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Special Supplement

South Africa: 12 years after the Marikana massacre

The miners' struggle of 2012-2014 opened a phase of general strikes and revolutionary offensives of the South African labor movement

Interview with James S., leader of the WIL of Zimbabwe, and Carlos Munzer, co-author of the book *Marxism and the Black Question*

Interviewer: Florencia Cerrillos



2012. Marikana Strike

International Workers Organizer (IWO): 12 years have passed since the murder of 34 miners at the hands of AngloAmerican hitmen and gunmen. The workers of South Africa are still crying out for justice.

Carlos Munzer (CM): Indeed, the one responsible of carrying out this massacre is currently the president of South Africa. To-

day, August 16, is a day of mourning and pain for the entire black working class. In 2012, 34 miners were murdered by transnational corporations led by Anglo American and London Mining Company (Lonmin). To do this, they used police hitmen and gunmen paid by the Stalinist union bureaucracy of the COSATU trade union and the government of the African National Congress (ANC).

The huge battles of 2012-2014 by the South African mining movement became the vanguard of a mass offensive that caused the overfall of the hated President Zuma years later and left the infamous regime of the ANC and Stalinism, supported by the union bureaucracy, in serious crisis.

Millions of workers had entered the struggle in those years. Drawing lessons from this period from 2012 to 2018-2019,

marked by great offensive class combats of the South African proletariat, deserves the full attention of the international revolutionary movement. "New" mediations and directions had to emerge that deceived the masses so that they did not overthrow the pro-imperialist regime of the ANC and the black bourgeoisie, supported by the bureaucracy of the unions and Stalinism.

The fight for the trial and punishment of all the murderers of Marikana, the demand for a salary of 12,500 rand, the expulsion and expropriation without compensation of the transnational corporations that plunder South Africa, continue to be a pending task...

IWO: James, was the demand for a salary of 12,500 rand, which was equivalent to the cost of the market basket, what sparked the Marikana struggle?

James S. (JS): Yes. To conquer it there was a wave of strikes developed for 3 years, one of the bravest of the South African proletariat. The combat of the Marikana miners is a milestone even in the class struggle at the continental level and opened an acute process of radicalization of broad layers of the proletariat.

In 2012, I was in Marikana after the massacre of the comrades to bring solidarity with a delegation of Zimbabwean workers to coordinate and extend that struggle

to Southern Africa. I met with miners' delegates and learned about the terrible living conditions they suffer. Many of the workers sleep in shacks and cardboard huts that surround the platinum mines.

During all these years we were with them in the enormous mass mobilizations that they carried out on August 16 in the place where the 34 comrades were murdered. This fight and its martyrs will never be forgotten.

The Marikana combat was followed and supported by advanced workers from all over the continent. It was one of the most radicalized fights of the working class in South Africa.

miners set up a huge strike committee with grassroots delegates and assemblies. Their demand was jobs and a decent salary. The economic struggle jumped into a political struggle: it clashed with the government. What's more, it was one of the largest anti-imperialist struggles in South Africa in years, where Anglo American, the Anglo-US pirates who for decades and decades have been plundering the oppressed peoples of Africa and their enormous wealth, were confronted. One of the greatest slogans of the struggle was: "12,500 rands or pack your bags and leave the country."

IWO: At that time, ANC Zuma government was in power.

CM: Yes. And with the ANC the old Stalinist Communist Party of South Africa was co-governing, which with Mandela had guaranteed a peaceful solution and "reconciliation" to the white repressors and slavers of Apartheid, saving them from the revolutionary process of the '80s that defeated that infamous regime.

The ANC have continued and acted as guarantor of the looting of the enormous mineral wealth of South Africa such as platinum (as in Marikana), gold, copper, etc., while with this "reconciliation" pact the white murderers of the Apartheid they were freed and taking the main positions of the officers and generalship of the Pretoria army, which acts as a true

"In order to go out and fight for their demands, the Marikana workers had to break with the pro-government union, which was a true appendage of the company and the government"

IWO: What do you mean?

JS: The thing is, in order to go out and fight for their demands, the Marikana workers had to break with the pro-government union, which was a true appendage of the company and the government. The

Marxism and the Black Question

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Marxism and



the Black Question



USA: the rebellion of the slaves in the heart of the imperialist beast

Presentation by Eliza Funes

gendarme of the business of imperialism throughout the region.

Zuma was part of a new bourgeoisie that made its fortune as “black” managers of the imperialist plunder and that emerged in a sea of black slave workers.

Let's not forget that Africa is a continent disputed by imperialist and transnational powers because it has an enormous source of raw materials, not only minerals of all kinds, including uranium and coltan, but also hydrocarbons, cocoa, rubber, etc. This contrasts with the extreme poverty and brutal exploitation suffered by the workers on the continent.

To give just one example, the cocoa extracted by Cargill, world's largest cereal company and food producer, is looted from Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria and Cameroon. Cargill is the owner of those nations. They occupied their lands at gunpoint, with paramilitaries and the bayonets of their sepoys. In these nations, millions of children harvest the cocoa with which large transnational corporations produce the 800 billion tons of chocolate consumed around the world. Furthermore, in Congo more than 100 thousand children lift coltan and cobalt for Canadian, English and USA mining companies... There, it is lived a state of exploitation and plundering of child labor, unseen in times of slavery, where the slave was expected to grow and strengthen until adolescence to make him produce and to last longer alive at the service of the slave owner.

JS: In South Africa, in the platinum mining belt, thousands of workers, in the worst working conditions and misery, even without housing, extract the minerals that fatten the pockets of the transnational corporations of the Anglo-US pirates.

And this must be said because an arrogant white worker aristocracy, a tiny minority of privileged workers of the imperialist powers, which is the basis of the union bureaucracies and the social-imperialist parties of the central countries, looks at blacks workers with disdain and contempt, who are coming to their countries looking for bread and a bed to sleep in, escaping the martyrdom of hunger and slavery. But those who arrive there are the true owners evicted from their lands by the transnationals and the bankers of the imperial centers.

The harshness and thrust of that enormous Marikana struggle was the outbreak



Brutal exploitation of children in DRC's cobalt mines

of years of oppression, subjugation and wage slavery of South Africa and the entire continent.

IWO: *The black continent has been one of the most plundered on the planet for centuries*

CM: Sure. At its early years, capitalism subsumed the slave mode of production and took black workers to work on the large plantations of Brazil or the cotton lands of the USA, from where it supplied raw materials for the looms of the English capitalists when the Industrial Revolution began at the end of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th century. That was the slave route.

“The government of the ANC led by Mandela, composed by a black proto-bourgeoisie and Stalinism, with the saved the large properties of imperialism from the proletarian revolution when Apartheid fell”

But the black proletariat in Africa and in the world have never stopped fighting. Even in North Africa, in the Maghreb, Arab workers were, as happened in Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, Egypt, the advance guard of the revolutionary uprisings that converged with the uprisings of the masses of the Middle East against imperialism and their puppets governments in 2011.

The black proletariat waged enormous battles, not only in South Africa. The working class and the poor peasants were the ones

who gave their lives for the independence of their nations in the last century throughout the African continent. These battles were expropriated by the lackey black bourgeoisie, left by white imperialist masters to maintain order in their colonies and semi-colonies. That process culminated in the late '80s.

Lately, we have seen the great struggles in Mali and Chad that were part of the mass fight against the theft of uranium, which powers France's nuclear apparatus. Recently in Kenya, a huge revolutionary mass uprising attacked the citadel of power, against the anti-worker laws that the IMF is trying to impose.

The South African proletariat was another vanguard sector of the combat in this 21st century. The South African workers who had faced Apartheid quickly clashed with the great black bourgeoisie that expropriated that fight.

IWO: *In the book “Marxism and the Black Question”, which you wrote and compiled with historical materials from the FLTI, it is stated that it was Stalinism in all its variants, pro-Moscow or pro-Maoist, the one that allowed the black bourgeoisie expropriates that anti-colonial and anti-imperialist combat of the masses of Africa.*

CM: That is the role that Stalinism played. In South Africa they were part and founders of the ANC. Thus arose in the mid-90s that government led by Mandela, made up of a black proto-bourgeoisie and Stalinism, which with the fall of Apartheid saved the large properties of imperialism from the

proletarian revolution and imposed itself as manager of their businesses, diverting the revolutionary struggle of the masses that shook Africa and the entire world in the 70s and 80s.

The unions, like COSATU, were within the ANC. They functioned as an appendix of the regime and the governments in power and were completely nationalized since that movement had to once again tightly control the working class so that it did not advance to the socialist revolution.

The damage done by Stalinism to the working class of South Africa and the entire continent is the same damage that was caused with the yield to imperialism of the USSR and China in '89, or as we see now in Cuba with the capitalist restoration.

In Africa, as well as in Central America in the 1980s, Stalinism carried out its last "dirty jobs" at the service of imperialism before handing over the workers' states.

This process had already started. Let us not forget that in the mid-1970s Portuguese imperialism had been defeated in Africa militarily. It fled its colonies and it was the "bourgeois Stalinist" governments that maintained private property there and guaranteed imperialist plunder, while the revolution began in Portugal, which was openly betrayed by the Communist Party of that country.

JS: We must insist on what we propose here about how the ANC government emerged, supported by Stalinism in South Africa; it was the product of a great betrayal of the revolution, since the enormous struggle of the Marikana miners and all the mines of platinum, faced that regime of traitors and the millionaire black bourgeoisie that maintained the businesses of imperialism throughout the region.

Large parts of the bourgeoisie and world imperialism make a monument to Mandela, who saved them with his regime of "reconciliation" with that murderous white bourgeoisie of Apartheid.

What I am telling you is very important and knowing it is essential to deeply understand what happened in Marikana. The official union that was in the mines was the NUM (National Union of Mineworkers), of which Ramaphosa himself had been a leader, who later ended up being manager of the Lonmin mine, which the Marikana workers faced in their strikes in 2012-2014, and he was the one who sent the police and



Marikana miners strike: "R12,500 or pack your bags and leave the country"

the strikebreaking gunmen to crack down on the miners in full force.

IWO: *From what you say, the Marikana struggle was a qualitative breaking point between the working class and the ANC government and imperialism.*

CM: Sure. That is the qualitative fact, which opened a true pre-revolutionary situation of radicalization of the masses and crisis at the heights.

"The heroic fight of the Marikana miners was an example of struggle with workers' democracy, strike committees and even self-defense committees"

IWO: *But the immediate result of those big strikes, what was it?*

JS: From a financial point of view, the salary of 12,500 rand that was claimed was not achieved. Today because of inflation, it should be 15,000 rand. The misery continues. Slight raises were achieved. Today workers' average salary is 4,600 rand.

It is clear that the 2012 strike and the return to combat in 2013 by the Marikana workers did not achieve their objective, but

they left a great lesson when their comrades shouted: "We want 12,500 rand or we will kill the management." That is to say, the working class knew, it sensed that it had to take the mine of imperialism into its hands to achieve its conquests. This was one of the great revolutionary milestones of the continent's proletariat in recent years.

That fight threatened to sweep away the regime. Its deepening would open the way to achieve the conquests that were claimed.

The thing is that, in their uprising, the majority of the South African working class revolted against the regime and a process of rupture with the traitors of COSATU and the ANC began. **In this period, we experienced a great independent mass action. The struggle expanded to the industrial proletariat, which urged some of its unions into combat, such as the NUMSA of metalworkers, which took up that fight and began what we Marxists define as a proletarian rise.**

IWO: *In international leftist circles there is an attempt to forget the heroic strike of thousands of platinum workers that began in Marikana in 2012*

JS: We see it today on this 12th anniversary of the massacre and in the tributes that the miners pay every year to their fallen comrades. In all the ones I participated in, I never saw any movement there that claims to be of revolutionary socialism, not to men-

tion the Communist Party, which is seen as one of the biggest traitors of the South African proletariat.

The thing is that many currents of Stalinism and the renegades of Trotskyism want to keep that heroic fight of the Marikana miners under the rug because it was an **example of struggle with workers' democracy, strike committees and even self-defense committees.**

Ultimately, what they also want to hide is the massive rupture of the workers' base with its bureaucratic leadership of the NUM union, as I told you before, and that the AMCU (Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union) had emerged, which expressed to the committee strike and the democratic body of delegates, representative of the vast majority of miners.

Let's not forget that 12 thousand workers worked in Marikana and with their struggle they united with tens and tens of thousands of platinum miners in the region, as happened in 2014 when they all went on strike.

The Marikana combat leaves a great lesson and learning for the international labor movement. Many wonder how thousands of workers were able to endure 5 months of strike in 2014.

This struggle took me back to the great strikes of the English miners when Thatcher closed the coal mines in the mid-1980s. In England, the struggle was sustained because the unions had a large strike fund accumulated by union dues and paid 50% of the salary to all strikers, an issue that sur-



Massacre of miners in Marikana

prises many workers when we tell them that this is why union dues exist for and that's how they should be used.

Those 5 months of struggle in Marikana were sustained, first of all, by the heroism of the workers and the strike fund and the solidarity they received, but essentially, because workers from Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique, Namibia and several other neighboring countries throughout Africa worked in that mine. The workers took turns to be on the strike, while others returned to their countries for 30 days to feed with their families. **It was one of the strikes with the greatest creativity and international fraternization of the workers. A true example for the world working class.**

IWO: *From what you say, I understand that if the Marikana strike did not succeed in its economic objectives, it did manage to open the process in the South African proletariat.*

JS: I already stated how this struggle was the breaking point of a process of revolutionary offensive by the workers against the regime and that openly clashed with the Stalinist union bureaucracy of COSATU.

What emerged in Marikana was an alternative organization to the bureaucracy. The workers remained mourning for their dead after the 2012 strike. But their spirit was not broken. In May 2013, they went out to fight again after hitmen and the government executed one of their leaders, Mawethu Steven.

That day the workers refused to go down to the underground galleries of the mine and their second offensive began. Steven had been murdered in a local bar while watching a football game. He had openly confronted the NUM bureaucracy and had acquired great popularity among all his comrades. He was a leader of the AMCU. The cowardly management of Lonmin had him killed, while the anti-worker Apartheid judges summoned him to testify before the Commission of Inquiry into the Marikana massacre.

Hatred once again swept through the mines of South Africa. Everyone: managers, judges, police, were responsible for this new murder. The Anglo-US employers tried at all costs to push back the new organization conquered by the strike of the year before.

2012-2013:

Statements by WIL Zimbabwe - Southern Africa on the Marikana struggle.



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IWO: Are these struggles the ones that anticipated the general combat of 2014?

CM: The outburst of the mining movement was in 2014. The workers could no longer tolerate the working conditions in the mine. They demanded justice for their martyrs. And their battle cry was, as James

said: "R12,500 salary or pack your bags and leave the country."

The 2014 strike spread across South Africa's platinum belt, paralyzing Anglo American Platinum (Amplats), Impala Platinum and Lonmin Platinum, the three largest looters of the minerals and natural wealth of martyred Africa.

The economic struggle quickly be-

came political and was generalized to the entire South African labor movement.

Zuma's government was truly hated by the entire working class and each of its struggles weakened it more and more.

I wanted to point out that this mass offensive caused a historic crisis in the ANC and would subsequently open a huge crisis at the top in the years to come.

2018-2019: new mediations of Stalinism emerge to divide the open mass revolutionary offensive in South Africa

IWO: What you have been defining is that the miners' struggles opened a process where the working class broke away with the ANC.

CM: Yes, and a huge radicalization process also took place, which lasted for years. The mining struggle awakened another key sector of the South African proletariat, as James said: the metal workers of automotive and metalworking industry of the NUMSA union, which also emerged in a break away with COSATU and the ANC in 2013-2014. This union accused the ANC of being responsible with Ramaphosa for the murder of the 34 Marikana miners and of being a totally anti-worker government and servant of imperialism.

The mining union AMCU and the metalworking union NUMSA were milestones in this radicalization process. Broad layers of the working class were turning to the left. They broke at an angle of 180° with the ANC, COSATU and Stalinism. A pre-revolutionary situation had been already open.

This mass offensive imposed the early fall of the Zuma government in 2018,

against which the workers had organized a huge general strike in 2017. Those years were the highest point of the crisis of those at the top and of the tendency towards independent actions of masses of those below. Students, broad swaths of the working class, the unemployed in the towns entered the fight...

JS: I would like to point that, after the Marikana strike, this process had a huge impact on the countries of the region.

In Zimbabwe, there was a wave of great worker and student struggles with mobilizations, strikes and street clashes. This radicalization process openly collided with the ZANU-PF (Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front) regime and threatened to overthrow Mugabe's government. An enormous political crisis was opening in the heights. This agent of imperialism and the IMF was about to fall into the hands of the masses.

This motivated a sector of the government and the bourgeois party MDC (Movement for Democratic Change), which posed as "opposition" and "democratic," to support a military coup that put Mnangag-

wa in power, who then called elections. He formed a cabinet with the military supported by the MDC and the union bureaucracy of the ZCTU trade union, which acted as a true front of class collaboration.

The MDC posed as an "opposition". Currents such as the ISO (International Socialist Organization) of Zimbabwe, a sibling group of the former Trotskyists of the English SWP, covered it on the left and ended up calling to vote for that bourgeois party in the elections.

In Zimbabwe, the "pro-Moscow" Stalinist party does not exist. ZANU-PF, which was the national liberation movement of the former Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in the '70s, was linked to China, it was pro-Maoist. The ISO is the one that plays the role of Stalinism in Zimbabwe, while in South Africa it supported the different "left" fractions of the Communist Party with which they tried to contain the masses in their revolutionary offensive from 2012 to 2018.

This is how the "socialists" of the City of London acted: subjecting the workers to the "democratic" bourgeoisies and covering Stalinism's back... They are parties, governments and regimes; most of them are deeply dictatorial and guarantors of the application of the worst IMF plans for the financial plundering of African countries and the looting of transnational corporations of the continent's wealth.

IWO: Based on what you say James, the revolutionary unity of the heart of the industrial proletariat of South Africa was at the top of agenda.

JS: I already told you. Not only of South Africa, but of the region. But in South Africa in particular, a pre-revolutionary situation had already emerged, as Carlos defined.

The bourgeoisie and Anglo-US imperialism had to look in South Africa for new



2017. Mass combat in South Africa: "Zuma must fall".

mediations to contain this rise. The general strike of October 2017 had dragged along the vast majority of the working class and the exploited masses. The old Stalinist unions had completely lost control of the labor movement. The beginning of the combat in Marikana meant the beginning of the political crisis of the ANC and the Zuma government.

CM: This was what later caused the fall of that government in February 2018. The crisis of the ANC and the independent actions of the working class opened at that time an enormous political crisis in the heights.

This crisis was quickly closed: the bourgeoisie handed over Zuma's head and the Congress appointed Ramaphosa, the Lonmin manager who had massacred in Marikana, as interim president until the 2019 elections. This infuriated the working class, but at the same time, due to the actions of new mediations set up by the regime, divided the mass offensive.

Before the fall of Zuma, the bourgeoisie could not continue resorting to gunmen and scabs who only added gasoline to the fire of the exploited's revolutionary. What they needed was to throw water to it. Unfortunately, the "new" leadership of the unions, such as that of NUMSA, led the struggle to pressure Parliament so that it would seem as it had removed Zuma, and not as it really was: the product of a revolutionary action by the workers.

This policy of the NUMSA leadership weakened the front of struggle of the exploited. Thus a new crisis of leadership of the rising proletariat opened. "New" neo-Stalinist leaderships, breaking away with the old Communist Party, mounted on the radicalized masses to prevent them from openly clashing with the bourgeois state and advancing towards the revolution.

IWO: So new mediations were set up to divert and disorganize this revolutionary offensive?

CM: Exactly. During the general strike of October 2017, the Communist Party and the official COSATU bureaucracy openly proposed, with a clear reactionary position, that Zuma had to leave and Ramaphosa govern by mandate of Congress.

Meanwhile, the leadership of the NUMSA union laid the rug for the bourgeoisie to resolve its crisis through Parliament which, as I told you, named Ramaphosa president. We witnessed an infamous trap to divert the revolutionary rise that called into question the direct overthrow of the government and the regime as a whole.

Unfortunately, the Marikana AMCU was not part of the strike because the workers thought that if Zuma left, Ramaphosa, the murderer of Lonmin, would be voted in, but its leadership also prevented it from being an alternative and disputing the leadership of the general strike.

The leaderships of the combative

“The SRWP was founded solely by the members of the NUMSA leadership with its reformist program... They wanted to reissue the scam of the “Bolivarian revolution” in South Africa, just at a time when the Castro brothers had finished handing over Cuba to capitalist restoration”

workers' organizations that the proletariat had set up, divided their ranks. As we saw, either supporting the “peaceful fall of Zuma and the assumption of Ramaphosa via parliament” or refusing to intervene in the strike to dispute the leadership with a revolutionary program. The AMCU had already won it in the previous battles of the platinum miners: 12,500 rand for everyone, expelling imperialism, strike committees and direct democracy.

IWO: Was this guaranteed by the new leaderships that emerged?

CM: There was a conscious and planned action by the state to divide the workers' offensive. “New leaderships” were placed at the head of both NUMSA and AMCU, but these came from the depths of South African Stalinism and the ANC. Two wings of the Communist Party broke away with it and “turned left” to contain the masses.

One of them was led by Malema, former leader of the South African Communist Youth. This current proclaims itself as “black nationalist” and proclaims the fight

for “black power.” He led the fight and the claim to the ANC for compensation to the widows of Marikana, taking this demand to bourgeois justice. Year after year he promised that with “black power we could end the exploitation of Anglo American,” but not by expropriating its mines without compensation and under workers' control. That is, after an apparent “anti-imperialist” speech, he diluted the truly anti-imperialist and revolutionary program that expressed the radicalization of the heroic platinum miners in South Africa. And with the demand of “black power” he separated the Marikana miners from the rest of the working class that was breaking with the ANC.

This was the current that aborted the fight for “black power”, which could only be achieved by setting up throughout South Africa factory committees of combative unions, of rebellious students, of delegations of the populations that demand basic services to live with dignity and fighting to dissolve the murderous police, with the workers' militia and the soldiers' committees. It is that only mass self-organization body fighting to take power are the ones that can guarantee a Black Workers and Peasants

Republic, which is a point of support for the Federation of Black and Socialist Republics of Africa.

All this was a coldly calculated deception by Stalinism, imperialism and the ANC government.

IWO: What role did the NUMSA leadership play then, because you said that it brought the workers' rise to the feet of Parliament so that Zuma's fall could be cushioned?

CM: The leadership of NUMSA also emerged from the bowels of Stalinism. It was a wing of the COSATU bureaucracy that dressed itself as “leftist”, “combative” and even “revolutionary”.

In 2013-2014, when it broke away with COSATU, this leadership called for the creation of a “revolutionary workers' party” in South Africa. Let us not forget that NUMSA and SAFTU, the federation of unions that also broke with the official trade union, organize 800,000 industrial workers in South Africa.

The emergence of this process, which the working class base filled with combat-

ive content and open radicalization, as we have seen, was diverted by its leadership, ultimately, to play a role as the “left wing” of the ANC regime.

To do so, the NUMSA leadership was forced to put itself at the head of the struggles and the workers' offensive of the industrial proletariat and metalworking in particular, which did not cease, as expressed in the general strike of 2018. The NUMSA leadership place itself at the head of the masses to leave the streets and subject them to the 2019 electoral trap, in which Ramaphosa was victorious, who was legitimized.

To develop this policy, the neo-Stalinist leadership of this union had to show a “leftist” and “revolutionary” face and clothing...

JS: The thing is that NUMSA's project of setting up a “new revolutionary party” was not credible only with the “left wings” of Stalinism. To legitimize their policy, they needed the renegades of Trotskyism.

This is why, the NUMSA leaders participated in various international congresses of the self-proclaimed “Trotskyists”, where they went to wash their faces and dirty clothes. These former Trotskyist currents dressed in “rrred” that Stalinist left leadership that the South African bourgeoisie knew how to use very well to impose the trap and the diversion of the pre-revolutionary situation. It is striking to see everyone looking the other way now.

For example, the NUMSA leadership participated in congresses of the Conlutas trade union of Brazil, which is led by PSTU and LIT-CI. They also taken to meetings of Labor Notes of USA, by the same Conlutas. There they were received as “heroes” of the metalworking workers of South Africa.

This NUMSA leadership that “turned left” channeled the struggle of the auto and metal workers, but at the same time, took it to a dead end; they diverted it.

In January 2018, the NUMSA leadership proclaimed the founding of that party as a “Socialist Revolutionary Workers Party” (SRWP) and in April 2019 they held a congress and founded it. All the currents that are to the left of Stalinism entered there, such as the ISO and all the groups coming from former English Trotskyism. The CWG, a very small group from New Zealand, applauded its founding, saying that a new “labor party” had to be created (as they want to do in all countries in the world, that is, a reformist party).



2019. Founding of the SRWP in South Africa: speakers with Fidel Castro's T-shirts and Chavista berets

A revolutionary current coming from a merger with the FLTI wanted to make its experience and also joined the SRWP, as is the case of the WIVL of South Africa. They entered that party believing that with it they were going to advance to establish a revolutionary party. Nothing could be further from that.

The SRWP was founded. Only the cadres and leadership of NUMSA participated in that congress. They had made sure all those years that the constitution of that party and its program were not discussed by hundreds of thousands of vanguard workers.

The SRWP was founded solely by the members of the NUMSA leadership with its reformist program. Its axis was to “confront Ramaphosa” by demanding the “Freedom Charter”, which was Mandela's call to establish the regime of “reconciliation” with the white fascists of Apartheid that we talked about before. They covered that program with “socialist” phraseology. That is to say, the NUMSA leaders proclaimed an “ultra-red” program without breaking with the ANC or with Mandela's “reconciliation” program.

Workers must know that this leadership, which had just participated in congresses of trade unions led by the “Trotskyists”, imposed that to join that party you had to vindicate Castro-Stalinism and Chavism. **They wanted to reissue the scam of the “Bolivarian revolution” in South Africa,** just at a time when the Castro brothers had finished handing over Cuba to capitalist restoration. It was a stab in the back; a huge betrayal.

CM: The leaders of NUMSA dressed in the clothing of Castroism, which ultimately was a very important instrument with which the bourgeoisie tried to subdue the revolutionary black labor movement, which felt part and sibling of the Cuban revolution in South Africa, all of Africa and mainly in USA. This time they did it also incorporating the figure of Chavism.

There is already history of this betrayal. In Latin America we saw Castro in the 70s proclaiming the “peaceful path to socialism” in Chile or at the beginning of the 21st century, with the scam of the “Bolivarian revolution”, strangling the enormous anti-imperialist struggles of the masses at the feet of the native bourgeoisies.

The founding congress of the SRWP was a political scam on the workers. We cannot forget that in the '70s, Castroism and its “militias” played a key role in covering the enormous political crisis left by the expulsion of Portuguese imperialism by the revolutionary masses of Angola and Guinea-Bissau. In those countries, the Stalinist movements found themselves in power and used it to defend capitalists' private property.

Castroism protected Rockefeller's oil wells in Angola so that they would not be expropriated by armed workers in their anti-imperialist struggle against the Portuguese occupation. Castroism played a detrimental role throughout Africa, as they did in South Africa by openly supporting the ANC and Mandela in the '70s and '80s. This time, legitimizing the SRWP which, as a neo-Stalinist variant, was part, together with Malema, of the abortion of the revolutionary process that was getting underway in South Africa.

British Trotskyism, which has relative weight in African countries, in Zimbabwe and South Africa in particular, played a very important role in legitimizing this Stalinist maneuver, as they are also doing it today by openly supporting the ANC.

I'm talking about a current like the ISO. Comrade James has already told us the experience of Zimbabwe, where the ISO played the role of Stalinism in setting up opposition fronts with the bourgeoisie that they call "democratic", such as the MDC, which was nothing other than the "democratic" agent of the imperialist transnationals that plunder that nation.

In South Africa, they supported this process of backing Stalinism and directly the ANC. As we denounced in our book *Marxism and the Black Question*, the ISO stated that "democracy and democratic freedoms were achieved in South Africa with the ANC government." This is a vile lie. The democratic conquests were achieved with the slave masses of Apartheid fighting in the streets and defeating that opprobrium regime. These democratic freedoms were lost as we have seen in the Marikana massacre and in the fascist pogroms against immigrant workers, precisely because the ANC prevented the victory of the socialist revolution in the '80s, when the Communist Party handed power to the black bourgeoisie.



2020. Black movement leads the fight against Trump in the US

IWO: *In USA, the ISO was directly dissolved to support the billionaire Sanders and the political scammer Ocasio-Cortez of the "democratic socialists" of the imperialist Democratic Party, so that they would lead the entire left wing of the working class to support Biden "against Trump."*

JS: Yes, this is what we are talking about. And the workers of England and the entire world must know it, as well as the sinister role played by the "left" Stalinist cur-

rents that march into single parties with the renegades of Trotskyism.

That happened in Cuba, with Frank García Hernández of the Communist Party, who revindicates the figure of Trotsky, but who is not part of or leads any struggle of the workers facing capitalist restoration on the island. Yes, even Putin's itinerant ambassador, Darya Mitina, was taken to "anti-imperialist" congresses with the former Trotskyists of Greece.

Workers must be aware of the sinister role these unified parties play with Stalinism, drawing lessons from South Africa.

The black working class, a key fraction of the world proletariat

IWO: *What is the current situation of the South African working class?*

JS: There is a national-socialist vision in the reformist currents that see the working class as only a national class, when it is essentially an international class. And the black proletariat is a fraction of the world working class, the most exploited, but also the one that has fought the most internationally.

When we talk about the struggle of the working class in Africa we are discussing the situation of the black working class worldwide, one of the most punished by the capitalist system.

In USA, the black labor movement played a key role in the struggles of the US proletariat since the beginning. It was the advance guard of the fight against im-

perialism within the US, first of all, for its conquests as a brutally oppressed black nation within that imperialist power. They were also the vanguard of the fight against the Vietnam War.

"In USA, the black labor movement played a key role in the struggles of the US proletariat since the beginning. It was the vanguard of the fight against imperialism within the US"

The black movement was key in the fight for the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq and Afghanistan and then openly confronting white supremacists and leading the fight of all US workers against the Trump government, who was left seriously in crisis

after the murder of George Floyd. We account for all this in our book *Marxism and the Black Question*.

Let us not forget that in US, "Black Lives Matter" emerged in 2013, in protest of the acquittal of the police officer who had murdered young black man Trayvon Martin in 2012. This movement regained enormous weight in 2020, when it led the fight for the trial and punishment of George Floyd's murderers.

The black labor movement did not stop fighting in the 20th century or in the 21st century, as part of the global working class anywhere in the world. They revolted in Haiti. They have been part of the Arab workers of the French proletariat with the so-called "Black Vests" who, revolted for the rights of immigrants in Europe and taking to the streets of Paris, raised the cry of "Fear has changed sides".

IWO: *There are millions of migrants on the planet. A large part of them, along with Arab and Latin American workers, are black workers.*

CM: Indeed. There are 260 million migrants. Many of them from black Africa die crossing the Mediterranean. In imperialist Europe, they are used as disposable labor. They do not get to Europe for a walk, but because the cynical imperialist bourgeoisie opens the borders to them when it needs them to raise the crops and do the worst jobs. Then, when they want to get rid of them, they let them sink into the Mediterranean by the hundreds of thousands.

Nothing different from what is happening on the US border with Latin American workers. A few days ago, I read that Trump announced that his first measure, if he wins the elections, will be to expel a million immigrants. This is nothing new: it's what Biden is doing, even with fascist white gunmen from southern states closing the border against caravans of hungry migrants from Central and South America trying to get there.

In 2005, there was a major hurricane in USA. New Orleans was almost demolished. Chicano and black workers were the ones who rebuilt it. A major construction workers' strike broke out there. The black workers joined the Latin American workers when the latter greeted him, calling him to a common struggle "from one slave to another..."

IWO: *I was reading the note from comrade Peter from England, after the enormous mass marches through Palestine of the English proletariat and youth, in which the working class came out to confront the fascist "anti-immigrant" movement.*

CM: Big capital launched fascist gangs in England under the excuse of migrant to crush them and break the unity of the working class. Yesterday, the aristocracy and the workers' bureaucracy of the unions and the Labor Party had raised the slogan of "British jobs for British workers." Even Brexit was supported by the upper layers of the British working class. Today, we can see how the imperialist bourgeois-



"Black Vests" immigrant workers in France

sie treats the British proletariat the same as immigrants, ripping off all their conquests one by one.

Huge layers of the English working class are defending immigrants in the streets. With them, they have marched in recent months in support of the Palestinian masses, martyred with a true genocide of Zionism in Gaza, which is spreading to the West Bank.

of the masses, expropriated by the black bourgeoisie and Stalinism. Today, we are witnessing the ANC trying to capitalize and divert this fight against the Zionist massacre in Gaza, in the international courts of The Hague, with "condemnations" from the UN, etc., which have not stopped even one of the missiles with which the Zionism massacres the Palestinian people daily and destroys their cities, hospitals, homes and schools.

"Yesterday, the labor aristocracy and bureaucracy of the unions and the Labor Party raised the slogan 'British jobs for British workers' (...) Today, we see that the imperialist bourgeoisie treats the British proletariat just as it treats the immigrants"

We had already seen in South Africa one of the largest mobilization processes in the world in support of Palestine. The black South African worker hates Zionism, like yesterday the regime of the white bourgeoisie of Apartheid, which had them in true concentration camps called Bantustans. The black worker had to show a document or passport to go to work. It is the same thing that happens today in Palestine occupied by the Zionist-fascist state of Israel.

This explains why South Africa is one of the vanguard sectors in solidarity with the Palestinian people. Apartheid was defeated by long enormous revolutionary struggle

IWO: *You were saying that the black working class is a fraction of the world working class that fights all over the planet.*

CM: That's right. Union bureaucracies, labor aristocracies and reformist left are the ones who break the coordination and desynchronize their struggle and separate the black working class from the entire world proletariat,

treating them as second-class workers.

Note that there is a paradox: the black working class, like the one of southern Africa, produces an enormous percentage, if not the majority, of the raw materials with which the world capitalist system functions, such as minerals, hydrocarbons, etc.

In the '30s, Trotsky said that the black worker in USA never allowed himself to be enslaved. He was always a rebel wherever he was.

Coordinating this fraction of the working class is a decisive step towards rebuilding the unity of the world proletariat that Stalinism and the union bureaucracies have destroyed.

In the heat of the combat of the black proletariat in South Africa, there are Revolutionary Trotskyist being built

IWO: *Our international current arises and has a very important affluent in its constitution in the workers of Africa.*

JS: We consider this a key issue. Our experience and approach to the FLTI is an enormous lesson in internationalist combat. Our action in these events and drawing these lessons, which are expressed in our historical materials and in the book *Marxism and the Black Question*, was decisive in achieving a revolutionary program.

Our development and evolution were complex, difficult. We came from a breakup of the ISO of Zimbabwe, which was totally revolutionary since we denounced that this party was an appendage of the MDC. We emerged with a program against submission to the "popular front", while the comrades of the WIVL from South Africa were looking for an international alternative to develop their fight on the continent, they turned to the left and were also part of the founding of the FLTI.

We arrived in Africa also joining a process of radicalization in countries like Mozambique. Let's not forget that in 2009 a great revolutionary process took place in Madagascar; it was almost a classic revolution.

IWO: *What do you take from this experience that our current made in Africa?*

JS: First of all, we broke our isolation and linked ourselves to revolutionary vanguard phenomena from deep Africa and the black working class. This international construction offensive was part of our intervention in open civil war processes such as Libya and Syria. With them, we reached the Pacific and we still maintain a policy of international action bloc with the comrades of the JRCL-RMF of Japan.

“In Africa, the entry of all the groups that claim to be Trotskyists into the SRWP, the Stalinist and Castro-Chavist party in South Africa, decisively anticipated the liquidation, not only politically, but also organizationally, of the currents that claim to be revolutionary Marxists”

The currents that liquidated the Fourth International seek to ensure that this highly contradictory process of our construction, but fierce and internationalist, be unknown to the new generations. But that's not going to happen.

The entry of all the groups that call themselves Trotskyists in Africa into the SRWP, the Stalinist and Castro-Chavist party in South Africa, decisively anticipated the liquidation, not only politically, but also organizationally, of the currents that claim to be revolutionary Marxism. ISO is the outpost of this process, as we saw in Zimbabwe, South Africa, USA and also in England itself, where they were located as the left faction of the Labor Party, led at that time by Corbyn.

But at the same time this enormous pressure meant a crisis in our ranks, which we managed to overcome by selecting our forces, under the lessons of the conquered Trotskyist program.

Fighting against these pressures, we founded our revolutionary core, anchored in an international faction that at every step counterbalanced and kept alive Trotskyism of the countries of South Africa.

We did not give an inch defending the strategic interests of the black proletariat internationally, as part of the world working class.

The entry of all the Trotskyist groups into the South African SRWP was also a great pressure. There is no doubt that the crisis of the Fourth International continues to be a limit to establishing vanguard revolutionary parties. Hence, the fight for its refoundation is a key issue to do so without betraying or capitulating.

CM: Notice that to enter the founding congress of the SRWP, you had to wear a red t-shirt with the faces of Castro and Chávez and swear allegiance to the "Bolivarian revolution." As James says, this put enormous pressure on the revolutionary movement that was taking its first steps in Africa. Obviously, that is what finally happened.

This policy of joining the SRWP separated us from our WIVL comrades in South Africa, despite the enormous agreements we held and still hold. The same with the CWG that called to openly enter.

Today the balance is clear: all this was a setup and a maneuver by Stalinism to disorganize a mass revolutionary offensive.



James S. at the Marikana miners' strike

The CWG is silent on this. Not so the comrades of WIVL, who are drawing lessons from that experience.

Just to get an idea, our comrades from Zimbabwe went to the founding congress of the SRWP to fight for the NUMSA workers to define the program and policy of that party. They went to fight a great battle with the internationalist program for the South African revolution. They did not go with Castro or Chávez t-shirts, but rather those of the Fourth International. Of course, at the entrance they could enter wage this battle. Only those currents that submitted to the rules of the new left-wing bureaucracy of NUMSA and paid homage to Castro-Chavism entered there.

JS: This experience of building the SRWP culminates with the total separation of this party from the metalworking workers, which causes a strong electoral defeat, but also demoralization at the base of the union.

Ultimately, Malema from Marikana and this neo-Stalinist party turned out to be an abortion, for now, of the rupture of the South African working class with the ANC and of the fight to conquer a revolutionary labor movement and an internationalist party of the proletariat of South Africa that leads them to seize power.



June 2024. Mass revolutionary uprising in Kenya

This was a huge frustration just like Mandela was in the '80s. But in this case, the last word has not been said. The ANC is hated by the masses, but if the working class does not provide a way out, the reaction of the bloodthirsty and lackey black bourgeoisies, together with imperialism, will once again drown the African labor movement in blood, as they did yesterday with the miners of Marikana.

IWO: As happens throughout the semi-colonial world, due to the imperialist crisis, the dispute over sources of raw materials has been exacerbated.

CM: This in Africa occurs multiplied by a thousand due to the degree of wealth of minerals and other raw materials that are essential for the development of all branches of production of the imperialist monopolies worldwide.

Imperialism advances, as it always did in Africa, crushing the nations and peoples it oppresses. The fight for sources of raw materials is based on counter-revolutionary wars, on true genocides like in Congo, on sinister regimes like that of Apartheid before or those of the old French colonies in Sub-Saharan Africa. Uranium and coltan are extracted from these countries, and gold, platinum, diamonds and much more are looted from the countries of South Africa.

But the masses of black Africa have not given up. We have seen them recently in Kenya. There was no country where the proletariat have not entered into open revolutionary offensives, which were betrayed and diverted, or crushed by counterrevolution.

Time is running short to set up revolutionary internationalist vanguard parties. The leadership crisis deepens. The African continent shows that the time of crisis, wars and revolutions is becoming more acute and that the alternative of socialism or barbarism is an immediate alternative,

ZIMBABWE

August 16, 2024

The Mnangagwa government, servant of the IMF and imperialism, starves the poor people and cracks down and imprisons workers' leaders and activists

Unconditional freedom for all political prisoners!



Emmanuel Sitima, president of the ZINASU national student union, and Robson Chere, general secretary of the ARTUZ rural teachers union, imprisoned by the Mnangagwa government.

See the WIL statement in our digital newspaper
www.fti-ci.org

despite and against reformism, which proclaims that workers, applying pressure on bourgeois parliaments and in blocs with what they call "progressive bourgeoisies" or "anti-imperialists", can raise their living standard, without the victory of revolution.

In Africa, two theories and two strategies continue to openly confront each other: on one hand, the miserable program of submission to the bourgeoisie of "two-stage revolution" and fronts of class collaboration. On the other hand, the theory and strategy of Trotskyism of struggle for the socialist revolution as an immediate task. Only by fighting for it will the proletariat be able to achieve here or there partial demands, which will be lost if it does not take power.

The black labor movement and its most advanced and most insightful layers are a decisive battalion for the fight for the re-foundation of the Fourth International

IWO: I have read a summary statement of this process from the WIVL comrades of South Africa that was published as part of the International Correspondence to the VII Congress of the FLTI.

CM: That note is very important. They broke away with the SRWP by making a self-critical public summary of their intervention there.

IWO: That's very progressive

CM: I have not seen any current that claims to be revolutionary Marxism publicly raise before the masses any of the terrible adaptations, capitulations and betrayals that they committed.

JS: I know what the WIVL comrades say, which is highly auspicious. In that statement they state: "We made a mistake by putting our trust in NUMSA leaders to create an environment for the real building of a revolutionary workers party. However, from the start the structures were bureaucratic and suppressed workers voices. (...) It seems that the aim of the NUMSA leaders was to pacify and neutralise the radical base of the union with talk of revolution. In this they played an important support role for imperialism to help curb and neutralise a key section of the revolutionary Left in the working class, centrally in NUMSA itself.



South African Trotskyist Militants in 1934

(...) As WIVL we accept blame too for having stayed in the SRWP for so long."

CM: That's a big step forward. Now that struggle and those lessons have to rise to the end in achieving an active internationalist policy to refound the Fourth International. From a national vision it is not possible to understand the actions of the treacherous leaderships that are centralized at the international level.

With our WIVL comrades, we have promoted, at key moments, the fight in solidarity with the Palestinian masses, for the destruction of the state of Israel and against US imperialism that commands Zionism.

The struggle to establish an international general staff that draws revolutionary lessons to make it easier for the working class to identify its enemies, especially when they dress in "rrred", is a decisive task and is the best tribute we can pay today from the FLTI, and the revolutionary groups in Africa that make up their ranks, to the Marikana miners.

"I would like to mention that August 20 sets a new anniversary of the assassination of Leon Trotsky at the hands of a Stalinist agent. From the African continent, WIL pays tribute to the comrade, founder of the Fourth International"

They did everything to win and they still fight for trial and punishment of all the murderers of their comrades and for a salary of 12,500 rands, which is a revolutionary demand of the entire workers' movement in

black Africa, which will only be conquered by expelling imperialism and recovering the land, in a Federation of Black Workers and Socialist Republics.

IWO: Would you like to add anything?

JS: I take advantage of this report to denounce that a process of persecution of labor activism has begun in Zimbabwe, where workers at every step threaten with harsh combats, such as miners and teachers, the student uprising, etc. We have to be with them. They are one of the most exploited fractions of the proletariat in Africa. Promoting a campaign for the freedom of Zimbabwe's political prisoners and the trial and punishment of the murderers of the Marikana miners is the top-priority task.

Before finishing, I would like to mention that August 20 sets a new anniversary of the assassination of Leon Trotsky at the hands of a Stalinist agent. From the African continent, WIL pays tribute to the comrade, founder of the Fourth International. We know of the enormous struggle that the founders of our world party gave to stand up the black proletariat, particularly in USA.

Our assassinated leader worked hard enough to ensure that our party in USA, the SWP, in the 1930s dedicated enormous forces to work in the black movement.

Trotsky affirmed that the claim and black nationalism in USA is nothing more than the natural excess of desire for equality. And that is totally and absolutely progressive. But also, he also affirmed that

white American chauvinism is the expression of racial domination and is essentially reactionary. The nationalist tendencies of blacks openly confront the capitalist system that imposes racism and contempt on the black movement to generate a cheap and slave labor force.

I wanted to pay tribute to Comrade León Trotsky, knowing that this task of fighting for a revolutionary leadership of the black working class worldwide is inseparable from the fight to refound the Bolshevik-Leninist party, the Fourth International.

The banners have to be clear. We fight under the clean flags of the Fourth International to give back to the black proletariat of Africa the leadership it deserves.

CM: For our part, we express our commitment to the fight for the refoundation of the Fourth International at a time when the former Trotskyists have consummated their entry or fusion with the Stalinist currents and the class collaboration fronts throughout the planet.

JS: That experience was already lived here and the workers of South Africa, Zimbabwe and the entire continent are paying dearly for it.

The founding of the SRWP by Stalinists and renegades of Trotskyism, who aborted the pre-revolutionary situation in South Africa, occurred in the same year in which the "leftist" wings of Stalinism and the liquidators of the Fourth International met in Havana to "claim the figure of Trotsky", while they betrayed his legacy and his program in South Africa, Latin America, USA and internationally.



Leon Trotsky

Here they saved ANC from the hatred of the masses and in Cuba they gave a "democratic" halo to Stalinism that had just restored capitalism in the island.

As South Africa demonstrates and the experience of Bolshevism demonstrated, between Trotskyism and Stalinism there is a river of blood. Those murdered in Marikana by Anglo American and the strikebreaking gunmen of the ANC and the Stalinist bureaucracy are part of that blood.

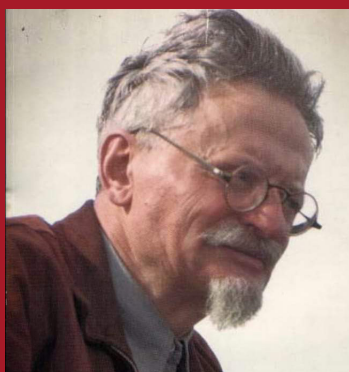
IWO: The book "Marxism and the Black Question" is sold out. Are you preparing a new edition?

CM: The Rudolph Klement Publishing House is working on a second edition of it, updating its presentation. We are working on it.

IWO: I think this interview could be part of this new edition.

CM: The Trotskyist comrades in Africa will have the last word on what you propose. The thing is that this work, like our books on Syria, have not been written from comfortable desks, but rather intervening in the heart of the live combats of the civil war processes in which our current has proudly participated, such as Marikana and the struggles from South Africa, in the Middle East, on the First Lines of Colombia and Chile, against the coup in Peru...

So, there goes then our tribute to Marikana's comrade on this 12th anniversary of the massacre. The victory of the socialist revolution in Africa and internationally will avenge them and remember them as martyrs of the world proletariat. •



August 20, 1940 - August 20, 2024

Tribute to Leon Trotsky 84 years after his assassination at the hands of a Stalinist agent

In defense of the legacy of Trotskyism

See the tribute in our digital newspaper
www.fti-ci.org





Letter from the FLTI to the 62nd International Anti-War Assembly of Japan

Continued from back cover

Comrades,

It is necessary to break the siege of the Palestinian masses!

While they fight, day by day the cowardice of the native bourgeoisies of the region, both Arab and the Iranian theocracy, comes to light. They only seek the surrender of the resistance.

They brutally repress, as do the PLO and Fatah, the Palestinian masses of the West Bank who seek to enter into combat with their brothers in Gaza. They still keep under control the millions of Palestinian workers living in Lebanon. They act as a real fifth column of the heroic Palestinian resistance.

In this "holy alliance" the coward Putin who played the role of mercenary and murderer in Syria, where 600 thousand oppressed people were massacred, could not be missed. Rusia has a huge military base in Tartus, on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea in Syria, barely 250 miles from Gaza. From there Putin protects the ships carrying supplies to the state of Israel. He is for the victory of the occupier, unlike the Yemeni nation that attacks any ship carrying weapons and supplies to Zionism.

From Wall Street to Beijing, from

the butcher of Moscow to the imperialist Maastricht: they all want to impose the surrender of Gaza. They recognize the state of Israel and uphold the "two-state" policy, which is nothing other than Zionism's occupation of Palestine and the subjugation of its people to ghettos and concentration camps.

Comrades,

Surely you know that August 3 was set as an International Day of Struggle in solidarity with Gaza and for the freedom of the Palestinian prisoners. **This day has been called by the Palestinian resistance in Gaza and hundreds of organizations around the world have joined it.**

In the USA a huge movement of youth and workers is developing against the Zionist genocide of the Palestinian people. This struggle clashes openly with the government of the butcher Biden, who directs the operations of Zionism against the Palestinian masses. As in the 1970s against the Vietnam War or later against the US occupation of Iraq, the rebellious youth of the US have won the streets and together with the Black movement and the working class **have opened a new front of strug-**

gle of the Palestinian people in the very entrails of the imperialist beast.

They surrounded the Capitol while the fascist Netanyahu was being cheered by the representatives of the financial oligarchy of Wall Street, both Republican and Democrat.

The American youth have been the protagonists of university takeovers, fighting in the streets of New York, Oakland, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Charlotte, etc. and lately they have united their struggle with that of the Black movement of "Black Lives Matter".

That is why the demand put on the streets by this movement of the American youth and workers is: **from Brooklyn to Gaza, no justice, no peace!**

Thus, a mass movement for Palestine stands up in the US raising the demands of the black movement and the workers who also openly clash with that scam of the "left" of the Democratic Party headed by the billionaire and Zionist Sanders and his partner Ocasio-Cortez.

Comrades,

By the time you are holding your Anti-War Assembly, the International Day of Struggle of August 3 will be over.

The situation in the Middle East is getting worse. Neither Iran nor Hezbollah can contain the Palestinian masses in Lebanon who are trying to enter the fight. The crisis and momentary weakness of the American government in the midst of the US electoral situation is forcing Zionism to deepen its total war. At this moment it is attacking the districts of Beirut.

In these conditions, comrades, we propose a task that cannot be postponed:

Let us make our own the call of the Palestinian resistance and let the response to such genocide **not only be a day of struggle**, but let this day be a step to set up an **International Committee to coordinate and centralize all the solidarity with the Palestinian cause in the five continents!**

It is not only the US students who are fighting, but our Zengakuren comrades have marched to the Zionist embassy in Tokyo condemning the Zionist massacre. Comrades, we are with you!

It is high time for a decisive intervention of the working class pushing for a **World General Strike** to stop the genocide in Gaza and with the internationalist unity of the proletariat to confront the counterrevo-



March in the U.S. against the genocide in Gaza

lutionary offensives of imperialism against the oppressed peoples and its own working classes!

A victory of Zionism in Gaza would be a new foothold for superior adventures of imperialism on the planet.

Comrades,

Well into the 21st century, it is abundantly clear that the epoch of crises, wars and revolutions is deepening day by day.

After the crash of 2008 and the successive rounds of the crisis that followed, the US is returning to the world market, where it had lost its undisputed hegemony. It does so by showing off its gunboats, throwing its crisis at the entire world, fighting inch by inch for its spheres of influence and by shooting.

From 2008, the **“great” Germany, France and the imperialist Maastricht began to control, with high tariffs and autarchy, the European market from Portugal to the Russian steppes.** Russia was supplying gas, energy and minerals to imperialist Europe and the latter was providing Moscow's industrial-military apparatus with high technology.

US imperialism was not able to enter Europe with Trump's trade war, but came back at it by stepping on it with NATO. They used Putin's invasion of an oppressed nation like Ukraine to cut off the flow of raw materials from Russia to imperialist Maastricht and dislocated the division of labor and control of the European market by the Franco-German axis. This opened a huge crisis in the whole of Europe and particularly for the “great” Germany and its partner, French imperialism. Now, they are both placing a big share of their factory capacity, their state-of-the-art technology and financial capital to develop the war industry.

On its end, US imperialism, with NATO, have already placed themselves on the borders with Russia, while Putin insists, with his partition of Ukraine, on being the gendarme of the business of imperialism and the capitalists in the whole Eurasia. That is the role he has been fulfilling.

The successive rounds of the global crash have even hit “big” China. There, dozens of commercial banks have collapsed, the big construction companies have melted down and a true “real estate bubble” is in full expansion, like that of the US imperialism in 2008.



Rally in Japan in solidarity with Palestine

From South Korea and Taiwan, the US shows its cannons and carries out military ostentation and harassment. This forces China to place more of its surplus, amidst its crisis, investing in arms.

This is the inevitable tendency of the capitalist system during the imperialist stage. The bankrupt capitalist system prevents the development of the productive forces; what it develops are productive forces. As Lenin would say, **war is the most important business of bankrupt imperialism.**

The world crash and its successive rounds have broken the balance and the division of labor in the world economy and policy and they have dislocated the international labour division. A huge political crisis of dispute has opened up for the zones of influence and of brutal imperialist counter-offensive against the world working class.

Comrades,

Bankrupt imperialism comes to define historically 1989 in its favor, seeking to colonize the former workers' states with an aggressive policy, while restarting a huge dispute in all areas of influence and for control of the branches of production.

In this “dark century”, as you call it, inter-imperialist disputes express the fight over who will be politically and militarily the winner in the dispute over the enormous sources of raw materials and the industrial-military apparatus of Russia and with the enormous internal market of China.

This will not develop peacefully, but these large capitalist countries with powerful commercial and industrial bourgeoisies, closely linked to the capitalist world-econ-

omy, will have to be colonized or semi-colonized with invasions, custom wars and counter-revolutionary wars. There are too many imperialist powers and those that exist, starting with the US, are bankrupt.

In addition, the imperialist powers are seeking for direct agents of their businesses to emerge in those countries to influence them from within. This is what explains the strong Bonapartist regimes that exist in Russia, China, Vietnam and Cuba itself. **They are regimes that are offensive against their working class and defensive against the aggressive policy of imperialism in the world economy in crisis.**

The world market has shrunk. The crash has devoured millions of jobs. The population is growing demographically. The fight for the surplus becomes more acute. There is no longer a place for “independent” capitalist countries and as we see in the semi-colonies, the possibility of the national bourgeoisies to bargain their businesses with imperialism has come to an end. A true plan for the colonization of the semi-colonial world is underway.

If the working class does not prevent it, wars for new markets, and in particular for Russia and China, will be the order of the day. That is the inevitable tendency of rotting imperialist capitalism.

The tensions in Taiwan and South Korea, as well as the war in Ukraine, anticipate what we say here.

But, to go into higher counterrevolutionary offensives, **the imperialist bourgeoisies, and of USA in particular, must defeat their own working class and that of the colonial and semi-colonial world that they oppress.** The imperialist powers become a thousand times more aggressive.

The margins for class conciliation have ended. Reformism, an agent of imperialism, can no longer pass off the handouts it received yesterday as reforms. An era of "counter-reformism" has opened.

The possibility of the emergence of governments such as Trump in the US, Le Pen in France or Vox in Spain, are the indication that the establishment of the great imperialist powers has decided to take out the whip to deliver very harsh counterrevolutionary blows to its own working class.

This plan advances because the reformist parties of Stalinists and social-traitors betray the proletariat, placing it at the feet of their executioners, whom they call "democratic", "progressive" or "anti-imperialist". It is the old and perfidious "popular front" policy of Stalinism in the 1930s, where the working class is subjected to the bourgeoisie and must abandon all its demands including the most important of them, which is the fight for power.

Thanks to these class collaboration fronts and their mermaid songs, mass offensives are disorganized so that big capital can later crush them with Bonapartism and fascism... One does not work without the other. They are two ends of the same rope that bourgeoisie uses to strangle revolutionary process.

As we have seen, in France, an infamous pact of the neo-Stalinist left (self-proclaimed as "progressive") of Mélenchon has succeeded, which, with the excuse of "defeating Le Pen", cynically made an agreement with Macron, when that government is which has taken away all the conquests of the working class, such as the 35-hour work week and retirements, and imposed labor flexibility.

This also happens in the Spanish State where it has been the PSOE and Podemos, supported by Stalinism from the Labor Union leadership, which harshly attacked the workers' conquests, they crushed the uprising for self-determination in Catalonia and saved the monarchy for the umpteenth time.

Syriza did the same in Greece, supported by the Stalinist union bureaucracy, aborting a pre-revolutionary situation years ago.

Comrades,

The task of the reformist left during wars is to place the world working class in the trenches of its class enemy.



Massacre in Syria: Aleppo city reduced to rubble

Yesterday we saw it in Syria, where these leaderships made a front with imperialism to "defeat terrorism." Thus they supported the dog Bashar and the murderer Putin in their massacre of the Syrian revolutionary masses.

In Palestine they gave their condolences to Zionism when the resistance defended itself by taking hostage fascist settlers armed to the teeth who are usurping their land.

Now they have placed the enormous international solidarity with martyred Gaza at the feet of the Iranian theocracy and the traitors of the PLO and Al Fatah in the West Bank.

In Ukraine, most of these currents present Putin as an "anti-imperialist fighter" who, according to them, would come to "put a limit on NATO," thus justifying the invasion of "great" Russia into oppressed Ukraine.

These opportunists of Marxism deny that Ukraine is an oppressed nation, with centuries of oppression by the Tsars and then by Stalinism, which, like them, transformed great Russia into a "prison of nations".

For Lenin, there is one principle position before wars: one is to be militarily defencist when a colonial or semi-colonial country is attacked by an power that invades it; and one it is to be anti-defensist when the proletariat is the one fighting in the battle front dying for their own imperialist bourgeoisie. On the other hand, one is to be for peace when two oppressed countries go to a fratricide war. The program is to unify the struggle against imperialism.

Not having such defensist policy on the

invasion of Russian to Ukraine is a criminal policy. The more Putin invades Ukraine, the more he pushes a desperate people and an already divided nation into the arms of the European Union, the IMF, which in turn plunders it, and the imperialist transnational corporations that steal its wealth.

While the majority of the world reformist left is in Putin's trench in his invasion of Ukraine, other sectors, no less capitulators of reformism, affirm that with the pro-imperialist government of Zelensky, NATO and the imperialist Maastricht government, the war of national liberation can be won. This is a true mirage.

The scoundrels of NATO and the European Union are not at all for the victory of the oppressed nation. In the middle of the war, they have already taken, with Cargill and Monsanto, the wheat and cereals from the black lands of Ukraine and are doing fabulous businesses like the French ArceelorMittal, while the IMF has put Ukraine in debt with double and triple chains.

Comrades,

What the fight for the national liberation of an oppressed people needs in the first place is the unity of its working class. We know of the courageous pronouncement of unions, labor organizations and Marxist currents that fight in Ukraine.

It is necessary to insist a thousand and once that we need a program and a policy of the working class independent of Zelensky and the pro-USA government that in the middle of the war have torn away all economic, union, reunion and organization rights from the Ukrainian working class.

All this while the imperialist aid did not go beyond a few World War II tanks and missiles that only guarantee reaching the

borders already established in the Donbass and Crimea by the Moscow bandits.

At the hands of NATO, the IMF and USA, Ukraine will not be independent nor will it defeat the invasion.

The unity of the working class from Kyiv to Donbass becomes decisive. In the territories controlled by Moscow, the workers of the big mines of Donetsk, Lugansk, Mariupol, etc., have been laid off by the thousands and brought to subhuman living conditions by the Russian oligarchs and their centurions in that occupied region.

The same thing happens with the workers of the Kyiv governed regions.

The task of uniting the demands of a single working class from the Donbass and Crimea to Kyiv, resuming the fight for the defeat of Moscow, the break with the IMF and the disavowing of a fraudulent foreign debt, would quickly lead to the fraternization of the workers of the whole Ukraine and to open trenches in the rearguard of the invading troops.

This would be a true electric shock for the workers and youth of Russia who are deserting in their thousands because they refuse to go to fight in Ukraine and, above all, it would be a hard blow to the union bureaucracies, social-imperialist parties and the Stalinism that controls the European working class, to demonstrate that it is these leaderships that are real servants of NATO since they defend the imperialist governments of Maastricht, which are all NATO members.

Only the unity of the Ukrainian working class, with it and its organizations taking political, economic and military control of the war to expel the invaders and break with the IMF and the Europe of Maastricht, is the way to achieve the national liberation of Ukraine, unite the Ukrainian prole-



Ukraine: Mariupol children's hospital destroyed by Putin's bombs

tariat with the working class of the whole Europe and to be able to make real what the title of the declaration claim of the European Network for Solidarity with Ukraine proclaims: *"for a people's peace, not an imperial peace!"*.

Together with you we agree when this declaration states: *"we need a peace based on and supported by the interests of the people and workers of Ukraine and Russia"*.

Comrades,

But the masses have not given up...

The working class fights. The leaderships betray it.

As we saw, the heroic Palestinian resistance is bringing the American masses back to their feet.

Likewise, we have witnessed huge spontaneous uprisings and mass revolts against hunger, as happened in Sri Lanka and Iraq, and today in Kenya and Bangladesh, to name a few examples.

In **Latin America**, huge processes of uprisings of the working class and poor peasants developed from 2019-2020 onwards. The Chile of Dignity, the revolutionary general strike in Colombia, the combats of the Ecuadorian masses, the enormous workers and peasants mobilizations against both the military coup in Bolivia and the palace coup in Peru, demonstrate what we are saying here.

These revolutionary processes were deviated and betrayed by Stalinism, the renegades of Marxism, the trade union bureaucracies and the so-called World Social Forum that yesterday with the scam of the "Bolivarian Revolution" inflicted serious de-

feats on the anti-imperialist struggles of the Latin American masses at the beginning of the 21st century.

The new revolutionary offensive of workers and peasants in Latin America was met with a hard stab in the back imposed by the Stalinist scourge: the selling out of workers and peasants Cuba to imperialism and the capitalist restoration.

The war cry of Castroism of "socialism no longer exists, even in Cuba", was the greatest betrayal of the working class of the entire American continent, while a new capitalist class arose inside the island and the majority of the workers live in conditions of hunger and misery as in Haiti.

Thus have arisen now Petro in Colombia, Boric in Chile, and the return to power of the MAS in Bolivia, the return of Lula in Brazil, etc., that is to say, a true pro-US imperialist left that managed to stabilize the imperialist control of the region.

They took over and prolonged the trap, the deceit and the expropriation of the anti-imperialist struggle imposed before by Castro, Chávez, the Kirchners, Morales, etc.

In the first decade of the 21st century with the World Social Forum and now with the so-called "Progressive International", which also includes the American left supporting Sanders and Biden "against Trump", imperialism managed to contain the different waves of mass struggle that shook the American continent.

One of its high points was the struggle of the American working class and the uprising of the black people against Trump in 2020, which today all the traitors to socialism want us to forget.

See the JRCL-RMF Call to the 62nd International Anti-War Assembly at:

www.flti-ci.org



Workers' march in Japan

It is the masses who pay for such betrayals with the disorganization of their ranks, discouragement, unheard-of sufferings, enormous social crises, etc.

It is on this basis that Milei, the palace self-coups like that of Dina Boluarte in Peru or the last attempted coup in Bolivia arose.

As if this were not enough, the Latin American working class suffers on itself the scorn of the balance that remains of the scam of the so-called "Bolivarian Revolution" in Venezuela.

Maduro has been posing for years as an "anti-imperialist" in Latin America, but he did not affect a single interest or property of the transnationals and bankers, while imperialism expropriated all the funds of Venezuela abroad and even the more than 15,000 service stations of its oil companies in the south of US.

The "Bolibourgeoisie", which emerged from the officer caste of the Venezuelan army, is the sector of the ruling classes that enriched itself the most, as a partner of the commercial bourgeoisie. Chavismo led the masses to a situation of desperation in the name of "socialism of the XXI century", which turned out to be *workers eating from the garbage dumps in the streets*.

The masses fought... The leaderships betrayed them... **The real crisis that exists is that of revolutionary leadership: the lack of revolutionary vanguard parties fighting for the socialist revolution and the internationalist unification of the workers of the American continent and at the international level.**

The parties that claimed to be of revolutionary socialism and the Fourth International today march arm in arm with Stalinism, as they do with the alleged Cuban Stalinist "left", and have been left hanging to the bourgeois parliaments, the reactionary native bourgeoisies and the class collaboration fronts...

The last chapter of this history of the class struggle in the 21st century has not yet been written. The proletariat has not been taken out of the scene, in spite of the hard partial defeats imposed on it by the leaderships that betrayed it and created for it at the international level the worst conditions to fight.



2022: 60th International Antiwar Assembly in Tokyo

Comrades,

We salute your Anti-War Assembly. We know of your hard struggle from Japan to defeat the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the genocide in Palestine and also your government, which is a direct ally of Anglo-US imperialism. We also know of your enormous struggle against Stalinism and other treacherous leaderships. Know that in that fight you can count on us. We are in the same trench and on the same barricade.

Comrades of the JRCL-RMF,

The revolutionary currents find ourselves facing great challenges. The fight cannot be country by country. Because on the same moment that you openly confront the government of Fumio Kishida in Japan, the courageous Trotskyists of Argentina, to give just one example, seek to regroup the ranks of the working class to settle accounts with that proto-fascist beast of Milei that has emerged from the bowels of this rotten capitalist system.

The struggle to regroup the internationalist forces of the world proletariat is the task of the moment.

We must set up an International Committee to organize the World General Strike

to stop the massacre of the Palestinian people! For the destruction of the Zionist state of Israel! Free Palestine from the river to the sea with its capital in Jerusalem! For the United Socialist States of the Maghreb and the Middle East!

Let's regroup our forces to fight together for the whole Ukrainian (from Donbas to Kiev) working class to take the political and military leadership of the fight to expel Putin's invading troops and unite with the Russian and European working class to confront NATO and the imperialist Maastricht! For a working-class, Soviet and independent Ukraine! For the United Socialist States of Europe!

From Alaska to Tierra del Fuego, the struggle on the American continent is far from defeated. The youth and workers of the U.S. today are in the vanguard of the confrontation against the tyranny of Wall Street.

From black Africa to the martyred Chinese proletariat, the working class is one!

The alternative is clear: socialism or war.

Open the road to militant internationalism!

Long live the international socialist revolution!

For the Collective for the Refoundation of the Fourth International / FLTI:

Milenka López and Juan Sánchez (LSTI of Bolivia), Lourdes Fernández (POI-CI), Giovanni Alberotanza (Avanzata Proletaria), Abu Muad (The Truth of the Oppressed of Middle East), Raúl P. (LSTI of Perú), Cheo Navarro (Utopía la Palabra, Colombia), Claudia P. y Alejandro Flores (LOI-CI), James Sakala (WIL)

Carlos Munzer, Director of the Editorial Board of the newspaper "The International Workers Organizer"

Letter from the Collective for the Refoundation of the Fourth International / FLTI

Fierce imperialist counter-offensive attacking the working class and national oppression wars

The masses haven't surrendered Workers fight, leaderships betray them

July 30, 2024

To the 62nd International Anti-War Assembly

Comrades of the JRCL-RMF
Comrade Zengakuren
Comrades of the Antiwar Youth Committee,

Comrades,

We are sending you our revolutionary and internationalist greetings from the Collective for the Refoundation of the Fourth International / FLTI to your Anti-War International Assembly.

You will be gathered at a time when, under the leadership of the US imperialist bandits, Zionism, commanded by Biden and Netanyahu, is advancing in the OPERATION MASSACRE FINALE ON GAZA.

Ten months of genocide have already passed. Tons and tons of bombs have fallen on the small territory of Gaza. There are



March of the JRCL-RMF and the Zengakuren youth to the US embassy in Tokyo.

already no neighborhoods, houses, hospitals or schools left that have not been demolished there.

Hunger and lack of water are the powerful missiles used by the State of Israel to make the Palestinian masses surrender... but they have not succeeded.

As the resistance proclaims, *Starve or die resisting!*

The people will not surrender. Free Palestine from the river to the sea!

Continued on page 15

Let's stop the genocide by Zionism against the Palestinian people! Biden and Netanyahu, war criminals!



We must break the siege of Gaza by the PLO, the Arab and Iranian bourgeoisies!

Let the whole Palestinian people from the West Bank, Jordan and Lebanon enter the combat!

International general strike!



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