

Towards A Socialist Peoples Republic of Aotearoa

Programme of the Communist Party of Aotearoa (NZ)

Capitalism is a System of Exploitation

New Zealand is built on the land, forests and fisheries of Aotearoa. Colonial settlement took place on the basis of a treaty between an emerging independent nation, 35 Maori chiefs having declared independence in 1835, and the English Crown. The 1840 Treaty of Waitangi guaranteed the Maori full control over their properties alongside English settlement.

Despite the Treaty, the settler capitalists went on to seize the lands of the Maori in a series of bloody wars and commercial fraud. Maori society was devastated by war, disease and the loss of their economic base, reducing their population to a fraction of its former size, now comprising less than 12 percent of all people in Aotearoa. Maori language and culture were denigrated and marginalised.

From the rich natural resources of Aotearoa, the working people of Aotearoa built this country; its industries, farms and cities.

Aotearoa is capable of satisfying the needs of all its people. But today the great majority of our people are faced with the threat of unemployment and poverty, ever-rising prices, deteriorating health, education and other social services.

A handful of capitalists control our country and make vast profits on the labour of the working people and the natural resources of the land. All the major means of production - the factories, forests, farms, fisheries and mines are in the hands of a few hundred capitalists.

Within this capitalist class there is a particularly powerful core of monopolies, many of them transnational, such as Fletchers, Brierleys, Todds, Lion Nathan, Fisher & Paykel. Agrarian food processing, such as meat and dairy works is largely in the hands of capitalist producer-run monopolies such as the Dairy Board, cooperative dairy companies and farmers freezing companies.

There are also a large group of foreign capitalists - principally US interests such as Bell South, Heinz, International Pulp and Paper, Mobil, and Texaco; the Australian banks, Goodman Fielder, Comalco, BHP, TNT, News Corp; Japanese manufacturers such as Mitsubishi, Toyota, and Mitsui; and British banking, insurance, oil and shipping interests. These own many forests, factories and mills, transport and communications in Aotearoa. They control whole sectors of the economy such as car assembly and oil and a majority of the capitalisation on the sharemarket but they do not form a united or hegemonic group.

The people at the centre of the monopolies lord over huge personal fortunes accumulated from the backs of the working class.

Exploitation

Capitalism is a system of exploitation. A handful of parasites live off the backs of the workers and could not care less about their situation. This is how they came to pocket over \$23 billion profits in 1991. Every bit of the capitalists' vast wealth was stolen from the working people of Aotearoa. The capitalists get rich from the fruit of our labour.

At the end of the week a worker collects their pay. The capitalists and their apologetic flunkies claim this is a fair exchange. But it is highway robbery. In reality, workers get paid for only a small part of what they produce. In 1991 workers on average each produced new goods and services to the value of \$1,720 each week. However they each received an average of \$560 wages per week, before tax. The rest, the surplus value, goes straight into the hands of the capitalists and their flunkies.

The bosses get rich, not because they have "taken risks" or "worked harder," as they would have us believe. The more they keep wages down and get fewer workers to do more work, the more they can steal from us and the greater their profits. If the bosses think they can make more profit somewhere else, they just close their factories and throw the workers out on the street.

Monopoly capitalism is a system of international exploitation - imperialism. The monopolies invest their capital abroad, as "transnational" corporations. They penetrate foreign markets and plunder the natural resources of developing countries. They also attempt to dominate other countries politically and to a degree militarily. This international exploitation brings enormous profits for the big corporations, and wretched lives for the people of the developing world

Economic Crisis

Monopoly capitalism is a system of economic anarchy and crisis. Monopoly capitalism is plagued by periodic economic crises, such as recessions, which are becoming more serious and complex. It is the very nature of each monopoly to try to maximise its profits by pushing production and cutting expenses, especially the pay of workers. Prices tend to go up and wages down. The result is that monopolies find they cannot sell all they have produced, and they lay off workers. This only worsens the situation and the economy sinks even further until the monopolists have eliminated their surpluses.

Economic crises are aggravated by speculation, hoarding and other schemes of the bankers, financiers and industrialists. Each tries to profit in the short run, but their individual greed eventually throws the whole system into turmoil, leading the working class and people to suffer.

This anarchic system wastes a great deal of social wealth. Millions of dollars are spent on corporate takeovers and legal fees. Money is diverted from the expansion of production and social services into speculative frenzies. Useful products and crops are routinely destroyed to keep prices and profits high. Massive industrial plants sit idle as the monopolists decide they can make money in other ventures. Thousands of people and small businesses

are uprooted from one community to another as plants close in one area and open in another. Major advances in public transport are blocked by companies with investments in cars and roads.

Monopoly capitalism is an obstacle to the further advancement of the material well-being of society. It is unjust, wasteful, irrational and increasingly unproductive.

Aotearoa is presently in the throws of a long economic crisis. There has been a serious balance of payments deficit since 1974, high inflation, low growth and the persistence of large scale unemployment. Real wages remain at the level of the mid 1970s.

In the face of economic crisis, monopoly capitalism has always tried to put the burden of the crisis onto the shoulders of working people. It has tried wage freezes, social contracts, cuts in benefits, increases in taxation, cuts in expenditure on health and education, and handouts to business.

Impoverishment of the Working Class

For working people the future is less and less certain. 200,000 people are out of work. Wages fall or remain stagnant while hours increase and working conditions deteriorate.

Every day in Aotearoa a worker is killed in a work accident. Hundreds of others are dying slowly of industrial diseases or are mutilated for life.

More than 40,000 people are homeless, overcrowded in spare rooms, caravans or living in cars. Hundreds of children live in stormwater pipes seeking solace in a bag of glue. 3,000 people attempt suicide each year. 2,400 people are hospitalised by assaults and attempted murder.

People live in misery so a small clique of very wealthy individuals can live in luxury.

The idea that everyone can get rich under this system is a lie invented by the rich themselves. Under capitalism, the only way to get rich is to trample on someone else. There is only room for a few capitalists - at any time the great majority must work and be robbed. This is why workers have only one choice: either submit to this wage slavery or fight it!

Racism and National Oppression

Capitalism in Aotearoa was built on migrant labour from Europe. But in addition the capitalists turned to non-European migration for supplies of cheap flexible labour in times of economic expansion. From the earliest days of settlement Maori were employed as internal migrants from their villages to work on farms as labourers and shearers, able to survive on the low wages offered because of the communal support of their hapu. Chinese were imported to work on the goldfields and railways in the late nineteenth century. Maori were drawn from rural areas to the expanding cities following World War II, and were followed by Pacific Island immigrants in the 1960s.

These national minorities have been employed in the lowest paid jobs, the worst working and living conditions and are systematically oppressed-as a people. They are discriminated against in employment, housing, education, excluded from Pakeha society yet their own languages and cultures are suppressed. Their marginalisation from European culture has made it hard for them to defend their rights.

The state has systematically enforced racial oppression in Aotearoa. There has been a long history of racist laws against Maori, primarily designed to maintain cheap access to Maori land. Until the 1950s laws discriminated against Chinese citizens. In the 1970s the state harassed Pacific Islanders as "overstayers" in an attempt to export some of New Zealand's unemployment. The racial oppression of Maori is especially degrading, since Aotearoa is their own country.

An integral component of this systematic national oppression is white chauvinism and racism. This ideology, stemming from the unequal situation of pakehas and minorities, is pervasive in Aotearoa and helps justify and perpetuate the brutal system of national oppression. Within the working class many pakeha act upon racist beliefs to one degree or another, against their own class interests. Some pakeha consciously ally with the exploiters and promote actions against workers of other nationalities. But in the final analysis, the vast majority of working people of all nationalities have no stake in racism and national oppression.

The long history of oppression of national minorities in Aotearoa has given rise to deep sentiments for equality and liberation, particularly among Maori. Their struggles against national oppression strike at the root of the monopoly capitalist system.

Women's Oppression

Women's oppression is built into monopoly capitalism. Women comprise 44% of the total work force, and over a third of the full time work force but receive only 80% of the income of men. Women fill many of the lowest-paid and tedious jobs in the economy. Women have reduced access to education.

Capitalism profits from the low-paid work of women and the unpaid work of women in the home. Women are exploited by capitalism as a sexual image in commercial culture. The billion dollar pornography and sex industry have reduced women to mere commodities. Women are subject to appalling violence - within domestic relationships, through a daily bombardment of denigration in the media and in social situations, to rape and incest.

The capitalist class has long attempted to preserve the low wage position of women. The state has a long history of systematically controlling women's reproductive, democratic and employment rights. Integral to this systematic oppression is male supremacist ideology, stemming from the unequal situation of men and women. This pervasive ideology leads many men to subjugate women in work, social and domestic situations, through the practice of an intimidatory, harassing, degrading and violent culture. Some men consciously ally with the exploiters to maintain the subordinated position of women. But, again in the final analysis, the vast majority of working people, both women and men, have no stake in women's oppression.

A System of Injustices

Besides the exploitation of workers and oppression of national minorities and women, hundreds of thousands of people in Aotearoa suffer from the hidden hands of the capitalist class.

For young people monopoly capitalism means an insecure and uncertain future. Access to public education is becoming increasingly restricted. Youth unemployment is drastically high and young people in Aotearoa have the highest suicide rate in the world. Few constructive cultural or social opportunities exist for youth. Instead, capitalist society abounds with parasites who spread drugs and destructive pursuits among the young.

The elderly, and the disabled are also treated unfairly. The elderly toil their entire lives, but after retirement they lead lives of fear and worry. Capitalism has no regard for its senior citizens; once it has squeezed the working life out of the workers they are tossed away. Capitalist society also callously mistreats disabled people because everything is geared to the drive for profits.

Small business people and family farmers face ruin as big business drives the small ones into bankruptcy.

Artists, intellectuals and cultural workers find less funds devoted to culture in favour of immediately profitable returns. Few cultural workers can concentrate on their interests since they must find other jobs to survive. The cultural life of the country is endangered by this as commercial, often foreign, interests corrupt the national culture.

This exploitative and oppressive system, where profit is master, has choked our entire society with economic crises, political reaction and social decay. The drive for profits holds thousands hostage to hunger and want; it has poisoned the very air that we breathe and water that we drink; it spawns cynicism and violence, drugs, crime and social devastation.

Imperialism

The New Zealand capitalist class stands as a junior partner of the world domination of foreign capitalism - imperialism. Capitalism in Aotearoa developed as an appendage of British capitalism and more recently of the USA and Japan, New Zealand capitalists supplying foodstuffs to the northern hemisphere but dependent on them for industrial and manufactured goods. The small-scale secondary manufacturing developed by New Zealand capitalists is dependent on machinery, fuel and materials bought with the foreign exchange gained from agriculture.

The dependence of the capitalist class on foreign markets and supplies makes it vulnerable to international disturbances. Attempts by the capitalist class in the face of economic crisis to restructure economic activity away from the domestic market in Aotearoa towards exports overseas only strengthens their dependence on the world economy.

Because of their close associations and dependence on the dominant world power of the day, New Zealand capitalists have been anxious to provide political and military support to the dominant imperialists. The New Zealand government is a member of the leading imperialist organisations - GATT, the OECD, IMF - has diplomatic relations with all the major powers and has joined many military alliances. When Britain was the dominant world power, the New Zealand government contributed finance for the British navy, sent troops to fight in the Boer War and World War I. 17,000 New Zealanders died in World War I for no other reason than to keep the colonial peoples under British rather than German subjugation. The capitalists then used the British umbrella to stake out their own colonial interests in the South Pacific. In the 1950s the New Zealand government sent troops to fight with Britain against the national liberation movement in Malaya.

With the emergence of the USA as the dominant world power after World War II, the New Zealand capitalists switched their allegiance to the US. They supported the USA's military aggression against the national liberation movements in Korea and Vietnam, and New Zealand joined the ANZUS pact, which was originally directed against China. More recently New Zealand troops have also been sent in support of US military interventions in Iraq, Somalia and Yugoslavia.

Working people make up the overwhelming majority of the world's population. But in nearly every country they are the oppressed majority, labouring to support the luxury of a handful of exploiters. More than 500 million people are on the verge of starvation, while the gap between rich and poor is widening. Aotearoa's largest capitalists through multinational operations have joined the world scramble for quick and easy profits in the third world and the domination of world markets. Companies such as Fletchers, Carter Holt Harvey and the NZ Dairy Board have large investments in South America, while many manufacturers have plants in the low-wage economies of Asia.

Socialism is the Alternative to Monopoly Capitalism

Capitalism has created the economic conditions for socialism in Aotearoa. Today the whole system of production is socially interdependent, but it is controlled by private hands. In place of private control of social production there must be social ownership if society's problems are to be addressed.

The problems of capitalism - exploitation, anarchy of production, speculation and crisis, oppression of nationalities and women, and the whole system of injustice - arise from the self interest of the tiny group of monopoly capitalists.

Socialism will be won through the revolutionary overthrow of monopoly capitalism - the seizure of political power by the working class. Having overthrown the capitalist class, the working people will take over the economic forces developed by capitalism and operate them in the interests of society. Socialism will be a better society, one which will present unprecedented possibilities for the improvement of common peoples' lives.

Because working people will control the great wealth they produce, they will be fundamentally able to determine their own futures. The end of exploitation of one person by another will be a resounding liberating and transforming force.

Socialism will not mean more government control. Today we often hear of government control of the railways or post office as "creeping socialism". But under capitalism the state serves the interests of the ruling monopoly capitalist class. When the government intervenes in the present economy, it does so to help, not hurt, capitalism.

The exact features of socialism in Aotearoa will emerge as our struggle against monopoly capitalism develops. But based on study of Aotearoa society and experiences of socialism in other countries we can visualise some features.

The main means of production - the large factories, mines, forests, big farms, offices, banks, transport systems, media, communications, big shopping chains will be taken into ownership by the new workers' state. Private ownership of large enterprises will end. The property of working people, the middle class and even medium sized capitalists will be left alone.

The economy will be planned to serve human needs rather than simply profit and luxury consumption by the rich. This will release the productive capacity of the economy from the limitations of profit maximisation. A great expansion in useful production and the wealth of society will become useful.

Rational planning will replace anarchy. Coordination and planning of the broad outlines of production by public agencies will aim at building an economy that will be stable, benefit the people and steadily advance.

Redirecting the productive capacity to human needs will require a variety of economic methods and experiments. There could be a combination of central planning, local coordination, strict price control or use of the market mechanism to set prices. Various policies might be used with changing conditions. But no matter what means are chosen, a socialist economy must uphold the basic principles of social ownership, production for the people's needs, and the elimination of exploitation.

Factories and other productive facilities will be modernised to eliminate backbreaking labour and ecological damage. Regional disparities will be addressed. No longer will Auckland mushroom while the South Island stagnates. Productivity gains will be used to shorten the working day and improve living standards, rather than create unemployment. Construction of housing, schools, medical, cultural and sporting facilities for working people will be a priority.

With socialism, goods and services will be distributed on the basis of from each according to their ability, to each according to their work. No longer will monopolists, landlords and speculators live off the labour of others. Every person will get the opportunity to contribute to society as much as they are able. Those who work more will receive more income. Those who retired or are unable to work would be supported from the social fund, while encouraging them to contribute what they can to socialist construction.

Transforming the main productive enterprises from private to social ownership will allow workers to manage democratically their own work places through workers' councils and elected administrators, in place of the myriad of supervisors and consultants today. In this way workers will be able to make their work places safe and efficient places that can serve their own interests as well as society's. Small owners, like farmers, fishing people and small retailers will be encouraged to form cooperatives and work together to raise their standard of living and improve efficiency.

Socialist Peoples' Democracy

Because the capitalist class profits from the oppression of the national minorities and women, the development of bourgeois democracy in Aotearoa is incomplete and will not be carried through by the capitalist class. Because of the remaining need to win democratic equality for the national minorities and women, the new government established by the socialist revolution in Aotearoa will have the form of a Socialist Peoples' Democracy.

To protect and govern socialism, the people will establish a socialist people's democracy, a genuine democracy for the masses of people. The people will elect officials and representatives at all levels of government and the economy. There will be the right of recall and referendum. Officials would be paid an average worker's salary. The media would be under democratic control and could be used in a much broader way to involve people in government. Socialist democracy would be far broader than what is possible today because the voices of the people would be heard, not simply those of the rich.

The working class through its own political party or parties will direct the government and play a leading role in society through education, persuasion and by example in the construction of socialism. Political parties which do not belong to the monopoly capitalist class and which uphold socialism may function. All revolutionary parties that participated in the struggle for socialism will enjoy all political rights and responsibilities.

Basic civil and individual rights such as freedom of speech, press and assembly would be given real content with the removal of the domination of capital. More extensive and explicit rights for the working class, oppressed nationalities, women and other social groups would also be guaranteed. The right to be free of exploitation would be primary over any property rights. The right to a job, today denied for thousands of people, would be guaranteed. The right to education and health care would be raised as basic human rights and resources concentrated in these areas to make this a reality. The rights of workers to strike, organise, stand for political office, criticise the government, freedom of religion would be written into law.

There will be no overnight miracles under socialism, but the way cleared to achieve a decent meaningful and productive life for all working people.

Particular attention would be given to raising the economic, social and cultural level of people who especially suffered under monopoly capitalism, such as the national minorities, women and ghetto areas.

Recognition would be given to the sovereignty of the Maori over Aotearoa and the Treaty of Waitangi honoured. The socialist government would work for the equality of all nationalities, the revival the languages and cultures of the national minorities. White chauvinism and racism would be actively fought.

Socialism will also permit the liberation of women by ending obstacles to their equal participation in society. Comprehensive public child care would be established. Paid maternity leave, flexible working hours and a shorter working day would be legislated, as would the right to free contraception and safe legal abortion. Male supremacy would be vigorously combated. Cultural life would blossom outside the shadow of the dollar. A socialist society could give a great deal more attention to arts, sports, education, and popular entertainment. The sciences and humanities would also develop more fully with more resources.

What will not be developed under socialism are the massive government bureaucracy and repressive state apparatus (police, prisons) which are used to control the people and defend the monopolists. A socialist society would have no such needs. The socialist state, however, would take ruthless measures to eliminate organised crime and attempts by the defeated capitalist class or foreign reactionaries to return to the old order. The professional armed forces and police will be largely replaced by a peoples' militia organised in factories and communities.

A socialist Aotearoa will trade with other countries on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. Foreign policy will be based on the principles of equality, respect for national independence, non-aggression, peace and support the freedom struggles of workers in other countries and the struggles of oppressed nations, and will unite with other socialist countries around the world in order to defeat imperialism.

There will still be struggle, conflict and problems under socialism, since human progress always advances through overcoming obstacles and contradictions. There may even be reactionary attempts to restore capitalism. But the destruction of the power of the dollar over society will open the way forward for the common people of Aotearoa. They will have unprecedented possibilities for the improvement of their lives.

The socialist people's democracy will be the form of the political rule of the working class in Aotearoa, the specific form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Democracy will be ensured for the vast majority and the national minorities and dictatorship exercised over a particular class - the former and would-be oppressors. As such, socialism will be the first stage of the development towards communism, a truly classless society. Communism is a long time off. It will be possible when worldwide economic, ideological and social development will allow the gradual amalgamation of peoples into one, making states themselves unnecessary. Communism will realise the ideal "from each according to one's ability, to each according to one's need." Classes will have largely disappeared, the state will "wither" away, and an exciting new era of human freedom and prosperity will arise.

The immediate step in this direction is the struggle to end the monopoly capitalist system in Aotearoa.

The Revolutionary United Front For Socialism

To make revolution and put an end to capitalism, the working class and oppressed peoples must have a clear strategic plan. They must determine what the nature of the struggle is, who are the main enemies and who are friends that can be rallied to the cause.

Standing in the way of social progress and socialism in Aotearoa is the domestic capitalist class and foreign imperialism. In making the socialist revolution, the domestic capitalist class is our main enemy. It is the ruling class. It holds state power and is principally responsible for the hardships facing our people. While attacking the entire capitalist class, we must direct the main blow against the leading and dominant core - the monopoly capitalists. But we cannot succeed unless we also attack the secondary enemy - foreign imperialism.

The monopoly capitalists are composed of the top owners and administrators of the large New Zealand-based multinational corporations that control the economic life of Aotearoa. Their power extends beyond the boundaries of the country to control the destiny of thousands of others, primarily in the Asia-Pacific region. Immediately serving and protecting this class are highly paid managers, executives and advisers. Altogether, the number of individuals responsible for monopoly capitalism comprise less than 2% of the entire population.

Against this minority stands the vast majority of the rest of the population. The conditions of life for 98% of the people cannot fundamentally improve without the overthrow of the ruling class of monopoly capitalists.

The largest and most resolute opponent of the monopoly capitalists is the working class. The working class is daily thrown into conflict with the capitalist class. Because of its social position, it is the most revolutionary class and will be the principal and leading force in the socialist revolution in Aotearoa. Within the ranks of the working class, it is the industrial workers who have proven to be the most resolute and consistent fighters.

The monopoly capitalists are a powerful enemy and it will require protracted efforts to overthrow them. But there is a potentially much more powerful force opposing them: a united front of the vast majority of people in Aotearoa and the people in other countries oppressed by New Zealand capital. This united front is the basic approach to ending monopoly capitalism and attaining socialism.

The groups that comprise the united front have many different interests and concerns. But what unites them all is their objective opposition to monopoly capitalism in Aotearoa. The working class needs a strong revolutionary alliance with all the various classes and strata against monopoly capitalism. Only by isolating our enemies to the maximum and winning over all those who are oppressed by capital to the banner of socialism can the working class succeed in overthrowing capitalism. To forge this united front, we must understand who are our friends and who are our enemies. This requires an analysis of the different classes in Aotearoa.

The Classes in Aotearoa

The most fundamental of all human activities is material production. If we did not produce, we could not live - politics, law, religion, philosophy, literature, recreation would all be impossible if we didn't have food to eat and shelter over our heads. For this reason the method of organising production has long been the most contentious of all problems faced by society. Society is characterised by the division of people into classes according to their role in the production and distribution of social wealth.

In Aotearoa, as in any capitalist society, the capitalist class and the working class are the two basis classes. The capitalist class owns the means of production and holds state power. The working class is the main and leading force in the revolutionary struggle. Between the two is a complex petty bourgeoisie (middle class).

The Capitalist Class

The capitalists are the ruling class in Aotearoa. They are our main enemy in the fight for socialism. Through their ownership and control of the means of production they control the economic life of Aotearoa and live off the profits they squeeze from the working class. Through the National and Labour parties the capitalist class uses the government for its own ends.

The capitalist class includes the owners of factories, mills, mines, transport firms, real estate, large farms, large trading firms, the top managers and directors of the big corporations, and the highest capitalist politicians, state functionaries and officers of the armed forces.

The capitalist class makes up only three or four percent of the population. Of these only a handful belong to the monopoly capitalist class which, if families are included, numbers little more than 20,000. Through its control of the decisive sectors of the economy, the monopoly capitalists make the decisions which affect the whole of society.

For all its power, the capitalist class is not a totally united class. There are divisions between domestic and foreign capital, between monopoly and non-monopoly capital, between state and private capital. *Foreign capital* owns outright the majority of large corporations, banks and insurance companies, most of the transport and communications and much of the forestry industries. The *non-monopoly capitalists* do not have the international power of the monopolists but still exert considerable economic and political influence. Some of the large capitalists of the oppressed nationalities are in this strata.

The Petty Bourgeoisie

Between the capitalist class and the working class lies a large and varied middle class, called the petty bourgeoisie. It is composed of people who have some independent means of livelihood such as a small store, or those who have special technical or creative skills that they control and sell.

The petty bourgeoisie is a very unstable class. While they class generally have more security in their lives than the working class, they are constantly threatened with ruin, or find their skills no longer in demand. Many face being driven down into the working class while a few succeed in scrambling up into the ranks of the capitalists. The individualistic mentality of "being your own boss" pervades the petty bourgeoisie.

In prosperous times it forms a very important social base for capitalism. In times of economic and political crisis, the petty bourgeoisie splits: some of its members side with the working class, seeking social change, while others go to extremes in their support of capitalism. Fascist movements draw their mass base from members of the petty bourgeoisie terrified by economic crisis and socialism alike.

The petty bourgeoisie consists of around 100,000 small employers, 175,000 self-employed and 200,000 managers and professionals. The petty bourgeoisie is divided into three main strata, distinguished by their incomes, working and living conditions, and social status.

The *lowest strata* includes self-employed shop owners, fishing people, artists, most teachers, craftspeople, family farmers, independent drivers and contractors. With incomes seldom greater than ordinary workers and working long hours to stay afloat, they can be won to the side of socialist revolution.

The *middle strata* includes semi-professionals, middle managers, doctors, lawyers, accountants, scientists, some teachers and medium sized farmers and small employers. Their standard of living is a lot higher than the working class and many of them (owning their own businesses) enjoy hidden incomes in the form of tax rebates and business cars. Socially, a lot of these people mix with the capitalist class, and while a few can be won to the side of socialism, most can be neutralised at best.

The *upper strata* consists of the elite of the professionals, large farmers, managers, top civil servants and the best off of the self-employed and small employers. This group will largely support the capitalist class since they are close to it and enjoy the rewards of power. Few will support the struggle for socialism.

The Working Class

The working class is the principal and leading force in the struggle for socialism in Aotearoa. The working class is composed of all wage-earners - mental and manual, urban and rural - whether in basic industry, manufacturing, service, farm, sales, domestic, clerical, public or other jobs. The working class is composed of skilled and unskilled, employed and unemployed. Some workers earn more money than some in the petty bourgeoisie, but they are still members of the working class because they do not exploit the labour of others and must sell their labour power to survive.

The working class comprises 1.4 million wage workers and their families, more than 75% of the population. industrial workers (in forestry, fishing, mining, manufacturing, energy and construction) make up over 35% of wage workers, around 500,000 workers; less than 25,000 workers, 2%, are rural labourers. Another 400,000 workers are employed in trade and transport, 160,000 in finance and 400,000 in government and social services. Around 250,000 workers, 10% of the working aged population, are officially unemployed or 'jobless'. Around 400,000 workers are retired and 175,000 people are engaged in full time child care, 100,000 supported by the Domestic Purposes Benefit. Wage workers were organised in 58 unions in 1992, 13 with more than 10,000 members and 32 with less than 5,000 members.

Of the various types of workers, it is the industrial work force which is the most determined and resolute fighter in the struggle for socialist revolution. Industrial workers produce most of the material wealth concentrated at the point of production in the large work places, subject to the discipline of the production line and the bosses. Their bitter experience has made the industrial working class the best organised section of the working class. They have always led the way in the battles with the employers and the state - in the mines and freezing works, pulp mills and factories.

Despite its huge numerical advantage, the powerful potential of the working class in Aotearoa has been frustrated by internal divisions and limited development of class consciousness.

A small number of *advanced workers* see the need for fundamental change and want to bring this about. They are often leaders of struggle and are open to the path of socialism and revolution. These workers tend to be found among the lower paid, less skilled and more oppressed strata of the working class. They have fewer illusions about the nature of society in Aotearoa. Many Maori, Pacific Island and women workers are in this group.

The *majority of workers* at this time do not understand the need for fundamental change to society. They have difficult lives but do not see how their problems can be resolved. They want an improvement in their lives and often struggle against their employers, but do not yet see the need for revolutionary change.

There are also *backward workers* who are generally content with their situation or feel that, even though things could improve, monopoly capitalism is the best system. They do not favour change and many are affected by racism and male chauvinism. These backward workers normally agree with the capitalist class on major domestic and foreign policy issues.

The *labour aristocracy* is a section of the working class with high wages and privileges, drawn from the highly skilled and the trade union bureaucracy, is a pillar of support for the capitalist class. The labour aristocracy materially benefits from imperialism and the suppression of the majority of the working class. While relatively small in number, this strata has influence far beyond its size through its control of much of the trade union apparatus and its influence in the Labour party, and the Liberal party before that. It is a major obstacle to the struggle for socialism and tries to lead the working class along a path that is acceptable to the ruling class.

With the help of advanced workers and communists, more and more of the majority of workers will become politically conscious and understand the need for revolutionary socialism. Through well-organised struggle and education, independent of the labour aristocracy, workers will realise that their interests lie in the overthrow of capitalist private property and the establishment of socialism.

The Strategic Alliance

The working class, because of its centrality to the process of production, is the most revolutionary class in Aotearoa and will be the principle and leading force of the socialist revolution. But to defeat the powerful enemies we face, the working class needs to win every possible ally to the socialist cause. Only by isolating our enemies to the maximum and winning over all those who are exploited and oppressed can capitalism be overthrown.

The united front for socialist revolution will include all class strata and groups who are oppressed by capital as well as the working class – the lower and some of the middle strata of the petty bourgeoisie, oppressed minorities, women, young workers and students.

Because capitalism in Aotearoa is based on settler colonisation, the struggle for socialism will not be a simple conflict between the working class and the capitalists, but will be fundamentally integrated with the Maori struggle for national self-determination. The alliance between the working class and Maori nation is necessary to bring down monopoly capitalism in Aotearoa. The solidity of this alliance will influence the entire development of the united front against monopoly capitalism.

The solidity of this basic alliance hinges on forging unity among nationalities and between men and women within the working class and building unity between the workers movement and the Maori nationalist movement.

The working class is composed of different nationalities; predominantly Pakeha, Maori, Pacific Islander and Asian, and is divided between men and women. Their common identity is that they are all exploited by the capitalist class. But the working class has been divided as women and minority nationality workers have been forced into the worst jobs and working conditions. Pakeha and male workers have higher incomes, better conditions and are more likely to find jobs. English is the official language and European male culture predominates, while the language and culture of national minorities is degraded. To build unity among the working class genuine support for the self determination of national minorities and women must be built.

Not only must unity be built within the working class, but unity must be built between the working class movement and the Maori nationalist movement. Settler colonisation has created a deep desire for Maori for genuine equality and liberty. This national-democratic movement is a powerful revolutionary force and, ultimately, can succeed only with the overthrow of capitalism. This struggle against a common enemy forms the basis for the alliance between the working class and Maori.

To forge the strategic alliance, communists strive to win workers to oppose all forms of racism and sexism, including upholding and fighting for the just demands of the oppressed for self determination. Only in this way will the oppressed see that communists and Pakeha and male workers have no unity with the white and male capitalist class.

Revolutionary Pakeha and male workers have the responsibility of opposing racism and sexism among workers and winning support for the oppressed. Revolutionaries among oppressed workers have the tasks of uniting and leading the movements of their people and opposing narrow interests.

While the basic alliance is fundamental to the success of the revolutionary united front, organising amongst the basic forces must be combined with work among other classes and strata. Students, predominantly from the petty bourgeoisie, play an important part in democratic, anti-imperialist and revolutionary movements. Intellectuals and professionals are influential, even in small numbers.

Considerable attention must also be given to supporting the much more advanced national liberation movements in the third world. The success of these movements weakens imperialism and intensifies the difficulties for the capitalist class at home.

The Path of Socialist Revolution

The Mass Struggle for Power

In building up its strength, in welding an alliance of all working people and in taking power, the fundamental method of struggle that the working class must use is **mass political organisation**. Whatever the tactics adopted at any particular time, whether it be strike action, demonstrations, delegations, petitions or the election of members of parliament, the working class must rely on its vast numbers and its ability to organise. The working class does not have all the financial and institutional resources available to the capitalists. It does not control the courts, the bureaucracy, police or armed forces.

Mass action on its own can create pressure to win concessions from the capitalists and strengthen the fighting position of the working class - as in 1968 over the Nil Wage Order or in 1980 over Kinleith. Mass action is also the best way to show people the realities of the capitalist system - people can experience the character of the state and the bosses in a direct and immediate manner. Mass action also shows workers that they are a class with the ability to act in a united and powerful way.

In generating mass action the importance of theoretical work to combat capitalist ideology must be recognised. The working class in Aotearoa has high literacy and the media is well developed. Constant theoretical work must be done among the masses and among communists to combat the corrosives of capitalist ideology.

In the course of mass action against the capitalists, the working class and their allies must create economic, social and cultural institutions that express and meet the needs of the people and support their organisational capacity. They must also create new representative bodies capable of expressing their will and leading the struggle. In a revolutionary situation the working class will create its own popular assemblies of a much broader character than the present capitalist parliament. These institutions will be the nucleus of socialism. Democracy under Capitalism In its struggle for socialism the working class is greatly assisted by the existence of bourgeois democracy.

Although the capitalists rule, they do not do so through open violence and terror. Working people in Aotearoa enjoy a wide range of democratic rights - we can vote in regular elections, we can organise in trade unions and political parties, we can set up pressure groups, publish newspapers and leaflets, go on strike, hold meetings and demonstrations, and travel freely around the country. If we get arrested for anything, we are not held in detention without trial and we have the right to legal defence. These rights are vital for the working class to defend and promote its interests. Without the rights to form trade unions and to strike we would be at the absolute mercy of every whim of the employers.

But these rights have not always existed. Nor were they generously granted by the employing class. They have been fought for with great effort and sacrifice by many generations of working people in a struggle that goes back to Peterloo, Chartism and the Reform agitation in Britain, the formation of trade unions and the winning of women's right to vote in Aotearoa. Many people from Aotearoa fought fascism in Spain and World War II. Neither are these rights in any sense guaranteed under capitalism. Bourgeois legality was cast aside in the great land grab from the Maori last century. Whenever a crisis develops in capitalism the employers attack democracy in order to limit the fighting ability of the workers. The 1932 Public Safety Conservation Act and the Emergency Regulations of 1951 were passed to suspend all normal civil liberties and protect the security of private property. Under the 1951 regulations it was illegal to demonstrate or publish any newspaper or leaflet supporting the locked-out watersiders, and a person could be prosecuted even for giving food to the children of a worker involved in the dispute.

Since the outbreak of the present economic crisis, the rights of trade unions have been progressively curtailed by a series of laws, the rights of police to arrest and detain have been strengthened and the powers of the SIS increased.

Despite the importance of the democratic rights that we have won over the years, the working class can never achieve complete political freedom under capitalism. In this society only the capitalists have the money, time, knowledge and influence to use capitalist democracy to the full.

We can publish newspapers, but the best printing works are controlled by the capitalists and funded by advertising. We can say what we like, but the rich can buy time on TV and radio, and the journalists listen to them because they are powerful. We can form unions, but the government can deregister them at any time. We can buy all the property we want, except that capitalists have far more wealth than us. We can vote for a change of government, except that all the major political parties support capitalism.

In all these ways, the formal equality that exists for all citizens is undermined and restricted by the power of capital. Until the working class gains control of the means of production, democracy can never be more than a partial achievement.

The State

The government of Aotearoa today serves the interests of the ruling capitalist class. No matter which party is in power, the state apparatus - parliament, government departments, the courts, prisons, police and armed forces - protects capitalist private property and administers the capitalist economy. In every major industrial dispute in Aotearoa's history, the state has taken sides with the bosses against the workers.

The state dampens down class struggle by diverting it into complex legal channels and promoting class collaboration between employers and trade union leaders. The state organises infrastructure - roads, airports, communications, ports - funds research and development and manages economic conditions inflation, interest rates, exchange rates - to promote capitalist accumulation, "the economy". From TV programming to the education system, the state spreads an ideology of respect for private property, individualism and the law, that the rich are entitled to their wealth and that the government should be left to govern.

The foundation of the state, however, is the armed forces. From the earliest colonial settlement, settlers established armed militias. The land was seized from Maori by military conquest in the 1860s. In 1913 gunboats, field guns and troops were deployed against the general strike while armed special police on horseback ("Massey's Cossacks") attacked strikers. In 1912 Frederick Evans, a striking gold miner was killed at Waihi in a police-led attack by scabs on a union hall. In the 1930s armed troops patrolled the streets to prevent looting by the unemployed. In 1951 the army loaded ships while Watersiders were locked out. In 1978 the army helped police to clear Bastion Point of land protesters. In 1979 the army was readied to staff the Lyttleton Road tunnel during a strike and during the 1981 Springbok Tour, the army backed up police operations.

The Capitalists Will Not Give Up Power Voluntarily

Despite the rationality, efficiency of socialism and the desire of the vast majority that a revolutionary alliance for socialism would demonstrate, the capitalists will not give up their control of Aotearoa without a bloody fight. No ruling class has ever stepped down voluntarily to abandon its power and wealth to the masses. From Spain in the 1930s to Chile in the 1970s, attempts to elect socialist governments have been ended by military onslaught.

The struggle for socialism will mainly be a protracted legal one, but the working class cannot chain itself to the rules established by the ruling class. The working class must make preparations to defend itself from attack and be able to adopt different tactics in the case of fascism or war. The working class must also prepare for the eventual seizure of power from the capitalists. In the final analysis, the capitalists will not relinquish power peacefully.

The final seizure of power from the capitalists in Aotearoa will consist of a mass uprising. It will be an insurrection with tens of thousands of workers in the forefront, supported by the vast majority of working people, coupled with uprisings in Maori communities. Because of the developed nature of the capitalist economy in Aotearoa and the concentration of the population in the major cities, we can expect the outcome of the revolution to be decided very quickly - in a matter of weeks or even days. We will not see a protracted people's war along the lines of the Chinese revolution. Instead we will see a rapid mass uprising in the cities, similar to the Bolshevik seizure of power in 1917. The transition to socialism in Aotearoa will be difficult since the capitalist class is powerful. But the capitalists have created the factors that will bring its own downfall. The revolution will involve both domestic and international forces. At home, the working class, Maori and people in general will increasingly struggle. At the same time the dependence of the capitalists on foreign sales and supplies will make it vulnerable to international economic crisis. At some stage these forces will converge into a mighty current that will weaken and then topple the capitalist class.

The Communist Party

The revolutionary united front and mass political action are two important weapons of the working class. The third - the Communist Party - is the key one. Only a working class party can **lead** the mass movement of the workers and the revolutionary united front to socialism. While spontaneous outbursts of anger and revolt against the system do occur, the **conscious organisation** that is absolutely necessary for carrying out a revolution can never be achieved spontaneously. Nor can it be achieved by organisations such as trade unions which are limited to carrying out work amongst particular sections of the working class and do not embrace the entire revolutionary united front.

Communists work for a broad and diverse movement. They may use many different tactics, make alliances and negotiate with various forces, but the independence, solidarity and security of the party must never be compromised. Never for a moment should it be thought that the socialist revolution will be possible without this leadership.

The Communist Party is the organisation that can orient the struggle of the entire class, by educating, organising and mobilising the working class. It can bring an overall perspective to each part of the workers' movement and unite all the isolated battles into one powerful storm. It can raise the spontaneous anger of the workers to the level of conscious political struggle to end this ruthless system.

Only with a determined leadership embracing all sections of the working class and its allies can the revolutionary united front be built and the capitalist class be overthrown. Providing this **political leadership** and **central organisation** are the tasks of a Communist Party.

The Immediate Tasks of the Revolutionary Movement

From the first steps on the path to socialist revolution, the revolutionary united front, the mass struggle for power and the communist party must be built. These three component parts of socialist revolution cannot be separated. To try to build the united front independently is to fall into conservative 'unity at all costs, tailing behind the mass struggle. To try to build the mass struggle independently is to fall into reformism, easily accommodated by capitalism because fundamental issues of power are not questioned. To try to build the party independently is to fall into dogmatism and adventurism, unrelated to the mass struggle.

The working class, oppressed nationalities and other peoples in Aotearoa are struggling daily to improve their living conditions, defend and expand their democratic rights and win peace and social progress. The Communist Party of Aotearoa supports and raises the following goals as ones which will build the revolutionary united front, the mass struggle for power and the communist party.

Build Maori Self-Determination

The struggle for self-determination by Maori is a struggle for democratic rights denied by capitalism, and which shakes it to the core because settler capitalism in Aotearoa is based on stolen land. We must demand full redress and reparation for all grievances stemming from unjust acts committed by the government, and the right to sovereignty and nationhood on the basis of the Treaty of Waitangi and the Declaration of Independence.

The Maori struggle for self-determination can develop as a mass struggle for power only if collaborationist tribal leaders are isolated and defeated. We must establish new democratic political, economic, social and cultural institutions to strengthen the fighting ability of the movement.

We must strengthen the strategic alliance by winning support amongst workers for the equal social, cultural and educational rights for Maori in all areas and fighting against white chauvinism in all its forms.

The Communist Party must expand vigorously among Maori to ensure the tasks of uniting and leading the movements of their people and of opposing narrow interests are carried out.

Transform Unions into Class Struggle Unions

We must promote the strike movement and make it so widespread and intense to demonstrate to the entire people that the monopoly capitalists are weak and rotten to the core. We must promote the economic strikes and transform them into political strikes and political demonstrations.

Transforming unions into fighting organisations requires the isolation and defeat of class collaborationist trade union leaders, by uniting left and centre unionists in economic and political struggles. It is aided by winning democratic reforms within unions and in the creation of industrial rather than craft-based unions. Class struggle unions must form fighting federations to coordinated militant activity. To transform economic struggles into political struggles there must be ceaseless politicisation of the issues of the day, both domestic and international.

We must establish new unions among unorganised workers by carrying out social investigation, providing political education, organising workers around majority demands, and consolidating workers into unions in the course of fighting for these demands.

To forge the strategic alliance, communists strive to win workers to oppose all forms of racism and sexism, including upholding and fighting for the just demands of the oppressed for self-determination. Only in this way will the oppressed see that communists and Pakeha and male workers have no unity with the white and male capitalist class.

Revolutionary pakeha and male workers have the responsibility of opposing racism and sexism among workers and winning support for the oppressed. Revolutionaries among oppressed workers have the tasks of uniting and leading the movements of their people and opposing narrow interests.

These tasks require the conscious organisation that can only be provided by the Communist Party. The Communist Party must expand in workplaces and unions in the course of the struggle if the unions to become fighting organisations of the working class. At every stage the most advanced elements from among the revolutionary activists must be drawn into the party.

Build Strong Urban Poor Communities

We must fight to organise the non-unionised, both to defend existing unions from potential underbidding and anti-union organising, but to make links between workplaces and between sectors.

The urban poor can be organised on the basis of new democratic and ecologically sustainable political, economic, social, and cultural organisations. The Organisation of community services and cooperative economic activities is particularly important. As well as community services built from scratch such as drop-in and advocacy centres, women's refuges, kohanga reo, kura kaupapa, and community child care the privatisation of state social services is opening up opportunities for self-organisation by the urban poor such as schooling and health care. The struggle must also be waged for the urban poor to take control of existing state services in their communities, such as campaigns for election to school boards.

Urban poor organisations gather people from diverse workplaces and sectors; links must be made systematically. The Communist Party can forge important alliances in its work with the urban poor, and, due to the danger of exploitation of these struggles by lumpen proletarian elements good leadership is essential. At every stage the most advanced elements from among the revolutionary activists must be drawn into the party.

Win the Petty Bourgeoisie to the Side of Revolution

While the urban petty bourgeoisie is generally self-centred and dispersed, their children are concentrated in universities and high schools and are receptive to revolutionary propaganda. The student mass and their teachers are important to bringing the intelligentsia and the entire urban petty bourgeoisie to the side of the revolution.

Like the position of the petty bourgeoisie itself, caught and buffeted between two powerful classes, students are divided between those who consciously welcome becoming functionaries for the capitalist class and those who consciously reject this role and want to serve the people. These groups stand at opposite poles and are small in number. The mass of students lie between them and are more or less satisfied with their lot.

Like all petty-bourgeois elements, students tend to be subjective and irresolute in action, but they also have a positive side - youth, energy, sympathy with new ideas and access to knowledge which enables them to know more readily what's going on in the world.

Students and teachers are very capable of propaganda work and mass actions and are willing to coordinate their activities with the masses of workers, Maori self-determination and national liberation struggles overseas. They should be encouraged to create as many study circles as they can among friends and classmates and workmates. The efficacy of their ideological and political work should in due time lead to political mass actions.

Students should link the issues on the campus with the deteriorating conditions of society and the world in general. They should organise mass actions of their own and join those of the workers. Students should be organised to carry out social investigation and mass work among working class communities.

Many students and teachers are willing to remould their petty bourgeois outlook, engage deeply in revolutionary work and join the Communist Party. Others will accept the general line of the party and spread this to the ranks of the professionals and petty producers. At each stage of organising work among students and teachers we should draw the most advanced activists into the Party.

Support the Oppressed

In building mass political action and forging the revolutionary united front we must build support for the fundamental democratic rights of all the oppressed. In all areas of work revolutionaries have a prime duty to oppose racism and sexism and any other ideologies which deny people's fundamental democratic rights.

There is a deep thirst among women for their long-denied self-determination. We must organise an effective fight and build institutions of self-defence against the terror of violence and sexual degradation of women. We must defend and broaden women's rights to control their own bodies through contraception and abortion. We must win legal rights and build institutions to allow women to participate equally in employment, such as free child care, paid maternity leave, and equal pay for equal work.

We must support the just demands of Pacific Islanders and all national minorities for economic, political and cultural equality and assist the building of institutions to support these demands, such forums to develop minority cultures and languages.

The Communist Party can strengthen the democratic movements of the oppressed for self-determination by building support and combating entrenched reactionary ideologies in all the areas the party works in. The generalised experiences of the party in different sectors can strengthen the effectiveness of these movements. In the course of this work the most advanced activists from these democratic movements should be drawn to the party.

A World to Win

We are proletarian internationalists. We are carrying out the socialist revolution in Aotearoa to make our contribution to the struggle of the world proletariat and all oppressed peoples to defeat imperialism and bring about the dawn of communism.

We recognise at the same time all anti-imperialist struggles and advances of the revolution in other countries weaken imperialism and our own capitalist class to the benefit of the revolutionary movement in Aotearoa. We receive powerful political support, boundless inspiration and learn invaluable lessons. We see in the victory of national-democratic and socialist revolutions abroad, our own future.

We must unite the left and middle elements of the petty bourgeoisie with the working class to isolate the imperialist foreign policy of the capitalist class. Imperialist economic, political and cultural expansion and ecological damage must be exposed. The masses of the people can be mobilised in great numbers to oppose involvement with foreign military intervention, military alliances with imperialist powers and involvement with nuclear and chemical weapons in particular. Opposition to military alliances with imperialist powers must be broadened to opposition to economic, political and cultural alliances as well, such as GATT, the OECD and the IMF.

We must give utmost support to the national liberation struggles in the oppressed countries and support the revolutionary workers' movements in the advanced capitalist countries. We must publicise the struggles and demands of these movements and build international cooperation, organisation and material support among workers, national liberation movements, all peoples and ecological movements and among communist parties.

Peoples organisations should also be organised to develop international relations independently of the capitalist class. Bilateral, mutually beneficial trading arrangements with should be developed between peoples organisations of different countries, particularly from the third world. International non-governmental peoples forums should be established for trade, social and cultural development and conflict resolution.

With its clear internationalist perspective, the Communist Party can contribute strategies for effective international solidarity and attract to its ranks the most advanced activists from international solidarity movements. #