

STRUGGLE

A MARXIST APPROACH TO AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND

No: 115 : \$1.50 : December 2004

Criticism of Occupational Health

The National Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Committee has issued a Report, titled 'The Burden of Occupational Disease and Injury in New Zealand'. Its findings are a devastating criticism of the capitalist economic system in which profits take priority over worker's lives and health. It deserves attention. This Report confirms that an honest and objective study of any part of capitalism must lead to its exposure as an outdated system. Workers are paying a heavy price in deaths and injuries when toiling to make profits for the ruling class.

PUTTING PROFIT BEFORE WORKERS SAFETY - KILLS

Between 700 and 1000 workers die each year from occupational diseases, such as cancer, respiratory diseases, and ischaemic heart disease. Chemicals, fumes, dust and shift work are contributing factors. Another 100 people die from workplace injury.

Some 17,000 to 20,000 new cases of work-related diseases emerge each year. They include low back pain, skin disorders, chronic respiratory diseases, and ear problems. The ACC pays out on about 200,000 occupational accident claims.

WORKERS SAFETY IS A CLASS ISSUE

The provision of a safe working environment costs money. Safe handling of chemicals and the removal of fumes and dust requires the additional investment

of capital. This reduces profit margins. If a worker dies as a result of inhaling cancer-causing fumes and dust – tough! Another worker can be signed on from among the 70,000 unemployed. Such is the 'morality' of capitalism.

What has been the response of the capitalist class? Representatives of Employers have been bellyaching about the cost of compliance with government regulations, which allegedly reduce profits. But have we read of these leaders expressing concern about the deaths of hundreds of workers dying from occupational diseases annually? No, we have not. Yet, it is 'their' system that is killing workers and subjecting many thousands to avoidable suffering. For this class, workers are a 'commodity' to be disposed of when no longer fit to make profits. Their well being does not even register on the employers' 'radar'.

STATE AGENCY IS AN ACCESSORY TO NEGLECT AND COVER-UP.

According to the above Report, more than 4 out of every 5 work-related deaths (80per cent) were not documented, reported, or investigated. Each year 250 to 400 workers died from occupational cancer and 320 to 750 cases were diagnosed. 'But the notifiable occupational disease system run by the government agency – Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) reported only about 30 cases a year' (source: NZ Herald,9.11.04).

Unless OSH can provide a convincing explanation, this performance is virtually a form of criminal negligence by a state agency. By failing to investigate, or even document, the hundreds of workers who die from occupational cancer, OSH, either by neglect or design, has condoned the failure of employers to provide a safe working environment. OSH's conduct gives comfort to employers who avoid expenditure on measures to prevent workers' deaths.

According to Marxism, the state is an instrument used by one class to oppress another. OSH's performance should be so judged.

WHERE HAVE THE LABOUR POLITICIANS BEEN?

The Parliamentary Labour Party politicians claim to be 'worker-friendly.' Yeah, right. The fact is that many thousands of families have suffered the loss or injury to family members because the politicians lacked the will to insist that the capitalist class provided safe working conditions.

Ross Wilson, President of the Council of Trade Unions (CTU) is quoted as saying that the Report revealed the 'shockingly high toll' of decades of neglect in workplaces. He said – 'it is nothing less than a scandal that thousands of workers are dying because fatally toxic substances have been introduced into workplaces

continues on page 2

INSIDE: STRUGGLE ON...

Insider Trading	3	Philippines/NZ Common Interests	11
Superannuation	4	Protectionism	12
Parliament	5	Fascism	14
Wages and Home Ownership	6	Foreshore and Seabed	15
SIS	7	The Working Class and Fascism	16
Chemical Giant	8	Scientific Socialism	17
Police Ideology	9	Uniting	18
Overseas Investment Law	10	Book Review 'Colossus'	19

US Imperialist Occupation of Iraq Creates Mounting War Crimes

Despite all its censorship efforts, the US military cannot conceal the heavy casualties suffered by the Iraqi civilian population, now estimated to exceed 100,000. When US President Bush resolved to control Iraqi oil reserves, he had to find a pretext for the invasion of Iraq. He and his 'poodle Blair' lied like the professional liars, which they are. They continue to lie by claiming that the US-UK occupation is bringing 'freedom and democracy' to the Iraqi people. Just to make sure, the US is building four permanent major military bases in Iraq.

Subsequent inquiries and reports have repeatedly confirmed the views of the millions that marched against the US-UK invasion of Iraq. Saddam Hussein was not linked to Al-Qaeda; there were no weapons of mass destruction and the Iraq regime was no threat to its neighbours.

Within Iraq, there appears to be two main resistance activities. There is an armed liberation struggle involving the Sunni population. This resistance is so extensive that the US-led occupation is unable to control significant areas of Iraqi cities, towns and rural areas. With insufficient troops to cope with the widespread Iraqi resistance, the US has had to call for help. Like all imperialist powers, the US will use the soldiers of other countries as cannon fodder, in this instance, British troops.

The second form of resistance activity concentrates on terrorist-style use of car bombs. Non-Iraqi volunteers may be involved.

NZ ARMY OFFICERS INDOCTRINATED WITH GERMAN NAZI ARMY METHODS.

During their time in Iraq, New Zealand army officers were indoctrinated with US military thinking.

According to US military views, the occupation forces in Iraq should study the experiences of the German Nazi army, when it occupied Europe and



Russia during WW2. The German Nazi army was the best in the world!

Such indoctrination will come as a shock to those who recall only too vividly the atrocities of the Nazi-led German army - and the fact that it was outfought and defeated by a superior strategy, battlefield tactics, guerilla forces, and morale, especially by the Soviet Red Army, partisans and people.

US IMPERIALISM IS THE GREATEST DANGER TO WORLD PEACE

At no time in recent history, has the international community been faced with a gang of war criminals, administering the most powerful industrial country and armed with an enormous stockpile of weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, this gang has adopted the strategy of the first-use of nuclear weapons in pre-emptive strikes against its chosen targets. It has the intent to expand its murderous control of other countries and oil regions, with the aim of enriching the wealth of US corporations and their billionaire owners. Such is the nature of US imperialism

HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY ON ACTIVISTS

The conduct and plans of US imperialism cannot be ignored. While its external conduct will eventually help to iso-

late the US, they are not decisive. To halt the criminal conduct of the fascist-like Bush Administration, the greatest mobilisation of those favouring peace and the renunciation of armed violence to solve international differences is needed. People from differing classes have personal interests in such a world. Possibilities of uniting the many are very real.

In this situation, working people have the major task. Their class suffers most from preparations for war, and from war itself. As the givers of Life, women have a major role to play.

As the cannon fodder for US generals, the youth have a direct interest in the conduct of foreign affairs.

US war talk must be countered. Local US collaborators must be isolated. Support the Iraqi people. Independence for Iraq. US Get out of Iraq. Help Stop the Murder of Iraqi People.

COVER CONT.

without proper protection.' (www.nohsac.govt.nz - reports)

ORGANISE TO DEMAND SAFE WORKING CONDITIONS

History shows that the capitalist class or their politicians cannot be relied upon to protect workers lives. The Report is another good reason for replacing capitalism.

In the meantime, workers need to organise to impose adequate safe working conditions. The CTU is promoting job safety officers. Doctors must be trained to recognise and report on occupational diseases, which is not happening at the moment. Family members should encourage and support union membership, too. Labour politicians should be asked to front up. As the Report convincingly shows - Lives are at Stake here. Demand Job Safety. Build Union Strengths. Make it Happen.

Multi-Millionaires Charged with 'Insider Trading'

The Securities Commission has dropped a 'bombshell' into the corporate world of 'wheeling and dealing' by high flyers. Not before time, in the view of many shareholders. After extensive local and overseas inquiries, the Securities Commission has multi-millionaire former directors of Tranz Rail, Messrs Fay, Richwhite and a US director in its sights for alleged 'insider trading'.

In the speculative world of the stock exchange, corporate directors are required to refrain from using 'inside information' for their personal gain. Should they use such information to buy or sell shares in their corporation for their own advantage, while withholding such information from their shareholders, they are liable to be charged with 'insider trading'.

Although the dominant ideology of capitalism is 'looking after No 1', this ideology conflicts with the rights of shareholders, who form a collective body to elect directors administer the corporation. The directors and management are required to keep the shareholders informed about the financial state of the said corporation, so that all are treated equally and fairly.

In corporate structures, a few major shareholders can out-vote the many hundreds, and often thousands of these small investors. Yet, these same major shareholders, and the functioning of the capitalist system itself, are largely dependent on the flow of small investor's savings into corporations. These money savings are turned into capital, under the control of and for the benefit of the major shareholders. Should small investors lose their trust and confidence in the directors of corporations, investments decline and share prices tend to follow. Apparently, this tendency has been sufficiently strong to affect the flow of investments into local New Zealand corporations.

Because nothing destroys the trust of investors quicker than 'insider trading', the Securities Commission has acted. In doing so, it is defending the long-term interests of the capitalist class.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS: TRANZRAIL 2002 SHARE TRADING QUERIED.

February 2002: large quantities of Tranz Rail shares were traded. Two directors, Sir Michael Fay and David Richwhite's private company sells its 14.5 per cent stake in Tranz Rail for \$63.18 million.

The US investment fund, Berkshire, sells its \$15.4 million stake and its Tranz Rail director Carl Ferenbach sells \$2.18 million shares.

March 2002: Tranz Rail's chief financial officer, and managing director sell their shares.

May 2002: Tranz Rail discloses a reduced profit for the March quarter, with a write down of assets to follow. The share price continues to decline.

July 2002: the Stock Exchange asks for an explanation following a sharp drop in share price.

After Tranz Rail says that fourth quarter profits not up to expectations, the share price tumbles.

Securities Commission begins informal investigations. Share price dropped to 30 cents from \$3.60 to \$4.28 in February. Shareholders Association, Chairman Bruce Sheppard and shareholder Michael Horton made formal complaints. The latter claimed to have lost \$200,000.

October 2004: The Securities Commission files charges of alleged 'insider trading' by the defendants to avoid estimated losses of up to \$33 million, when they knew that Tranz Rail had unpublicised problems. The Securities Commission had to satisfy the initial Court hearing that it had sufficient evidence for the Court to hear the case against the defendants. The defendants all live overseas and vigorously deny the charges.

POINTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

'Struggle' is not interested in the defendants as individuals. What is of interest is that they are representatives of a class stratum that accumulates their wealth, mainly, by collaborating with foreign corporate investors; that, thanks to the sale of state assets, this class stratum became major shareholders in Telecom, BNZ, Trans Rail and other former state-owned enterprises. By means of non-taxable capital gains and share price rises, this small class increased its wealth by hundreds of millions of dollars. This

class is called comprador capitalists because they have this special collaborative role with foreign capital.

With its control of the state apparatus, including parliament, the comprador capitalist class, along with foreign capital, has been the main beneficiary of the de-regulation of the economy and the privatisation of public assets, initiated by the Fourth Labour Government. To keep accumulating wealth, the comprador capitalists seek to encourage foreign investment and continue sales of local and central government assets.

PERFORMANCE OF TRANZ RAIL DEMANDS INQUIRY.

As a result of government investment in NZ Rail, and the subsequent pay back to major shareholders, the actual cost of shares to them was 16 cents. Over the years, the rail track was so run down that the Government had to gift \$200 million to the new incoming owner. The privatised rail network has been a disaster for railwaymen, their families, for the taxpayer and the public. Safety became a major issue. Engine drivers had to reduce speed because of the state of the track.

Inevitably, a future generation will see the privatisation of NZ Rail and its subsequent record as conduct of a criminal nature, amounting to the looting of public assets by a minority class.

HOW WILL THE COURTS RESPOND?

Already, the defendants have engaged a squad of eminent lawyers. Legal fees will amount to millions of \$. Any compensation and penalties could be in excess of \$200 million. Some observers predict Court proceedings could last years – if there is not an 'out-of-court' settlement first!

The public will be able to compare the conduct of the Court, the news media and the politicians towards the 'insider trading' defendants, with those accused of petty crimes.

Whatever the outcome, events will reinforce the need to remove the comprador capitalist class from its control of state power and to return former state assets to public ownership.

Increased Rate of Super Justified

After consulting with their members, Grey Power officers have been lobbying parliamentary parties to win support on a number of issues, such as = an increased rate of superannuation (super), hospital care, asset testing, and electricity charges.

Grey Power is a lobby group concerned with the welfare of the elderly. In response to a brochure issued by the Office of the Prime Minister, Helen Clark, Grey Power informed the PM that the elderly 'feel neglected, unimportant and undervalued',

- That 18 per cent of elderly patients being admitted to the Auckland Hospital suffer from malnutrition,
- That 18 people are said to be dying from the cold each day in winter,
- That the Superannuation level is just too low to allow one to live in dignity...
- That there needs to be some positive action to redress the loss of spending power, as prices for all commodities and services continue to escalate.' (September 2004 – The Magazine)

Method of Fixing Super rate is Flawed
The rate of super is supposed to be between 65 to 72.5 per cent of the Net After Tax Ordinary Time Weekly Wage for a couple. At present, the rate is 65 per cent of NATOTWW. Both Government and employers are colluding to keep wages low, which affects the super level.

The next problem is that adjustments are made to super, according to movements in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which is calculated annually. The issues here are: the CPI is not based on the spending peculiar to the elderly and, therefore, does not give an accurate guide to their required income. They have greater expenditures on electricity, heating and health expenses. An elderly consumer's price index should be developed.

The fact that the adjustment to super is an annual event means that for some months the elderly must cope with increased costs with an already inade-



quate fixed income. They are always left behind. Whereas, if the adjustment was made at six monthly intervals, the elderly would have some means of coping.

GREY POWER 'PUT DOWNS' AND DIVIDE-AND-RULE

Without exception, a people's lobby group attracts adverse comment, especially from Government sources. Grey Power members are viewed as 'quite well-off' by Government. Others write off Grey Power as 'middle class'! This is another example of 'divide-and-rule' or sectarian views.

The facts are the majority of retirees have been wage earners. Not all, will be members of Grey Power. Nevertheless, Grey Power lobbying for an increase in super is in the interests of retired wage earners. Grey Power research states that 'the majority (of supernatants) have little else than the New Zealand Superannuation, plus about \$3000 in the bank to cater for emergencies or to pay for funeral expenses.' (Grey Power journal page5 Sept.04).

So, the stand being taken by Grey Power for an increase in super from the current 32.5 per cent to 35 per cent for

each partner or from 65 per cent to 70 per cent for a couple should be supported. For example, trade unions may like to acknowledge the welfare of their former members, now retired, by supporting Grey Power on the super increase.

LABELING ORGANISATIONS IS NOT HELPFUL

In production work, workers are encouraged to investigate and study problems to find solutions.

The same goes when developing activities to solve people's immediate needs. Before dismissing Grey Power as 'middle class', one should investigate current policies and activity.

KEEPING THE BIGGER PICTURE IN VIEW

In lobbying on behalf of their members, Grey Power officers have drawn on real life experiences affecting those on inadequate fixed incomes. They have observed that 'any discretionary spending that may have been available, has long since disappeared, as rates, electricity costs, transport costs, food costs continue to escalate well above the CPI adjustment'. Workers on low wages will appreciate this view.

When looking at the bigger picture, there is substantial evidence of a high incidence of child poverty. New Zealand is now regarded as having a 'low wage economy. There is also a high level of overcrowding, as families double up because of high rents. Surprisingly, many citizens are not seeking medical attention because of the costs. As mentioned elsewhere in 'Struggle', wage earners are paying a heavy price in deaths and injuries caused by toxic fumes, dust and chemicals.

The inadequate level of super is part of this bigger picture, in which the big local and foreign industrial and banking corporations are accumulating record profits.

For the people to succeed, mutual support and encouragement should prevail.

On Parliament, the Parliamentary Labour Party and the Advance to Socialism

Interest in socialism will increase. Various groups and parties will seek to advance its cause. New activists will emerge. To avoid reinventing the wheel, certain facts and experiences need to be studied.

THE REALITY – SUPPORT FOR PLP

Although their support has declined, most workers support the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP), even though it is a party promoting monopoly capitalism. The PLP is seen as the 'lesser of two evils', the best of a bad lot or 'the only alternative'. Some workers are Labour Party members. The ideological hold of the PLP over most workers is still strong and cannot be ignored.

SUPPORT FOR PARLIAMENT

Most workers acknowledge the parliamentary institution and parliamentary elections as 'democracy'. A growing number recognise the parliamentary process, and parliament itself, as loaded against working people.

From the standpoint of Marxism, parliament is an institution specially designed to conceal the dictatorship of the capitalist class. It is based on 'deception'. Not all 'socialists' agree with this assessment. Some even rely upon parliament to introduce socialism. The Marxist view is that the capitalist class will resist the introduction of socialism by all the means at its disposal. A genuine revolutionary party acknowledges that view. Many 'socialists' ignore this assessment. Illusions can be created about parliament. The former Communist Party often stood candidates in parliamentary elections. The slogan was 'Elect Communists'. This action created a certain endorsement of parliament and the illusion that the CP thought there was a possibility of a CP candidate being elected. Workers and supporters knew that this was impossible. With the prospect of very low votes, the standing of candidates was counter-productive.

As long as most workers have had insufficient experience to learn the real nature of the PLP as a party of capitalism, then, further periods in office for the PLP are a necessity. The action of the PLP in abolishing the customary rights of Maori to the foreshore and sea bed is an example of how the PLP can shoot itself in the foot when in office.

In its defence of capitalism, the PLP are bound to alienate more working people in the future. 'Socialists' need to be in a position to take advantage of these inevitable developments. But how can they, considering the disunity? Some serious study needs to be done to learn from both local and interna-

tional experience. Workers do not automatically transfer their support to a 'socialist' party, especially when the socialist movement is so divided.

TRUST, EXPERIENCE AND CONFIDENCE

Certain conditions are required before working people will transfer their Trust from one party to another and from the parliamentary path to a militant path of struggle. They must have opportunities for learning through their own experience, at their own pace, the correctness of the practical steps proposed by the revolutionary party. Over what may be a protracted period, working people will learn whether their leaders are reliable or not, and whether they can be trusted.

Only by providing a correct and reliable leadership, will the party and its members gain the Trust of the working class. Only a party that insists that its members 'serve the people' can establish that Trust.

EXPERIENCE IS PERSONAL

By becoming involved in activities around their immediate needs, working people will learn from the responses of the Labour Government and its politicians. In the course of repeated experiences, and aided by appropriate explanations, decisive numbers of the working class will learn of the real nature of the PLP and Labour Governments. They will learn from their own experience that the PLP protects employers and the foreign corporations getting rich by creating poverty, and that real independence from imperialism must be won, as the first step to socialism.

Simultaneous with the learning of the real nature of Labour Governments, the working class will be learning an equally important lesson – confidence in its own strength and historic mission. 'Socialists' can aid this process or obstruct it.

CONFIDENCE

As the working class has repeated experiences in campaigning in industry and in the communities, a new understanding will emerge. The advanced workers will gain confidence in their abilities to involve the bigger intermediate numbers of the working class. The working class will become conscious of its historic mission to lead all labouring people to end wage exploitation.

In contrast to some 'socialists' who make their election to parliament their priority, Communists give priority to ensuring that

the working class and people gain confidence in their own strength.

THE MAGIC WEAPON- MARXISM-LLENINISM

For these essential goals of trust, experience, and confidence to be attained, a collective of committed activists is needed. Their commitment includes learning from the history of class struggle, from Maori, Polynesians, women and youth, with the aid of the revolutionary science of Marxism-Leninism.

Overall, there is insufficient study by Marxist-Leninists students of the situation in New Zealand. By studying the nature of the NZ economy and its various class contradictions, by giving priority to serving the people, and learning from practice, 'socialists' may be able to unify their thinking and actions. Divisive conduct may be reduced. Much greater attention will be given to the oppression of Maori. These outcomes will have beneficial results.

Classical Marxist writers have listed many lessons from the struggles of the working class in many countries. By learning their methods, students can assist in solving problems in New Zealand. A major challenge is to involve supporters of the PLP in the defence of their living standards.

DESIRE FOR UNITY MUST BE GENUINE

Generally, 'socialists' are highly committed. They passionately look forward to a world free from war, poverty and the degradation of the environment. But their disunity obstructs them attaining their aspirations. Often 'Socialists' from the lower middle class have difficulty in adopting the standpoint of the working class. Their ideology is expresses impatience, relying on a small group and ignoring the wisdom of the people. They tend to look down on the experience of industrial workers.

When there is a genuine desire for unity, there will be a genuine desire to learn from historical and current practice. All who genuinely want to put the interests of the working class and the people first, will adopt methods and tasks that promote the advance to socialism.

(Recommended reading: Left wing Communism- Lenin; Reform Our Study, Rectify the Party's Style of Work, On Practice, On Contradiction, Oppose Book Worship – Mao Zedong; Communism in Australia- E.F.Hill)

How Capitalism Uses Home Ownership to Reduce Wage Levels

While there is growing news media comment about low wage levels, there is no comment about the connection between home-ownership and low wages. For this connection to be made, the background to home-ownership and the wages system must be examined.

Historical Reasons for Home-ownership
In the United Kingdom, when capitalist enterprises, factories and mines were being established, 200 years ago, the provision of housing was used to attract and retain workers. However, there were serious shortcomings. Workers could be evicted when made redundant, or for non-payment of rent during a strike. On retirement, the retired worker and family faced the dreaded workhouse. Workers and their families longed for security of accommodation.

With the steady increase of new settlers in Aotearoa/New Zealand, this longing for the security of owning one's own home persisted, especially as the same capitalist economic system functioned locally. By the 1890's, Government's were responding with legislation to assist low-income workers with advances to buy sections and build modest dwellings. To a greater or lesser extent, depending on the strength of public campaigns, the state of the economy or the need to win electoral votes, successive administrations amended or introduced legislation to provide housing assistance.

The peak was reached when the 1935 Labour Government built thousands of state houses to cope with the many families living in sub standard accommodation, following the Great Depression of 1929-33.

SOCIAL PRESSURES & ATTITUDES

A strong persuasive social custom or attitude has encouraged newly weds to save and work to own their own home. Home-ownership, to a certain extent, has been regarded as the norm. It shows that the parents are thinking of their family and their retirement.

Home-ownership gives a sense of security and independence. The family could not be evicted for not paying rent. Instead of having no assets after paying rent for years, payments to buy a house would finally produce an asset.

But there has been a negative side, too. Failure to keep up with mortgage payments could see a forced sale. Increasing or high interest rates may take food off the table. There could be years of working for the banks or other creditors. What is not so apparent is that home-ownership tends to reduce wages.

This is due to the deceptive nature of the wages system. Capitalism has the tendency to use every possible opportunity to make more profits.

THE MAKE-UP OF WAGES

Wage earners front up to their employer to sell their capacity to work, their labour-power. Like other commodities that are sold in the market place, the value of labour power is determined by the costs of production or in Marxist terms, the value of the means of subsistence. These include food, clothing, shelter, transport and the various necessities of life, needed to rear and educate a new generation of wage earners.

When the values of the means of subsistence increase, wage earners and their trade union negotiators have good cause to claim an increase in wages. On the other hand, when the values of the means of subsistence decline, the value of labour power declines, also. Real wage levels will tend to follow this decline.

For example, the reduced prices on a wide range of household necessities prevailing in 'The Warehouse' have reduced the values of the means of subsistence. This decline in values has impacted on wage levels. The connection between the expansion of 'The Warehouse' and the existing low wage levels cannot be ignored. From the standpoint of the big corporate employers outside of the retailing sector, 'The

Warehouse', has outdone Santa Claus, showering these corporate employers with record profits, caused by 'The Warehouse's reduced prices on a wide range of 'the necessities of life'.

TENDENCY OF HOME-OWNERSHIP TO REDUCE WAGE LEVELS.

Historically, wage earners sought home-ownership as a means of security from eviction and an alternative to the workhouse in old age. Building Societies were formed to assist members into home-ownership. Over time, the capitalist class adapted itself to the housing needs of its workers. To avoid tying up its own capital in the provision of housing for workers, the capitalist class realised that either Government housing departments or bank and finance companies could provide the necessary finance.

The home building and associated home furnishing sector became a significant part of the economy.

What has been less apparent, has been the tendency of home-ownership to reduce or slow increases in wage levels. As an example, take a district, where home-ownership is the rule. In this district, the cost of housing is not included in the cost of production of labour power. The value of labour power is diminished, which is reflected in lower wage rates. Lower wages mean increased profits for the factory owner.

Savings Transferred to Capitalist Owner.
When the values represented by housing costs are no longer included in the value of labour power, (and its money expression = wages) they are transferred to the capitalist employer. During the working week, when less values are needed to be the equivalent of wages, these values are added to/increase the surplus values - the source of capitalist profits. Due to home-ownership, the values produced by the worker are redistributed to the advantage of the capitalist class. From the total of the values produced, fewer values are needed to meet the cost of labour power, so more values are transferred to the capitalist.

IMPLICATIONS OF HOME-OWNERSHIP

There is another reason why the capitalist class encourages home-ownership. This is to undermine the capacity of workers to challenge capitalist exploitation, such as more work for less pay, casualisation, safety issues, wage demands and long hours. The capital class estimates that if they can burden workers with a mortgage, these workers will avoid confrontations such as during strike actions. .

HOUSING SHOULD BE ON AGENDA

Ideally, the capitalist class should meet the cost of housing, for it is the main beneficiary of the capitalist profit system. Without workers, their profits would be non-existent. As long as capitalism lasts, housing shortages and difficulties for workers and their families will persist.

By taking part in campaigns for afford-

able housing, workers will learn about the real nature of capitalism. If these campaigns are successful in providing affordable housing – fine. When it becomes clear that capitalism cannot house the people, then there will be more people won to the cause of replacing the capitalist system with a system led by the working class majority.

Currently, the strong desire for home-ownership has to be taken into account.

The quality of life of too many working people and their families is at unacceptably low levels, due to the lack of affordable housing. A whole range of statistics point to the destructive affects of the housing shortage and overcrowding on families, their health, especially the health of children and the elderly. Over-crowding impacts on education, too.

State house construction should be

sharply increased to provide rental housing. The Housing Corporation should provide deposits and loans at 3 per cent interest rates to low to medium income earners for home-ownership. A housing tax of 0.5 per cent to be levied on company income in excess of \$2 million. Pensioner housing needs to be met. A National Housing survey should be undertaken. Maori and Pacific Island communities should be consulted with the aim of involving their participation. Trade union representatives should have a consultative and auditing role, concerning design, allocation and financing of state housing. State forestry and saw milling enterprises should operate to ensure supplies and to counter profiteering.

Affordable housing and home-ownership requires a collective community effort.

SIS Inquiry Must Be 'Independent'

Allegations of spying by a state agency, the Security Intelligence Service (SIS), on the Maori Party, Iwi and individual Maori are a most serious development. Moreover, after receiving the cooperation of an iwi, the newspaper confirmed the allegations directed at the iwi, after investigating its records over a three-year period.

This means that the SIS has been spying on this Iwi, with or without the approval of the SIS director and without the approval of the Minister responsible, the Prime Minister.

When first confronted with the allegations, the Prime Minister, H.Clark responded with throwaway lines – the allegations were 'a work of fiction' and 'laughable'.

Later, after growing public concern kicked in and all parliamentary parties called for an Inquiry, the Prime Minister did a U-turn. The PM endorsed the intention of the Inspector General of the Intelligence and Security service to hold an inquiry. He could do nothing else.

INSPECTOR-GENERAL INQUIRY INADEQUATE

Most probably, the Inspector General is a nice guy, loves cats and does not drink out of his saucer. But his primary job is to protect the SIS, and make it more efficient as a key agency of the capitalist state apparatus. The Police Complaints Authority has the reputation of engaging in 'whitewash-

ing'. When a former Inspector-General of I&S held office, that office was criticised, too.

To be credible, an independent inquiry must be led by a person(s), in whom the public has confidence, not by one on the Government pay roll. As a general rule, Inquiry Reports are pre-determined by the government when choosing the Inquiry head and the terms of reference. There are few exceptions, the most notable being the Report on the Mt Erebus crash.

THE SIS PROTECTS THE INTERESTS OF A MINORITY CLASS

A few questions will clarify the role of the SIS = Did the SIS forewarn the public about the conspiracy to privatise public assets, such as Telecom, NZ Rail and the BNZ, and sell them to local and foreign investors, who made many hundreds of millions of dollars in capital gains?

Does the SIS investigate ' activities that hurt the country's international and economic well being' such as student loans, child poverty, low wages, lifting tariffs, and 79,000 unemployed? Does the SIS investigate those who want New Zealand to be a US colony? No, it does not. Will the inquiry examine the relations of the SIS with the discredited US-UK spy agencies? Not likely.

It concentrates on the very people who want to reverse the present situation. It

focuses on working people and their organizations, and protest movements as they develop. The history of the SIS is a record of bugging phones, meeting rooms and planting spies to monitor, if not influence activities of targeted organisations.

THE BIG FEAR OF THE CAPITALIST MINORITY

To solve crimes, detectives, so we are told, look for motives. In the parliamentary scene, there are at least two parties with considerable interest in the Maori Party, and Maori affairs. They are the National and Labour parties. Behind them stand the ruling minority class of wealthy capitalists and their overseas partners. They fear the unity of Maori and the working class. The job of the SIS is to warn the State bureaucracy of developments among Maori, workers and their organisations.

IMPLICATIONS OF SPYING

After 9/11, a number of countries have used the pretext of fighting 'terrorism' to increase the powers of state agencies and reduce the human rights of its citizens. This tendency is not new. During the rise of fascism in the 1920-30s, various pretexts were also used to justify the reduction of political and civil rights. A secret police also developed, from surveillance to active intervention in daily life.

Demanding an Inquiry Independent of the Government is necessary

Departments' Cover-up US Dow Chemical's Responsibility for Poisoning Residents

After some 40 years, scientific reports have confirmed the concerns of Paritutu residents that the US Dow Chemical plant was the cause of severe health problems and birth deformities. The stress within families can hardly be imagined. Even more infuriating, is the record of obstruction and denial over several decades by government departments and Ministers of the Crown. Their lack of sympathy and responses to the families involved is nothing short of a cold-blooded neglect by department bureaucrats intent on defending the interests of a foreign chemical corporation.

Any Government claiming to protect women and children and the health of workers would be right in there seeking safe working conditions and compensation for the afflicted and the suffering. Regrettably, this has not happened.

BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The giant transnational corporation, Dow Chemicals, one of the nastiest, took over Ivan Watkins plant in New Plymouth and shifted to the suburb of Paritutu in 1960. The production of 2,4,5-T became a major product, being used widely to kill blackberry and gorse. TCDD is produced as a by-product, and is one of the 17 most toxic dioxins.

2,4,5-T is a component of Agent Orange that was used by the US to defoliate Vietnamese forests, injuring huge numbers of Vietnamese civilians, as well as Kiwi Vietnam vets and their families in the process.

Dioxin causes serious illnesses, including cancer, spina bifida, and horrendous birth deformities.

As early as 1965, Miss Henderson, the nurse in charge of New Plymouth Westown Maternity Hospital, became alarmed at the number of babies born with deformities. The Health Department was advised but nothing was done.

Paritutu residents made representations without success. In 1999, they formed the Dioxin Investigation Network. The

Network found that over half the families had suffered serious illnesses.

Emissions from the plant's chimney were held responsible.

REPORTS FINALLY CONFIRMED RESIDENTS' WORST FEARS.

In October, a Report by Professor Pearce of the Massey University stated that production workers exposed to dioxin faced a 24 per cent increased risk of cancer. The findings of the Massey University study were consistent with that of the World Health Organisation, involving some 22,000 workers in 36 plants in 123 countries.

A month earlier, the Health Department revealed that blood tests on 24 Paritutu residents showed that long term residents had a two to five times higher level of dioxin in their blood than average New Zealanders. This conclusion was similar to studies in Vietnam.

These Departments Failed the People. The Health Department brushed aside the concerns of Nurse Henderson, who reported the unusual number of birth deformities. The Health Department said that Miss Henderson was 'too conscientious'. The Health Department bureaucrats have a long record of avoiding controversial issues.

In November 1986, a Ministerial Inquiry reported that there was no proof that dioxin had any ill effects on the health of New Plymouth residents. The production of 2,4,5-T ceased in 1987, two years after the US, and NZ was the last Western country to do so.

Despite the world wide action and debate over the dangers of Agent Orange and dioxin, one would expect Occupation Safety and Health to get off its bum and check out Dow Chemicals, now named Dow Agro Science, to ascertain whether the occupational health of workers there was 100 per cent. There is no evidence that OSH took any action to monitor the health of the production workers. Obviously, OSH is not pro-active. To make sure, the politicians keep OSH on a tightened budget, there-

by allowing foreign (and local) corporations to undermine the health of workers with impunity.

The Associate Minister of Health D.O'Connor's reply to Green MP Sue Kedgley's request for immediate Government action to seek compensation for the victims of Dow Chemicals, is in marked contrast to the speed with which politicians reacted to the proposal to increase parliamentary salaries. He stated that the request for compensation is 'premature', which is political spin for 'doing nothing'.

HONOUR THE WORK OF COMMUNITY ACTIVISTS

Despite a history of inaction and denial by the 'authorities', local activists persevered, at considerable cost to themselves and their relationships within the community. The activists were erroneously blamed for reducing property values, when the real culprit was Dow Chemical's showering residential the area with fumes and foam.

The Reports have justified the years of campaigning. The activists and their supporters can hold their heads high and walk with dignity, in contrast to the culture of denial practiced by Cabinet ministers and government departments. Adequate funds should be provided by Government for expenses incurred in treating the dioxin related illnesses. OSH should check all past and present production workers. The next step is for the Government to get Dow AgroSciences to accept responsibility for its arrogant conduct in dumping dioxin-laden fumes over a residential suburb. Treating Paritutu workers and residents as 'expendable' is typical of the attitude of US imperialist corporations in India, Vietnam, Iraq and elsewhere.

Public pressure will be needed to motivate the Government – Demand Government agencies stop covering-up for Dow Chemicals and compensate dioxin victims.

(Acknowledgement : sources = NZ Herald and Dominion Post)

Capitalist Ideology Determines Police Conduct

Police failure to respond to a young woman's 111 call for help, and her subsequent disappearance has caused public shock. In this one brief episode, police conduct has revealed a serious 'attitude' problem by police towards members of the public.

Understandably, police chiefs have been apologising repeatedly. Efforts at damage control by police spin infer that police are under-funded, short staffed, over worked, and under stress.

Actually, a study of the police attitude problem cannot be confined to this one incident. Some officers face allegations of rape. Other charges against police officers are not infrequent. The principal role of the police and the kind of social relations in which the police force operates should also be examined. Other state agencies have been involved in allegations of violence.

POLICE FORCE PART OF STATE

Of all the institutions and agencies, the police, the armed forces and prisons form the institutions of coercion. They are the main pillars of the State. Another pillar is parliament, which relies on deception. Parliament's special role is to deceive the people into thinking that parliament is accountable to them.

This detective work demands that we check out the state, too. Marxism claims that the State is an instrument used by one class to suppress another. The prime task of the state is to protect the exploitive wages system in which the wage earner produces values equivalent to his/her wages in two to three days of the working week. In the remaining 2-3 days, the wage earner works for nothing, in unpaid time, the surplus values produced becoming the property of the capitalist.

Other forms of robbery, such as scams and fraud, are investigated by Police - but never this weekly robbery.

POLICE CONDUCT REFLECTS CAPITALIST CLASS IDEOLOGY

The wages system expresses the division of society into two main classes - the employer/capitalist class and the employed - working class who survive by selling their labour power. Since this sys-



tem creates hundreds of millions of dollars of wealth and profit for the minority capitalist class, this class has formed various views, attitudes, theories that defend this economic system. Various institutions have developed to defend and promote this wealth-creating carry-on.

Understandably, the strongest class economically and financially dominates in all spheres, including ideology. All the dominant views, attitudes, theories, laws and corresponding institutions are the views, attitudes and institutions that defend the capitalist class. All these items form the superstructure that serve the capitalist foundation - the relations between classes. Any study of police attitudes and conduct must include the dominant influence of this capitalist ideology guiding the police relations with the public.

SUBORDINATION OF MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Wage earners are about 80 per cent of the population. A minority class of millionaires is getting richer every year. Child poverty increases. Only relations of domination and subordination can exist between the majority and the minority. There is no equality. Wage earners are actually looked down upon. Those who live in multi-million dollar luxury homes and possess other luxuries are looked up to as achieving success! Such is the prevailing view. At the workplace, the relationship between owner/manager and

wage earner is decisively one-sided. These attitudes carry over into state agencies.

Ordinary folk do not receive the same respect or responses from state agencies as members of the wealthy stratum.

OTHER STATE AGENCIES INCLUDED

Former patients at Porirua Mental Health Hospital have spoken out about the violence they suffered. Former army teenage cadets at Waiuru military camp have alleged a regime of violence and bullying.

In industrial relations, the major corporations exert their dominant influence. Legislation outlaws or obstructs workers using their collective strength to lift their wage levels.

Currently, parliament is being used to dispossess Maori of their customary and property rights involving the foreshore and seabed. This is a form of state violence.

Equal pay for work of equal value is still not implemented, depriving women of their rights.

TRANSFORMATION OF STATE NEEDED.

Capitalist ideology corrupts people's outlook. As long as capitalism exists, with its ideology of hostility by officials exercising 'power' over the lives of ordinary folk, incidents will continue. The solution lies in establishing the working class ideology of 'Serve the People', as the guiding ideology for all state departments, including the police.

This ideology acknowledges that working people are the principal productive class responsible for providing the means of life. State agencies including the police, will become true public servants.

The first step is to achieve a Democratic State System exercising political power for the majority, instead of the present state system controlled by a minority.

It's the task of the Communist Party to support working people to achieve this goal

The Fight is On!

Government to Introduce New Overseas Investment Bill, Throws the Door Wide Open. Removal of Scrutiny of Nearly All Foreign Company Purchases.

The Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa (CAFCA) sees considerably more minuses than pluses in the new Overseas Investment Bill introduced into Parliament on November 10 by Dr Cullen, the Minister of Finance. His press release was headed "Toward a more effective overseas investment regime" and it definitely will be - for the transnational corporations whose ceaseless takeover of New Zealand will be made that much easier by this most obliging of governments.

Don't get us wrong, we congratulate the Government in making it harder for foreigners to buy land of "special heritage or environmental value" (note: not actually stop them buying, just to make it harder). That arises directly from sustained public campaigning about issues such as the sale of Young Nick's Head, other coastal property and South Island high country stations.

But such land is a small part of the overall picture of rural land sales to foreigners (the vast bulk of which is forestry and farm land) and a very, very small part of the economy. The fact is that company takeovers by transnational corporations, in all the sectors that constitute the guts of the New Zealand economy, total billions of dollars per year (not the tens of millions of "special" land sales) and the Government plans to make it even easier for those transnational corporate takeovers to proceed. That more than wipes out any gains made in the area of tightening up "special" land sales. Indeed, the latter is a mere sop.

It hasn't yet been announced when the Bill will have its First Reading in Parliament, nor to which Select Committee it will be referred. The official papers preceding the Bill stated the target for it becoming law is July 1, 2005. There will be the opportunity for public submissions during the Select Committee phase.

WHAT IS IN THE BILL?

* It will abolish the Overseas Investment Commission, which is the current rubber stamp body administering the overseas investment regime

and will transfer its functions to a specialist unit within Land Information New Zealand (LINZ).

- The threshold for official approval for transnational corporations to buy NZ companies will be increased from the current \$50 million up to \$100m. Interestingly, Treasury had recommended that the threshold be increased to \$250m and that is the figure cited all through the Cabinet papers, Cullen's recommendations, etc. Apprehension about public outcry caused Cabinet to back away from the higher figure. We must be grateful for small mercies (it is worth noting that Treasury's original recommendation was that there be absolutely no overseas investment oversight regime but concluded that it was not politically possible, in light of public opinion).
- To remove the current need for approval of foreign land purchases of less than five hectares in area and/or more than \$10m in value.
- The official recommendations preceding the Bill cite NZ's obligations under the General Agreements on Trade in Services (GATS) and the free trade agreement with Singapore as inhibiting NZ's ability to set restrictions on foreign investment. Indeed the official papers say that the proposed new threshold for company takeovers by transnationals will become the benchmark for all future free trade agreements and the officials were anticipating that threshold would be \$250m.
- To add insult to injury, the Government plans - "to keep costs to the taxpayer down" - to let the foreign investors be responsible for post-consent compliance and monitoring. New Zealanders have had 20 years of experience of "self-regulation" to not need to be told how just how lousy a system that is. They will only to have a file a report "regularly" on how they are complying with the terms of their consent and outline any reasons for non-compliance. Guess how many will say "No, we're not complying".

The removal of the Overseas Investment

Commission is no great tragedy in itself. CAFCA has always said that its job could be done by a monkey with a rubber stamp. But its replacement agency will see a significant weakening of any oversight. By definition, Land Information NZ is experienced with land. But land sales are very much the smaller part of the much bigger picture, maybe totalling in the tens or hundreds of millions of dollars per year. Company takeovers are where the foreign investment action is, totalling in the billions per year. There is no proposal for any new agency with any expertise in that field to be involved.

Cullen points out the last time a non-land transaction was refused permission was in 1984, and therefore we might as well virtually give up monitoring company takeovers. On the contrary - that is an indictment of 20 years of rubberstamping neglect by the OIC and Government; and a clarion call for the transnational corporate oversight regime to be significantly toughened up, not weakened.

Raising that threshold for company takeovers will remove all but the biggest of them from any scrutiny. Huge chunks of the NZ economy will be bought and sold without any official oversight at all. And remember - until just days before the 1999 election, the threshold for company takeovers was just \$10m. We urged the incoming Labour-led government to roll it back to that level. They have refused to do so and are now going to raise it to \$100m (an increase of 1000% in less than five years).

The removal of the need for approval for foreign land purchases of less than five hectares in area and/or more than \$10m in value removes the need for any scrutiny of central business district projects that involve land.

What we've been saying all along about the dangers of NZ getting entangled in free trade agreements (whether multilateral, like GATS or bilateral, such as with Singapore) is made glaringly obvious. We lose the right to control foreign investment.

We welcome the tightening of restrictions

on the sale of "special" land. This concession has been brought about by public opposition to the sale of the likes of Young Nick's Head and the sale of coastal land (primarily in the North Island) and South Island high country stations. However, this "tightening" wouldn't have stopped any of those purchases, not Young Nick's Head, nor the recent purchase of two Otago high country stations by Shania Twain. The Bill increases penalties for breaches. Sounds good but the proof of the pudding is in the prosecuting. It would be very interesting to know how many foreign investors have been taken to court. In the words of Scribe: "Not many, if any".

The OIC's brief has been to facilitate, not "hinder" foreign investment and this new Bill facilitates the OIC out of existence, and delivers a very "effective overseas investment regime" - an effective surrender of economic sovereignty. The minor concessions on some land sales are simply a smokescreen to conceal that central fact. The Government is saying to transnationals: "Come on in and help yourselves. Make yourselves at home".

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- a. Contact your MP urgently and register your opposition to the weakening of the current overseas investment law and regulations. Tell him or her that you consider this an election issue, and that it will influence your

- vote in 2005.
- b. Write to your local paper. Call talk-back.
- c. Argue for strengthening the controls over foreign investment, the conditions that are placed on it, and the monitoring that should follow.
- d. Advocate strongly for tighter control on overseas ownership of land and fisheries.
- e. Become informed. Join CAFCA and gain access to a wealth of information and analysis that you will not find in your local newspaper. Membership is \$20 per year (or \$15 unwaged). Payments to CAFCA, Box 2258, Christchurch.
- f. Submissions will be called soon, and the aim is to have the Bill into law by mid 2005, so it is critical to act now. Make a submission opposing this Bill.

MORE INFO

CAFCA has produced a leaflet on the subject, giving considerably more detail.

The leaflet can be read at CAFCA's Website. It is a PDF. You can access it at

<http://canterbury.cyberplace.co.nz/community/CAFCA/OICReview4.pdf>

Check our site regularly, as the leaflet keeps being updated.

You can download the leaflet yourself from there or you can order hard copies

from us. If you order several hundred, we'd appreciate a koha for the cost of copying and postage.

There are background articles on the subject. You can access them at:

<http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/06/01.htm>

<http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/04/01.htm> and <http://www.converge.org.nz/watchdog/05/01.htm>

If these Links don't work, for any reason, then go to www.cafca.org.nz, and click on the Foreign Investment In New Zealand page. For the Foreign Control Watchdog articles, go to www.converge.org.nz/watchdog Numbers 104, December 2003, 105, April 2004, & 106, August 2004.

CAFCA needs all the help that we can get in our campaign against this Bill.

Let's all get stuck in!

*-Murray Horton
Secretary/Organiser*

CAFCA
Campaign Against Foreign Control of Aotearoa
Box 2258, Christchurch, New Zealand
cafca@chch.planet.org.nz
www.cafca.org.nz

Common Interests of People of Philippines and NZ

Early October, veteran Human Rights activist from the Philippines, Marie Hilao-Enriquez completed a speaking tour, organised by the Philippines Solidarity Network of Aotearoa, (Box 2450, Christchurch).

Marie was well qualified to fulfill this task, having been a prisoner of the Marcos regime. Her sister was the first female political prisoner to die in prison – as the result of torture. Another two siblings suffered imprisonment.

For some 30 years, Marie has been a leading figure in the Human Rights movement. Her role has led to speaking tours of Canada and the USA and an address to the UN Committee on Human Rights.

Marie attended the peace talks in Oslo as an official observer, being one of two nominated by the National Democratic Front.

All who heard Marie speak gained a greater awareness of the actual situation

in the Philippines and the determination of the Filipino people to defend human rights in the most difficult circumstances. Philippines is a rich country with abundant resources, but the monopoly ownership of land by the wealthy few landowners creates a very hard life for farmers.

Since the Bush Administration used the pretext of 9/11 to launch its 'war-on-terror', the US has increased its intrusion into the Philippines, thanks to the willingness of the Government to surrender the country's sovereignty. The US sees the Philippines as a strategic base to threaten South East Asian countries. Human rights violations have increased in proportion to increasing US presence. Foreign corporations are plundering the economy. In the countryside, the armed struggle by the New Peoples Army led by the Communist Party continues. In the person of Marie, audiences were able to acknowledge the courage and commitment of Filipino women and all the people working for a democratic and

independent Philippines. Due to the news censorship, practiced by the monopoly owned news media, the New Zealand public receives scant information about the situation there.

The monopoly-owned news media will never build solidarity among working people of different countries, even when there are vital common interests involved. Only people-to-people efforts can be relied upon. In arranging such tours, the Philippines Solidarity Network plays a positive role in countering such news censorship.

Currently, the defence of Human Rights in both Philippines and New Zealand, and opposition to US imperialism's threat to world peace through its military expansion are two such vital common interests. Although separated by thousands of miles, the peoples' activities are mutually supportive. May they grow ever stronger.

Protectionism vs. Free Trade: Should Marxists in the West Support Protectionism?

Robert Reid from the Clothing Laundry and Allied Workers Union (CLAW) and Unite!, the union for part-time and casual workers, gave the following speech to a conference held recently in Wellington. The topic of the discussion was 'should Marxists in the West support Protectionism?'

A FEW PRELIMINARY COMMENTS

This is both a theoretical and practical question. To view it from only one aspect would be one-sided. And in the dialect between theory and practice the Marxist view is that practice (ie our actions in the material world) helps us to develop our theory, which in turn guides our further practice.

However, since we as Marxists are dialectical materialists rather than dialectical idealists; practice is the key and in the words of Marx's famous quote: "philosophers may interpret the world, but the point is to change it."

LET'S ADDRESS THE TOPIC OF THIS DEBATE.

It asks what position Marxists in the west should take. This is a very interesting formulation. Why does it ask what Marxists in the west think, why not all Marxists? Shouldn't all Marxists have the same view? Marxism would argue that the formulation of this question is correct. It teaches us that everything depends on time, place and circumstance. Marxism is not a dogma, genuine Marxism cannot be a form of fundamentalism, unfortunately many variants of sham Marxism are both.

So what is 'protectionism'? The word of course comes from 'protect' to defend oneself. The attempt to protect oneself from the ravages of capital has been at the core of the working class struggle ever since the rise of capitalism and with it the rise of the class itself.

Guilds and then trade unions were some of the early forms of protectionism of the working class. Most Marxists agree that these formations are spontaneous and therefore limited actions of the working class. They operate within the confines of

capitalism and for the most part do not challenge capitalism itself.

Yet, apart from what Lenin described at the r-r-revolutionary (or those left-wing communists with an infantile disorder) most other Marxists have acknowledged the importance of unity within these protectionist organisations. While at the same time as undertaking the slow and patient work of popularising socialist theory alongside the day to day struggle. As Mao said, 'being like a fish in the water, not waving the red flag to defeat the red flag'.

However, I think the meaning of the word protectionism in this debate that we are expected to address is the economic definition. The Oxford Dictionary sums this up as the 'system of protecting home industries'.

The question then is: 'should Marxists in the West support a system of protecting home industries?'

There is only one possible dialectical materialist answer to this question and that is 'it depends'. Depending on the time, place and circumstance I might find myself debating against a dogmatic 'yes' position or a dogmatic 'no' position.

EXPERIENCE

I am luckier than most in being able to address this question in very practical ways over most of my working life. I had the experience of working in a protected motor assembly industry in the 1970's and 1980's. Then I worked for a Thailand based left-wing Asia-Pacific workers' network, followed by working as a union official in the previously highly-protected footwear, then clothing, industries.

During this time, I have attended many conferences and discussions about protectionism, including a world GM workers' conference. Almost all of these discussions started with participants holding a strong pro- or anti-protectionist position, but finished with a consensus that it does, indeed, depend.

Can I give you a couple of examples?

In 1994, a conference was called in Bangladesh by French Trotskyist party to denounce protectionism. A number of French and Bangladeshi speakers got up and denounced the EU and US quota on garments from Bangladesh as forms of protectionism that hindered the growth of the Bangladesh economy, especially its growing export garment industry. Quotas and tariffs were denounced and free trade was lauded. During the day the discussion widened as to why other industrial sectors were in decline in Bangladesh such as jute and sari textiles. This decline had meant some hundreds of thousands of Bangladeshi workers had lost their jobs. This loss of jobs and destruction of these 'home' industries was correctly condemned by Bangladeshi participants. The reason for the situation was identified as cheaper products (often subsidised) being made in India. The spontaneous solution that the left-wing Bangladeshi unionists came up with was for their government to introduce 'protectionist' policies for the jute and sari textile industries in Bangladesh (the French comrades were, of course, very unhappy with this conclusion).

When I worked at GM and the government was starting to reduce the protectionism on the New Zealand car assembly industry we organised a number of protests around the theme of 'keep tariffs, keep jobs'.

There were a number of left-wing or communist groups operating in the motor plants at that time. The Maoist Workers' Communist League to which Don Franks and I belonged was very comfortable with organising workers around that slogan. It was a concrete issue, it had the mass support of all workers, and it was politicising workers by having them involved in mass rallies.

I still remember the tragic sight of members of two of the smaller Trotskyist groups coming to a couple of the biggest rallies with placards and leaflets saying 'Abolish Tariffs: Support Worker Internationalism'.

Their argument was, as it always with the dogmatic 'oppose protectionism' position, that workers in the rich countries are siding with their own bosses to deny jobs to workers in the poor countries. We are therefore part of the international system of oppression; we benefit from it, and are in the end part of the labour aristocracy in the international division of labour.

As with many arguments there are some elements of truth in this one-sided theoretical position.

We do live in an imperialist world. Workers in the imperialist countries are able to wrest some of the spoils of imperialism from their employers to lift their own standards of living. Protectionism does give assistance and advantages to home industries that may not be available to other capitalists.

But what was the effect of holding up such placards or distributing such leaflets in the Time, Place and Circumstance of a rally to save jobs in the motor assembly plants in Wellington in 1983?

First, did it help build the mass movement of workers? No, it confused and angered workers who saw the signs or read the leaflets. To take liberties with one of Don Franks' songs about another political paper at that time, workers reading the leaflet 'scanned the page, and screwed it up in puzzled rage'.

Second, was that action being at one with the masses, like a fish in the sea? No. It was isolationist and disruptive of the mass movement. It certainly didn't 'serve the people'.

I suppose it could have been argued that the motor company workers were being misled by Stalinist union official and as Marxists we have no other option but to alert the misled masses to this effect!

I must say that I find the theory of the misled masses a very arrogant one. Yet even if you genuinely believed it, isn't the best way to slowly and patiently argue for your position in the movement rather than be seen to be standing outside and opposing the movement?

Finally, let's see if the argument raised at this demonstration was correct, given the time, place and circumstance.

Were the workers and their unions siding with their bosses against other capitalists? Although my own national democratic philosophy allows for this at certain time, place and circumstance, in this case we were not. All the motor companies were

TNCs. They were not assembling in New Zealand not because they wanted to (as was shown less than 10 years later when they all closed when tariffs were finally removed). They were forced to assemble cars here due to policies of New Zealand governments in the mid-20th century that introduced 'protectionist policies' not to protect manufacturing industry in New Zealand, but to create it.

Those policies were and are still aggressively opposed by farming, extractive and more recently finance capital.

The jobs of New Zealand car assembly workers were not 'stolen' from car workers in the third world. In fact the jobs lost in New Zealand were lower paid than the Australian and Japanese workers who took them over when the industry did close down. The Australian and Japanese manufacturers were able to produce cheaper cars due to their higher concentration of capital and economies of scale.

So was the 'protectionist' struggle of motor assembly workers in New Zealand a struggle of rich workers, combining with local capitalists to oppress and deny jobs to workers in the third world? Plainly not, it was a struggle in its time place and circumstance that I supported (not least because I was one) and I hope everyone in this room would have supported.

WORLD MOVES ON

Today, the world has moved on. We are in a different time and circumstance, even if we are in the same place of Wellington, New Zealand.

In the 1980s the word 'globalisation' was not in vogue as it is today. Imperialism has become even more aggressive since the 1980s due to:

- collapse of the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc,
- formation of WTO,
- rise of neo-liberalism,
- growth of more powerful TNCs,
- end of history (if we are to believe some writers).

But the creation of a uni-polar world with US imperialism reigning supreme has led to a counteraction.

Imperialist globalisation and free trade are being attacked by a world-wide movement of people, parties and social movements. The anti-capitalist movement is a growing component of this movement.

It is not just happening in Seattle, Davos, London, Rome, Melbourne, but also,

often by many more thousands of people in Chiapas, Caracas, Bangkok, Mumbai, and other 'third world' countries.

In my view the sometimes sterile debate between protectionism and anti-protectionism has moved on.

The global power elite is fiercely anti-protectionist when it suits their interests but still highly protectionist when it doesn't.

We can all tell the stories of the hypocrisy of the US which preaches 'free-trade' to the rest of the world, but is still one of the most protectionist countries itself. The WTO agreements on TRIPs and TRIMs are 'protectionist agreements' for the imperialist powers wrapped up in free trade rhetoric.

OUR TASK TODAY

Our task today is perhaps much clearer than it was a couple of decades ago.

To use a 'peoples war' analogy we are very much at the first and second sub-stage of strategic defensive. The power of the enemy completely overwhelms our own. This means that we are very much in a guerrilla movement, skirmishing with the enemy, but trying to avoid set piece battles that we would be likely to lose.

We are trying to defend what we have. We will be protectionist by necessity in many cases. We need to build our base areas in people's organisations, unions, and even at times in bourgeois political parties.

But if we are to move to the next stage of strategic stalemate where our power can challenge that of the enemy then we have to move away from a defensive and protectionist strategy to link up with other peoples in other struggles. This doesn't mean we stop defending and protecting, but it does mean we marshal our resources and solidarity to support those other struggles against imperialist globalisation across the world.

We do have a world to win. Let's get beyond the angst of a protectionism/non-protectionism debate, and do what is required to see our project succeed.

Can a Fascist Party Take Office in Aotearoa/New Zealand?

Street marches by chanting ranks of Destiny Church/Party members dressed in black, opposing the Civil Union Bill, have reminded members of the public of the Black Shirts of the pre-WW2 Italian fascist movement. Destiny Church leader, Mr. Brian Tamaki, has promised his followers that in four years, they will rule New Zealand in a Theocratic State (a state under the direction of God). So, the Destiny Church is no ordinary religious cult. It has political goals, namely, the seizure of state power.

WHICH CLASS DOES THE DESTINY PARTY SERVE?

The Destiny Church/Party defends the institution of marriage by attacking the Civil Union Bill which acknowledges relationships between same sex couples. These same sex relationships are blamed for undermining the institution of 'marriage', yet the number of couples formally marrying are declining in far greater numbers while defecate relationships have been increasing at a similar rate. As the NZ Herald observed (4.10.04), 'the more accurate target should be the rise of heterosexual de facto couples' = from 1991 to 2001, the number of de facto parents and families had doubled.

By blaming same sex couples and the Civil Union Bill for undermining marriage, the leaders of the Destiny Church/Party are ignoring the impact of economic management decisions. Since the 1980's, when the Fourth Labour Government imposed 'free market' regulations, resulting in mass unemployment and redundancies, many families have been placed under enormous additional stress. In 1991, the National Government used the Employment Contract Act to king-hit the first line of defence for wage earners – their trade unions. Then, cuts in Social Welfare benefits and increases in State House rents followed, creating widespread social distress and poverty.

So, the real cause of family stress is the capitalist economic system, not same sex relationships. Big foreign corporations received have favoured treatment, enabling them to export billions of dollars in profits. In comparison, ordinary folk, like many members of the Destiny Church/Party, have struggled to pay the never-ending list of bills.

By targeting same sex couples, instead of heaping criticism on the large corporations and their millionaire owners, the Destiny

Church/Party leaders are diverting attention from the real causes of family stress. This attitude serves the class interests of the big capitalists. Same sex couples are not responsible for the cost of housing, higher power charges, rate increases, petrol prices, casualisation of work and unemployment. But the big corporations and their owners are.

MECHANICAL ASSESSMENTS ARE CONTRARY TO MARXIST SCIENCE

One view claims that the Destiny Party does not represent any ruling class opinion. This view warrants further thought. The big capitalists never admit that their economic system undermines the family. They will welcome the diversionary views of the Destiny Church/Party leaders blaming same-sex couples for undermining the institution of marriage, and not the capitalist economic system.

International experience shows that, generally, parties and movements with fascist tendencies first demonstrate their potential to disrupt or divide working class activities. Then, later, the fascist party attracts serious monopoly capitalist class support. Like all phenomena, fascist movements have a period of development, passing through various stages.

According to world history, the rise of fascism can be expected as long as capitalism exists. New Zealand will be no exception. One of the lessons learnt by Communist Parties in the pre-WW2 struggles against fascism was noted by Dimitrov = 'In our ranks, there were people who intolerably under-rated the fascist danger.....'. (Dimitrov, page 19).

THE DESTINY CHURCH/PARTY'S FUTURE PROSPECTS

The promise to create a Theocratic State, in four years is a very bold one. The Destiny Church/Party leaders will have to step up their activities. They will need to organise several campaigns to attract a greatly increased audience. Then, the public will have more opportunities to learn about the real agenda of the Destiny Party, too.

SITUATIONS IN WHICH FASCISM DEVELOPS

Usually, there is a prolonged economic and social crisis. Sections of the lower middle class, and the politically backward stratum of the working class turn away from traditional capitalist parties. These social strata do not automatically take the path of revolution. As

the traditional parties fail to cope with the crises, the fascist movement appears to offer solutions to their difficulties.

Disunity within the working class also plays a major role. The policy of class collaboration adopted by some trade union leaders and Labour/social democratic parties tend to obstruct timely resistance to reactionary legislation. The failure of the Council of Trade Unions to oppose the introduction of the Employment Contracts Act is a notable example.

Another negative factor is the lack of unity among those striving to practice Marxism-Leninism. Sectarian-divisive conduct and policies of lower middle class groups is another significant shortcoming. These factors currently await solution. Should they not be resolved, then this disunity along with the influence of class collaboration will tend to move more support to the Far Right, and movements with fascist-tendencies.

PERIOD OF PREPARATION (PART ONE)

Before a fascist take-over, there is usually a period of preparation, during which the capitalist parties use pretexts to introduce legislation restricting political and human rights. As a result, the capacity of the working class and the democratic forces to challenge the rising fascist tendencies is obstructed. At present, New Zealand trade unions do not enjoy the internationally recognised level of trade union rights. Political strikes are illegal. Using the pretext of combating terrorism, surveillance powers have been extended, since 9/11. The imprisonment of Mr Zaoui for some 2 years on the basis of secret evidence is a singularly most disturbing event that sets a very dangerous precedent.

FAR RIGHT AND CENTRE-RIGHT PARTIES RESORT TO RACIST POLITICS (PART TWO)

Fascist ideology is noted for racist views. So, when a Far Right Party, such as ACT or the centre-right Party, like the National Party, indulge in persistent 'Maori bashing', they create a climate helpful to groups with fascist tendencies. The National Front targets immigrants as the source of poverty, as if stopping immigrants will stop the oil companies and Aussie banks from plundering the economy.

When next in office, the National Party promises to reduce trade union rights, as well as abolishing Maori Treaty and customary rights.

Should these divisive measures be ignored, especially the attacks on Maori, Polynesians, Asians, or immigrants, fascist tendencies and ideology will be encouraged.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME. (PART THREE)

The Universal Basic Income promises a living wage funded by a 40 to 50 percent tax rate on all personal income but not company income, whether the recipient is working or not. Sounds attractive! Contrary to the intentions of UBI middle class supporters, the UBI can only function if trade unions rights and freedoms are abolished in a corporate-like state system, similar to the Italian fascist model. The UBI means that personal incomes are state controlled.

The UBI actually serves the interests of the monopoly capitalist class, because the UBI enables this class to make substantial increases in profits, based on the political repression of wage earners. (an analysis of the UBI is available from Struggle Publications, Box 807, Whangarei)

CONCERN FOR THE PEOPLE!

To gain mass support, fascism (the fascist movement) appeals to the most urgent

needs and demands of the people. It deliberately inflames the prejudices deeply ingrained in the masses as well as playing on their sense of fair play and justice. Fascism calls for an honest government, free of corruption. Once in power, fascism brings unprecedented sufferings to the people, as WW2 demonstrated. Trade union rights, rights of assembly, of association, and speech are abolished.

In an attempt to win public acceptance, the National Front has offered to patrol poor areas in Christchurch to ensure the safety of the elderly. Their plan is then to extend these patrols to Wellington and Auckland. Once accepted, the patrols would require uniforms and funding. By claiming to lead a 'white revolution', the NF expresses its racist and deceptive ideology.

IMPACT OF EXTERNAL EVENTS

Sooner or later, the New Zealand economy will experience a series of financial/economic crises caused by the deficit-riddled US economy. The US is the leading debtor nation, heavily dependent on foreign sources of oil and committed to military domination of the Middle East and the Euro-Asian continent. Increasing oil con-

sumption and declining supplies are estimated to clash as early as 2012.

With that possibility in mind, the ruling New Zealand comprador capitalist class cannot be relied upon. This minority holds state power to increase its wealth by attracting an inflow of foreign investment. Surrender and subservience to foreign capital is a major feature of this class. Its more aggressive, subservient sector is prepared to take any action to preserve its rule, and profit-making, including sending Kiwi troops to shed their blood for Uncle Sam's grab for oil in Iraq.

This class will not hesitate to use violence to force workers to bear the burden of any crisis. To answer the question = 'can a fascist party take office in Aotearoa/New Zealand?', the answer is, yes, it is possible. However, this development is not inevitable, providing the working class and all democratic forces respond in good time. There are positive indications. Racist policies and conduct are being challenged recently in Wellington and Christchurch

(Recommended reading: The United Front Against Fascism by G.Dimitrov)

Foreshore and Seabed Act Legalises Theft

Prior to the Foreshore & Seabed Bill, Maori held Customary Rights. They had not been extinguished. When Maori were cleared by the High Court to test their claims in Court, the Labour Government stepped in to prevent the Law Courts from hearing further Maori submissions.

Once having denied Maori access to the Courts, the Labour Government introduced a Bill to declare the foreshore and seabed Crown property.

WHAT HAS THE GOVERNMENT ACHIEVED?

- Maori have been denied access to due process of the existing law. This disturbs many Pakeha.
- Maori ownership has been confiscated. Customary Rights have been extinguished.
- The illegal ownership and occupation of the foreshore and seabed by private interests, local and Central government has been approved.
- The sale of the foreshore and seabed to private interests is possible.
- The Government has ignored the Treaty of Waitangi, the founding constitutional document.
- Parliament has again demonstrated its class nature, as commercial interests benefit at the expense of Maori and workers.
- Parliamentary deception reached new

lows, as the issue was presented as ensuring access to beaches.

- The Labour Government has created divisions between Maori and Pakeha, among Maori and among Pakeha – the old tactic of 'divide-and-rule'.
- The Parliamentary Labour Party has ignored an historic opportunity to set an example of international significance in formulating an Agreement, acceptable to all, following adequate consultation.
- The Government has created a new round of grievances by means of a bad law.

WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

In the short term, some will rely upon parliament, hoping that amendments to the Act may be negotiated. Others will stress public activities, such as marches and rallies. Whatever option is followed, the Act will engender continued resentment and resistance, whether in the Courts, on the streets or during general elections. And not only among Maori. Some will invite the Governor-General to withhold consent in the next few weeks.

The Government's intention to examine processes relating to a Constitutional Review should be given due attention. This step indicates that the Government is aiming to set in concrete the Foreshore and Seabed Act and the rule of a minority class of profiteers.

In the long term, the two principal social groups, Maori and the working class, may consider signing a Second Treaty. Both these social groups experience 'theft'.

Every week, the working class produces values equivalent to wages in the first part of the working week. In the second part of the working week, surplus values are produced for which wage earners receive nothing. Both Maori and the wage earners are the victims of 'theft'. Like Maori, wage earners have no access to Courts to stop this 'theft'.

Only by possessing state power will the working class and Maori end this exploitation, the loss of customary and trade union rights, persistent unemployment and increasing poverty.

Only when Maori and the working class unite to establish a Democratic State System, led by the working class and based on their alliance, will Maori achieve recognition of their customary rights to the foreshore and seabed, and wage earners end their exploitation. Monopoly capitalism is hostile to the peoples' rights, interests and well being.

At an appropriate time, the Second Treaty or an Understanding will be drawn up. It will acknowledge the common interests and the mutual benefits for both of working together to gain state power.

Working Class Action Can Halt Rise of Fascism of right Politics, Far Right Politics and 'Creeping' Fascism

The New Zealand people still has a strong democratic tradition, despite all efforts to extinguish it. Too many people are aware of the atrocities and genocidal occupation of European countries by Nazi Germany. Racist ideologies, symbolized by the nazi swastika are repugnant to most Kiwis. There is deep public suspicion that the US reasons for the invasion and occupation of Iraq involves the interests of US oil corporations.

The absence of any immediate prospect of a fascist government in New Zealand should not be a pretext for ignoring warning signs. Concrete assessment of events, trends and tendencies should be a feature of political work so that appropriate action takes place. There is a significant class struggle taking place in the ideological, political and economic fields against the working class and all working people. For some time, the spin doctors and their media outlets have been striving to undermine the place and role of collectives in the daily life of the people by emphasising 'personalities' and selfish individualism

Relying on the pretext of the 'war on terrorism', the US Bush administration has pressured the New Zealand Government to increase state surveillance powers that infringe on human rights. The Greens Party has been prominent in alerting the public to such legislation.

The almost 2 year imprisonment of Mr. A Zaoui on the basis of secret evidence is repugnant to centuries-old attitudes of justice. The continuing public campaign deserves increasing support.

The so-called Far Right and Centre-Right parties (Act and National) plan a new attack on trade union rights and working conditions for the purpose of increasing corporate profits to even higher record levels. This prospect, plus the low level of trade union membership, does require urgent attention. The Council of Trade Union leadership is giving some attention to this challenge. The fact is that low union membership is inevitably accom-

panied by low wage levels. If neglected by trade unionists, dissatisfaction among non-unionised workers can turn them towards far right demagogues or movements with fascist tendencies.

Efforts by the 'Unite' union activists to organise low paid workers and to encourage them to rely on their collective strength promises positive results.

For some 164 years, Maori have responded to various forms of oppression and discrimination, thereby enhancing the general inter-connectedness and interdependence of the vital interests of Maori and non-Maori. Currently, Maori are leading the struggle in defence of the Treaty and the call for dialogue over the proposed foreshore and seabed bill. Again, many non-Maori prefer a mutually-agreed settlement through dialogue in preference to the imposing of a decision by Government against the wishes of Maori. Seeking a mutually agreed outcome through dialogue is contrary to the far right and fascist-like method of forcibly imposing one's will on others.

An area of special importance when considering defences against the growth of fascism is the accountability of parliament and particularly, the Cabinet. Should Cabinet be allowed to make significant decisions without reference to parliament, then precedents are established that could be used by far right or neo-fascist parties.

Cabinet has the authority to sign trade deals without reference to parliament, despite the fact that the trade agreement may include the surrender of sovereignty and the provision of benefits to the other party at the expense of New Zealand jobs, industries and enterprises. The Action, Research & Education Network of Aotearoa (ARENA) is an organization committed to monitoring the World Trade Organisation and the conduct of New Zealand governments in their trading relations with other countries. Detailed research is followed up with recommendations to the public on vari-

ous types of responses and involvement. The lack of full accountability to and consultation with the public by Government's is an ongoing concern of ARENA..

Campaign Against Foreign Control (CAFC) of Christchurch has continued with research into the role and performance of foreign-owned enterprises and the repeated introduction of legislation by successive governments favouring the expansion of foreign investments in land, enterprises and resources of Aotearoa/new Zealand.

In all areas of activities, in health, education, environment, social welfare, justice, peace and anti-racism, there are a formidable number of committees, trusts and groups established by communities to promote their causes. In one form or another, they are dealing with the affects of corporate power and greed or government policies protecting these corporations.

There are whole range of issues, from health care, to job safety, child poverty to adequate housing which are worsening, even though there is some economic expansion. The people's interests require the continued growth of their organisations.

But there is one organisation demanding the attention from the working class – the building of a Communist Party armed with the scientific theory and methods of Marxism-Leninism, capable of making a concrete class analysis of the actual conditions prevailing in Aotearoa/new Zealand. The need to build the movement to isolate and expel US corporations, reclaim ownership of former publicly-owned enterprises and work energetically for world peace, full employment, national independence and socialism is an immediate task

Scientific Socialism

Many groups and individuals claim to be 'socialist'. This conduct has two aspects. It can be a positive response to the continuing crises of capitalism, with its wars, poverty and racism, as the people search for an alternative option to the tremendous waste in capitalism. But it also leads to confusion because of the divisions and competition among various kinds of 'socialism'.

As early as the 17th Century, socialist ideas existed in the writings of Lilbourne and Winstanley at the time of Cromwell. Later, Robert Owen in England, experimented in establishing socialist communities. They were described as utopian because they were impracticable. Nevertheless, the Owenian critique of capitalism helped Marx to develop his ideas.

In the mid-19th century, on the basis of a comprehensive study of history, Marx and Engels, were the first to predict socialism as the logical outcome of the law-governed development of socio-economic formations. They found that a new class linked to new methods of production, eventually overcame the resistance of the old ruling class. Slavery was followed by feudalism, which in turn was replaced by capitalism. Capitalism would be replaced by socialism, as the working class would mobilise to end exploitation and later, introduce the classless society of communism.

The driving force of these social transformations has been the class struggle between exploiters and exploited = between slave owner and slave, between feudal landowner and serf, and between monopoly capitalist and wage earner. All class societies have been based on exploitation and have antagonistic class contradictions. Marx and Engels, for the first time, armed an exploited class with a science for undertaking social change and ending exploitation. As a consequence, this science and its leading personalities have been subjected to persistent opposition by imperialists and their collaborators, a practice that indirectly endorses the value of this science to the working class.

The collective name for the sciences involved is Marxism-Leninism. This term embraces Dialectical and Historical Materialism, Materialist Dialectics, Marxist Political Economy and the Marxist Theory of Knowledge. On this evidence of a thoroughly integrated world outlook, Marxists claim that their 'socialism' is scientific socialism. It is a science because its theories can be verified through practice to determine their truth.

EARLY SOCIALISM IN AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND

Interest in socialism started over 100 years ago. There were differing views how to achieve a socialist society. The early members of the Labour Party were optimistic that socialism could be introduced, gradually, once a parliamentary majority had been achieved. History has proved that this view was based on deception.

Following the success of the first socialist revolutionary struggle in Russia in 1917, the former Communist Party of New Zealand was formed, being guided by the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao ZeDong. Its history has rich lessons for building a revolutionary working class party. Fabian socialism popularised by the Webbs, B.Shaw and H.G.Wells gave priority to discussion and publicising socialist ideas. Christian 'socialists' is another trend, and plays a positive role.

As the general crisis of capitalism continues, the attraction of socialism is bound to increase.

SOCIAL SOURCE OF DIFFERENT KINDS OF SOCIALISM'

Socialism and socialist ideas are not confined to the working class. While it suffers the greatest exploitation, there are other classes that are affected by the greed and actions of the monopoly corporations. For example, members of the lower middle class face increasing insecurity, the loss of their former social standing and their decline into the ranks of the wage earners. So, some members of this class adopt socialism, but they do so to ensure that their small class leads the struggle for socialism and not the working class.

Certain features of lower middle class socialism stand out. Because it is opposed to the working class leading the struggle for socialism, it must oppose the experiences of the working class of Russia, the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam in building socialism.

Otherwise, it would have to acknowledge that the working class was the leading class, and not their small class whose interests they strive to protect.

Because it opposes working leadership in the struggle for socialism, this lower middle class socialist movement must deny the role of the working class's own party, the Communist Party, and the contribution of outstanding Marxist-Leninist leaders, including Lenin, Stalin, Mao ZeDong and

Castro. As the revered leader of the Russian revolution, Lenin's writings sum up the experiences of the Russian working class and its party. But many 'socialists' ignore these writings. Marx is even described as a 'socialist', instead of a 'communist', in an attempt to give political legitimacy to lower middle class or petty bourgeois socialism.

CHARACTERISTICS OF WORKING CLASS SOCIALISM

The proletariat, the industrial workers linked to advanced forms of production, have an interest in ending their exploitation. This class has a high sense of discipline and is capable of great sacrifices.

No other class has such attributes. It is capable of uniting with all other oppressed strata to bring about social change and oppose the ruling class, when that class resorts to violence.

As each class has its own political party, the party of the working class is usually called a 'Communist Party'. The reason for this is that from the standpoint of Marxism, socialism is a preparatory stage, the first stage of communism. The task of the Communist Party is to assist the working class to seize state power by integrating the universal truths of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete conditions of the particular country. The party organisation is based on the working class principle of democratic centralism, in which majority rules and lower committees submit to higher committees.

Public ownership of major enterprises is introduced. Step by step, public ownership replaces private ownership over a lengthy period. Exploitation of wage labour ends. Under socialism, the principle of distribution is – 'each gives according to his/her ability, and receives according to the amount of work done'. In the higher stage of communism – 'each gives according to his/her ability and receives according to his/her need.'

With State power in the hands of the working class, the people are encouraged to participate in local and central government affairs and all forms of community activities. For the first time, the former exploited classes, led by the working class are now the 'ruling class' and are able to practice real democracy and not sham democracy. The satisfaction of the people's needs is the driving force of production, not private profit.

Using the Right Methods to Unite All Who Can Be United

Until US imperialism is halted and defeated, the people of Aotearoa/New Zealand face a virtual life and death struggle to preserve world peace and halt the degradation of the environment. Efforts will be needed over a lengthy period to unite all who can be united. Only the unity of the greatest number will suffice. Methods do exist that will achieve this result.

LEARNING FROM KARL MARX.

In 1865, there was an 'epidemic of strikes and a general clamour for a rise in wages'. The view that wage increases cause price increases and that trade unions were harmful to workers was being widely circulated by Citizen Weston. Karl Marx disagreed with this theory and presented his ideas at the meeting of the General Council of the First International in June 1865.

The focus of this writing is not on Marx's analysis of Citizen Weston's views, but on Marx's conduct and attitude towards Citizen Weston, another Council member, whose views Marx considered 'theoretically false and practically dangerous'.

Marx acknowledged (1) that Citizen Weston thought he was defending the interests of the working class; (2) that Citizen Weston had presented publicly his opinions that were 'most unpopular with the working class'; (3) that all present should 'highly honor ... such an exhibition of moral courage': and (4) that Marx hoped that at the conclusion of his address to the Council, Citizen Weston will find Marx agreeing with the 'just idea' in Citizen Weston's thesis.

By separating 'motive' (Citizen Weston 'thought' he was defending the interests of the working class) from 'practice' (the practical significance of views that were 'practically dangerous'), Marx was able to keep attention of his audience focused on Citizen Weston's 'theoretically false' views.

Marx went even further by inviting all present to 'highly honour ... such an exhibition of moral courage', when Citizen Weston had publicly communicated his views that were 'most unpopular with the working class'. Here again, Marx made a big effort to ensure the focus was kept on an erroneous theory and not on the author. He was attempting to win over Citizen Weston and any of his sup-

porters by avoiding personal attacks. Finally, Marx held out the possibility that at the conclusion of the address, that they may find 'common ground'. (Source: 'Wages, Price and Profit', page 3, Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1970).

THE EXPERIENCE OF THE WORKING CLASS OF CHINA

Even though the Chinese working class never numbered more than 2 million, it found the path to socialism, with the guidance of the Communist Party of China. To advance to socialism, Chinese workers and their party had to make investigations and a serious study of all other classes and strata and the contradictions among them in order to find common ground. They were able to identify the main enemy and the various oppressed classes.

Being in such a small minority, the Chinese working class and its Communist Party had to discover the methods for uniting all who could be united. Unless this task was accomplished, the Chinese working class could not play its leadership role. When the Japanese invaders expanded their occupation, additional classes and strata were ready to contribute to the common struggle for liberation.

In a certain sense, the social situation became even more complicated. But, on the basis of practical experience, the Communist Party of China developed the method - 'unity-criticism - unity'. It was widely used in all organisations, institutions, factories and schools.

UNITY - CRITICISM - UNITY

Without unity, there is no strength. The proof of this assessment is confirmed by the continual efforts to divide and disrupt the working class and people's movements.

The first step is to affirm the desire for 'unity'. Unless there is a real, genuine and committed desire for unity, unity will not be achieved and a critical examination of practice will fail.

When there is a genuine desire for unity, genuine efforts will also be made to critically examine practice in the next stage. On the basis of this critical examination, a new unity will emerge. The process of 'unity-criticism-unity' will have been completed.

By relying on this method in the years immediately prior to 1949, the Communist Party of China and the Chinese working class and people achieved their Liberation.

LEARNING THE HARD WAY IN NZ.

In the period 1967-72, an intense inner-party struggle unfolded within the former Communist Party of New Zealand. While there was 'talk' of unity, there was no real desire for unity. Each faction desired the capitulation, if not the expulsion of the other. The working class method of 'unity-criticism-unity' was not followed. Name-calling, labeling and subjective accusations, typical of the lower middle class ideology and methods replaced the working class method of giving priority to facts. The CPNZ was finally liquidated, an outcome prepared by the failure to practice 'unity-criticism-unity', the method practiced by revolutionary Marxists from Marx to Mao Zedong.

FIND COMMON GROUND AND PUTTING ASIDE DIFFERENCES

Within the community, there are many differing views; this should not be a surprise, as it is a natural outcome of the complicated influences at work on the job or in the community. While there will be differing views expressed, common ground will emerge after discussion. One must be prepared for hearing views that express agreement and views that differ. To learn where to find common ground, one must be a patient listener.

The 'left-sectarians' are noted for concentrating on differences, their impatience, and ignoring the common ground that emerges. The rational approach to building unity of action is to respect the views of others, concentrate on the issue that unites, and put aside differences for discussion at another time. Only through trial and error will experience confirm the correct working class methods of building unity. Unity-criticism-unity is a democratic method based on persuasion and education.

(Recommended reading: 'Wages, Price and Profit' - K.Marx ; 'On Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People' - Mao Zedong - SW Vol. 5); 'A Dialectical Approach to Inner-Party Unity' = same)

'Colossus – The Rise and Fall of the American Empire' - By Niall Ferguson

The title attracted this reviewer, because it appeared to be anti-imperialist. Not so. The author is a British Professor of Financial History and has a number of appointments at English and American universities.

He compares the history and lessons of the British Empire with the American Empire. Although his research is selective and one-sided, there are many interesting facts regarding the conduct of US imperialism. He lists US army casualties in various US wars, but ignores the heavy casualties suffered by the civilians of the invaded country.

The Professor is a supporter of 'empire' and liberal imperialism! His book is = (1) an apology for UK and US imperialism; (2) he appeals to US imperialism 'to do a better rather than a worse job of policing an unruly world than their British predecessors' (page 302); and he supports the role of US imperialism to invade countries to impose democracy and freedom.

Here, we have the unmistakable fear of the privileged British middle class. Their future security depends, not on a world free of armed aggressions, but on the cautious use of power by the US that avoids creating crises and awakening the wrath of the people the world over. The term 'liberal imperialism' is phoney. All imperialisms engage in violence or threaten violence.

In the author's view, 'the world needs an effective liberal empire and the US is the best candidate for the job' (Page 301). It is depressing to observe an academic prostituting his talents to win support for the most aggressive fascist-like and even greater menace than Nazi Germany.

Unlike the millions who took to the streets opposing the US invasion of Iraq, this pathetic academic is unable to conceal the class arrogance, typical of this former leading colonial power.

When listing the three major deficits confronting the US – the economic deficit, the manpower deficit and the 'attention deficit' he is describing major antagonistic contradictions inherent in an imperialist

power that can only be resolved by its demolition.

The economic deficit: 'since 1985, ... the US has gone from being a net international creditor to being the world's biggest debtor'. The author fails to acknowledge the enormously increased military expenditure on weapons of mass destruction as the major contributor to budget deficits. Instead he points to = 'The true feet of clay of the American Colossus are the impeding fiscal crises of the systems of Medicare and Social Security.' (page 29)

The author acknowledges that the richest country in the world cannot afford to care for the health and welfare needs of its citizens, while spending billions on new atomic and other weapons of mass destruction..

The US manpower deficit: the author is 'perplexed about the apparent lack of American combat effective troops' (page 292) To overcome this deficit, the lack of adequate manpower for the US empire's army, the author displays his class cynicism. His solution = 'there are 4 million unemployed, 2 million in US prisons, and illegal immigrants.' If one adds together the illegal immigrants, the jobless and the convicts, there is surely ample raw material for a larger American Army' (page 292).

The majority of his army would be working people, mainly people of colour. 60 per cent of gaol inmates are minor drug offenders. White middle class and upper class Americans would escape the draft.

The 'attention' deficit: 'The United States has acquired an empire, but the Americans themselves lack the imperial cast of mind. They would rather build shopping malls than nations. They crave for themselves protracted old age and dread, even for other Americans who have volunteered for military service, untimely death in battle' (page 29) Comment: Fancy wanting 'a protracted old age' and opposing 'untimely death in battle' for American young people. Inevitably, human aspirations come into conflict with the inhuman values and greed of imperialist corporations and their billionaire owners.

The attention deficit refers to the decline in American public support for US aggressive wars, once the public have had experience of the war's progress and aims.

The book may be borrowed at the local library? It is worth reading for the study of the class standpoint of one sector of the British middle class, now dependent for its survival on US Imperialism. It explains one source of support for Prime Minister Blair.

Book Two; 'Crossing the Rubicon. The Decline of American Empire and the End of the Age of Oil. By Michael C. Ruppert.

Hopefully, the library will get this book..

An extraordinary assembly of facts on peak oil and its influence on the conduct of the Bush administration and US corporations before and after 9/11.

-Don Ross.

Marxist-Leninist Literature Available:

Books by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao Zedong.

**Full catalogue available, Write to:
Books, PO Box 807, Whangarei.**

Strive to Unite!

Ka Kohi Te Toe Ka Whai Te Marama Tanga

(through the sharing of knowledge, enlightenment will follow)

Struggle is published quarterly representing the viewpoint of the Organisation for Marxist Unity. Struggle aims to provide a Marxist analysis of class struggle, politics and economy of Aotearoa/New Zealand.

The immediate task is to encourage working people and all possible forces to unite in a Patriotic and Democratic United Front led by the working class to remove the stranglehold of foreign monopoly capitalists and their local agents, by establishing a People's Democratic State System. This stage of the advance to Socialism is determined by the

objectively existing class contradictions, classes and laws of social development. The more comprehensive the competition of this stage, the more favourable will be the situation for the further advance to a socialist society.

Struggle emphasises the necessity of studying the history of class struggle in Aotearoa/New Zealand from the stand-point of the revolutionary working class science of Marxism-Leninism, in which the writing of Mao Zedong have made a major contribution. Struggle works for the building of a Communist Party based on the

ideology of Marxism-Leninism, a party that develops its strategy, tactics and methods corresponding to the needs of the situation in Aotearoa/New Zealand by concrete analysis: a party free from doctrinaire Marxism, sectarianism and the influence of social democracy, a party whose members are committed to serving the people.

PLEASE NOTE: Send all editorial material, opinions, criticisms (with date and source) to OMU, Box 807, Whangarei.

Published by Struggle Publications, ISSN 07 10-7623.

Subscriptions:

Post this coupon to Books, PO Box 807, Whangarei.

Rates: Individual \$8.00, Institutions \$10.00, Overseas \$12.00.

Please make cheque payable to Struggle Publications.

I enclose \$ _____ for 12 months subscription (4 issues).

Name: _____

Address: _____
