

Revolutionary Worker

ORGAN OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS GROUP OF ZIMBABWE (RWG-ZIM)

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ZIMBABWE:

ATTACKS ON WORKERS AND THE POOR, FIGHT CAPITALISM, IMPERIALISM AND DICTATORSHIP!



July, 2016 protest (Source: malawi24.com)

We are living in a very significant period in the development of society. Ever since the advent of capitalism in the late 16th century the distinct choices facing humanity have never been so acute. The choice between “socialism and barbarism” is now a practical possibility. We now live in the age of acute crisis characterised by the emergence of protectionist, far right and semi fascist forces and threats globally especially in key capitalist states. The general revolutionary period of 2011 to 2012, ignited by the austerity measures forced on the poor masses since the 2008 crisis, have gradually given way to counter revolutionary tendencies and threats. This general outlook has found concrete expression in the political and economic developments in Zimbabwe since 2008 and more recently since 2013 after the latest round of general elections won by the incumbent ZANU (PF) government, which has been in power since the attainment of formal political independence in 1980.

Zimbabwe has been experiencing an economic downturn ever since the dawn of the new millennium. This was made worse by the 2008 great recession which made a bad situation worse. After an initial stabilisation following the Government of National Unity (GNU) of 2009, between ZANU (PF) and the two MDC formations, the situation got worse after the 2013 general elections won by the ZANU-PF party of President Robert Mugabe. Industries have closed en masse resulting in massive unemployment and the spiralling growth of the informal sector. This has led to fissures within the ruling party on how best to resolve the crisis of capitalism in a backward semi colonial state. One faction (Lacoste led by the current co vice president Mnangagwa) in ZANU-PF is advocating for rapprochement with western imperialism, opening up the business

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May Day: Workers of the World Unite!

Smash Capitalist Imperialism & Stop its Drive to a Third World War!



May Day (Source: Wikimedia Commons)

The world is in the throes of a crisis of overproduction of capital caused by the falling rate of profit. It is exacerbated by the rise of China and Russia as rival imperialist powers to the declining US led bloc. We regard the crisis as proof of the self-destruction of capitalism in its death throes. It can only get worse as it destroys masses of accumulated capital and drives down the costs of labor which in past crises has always led to imperialist wars. Today the severity of the crisis is compounded by the fast approaching capitalist-fuelled climate catastrophe and the end of the human species. This crisis can only end in the destruction of a Third World War and climate catastrophe, or as the World Socialist Revolution. To stop the drive to imperialist war, ecological collapse and the end of humanity, imperialism must die!

Imperialism's war on workers

For imperialism to survive it must make the masses pay for its crisis. This means attacking their livelihood and their lives! This is shown by the huge downward pressure on the

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space and introducing a raft of democratic rights as a solution to the crisis with another (G40 led by Mugabe's wife) advocating the deepening of relations with Chinese imperialism, instituting protectionist measures and tightening the ruling party's grip on political dissent.

In order to conquer a decent life workers need to fight for a mass workers party that represents and fight for the workers, poor masses and peasants. Workers would need to fight inside the party for a Transitional Programme and for the smashing of state power. That is the reason we welcome the recent launch of the Zimbabwe Communist Party (ZCP) which claims to be the vanguard of the working people and the poor. However, a look at the launch press statement and preceding documents suggest otherwise. Firstly, by defining itself as Marxist-Leninist the ZCP appears to be inspired by the Stalinist 3rd international which played a reactionary role of stifling revolutions across the world historically and even now. Secondly, by making a political distinction between fighting for democracy and fighting for socialism, the ZCP appears to be following the classical Stalinist two stage theory as opposed to the theory of permanent revolution. A proper evaluation of the ZCP can only be possible when substantive documents become available and as they engage in practical work.

The great recession of 2008 caused by a crisis of profitability resulted in an acute crisis of global capitalism with the major imperialist economies forced to bail out banks and firms. The cost of the bailout has been forced on the shoulders of the working and oppressed masses through vicious austerity measures. This attempt has however failed to resolve the crisis. Even the so called emerging economies like Brazil and India have also been hit hard. The situation in semi colonial countries like Zimbabwe is worse as they face the double burden of imperialist domination and capitalist recession resulting in a vicious spiral of economic downturn. As a reaction to the failure of the austerity measures a section of bourgeoisie politicians and strategists is now proposing and implementing protectionist and neo Keynesian measures to try and ease the effects of the crisis. This, however, is bound to fail as well because the fundamental dynamic of a historic fall in profitability cannot be addressed by these superficial measures.

As in other countries, the bosses and elites in Zimbabwe have been forced to place the burden of paying for the crisis on the shoulders of the poor and workers. The working class has essentially saved the economy from imploding through slave wages and a massive attack on their working conditions. The destruction of social services initiated in the early 1990s has been intensified despite occasional election time and populist pro poor rhetoric by the anti-workers regime which is supported in essence by the whole spectrum of mainstream opposition parties and civic groups. The formal unemployment rate of above 90% has created a pressure point for forcing those still in work to accept slave wages and going for months without pay despite bosses and senior managers awarding themselves obscene pay rises on a regular basis. In the public service sector the workers have been attacked and victimised left, right and centre with the latest being the non-payment of the 2016 bonuses by now.

Clearly the balance of force in class terms is in favour of the bosses and imperialism against workers and the poor masses. The 2015 Supreme Court ruling on the dismissal of workers on three months notice dealt a big blow to the workers with over 3000 losing their jobs instantly and many living in perpetual fear and confusion. This is on the back of the decimation of the labour movement through its co-option by the major MDC-T party and the general deceptive nature of labour leaders especially in times of crisis. The splits in the union federations along partisan and opportunistic lines has made a bad situation worse. The umbrella body that represents the civil servants, the Apex council, is no exception to the opportunistic bickering and side shows at the grim expense of workers. Government has taken advantage of the situation by going directly to workers in an attempt to divide the unionised against non-unionised workers as well as set up workers against their unions. The blame has to be put squarely on the labour bureaucracy which is prostrating itself to the government and bosses for selfish reasons.

"The world is in the throes of a crisis of overproduction of capital caused by the falling rate of profit. It is exacerbated by the rise of China and Russia as rival imperialist powers to the declining US led bloc. We regard the crisis as proof of the self-destruction of capitalism in its death throes. It can only get worse as it destroys masses of accumulated capital and drives down the costs of labour which in past crises has always led to imperialist wars. Today the severity of the crisis is compounded by the fast approaching capitalist-fuelled climate catastrophe and the end of the human species. This crisis can only end in the destruction of a Third World War and climate catastrophe, or as the World Socialist Revolution. To stop the drive to imperialist war, ecological collapse and the end of humanity, imperialism must die!

....

For the international proletariat, the way out of the crisis is to resist all the imperialist attacks on every front in every country and build a revolutionary communist international to overthrow the rotten capitalist imperialist system. There is no lack of will and capacity to fightback by the world's workers. Every day makes thousands martyrs of our class. We can see the spontaneous resistance taking many forms in the struggle for jobs, social and economic rights and the defence of basic human rights, from opposition to cop killers from Ferguson to Baltimore, from the fascists in the Donbas, from the dictator al Assad and Islamic State in Aleppo, from ANC police thugs in Marikana, and from popular front betrayals in Brazil, South Africa and Greece." - [LCC, May Day 2017 Statement](#)

- 1) **We demand a sliding scale of wages and prices and employment for all who can work; working conditions should improve for all workers!**
- 2) **We demand the introduction of state projects to employ all the unemployed; the government must stop the attack on the vendors!**
- 3) **Land must be distributed to all poor peasants together with a state bank to provide inputs to all small farmers!**
- 4) **Build councils of unemployed workers to fight for the unemployed and all workers!**

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- 5) **To provide jobs for all big and imperialist assets must be nationalised and put under workers control and self-management!**
- 6) **Workers form strike committees to lead the resistance to the growing attacks on the wages and working conditions of the poor and the livelihood of the majority poor!**
- 7) **We call for free and quality health care, Housing and Education for all!**
- 8) **Workers form workers defence guards for defence against state violence!**
- 9) **For a workers state that defends workers, peasants and the poor masses against the local and foreign capitalists!**
- 10) **No to dictatorship and state persecution of activists!**
- 11) **For a workers and peasants' government on the basis of the armed people to implement decisions that benefit the workers and the poor as part of a Socialist federation of Southern Africa!**
- 12) **For a new WORLD PARTY of socialist revolution based on the TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM of 1938 to lead the revolution to end capitalism and open the road to socialism!**

Liaison Committee of Communists:

RWG (Zim), CWG (A/NZ), RWG (BR), CWG (USA)

Periodicals of the Liaison Committee of Communists:

Revolutionary Worker (Paper of RWG-Zimbabwe)

Guerreiro da classe Trabalhadora (Paper of the RWG-BR)

Class Struggle (Paper of the CWG-NZ) Class War (Paper of the CWG-US)

Class Warrior (Theoretical Journal of the Liaison Committee of Communists-LCC)

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masses living standards and attacks on their rights, their historic gains, and their very existence. It takes many forms:

(a) An expanding reserve army of unemployed from Asia, Africa and Latin America where most of the working population is in the informal economy. Everywhere casualising contracts such as 'zero hours' are targeting especially black, female and young low-paid or no-paid workers. In Europe and the US today up to half of youth are unemployed.

(b) Attacks on indigenous peoples' struggles to survive and defend their natural resources from outright theft and plunder as we see from the Amazon to Australia, from the Zimbabwe diamond mines to the West Papuan independence struggle and the US First Nation peoples' stands against fracking and capitalist climate catastrophe.

(c) Rising flows of migrant workers denied basic rights to life as in the case of African migrants deported by the ANC from South Africa, dying by the thousands trying to reach Europe, and trapped in concentration camps in Australia, Greece and France. And the millions of political refugees fleeing invasions and wars.

(d) Attacks on trade unions to break them so that workers are super-exploited and killed in unsafe conditions as in Bangladesh and Argentina; attacks by the bureaucratic thugs of the state, killer cops on the union ranks everywhere such as miners of Las Heras, Argentina, and Bolivia, and the massacre at Marikana.

(e) Vicious austerity measures imposed everywhere that destroy state welfare support for the working class in health, education, housing and social benefits driving workers into poverty ridden slums, early death or suicide as in the UK and Greece, driving down wages and restoring 19th century labour conditions.

(f) Rising fascist movements among petty bourgeois and lumpen elements that ferment divisions in the working class over jobs, housing, etc., that lead to ethnic, religious, xenophobic attacks in Europe and elsewhere which prepare the masses as cannon fodder for countless proxy wars from South Sudan to Ukraine.

(g) Imperialist invasions and occupations leading to proxy wars that pit workers of one or other nation, nationality, ethnicity or religion, and gender to fight one another. The proxy wars are most extreme in Africa (South Sudan) MENA (Syria, Iraq, Yemen) and Eurasia (Ukraine). They prepare the road to the Third World War.

By driving the proletariat into poverty and dividing it against itself as hostile factions, and in numerous wars, the imperialists and their national bourgeois agents desperately force down the costs of labour in the hope of restoring their profits. But so far they have not succeeded. The resistance is kicking back everywhere.

The proletariat fights to survive

For the international proletariat, the way out of the crisis is to resist all the imperialist attacks on every front in every

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country and build a revolutionary communist international to overthrow the rotten capitalist imperialist system. There is no lack of will and capacity to fightback by the world's workers. Every day makes thousands martyrs of our class. We can see the spontaneous resistance taking many forms in the struggle for jobs, social and economic rights and the defence of basic human rights, from opposition to cop killers from Ferguson to Baltimore, from the fascists in the Donbas, from the dictator al Assad and Islamic State in Aleppo, from ANC police thugs in Marikana, and from popular front betrayals in Brazil, South Africa and Greece.



Haymarket Martyrs' Monument

Yet, inevitably – whether this resistance is in the form of the fight against austerity, casualisation (the “gig economy”), for the rights of indigenous, blacks, women, of migrant workers, for the rights of unions, and opposition to proxy wars, invasions and occupations – spontaneous resistance is everywhere trapped by the false friends of the working class; the labour bureaucracy in the unions, the reformist left parties, and most treacherously the self-proclaimed communists and fake Trotskyists who betray the proletariat by covering for the open agents of the bourgeoisie in the ranks of the working class itself. To mobilise and organise a united world proletariat, first the working class must be freed from its treacherous bureaucratic misleaders who suck militant workers into fatal political alliances with the bourgeoisie under the banner of the popular front (from the ANC in South Africa, the PT in Brazil,

the PSUV in Venezuela, to Syriza in Greece, the Green Party wannabes internationally) that ties their hands as the crisis deepens and the fascist gangs and paramilitaries are unleashed by the bosses to try to smash the international revolutionary proletariat and stop it carrying out its historic task of overthrowing the capitalist system.

For a revolutionary program and party!

To bring an end to the capitalist imperialist crisis which now threatens the destruction of humanity and nature we need a socialist revolution. That needs a revolutionary **transitional program** of demands that are raised to meet the immediate urgent needs of workers for jobs, housing, education, health, etc., fought for by workers, for the workers.

These fights bring workers up against the power of the bosses state and its repressive forces, that denies migrants rights, kills militant workers, bans unions, jails or kills protesters, and incites workers to kill one another in pogroms and wars. This proves the need for workers to build their own class power based upon their organs independent of the bureaucracy and bourgeoisie - councils, militias, and most of all an international Leninist/Trotskyist party that provides the leadership to the revolutionary proletariat.

The revolutionary party has to be everywhere that workers are resisting the crisis, challenging all the bosses' agents at every point, and helping to organise workers into their own organs of workers power and breaking out of the popular front with the bourgeoisie. Our aim must be to name, expose and kick all these class traitors out of the class and to create a new leadership of class fighters who are won to the program of permanent revolution, capable of turning strike action into political general strikes, and then into victorious insurrections to overthrow the capitalist state and impose a Government of the workers and all the oppressed!

Workers of the World Unite!

For a new World Party of Revolution!

For Workers Councils and Militias!

For Workers Council Governments!

**For a World Socialist Revolution
and a Communist Future!**

Liaison Committee of Communists May 1st 2017



The following is an English translation taken from Adelante!! No. 4, (press of the Liga Comunista de los Trabajadores, Argentina - <http://lct-revolucionproletaria.blogspot.com/>) written by comrade Marcelo Ríos and reprinted here with permission:

Venezuela:

Neither Maduro, nor the reactionary right!

LET'S ORGANIZE WORKERS AND POOR PEOPLES COMMITTEES TO FIGHT FOR A WORKERS' SOLUTION TO THE VENEZUELAN CRISIS!



Maduro's failed attempt in March to suppress Congress had adverse political implications in the region and in Venezuela itself. It came to the point where Venezuela was excluded by MERCOSUR, and more and more countries of the OAS criticized the repression of the mobilizations, the attacks on opposition leaders and the limitation of the civil rights guarantees to the citizens under a state of emergency. The subsequent massive marches and the development of more Bonapartist traits of the regime only put Venezuela in a situation of imminent civil war because the reactionary bourgeois opposition and pro-imperialists are acquiring greater influence over the masses, and the Chavistas have only developed a discourse for themselves and neither a tactic or the political clout needed to unmask, or at the least severely discredit the reaction.

The underlying problem is that Chavismo has been a failure for the development of the national bourgeoisie. And it is symptomatic that it failed despite having one of the most important petroleum reserves in the world. This proves that without organic development of national Capital, without the transfer of petroleum profits to mining and agricultural investment, the policy for development of the national bourgeoisie is throwing margaritas to pigs.

The basic problem is that Chavism failed to develop the national bourgeoisie so much. And what is symptomatic is that it failed to have one of the most important oil reserves in the world. This shows that without organic development of capital is to throw margaritas to the pigs want to transfer to the industry the oil, mining or agrarian income to the development of a bourgeoisie.

This is economic failure, but it is actually the failure of chavism as a political movement. It is accompanied after the death of Chávez by a political leadership of less capac-

ity. Maduro finds no exit from the political and economic impasse which he is stuck in, but instead flees forward leaving him increasingly less room for maneuver. Faced with these new mobilizations the Maduro Government speaks of new elections for Governors, but knowing that he was likely to lose them, Maduro had already postponed the elections, which had to be held in December of last year. So now when Maduro refers to the "national dialogue" and speaks of "elections," seeking to decompress his situation, he has already lost any credibility. And the employers' opposition no longer only demands elections to Governors, but has taken as a central slogan the call for "general elections," with which it continues pressing with more demonstrations.

The political way out isn't via a demand for general elections nor a constituent Assembly (as do the PO, PTS and the FIT IS), which in both cases depend upon the Maduro government to convene them. Maduro does not want to call either of these exercises because he knows that he would lose in both and his choices would be reduced to mounting a great fraud or leaving power. Leaving although most of his clique will be imprisoned by the triumphant reactionary right.

The advanced workers and combative unions of the working class must mobilize against Maduro independently and advance committees independent of the government and the leadership of the imperialist bosses and struggle to impose an emergency workers' plan to stop paying the external debt and with the famine of the people, renationalize the gas and oil industry under workers' control, nationalize banking and foreign trade, expropriate the main industries, all land and supermarket chains, all under the control of their workers. For work for all: reduce and distribute working hours. These workers' and poor people's committees must arm not only the struggle to reject the repression of the Chavez government and impose a workers' government, but also to ensure that the reactionary and imperialist right does not dominate the situation if the Armed Forces are split or if they decide to make a transition pact with Capriles-Lopez, something which would absolutely be of no benefit for the working people.

- Marcelo Ríos



FOR WORKERS' CONTROL OF MIGRATION

Both the Labour and National led governments have run an immigration system for the exclusive benefit of the capitalist class. NZ immigration policy attracts both capitalists and workers through the categories of investor / entrepreneur and skilled labour lists. It also allows an "export" education industry through student visas. International students pay higher rates of fees than local students, making them an attractive market for (underfunded) schools to improve their funding streams. As we explain below, the immigration system benefits the capitalist class and fails the working class in NZ and internationally. That is why we need a Workers' Government that enables workers' control of migration!

Capital

For an investment of \$1-50 million a migrant can buy NZ residency and even citizenship. The theory behind this is that capitalist will invest in new plant/machinery/technology, or start a new business. This creates a constantly renewing immigrant capitalist class. The current government has relied on booming migration to hold up the otherwise shrinking economy – without migration NZ would be in recession (immigration minister Jonathon Coleman admitted).

Migrants do impact on the housing situation in Auckland in particular, since Auckland is the city where the most land and settle in. This does drive demand for accommodation, and capital rich migrants are in the position where they can buy land and property in this area. Housing shortage within Auckland brought resentment to the surface against people with Chinese sounding surnames. Chinese may represent the latest layer of the capitalist class. Old capital with declining profits, could well be put out by new capital.

The Chinese have significant capital to export, since China is the fastest growing economy in the world. It is not surprising that this is reflected in the immigration dynamics of NZ. However European origin settlers continue to arrive and the NZ government has even been subsidising migrant investors to super-profit from investments (eg. Trump supporter and billionaire Peter Thiel. Even the NZ Herald, mouthpiece for the capitalist class in Aotearoa, questioned the actual investment of capital from the migration schemes that brought Thiel.

Skilled labour

Particular skills have been identified as needed in NZ and so are on a list of preferred migrants. The Labour party prefer to champion the skilled Labour class of migrants in contrast to National, who outright champion capitalist migrants. However, in the "skilled worker" category, workers (and employers) need to prove, reprove and reprove they

are needed in NZ before gaining permanent residence, and jump through the hoops again to gain citizenship.

Let's pull this skilled labour category apart – many workers in this category are seeking a better life for themselves. Internationally the flow of skilled workers is from the colonies to the imperialist countries. This leaves colonies and semi-colonies with shortages of skilled workers, notably in the health sector doctors, nurses and other health workers, but also in the education sectors and engineering etc. So, the semi-colonies are undersupplied with skilled labour, the poor are under supplied with health care and education.

The semi-colonies continue to be underdeveloped. Those who manage to obtain an education are likely to migrate

to advance their opportunities in an "advanced economy" – which perpetuates uneven development. at home and internationally. The rich countries super-exploit migrant workers, eg. by not paying the true cost of labour, their education. By increasing the skill level required (points) for entry to NZ the bar is raised for only the best educated migrants to enter



Slaves at sea – workers' beaten, unpaid or paid slave wages on this ship the Oyang 77: But first - 8 charges of illegal fish dumping were laid

the country.

All the restrictions of flow of migrations are barriers to the development of a true international working class. (Never mind the free market). The capitalist migration market steals from the poor countries (top skills) to give to the rich countries. For example, the rich countries have the most doctors and the higher life expectancies yet they continue to take doctors from the poor countries where they are needed the most. Any flow the other way, of doctors for charities and emergencies is only short term, and not nearly enough.

Students

International students on visas are permitted to work only 16hrs per week. This leaves them vulnerable to exploitation as low wage workers. Their employers may demand longer hours of work and pay them for only 16hrs on the books and other hours off the books. Employers may demand to hold passports, thus restricting freedom of movement for migrants.

Tourists / visitors are permitted a limited amount of work, however risk dodgy employers, and super-exploitation at longer hours with part cash jobs (under-the-table = black economy). Jobs with full board & lodging but low pay. Academics have told us the level of exploitation in NZ particularly in construction, hospitality and horticulture.

Migrant workers fear speaking out for labour rights – as they fear it will jeopardise their migration status – and they may be deported. Migrants need full labour rights and automatic full citizenship if there is any breach of their la-

Cont. from pg. 6 Workers Control Migration

bour rights. Employers who break the law employing migrant workers should be expropriated and all labour costs paid. Not just a deal like that between Masala and Inland Revenue for \$8 million leaving \$26 million of assets that could go to their workers.

History

Wakefield plan was to pre-sell land to migrants. Wakefield was a convicted fraudster and he reinvented himself with his plan for immigration to NZ. The NZ migrants had to be rich enough to afford passage by ship. Then the richer could also buy land and become capitalists or farmers. But they ran into problems having enough labourers to work the land, because everyone wanted to work for themselves and profit from their own labour – not to sell their labour to a capitalist.

Migration policy hasn't really changed. The capitalist class in NZ sell citizenship to capitalists who have capital to invest in NZ. So, the capitalist migrants support the continuation of a capitalist state to continue the protection of their privilege.

The "skilled migrants" scheme is to fill labour shortages. However, this shows how capitalism employs workers who sell their skills for a low wage to get a job. NZ employers are only interested in making profits not paying to train NZ workers.

The immigration policy of New Zealand has a class bias running through it. It is made to meet the needs of capitalists. Unions have been fighting for migrant workers but are limited to the struggle for labour rights. Migrants are used by the capitalist class as a reserve army of labour of unemployed (and prisoners) to drive down wages

We demand:

- **Full labour rights for migrants, students and tourists:**
- **Expropriate any businesses that exploit migrants under workers control (no compensation to the capitalists).**
- **For full democratic rights for all workers – including the right to vote from the first pay.**
- **For working class control of immigration! Workers ban on fascists.**
- **Ban business migrants and capitalist investors.**
- **Open the borders to political refugees.**

In a socialist world planned migration would send skilled migrants to develop the poor nations, to educate and to build health services and infrastructure to improve living standards. For this to happen we need a new communist international and a Transitional Program for socialism to unite the worlds' workers into one revolutionary force.

Reprinted from the Communist Workers' Group of New Zealand/Aotearoa (CWG-A/NZ)

REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS GROUP LAUNCH DECLARATION

The National Coordinating Council (NCC) of the International Socialist Organization of Zimbabwe (ISO-Z) met on the 28th of June for the sole purpose of launching an Organization whose name reflects our detachment with the IST as well reflecting our evolved ideology and program. The RWG is the logical successor of the ISO that split in 2009 and withstood a high jacking attempt in 2010 after the initiation of the reconstitution agenda in 2008 when a new leadership was elected.

Through discussions and debates both internally and externally and interfacing with our collective experience we managed to evolve from a semi Trotskyist to a Trotskyist platform that utilizes the theory of Permanent Revolution as its political framework on the basis of a Transitional program that guides workers for the sole purpose of seizing power and laying a dictatorship of the proletariat. Central to this is the application of the dialectic as the best tool for social diagnosis and prognosis and provide a revolutionary program that differs from those of a variety of reformist and pseudo Trotskyist groupings whose main aim is to hijack the revolutionary fervent and channel it into a cynical reformist alley that has brought so much misery and sorrow for generations of the toiling masses.

Our program has as its basis the needs of the masses and the best way of mobilising them as well as exposing their class enemies elements of which include a sliding scale of wages and prices, price controls on all goods and services, nationalization of all key sectors of the economy, redistribution of land to the poor peasants, state projects to employ the unemployed, a working peoples convention of rank and file organizations of workers to write a new constitution, a workers government on the basis of the armed masses to implement all this ,building a Trotskyist organization as part of a revolutionary center, no to reformism and Stalinism, national revolution as part of a regional onslaught on capital and no to US and Chinese led imperialisms.

The various so called leftist or socialist organizations in Zimbabwe as a reflection of the international situation have reduced themselves into sectarian, reformist and centrist formations with nothing in common with the revolutionary tradition and agenda. Since the election in 2008 and especially since our special congress in August last year we made a deliberate effort to clarify our outlook and political tools before attempting to claim to be seriously championing the interests of the workers and this launch marks the end of that period as we now focus on political work in view of the impending clash between the workers and capital that is represented by the inclusive government.

Zimbabwe is limping from a position of a semi colony under economic siege in a degenerating capitalist system that is forced to resort to brutal wars in order to guarantee some stability in a perspective of impending collapse for a system that has ruined livelihoods and survives thanks to the betrayals of the so called workers leaders. With the working class demoralized and betrayed by these so called

Cont. from pg. 7 RWG Declaration

leaders the national end game is now firmly in the hands of the two poles of imperialism as witnessed by the so called u turn by SADC on Zimbabwe which is nothing but a logical outcome of a managed transition that excludes or uses the masses of any nation. China has decided to sacrifice its interests in Zimbabwe for those of South Africa which can be threatened by a shift of political ground in that country and it is also probable that America promised not to threaten the interests of China.

Internally but to a minor extent Zanu has managed to lay control of the National Bourgeoisie and thereby putting it against imperialism though the true nature of the relationship still has to be verified. Zanu will definitely lose any election that is to be held in accordance with a strict adherence to an agreed roadmap as this will more or less be a repetition of March 29 2008 though this time both the MDC and its handlers are cleverer. Any election that is not endorsed by SADC or has elements of what the US and its allies call an unfair poll will be disastrous for the regime as this will provide the political grounds for Imperialism to intervene. The splits in Zanu as to the holding of the election is testimony of how the party has been manipulated by the west as a basis for an internal crisis necessary for invasion and its probable that the same is true for the military despite its public utterances.

We would like to extend our revolutionary gratitude to the Liaison Committee comprising the HWRS of America and CWG of New Zealand for their comradely support during this difficult time and we look forward to developing our relationship into one that ensures the revolutionary coordination of struggles in the different regions we come from. This is only the start for our role as the vanguard of the working class to whom we lay all our efforts and gifts as we embark on this historic mission. This to all intents and purposes is the launch of the first Trotskyist Organization in this country and probably in the region and we are prepared to share our experience and struggles with our brothers in the region as we prepare for a revolution in Southern Africa as part of the African and world revolution. Despite the institutional challenges that we face we possess the most critical elements for any revolutionary body worth its name that is ideological and political clarity as well as a committed membership.

We still face a challenge in setting up a fully functional office as well as producing a workers paper and we appeal to all working class organizations and individuals who share our objectives of smashing the capitalist system to help. Indeed the global imperialist system is facing a deep crisis that today is threatening key countries like Ireland, Spain, Portugal and Italy. Even in the heartland of America the protests by workers is taking on a political character not to mention the aggressive and brutal wars in Iraq, Afganstan and Libya over natural resources. The recent revolts in the Arab countries

Clearly shows the limitations of the capitalist system in its decaying phase. Closer home the protests last year in Mozambique and South Africa and the recent ones in Swaziland as well as the current struggles on Botswana proves the inability of this system to play any progressive role. - **RWG (EX ISO-Z) NEC, 30th June 2011 Harare**

The following is the English translation of an article reprinted from our comrades of the Grupo de Trabalhadores Revolucionários (Revolutionary Workers Group of Brazil: RWG-BR): [Greve Geral do dia 28-4](#)

Brazil: General strike of day 28-4

The union centrals met and reached an agreement to call a general strike day for April 28.

The strike is against the Reform of the Social Security, Labor Reform and outsourcing, government measures that attack hard the rights of the workers.

Brazil has been hit hard by the global crisis of capitalism with a great recession, and workers are being heavily attacked.

The global crisis of capitalism has led to major attacks on workers' rights worldwide, as well as to inter-imperialist disputes, the largest being between the US / EU blocs and the imperialist bloc of China / Russia.

The PT ruled Brazil for more than 13 years in alliance with sectors of the bourgeoisie, applying neoliberal policies in the country. The main project of the PT was the rapprochement with Chinese imperialism and the BRICS, which is now being dismantled by the "Car Wash" operation of the Federal Police. Everyone who has ruled over the last 15 years, from the PT to the PMDB, which currently governs the country, is being accused of corruption by the "Car Wash" investigation. Even parliamentarians of the PSDB, that were opposition to Dilma and integrate today the government Temer, are denounced in the operation of the federal police.

Proponents of the "Car Wash" investigation say the operation is related to the corruption of the PT government at Petrobras and that this corruption is what caused the economic crisis in the country. But the "Car Wash" investigation was not the end of the corruption, which is an inherent part of the capitalist system and the relation of the bourgeoisie to the state. And neither was the economic crisis caused by the PT, but by the global crisis of capitalism that bogged down in 2008 and today reaches the whole world.

The PT in 2009 delivered billions of Reals (R\$) to save the big companies and banks. The slaughterhouses alone, now involved in allegations of fraud in the [Federal Police's "Spoiled Meat"](#) operation, received R\$10 billion from the BNDES (the Brazilian Development Bank). Additional billions of R\$ were granted to various sectors of private enterprise. The government soon began to charge the workers' the bill with the austerity measures. And Dilma already announced the need for the Pension Reform before the impeachment.

The era of hefty credits and commodity sales to China were over, and the right wing seized the moment of popular dissatisfaction with austerity measures for parliamentary and legal maneuvering that led to Dilma's impeachment.

Obviously, the economic crisis did not end

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with the fall of the PT, and the bourgeoisie and the media who defend the “Car Wash” against “corruption” say that pension reforms are key to getting the country out of the crisis. The current government is struggling to approve reforms knowing that this is critical to staying in power.

The PT says there was a coup in the country. But Brazil had (1964) already suffered a coup and knows what it means, with tanks on the streets and repression of workers and youth. The impeachment of Dilma was a maneuver inside the parliament, a “blow” that the PT suffered from its own allies. The coup narrative of the PT demobilized the working class, leaving them unprepared for a real blow.

As already mentioned, the current government is also involved in the corruption scandals and applying the same measures of attack to the workers that weakened Dilma and the PT. Supported by “Car Wash” and the government’s low popularity, the extreme right is growing. Reactionary sectors such as the police have held “strikes” and demonstrations, unsatisfied with the crisis situation, although the solution for them has nothing to do with the interests of the working class. The PT continues with its alliances with the bourgeoisie and the party of the “Car Wash,” defending Lula and “democracy.”

Workers’ dissatisfaction with unemployment, back pay, inflation, withdrawal of rights and corruption is increasing. The trade union centrals that call for a general strike day are the same ones that have demobilized and undermined indefinite strikes of several categories.

The union bureaucracy was pressured and called the General Strike, because they run the risk of losing total credibility before the workers. While bureaucratic leadership dismantles strikes and boycotts any single-front initiative and independent working class organization, they guarantee a one-day strike on a Friday, ensuring it does not extend beyond 24 hours.

The main trade union center, the CUT, is linked to the interests of the trade union bureaucracy and the PT, with its alliances with the bourgeoisie, in the interest of defending Lula from “Car Wash” and bourgeois “democracy.” It is necessary that the workers break with the CUT and the PT and the bureaucracies of the other central federations: Forca sindical, UGt, etc.

The general strike is a struggle against the bourgeoisie and the government, which react with strong repression to defend their interests. Workers need independent organization, a united front that unites and strengthens these organizations, committees by workplace, and self-advocacy committees. The independent organization of the rank-and-file is necessary so that the workers can advance their struggle and not be subordinated to the interests of the union bureaucracy and the central federations.

The way out of the crisis for the working class is the struggle against the bourgeoisie and capital, with independent organizations and a revolutionary party for a true workers’ government. The 13 years of Popular Front rule have demonstrated that alliances with the bourgeoisie and

a reformist program do not represent the interests of the working class. The struggle against the current government and the growth of the right and extreme right needs to be carried through with total class independence. As for Brazilian workers, it is no alternative to American imperialism to align with Chinese imperialism. Today we see the left divide between the defense of one imperialist bloc or another, like the Stalinist and “RT socialists” (who repeat the propaganda of the media linked to the Russian government: Russia Today) defending the Syrian dictator against the people’s struggle and cheating the struggles of workers around the world.

100th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution



“THE Russian question is with us once again, as it has been at every critical turning point of the international labor movement since November 7, 1917. And there is nothing strange in that. The Russian question is no literary exercise to be taken up or cast aside according to the mood of the moment. The Russian question has been and remains the question of the revolution. The Russian Bolsheviks on November 7, 1917, once and for all, took the question of the workers’ revolution out of the realm of abstraction and gave it flesh and blood reality.

It was said once of a book – I think it was Whitman’s Leaves of Grass – “Who touches this book, touches a man.” In the same sense it can also be said, “Who touches the Russian question, touches a revolution.” Therefore, be serious about it. Don’t play with it.

The October Revolution put socialism on the order of the day throughout the world. It revived and shaped and developed the revolutionary labor movement of the world out of the bloody chaos of the war. The Russian revolution showed in practice, by example, how the workers’ revolution is to be made. It revealed in life the role of the party. It showed in life what kind of a party the workers must have. By its victory, and its reorganization of the social system, the Russian revolution has proved for all time the superiority of nationalized property and planned economy over capitalist private property, and planless competition and anarchy in production.”

*- James P. Cannon
Speech on the Russian Question, (15 October 1939)*

RWG-Z STATEMENT ON THE 6 MARCH 2017 CIVIL SERVANTS STRIKE

NO RETURNING TO WORK UNTIL BONUSES ARE PAID!

GOVERNMENT HANDS OFF UNIONS AND WORKERS!

FIGHT FOR A LIVING WAGE!

FIGHT FOR BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS!

FORM WORKPLACE BASED AND NATIONAL STRIKE COMMITTEES!

BUILD WORKERS DEFENSE GUARDS!

PREPARE FOR AN ALL OUT STRIKE!

FOR A NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF WORKERS IN STRUGGLE!



The Apex council, representing all civil servants, issued a statement declaring that if government fails to pay their bonuses on time and in cash all workers will go on strike starting Monday the 6th of March 2017. The workers are also demanding that government stops meddling in workers affairs and also respect the joint negotiating forum between workers and the government. This comes as junior doctors are in the third week of their strike over bonuses, a decent wage and better working conditions with the nurses and senior doctors also threatening to go on strike over the same issues. Recent talks with government representatives yielded nothing as government was only trying to buy time whilst doing all it can to divide workers and weaken the unions ahead of a showdown over a living wage and better working conditions. The government through the minister of labour is busy trying to divide the public sector workers by conducting a nefarious “consultation” with the workers behind the backs of the unions. This is unacceptable and an affront to the workers struggle and interests.

As the **Revolutionary Workers Group of Zimbabwe (RWG-Z)** we fully support the call by the civil service workers unions to go on strike. This was long overdue. Nothing can be won by talking to an authoritarian and anti-workers government that serves imperialism, local capitalists and bosses in the party. This can only be the beginning of a protracted and robust mass action that will win workers their bonuses, a living wage and better working condi-

tions. But for this to happen workers need to be organised and clear in their demands. The battle cannot be left to the trade union leadership alone. Workers on the ground must come up with workplace based strike committees which coordinate with other workplaces and the unions in order to be able to turn this strike into an all-out general strike capable of conquering the demands of the workers and manned by accountable and recallable representatives. Workers must be prepared against the inevitable treachery of the labour bureaucracy which is prone to betrayals and cowardice.

Zimbabwe has been experiencing an economic downturn ever since the dawn of the new millennium. This was made worse by the 2008 great recession which made a bad situation worse. After an initial stabilisation following the Government of National Unity (GNU) of 2009 the situation got worse after the 2013 general elections won by the ZANU-PF party of President Robert Mugabe. Industries have closed en masse resulting in massive unemployment and growth of the informal sector. This has led to fissures within the ruling party on how best to resolve the crisis of capitalism and a backward semi colonial state, being seen also in the opposition parties and civil society. One faction in ZANU-PF is advocating for rapprochement with western imperialism, opening up the business space and introducing a raft of democratic rights as a solution to the crisis with another advocating the deepening of relations with Chinese imperialism, instituting protectionist measures and tightening the ruling party’s grip on dissent.

The great recession of 2008 caused by a crisis of profitability resulted in an acute crisis of global capitalism with the major imperialist economies forced to bail out banks and firms. The cost of the bailout has been forced on the shoulders of the working and oppressed masses through vicious austerity measures. This attempt has however failed to resolve the crisis. Even the so called emerging economies like Brazil and India have also been hit hard. The situation in semi colonial countries like Zimbabwe is worse as they face the double burden of imperialist domination and capitalist recession resulting in a vicious spiral of economic downturn. As a reaction to the failure of the austerity measures a section of bourgeoisie politicians and strategists is now proposing and implementing protectionist and neo Keynesian measures to try and ease the effects of the crisis. This, however, is bound to fail as well because the fundamental dynamic of a historic fall in profitability cannot be addressed by these superficial measures.

As in other countries, the bosses and elites in Zimbabwe have been forced to force the burden of paying for the crisis on the shoulders of the poor and workers. The working class has essentially saved the economy from imploding through slave wages and a massive attack on their working conditions. The destruction of social services initiated in the early 1990s has been intensified despite occasional election time and populist pro poor rhetoric by the anti-workers regime which is supported in essence by the whole spectrum of mainstream opposition parties and groups. The unemployment rate of above 90% has created a pressure point for forcing those still in work to accept slave wages and going for months without pay despite bosses and senior managers awarding themselves obscene pay rises on a regular basis. In the public service sector the

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workers have been attacked and victimised left, right and centre with the latest being the non-payment of the 2016 bonuses by now.

Clearly, the balance of force in class terms is in favour of the bosses and imperialism against workers and the poor masses. The 2015 Supreme Court ruling on the dismissal of workers on three months notice dealt a big blow to the workers with over 3000 losing their jobs and many living in perpetual fear and confusion. This is on the back of the decimation of the labour movement through its co-option by the major MDC-T party and the general deceptive nature of labour leaders especially in times of crisis. The splits in the union federations along partisan and opportunistic lines has made a bad situation worse. The umbrella body that represents the civil servants, the Apex council, is no exception to the opportunistic bickering and side shows at the grim expense of workers. Government has taken advantage of the situation by going directly to workers in an attempt to divide the unionised against non-unionised workers as well as set up workers against their unions. The blame has to be put squarely on the labour bureaucracy which is prostrating itself to the government and bosses for selfish reasons.

The strike action forced on the leadership by events and workers is a welcome move that has the potential to shift the balance of forces decisively. What is needed is not a symbolic one off action but a protracted strike that forces the government to pay bonuses, improve working conditions and improve salaries. The momentum created by the on-going junior doctors' strike and threats by the nurses and senior doctors is an advantage to the civil servants. Only militant and solid action can win results. The examples of the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) and National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ) workers of steadfast industrial action should guide the government workers. It is also important that other unions and bodies of the poor masses offer solidarity to the workers as they embark on a historic job action reminiscent of the late 90s.

For this to be successful workers should move to build workplace strike committees, with elected leaders who can be recalled immediately, that are coordinated at the national level to safeguard against betrayals and also able to coordinate and mobilise the strike. Relying on the union leadership is dangerous and can only lead to bitter defeats and frustration. The strike committees would also safeguard the workers against the manipulations and threats likely to come from the union leaders. It is likely that the government, faced with a life and death situation, will unleash the forces of violence on the workers. This must be defeated by building defence guards to protect striking workers against hired agents of the labour bureaucracy and the state machinery. Public sector workers should call for a national conference of all workers in struggle in order to build solidarity between public sector workers and other unions as well as other organisations of the oppressed. We urge all workers to come out in full force on Monday the 6th of March 2017 and be part of the great awakening of the working class against imperialist exploitation, capitalism and dictatorship.



*Zimbabweans protest against Mugabe in South Africa in 2016
(Source: groundup.co.za)*

- 1) **We demand a sliding scale of wages and prices and employment for all who can work; working conditions should improve for all workers!**
- 2) **We demand the introduction of state projects to employ all the unemployed; the government must stop the attack on the vendors!**
- 3) **Land must be distributed to all poor peasants together with a state bank to provide inputs to all small farmers!**
- 4) **Build councils of unemployed workers to fight for the unemployed and all workers!**
- 5) **To provide jobs for all big and imperialist assets must be nationalised and put under workers control and self-management!**
- 6) **Workers form strike committees to lead the resistance to the growing attacks on the wages and working conditions of the poor and the livelihood of the majority poor!**
- 7) **We call for free and quality health care, Housing and Education for all!**
- 8) **Workers form workers defence guards for defence against state violence!**
- 9) **For a workers state that defends workers, peasants and the poor masses against the local and foreign capitalists!**
- 10) **No to dictatorship and state persecution of activists!**
- 11) **For a workers and peasants' government on the basis of the armed people to implement decisions that benefit the workers and the poor as part of a Socialist federation of Southern Africa!**
- 12) **For a new WORLD PARTY of socialist revolution based on the TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM of 1938 to lead the revolution to end capitalism and open the road to socialism!**

Revolutionary Workers Group of Zimbabwe (RWG-Z)

5 March 2017 Harare, Zimbabwe

SOUTH AFRICA: CAPITALISM IN CRISIS, FIGHT FOR AN INDEPENDENT WORKERS PROGRAM

A political crisis within the ruling ANC party and government has erupted in South Africa. This was recently brought to the fore by the cabinet reshuffle by President Jacob Zuma ostensibly to put in place a team that would deliver on the new policy plank of “radical economic transformation”. This resulted in the so called rating agencies downgrading the status of South Africa to junk. But, to all intents and purposes this latest round of political gimmick, is the culmination of a protracted factional struggle within the ruling party as well as the incessant struggles between the ruling party and the opposition parties most notably the liberal Democratic Alliance (DA) and the radical Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF). It is within the ruling party, its alliance partners (the trade union federation Congress of South African Trade Unions, COSATU and the Stalinist South African Communist Party, SACP) and state institutions that the crisis has revealed itself most acutely and decisively. One faction is led by President Zuma whilst the other is led by the deputy president Cyril Ramaphosa. This has been exacerbated by the impending congress later this year where Zuma's successor will be chosen.

The real basis of the crisis within the ruling party is the ongoing crisis of the capitalist system that has also affected the so called emerging economies like South Africa, which are in fact advanced semi colonies. The crisis has squeezed the profits that the monopoly capitalists and emerging comprador capitalists have been sharing over the years since the end of apartheid in 1994. The fall in the prices of minerals, which account for most of the national income, has severely affected the relationship between the two capitalist wings. South Africa is an advanced semi colonial country heavily dominated by international imperialism and presided over by a popular front ANC government with the support of the post Stalinist SACP and reformist COSATU federation. The workers and the ordinary poor still suffer deprivation and extreme poverty were multinational companies rake in billions of rands yearly. The black government only served to stabilize the capitalist system that was under attack from the black majority as well as to co-opt a few black and formerly oppressed groups into the native bourgeoisie circle to ensure continued plunder of the natural and human resources of that country. All this was dramatically exposed by the murder of workers at Marikana together with the clear complicity of the ANC government and its partners in the tripartite arrangement.

Workers should not be fooled by either section of the capitalists who all seek to exploit them for their own benefit. Workers must fight for an independent programme that puts the question of power and control of resources at the centre. Such a programme can only be based on the theory of permanent revolution which places no artificial distinctions between the fight against corruption and the fight for socialism. The reformist Freedom Charter cannot be the basis for such a fight as it champions the interests of the black middle class and emerging capitalists. Furthermore,

the fight against monopoly capital cannot be left to the black capitalists who are only interested in getting a bigger share of the profits squeezed from the workers. The programme that champions the interests of workers and the poor masses can only be advanced through a mass workers party that pose transitional demands which must essentially culminate in a workers socialist republic of South Africa in a federation of socialist republics of Southern Africa.

WHAT WE STAND FOR

The **Revolutionary Workers Group of Zimbabwe (RWG-ZIM)** is a revolutionary Trotskyist political organization of the working class and all the oppressed. The RWG-ZIM stands on the theory and practice of the revolutionary workers movement associated with the names of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. We are part of the Liaison Committee of Communists (LCC) together with the Communist Workers Group of Aotearoa/New Zealand (CWG-A/NZ), the Communist Workers Group of USA (CWG-USA) and the Revolutionary Workers Group of Brazil (RWG-BR).

We fight to eliminate the system of capitalism and replace it with a socialist collective at an international scale through a socialist revolution that necessarily must be characterized by armed insurrection and civil war against the capitalist class. We fight for the unity of all fighting and genuine organizations of the poor and the oppressed whilst keeping an eye to the dangerous policies of social democratic, pseudo-revolutionary and liberal groups bent on obstructing workers and the poor. Only with a revolutionary world socialist party fighting as the leadership of the workers can the working class and the poor win. We are fighting for the construction of such a party.

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