

WORKERS INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL

Print
version
£2.50

Political and theoretical journal of Workers International (to Rebuild the 4th International)

No 8

October-November 2014

Bosnia-Herzegovina

New workers union in Tuzla



May Day 2014: The new union marches with banners calling for “Death to Capitalism, Freedom for the People!” and “Down with the Dictatorship of Capital!”. See report page 2

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New workers' union in Tuzla

Readers will remember the historic eight-point proclamation of the 8 February 2014 citizens' revolt in Tuzla. It called for:

- **A review of privatisations**
- **amalgamating workers' periods in work so as to protect their families' permanent health cover**
- **factories to be given back to the workers under public supervision**
- **elected politicians' salaries to be fixed at comparable levels to the public and private sectors**
- **ending all the special allowances and stopping them at the end of the period in office ...**

This proclamation brought a breath of spring to a Europe groaning under liberal austerity.

Workers at four firms in Tuzla (Dita, Polihem, Gumara and Kojuh, employing some twenty thousand workers) clearly had a major influence on the way this proclamation was written. Tuzla citizens subsequently held weekly open plenums with a view to working out and putting together various demands. They wanted to be "above" or "outside of" politics, parties or classes, improvising a "moderator" every evening and insisting on recording every speech as an individual contribution.

There were no elections to permanent positions and the work was done in twelve groups (legal, institutional, ecological, social, etc. ...). Number thirteen – a workers' commission – was only added under pressure at the last minute.

Forthright working-class struggle and working-class demands were drowned out by a typically petty-bourgeois cacophony that was powerless because it couldn't produce consistent agreement on a single point. In a town where dozens of thousands of workers and young university graduates are out of work, environmentalists' demands for cycle-paths drowned and blotted out the February 8 Manifesto.

Representatives of the four firms – Sakib Kopic, Enes Tanovik, Hrustan Muminovic, Ekrem Ekmečić, Cazim – tried to get their class point of view across, but the patchwork majority ruled them out of order: no one was allowed to speak on behalf of a group, workplace or class; this was citizens' democracy ... but as we know, a citizen is a colourless, tasteless and odourless social abstraction. Just as workers'

voices were being gagged in the plenums, "left" international visitors (like Besançon, Bob Myers) were lauding Tuzla's democracy as "the workers' capital of Europe". Some Croatian activists actually talked of "soviets"! Blinded by appearances, people forgot to think in class terms like Marxists. And as usual their impressionism didn't last long. The disastrous floods which hit the country in May also swept away the plenums, and they became a distant memory.

But the leaders of the four best-organised workplaces continued the struggle on their home, class terrain. They organised the Balkan's most imposing May Day demonstration under giant slogans: "Down with the dictatorship of capital!" and "Death to capitalism, freedom for the people!" (echoing the Yugoslav revolution's slogan; "Death to Fascism, freedom for the people!"). There were lots of marches, television appearances, and at last the initiative to set up a class-struggle workers' union (Solidarnost) against the official union led by entrenched dinosaurs who are partly to blame for Bosnia's institutional paralysis.

"What we want is a union as a social movement, more political, like it was back in the day in Poland, because it's not just the government but the whole state itself that is rotten ..." the Tuzla comrades told me when I went there bringing some financial support from the Workers International. Thanking us, Kopic said that we were the first people to actually recognise the real value of their struggle. The financial help was very timely; their wages are not being paid (and at Dita they have not been for 32 months!) but they have to deal with administrative obstruction involving endless taxes, not to mention finding petrol to drive to Sarajevo.

Setting a new trade union up is always tricky: until it gets a mass base, it doesn't carry much weight when it comes to fighting for demands. Marxists don't support the idea of minority "Red" unions. But, faced with a concrete wall, the most combative militants often don't have a choice. Mumovic took on the head of the official unions in front of the TV cameras. The man was completely deaf to what working people in Bosnia want, reduced as they are to the status of social pariahs. So the idea of a class-struggle union is

justified as long as the aim is to rally together the mass of workers with a view to struggle for political power, in the absence of which the corporatist local guerrilla war is never going to get anywhere. Bosnian industry is on its knees, stopped dead, the machinery is ageing, there are no reliable markets, even if the government stops promoting western firms, even if wages drop below Chinese levels (they are currently around 200 euros a month for people in work). And that's not even mentioning the country's institutional paralysis following the Dayton Agreement. There is no future for young people in the country, although most of them are well-qualified. Even the slightest trade union issue immediately raises questions of government policy.

The union cannot be neutral or impenetrable to politics. In Poland, the bourgeois and clerical politics at the heart of Solidarnosc (Walesa, Kuron, Mazowiecki) silenced supporters of working-class politics and turned the workers' union into a springboard for capitalist restoration. NUMSA in South Africa proposes the exact opposite: to become a home for workers to help the establishment of a workers' party that can go for political power. I evoke these two examples in order to put the new union's future path into perspective. The comrades immediately agreed with me. The future will show whether the most combative among the Bosnian workers will be able to evade the wide variety of political snares they will face. As it goes, the aid brought by Marxism matters more than financial help.

Some comrades in the left group "Lijevo" are already linked to this joint enterprise. This will enable them to add their theoretical thirst for Marxism to practical struggle alongside workers, which has long since been the almost insoluble problem facing the various left groups in the Balkans. I also hope that some intellectuals who take the working class and socialism very seriously will join too. The working class needs those of its children who have been lucky enough to go further than High School. Bosnian workers need international aid as much as Greek workers. We need to help them to link up with their nearest comrades in Serbia and Croatia who the war separated from them.

As at the time of "Workers Aid for Bosnia", this is not the exclusive privilege of any political current, us or anyone else.

Radoslav Pavlovic,
September 2014

Greetings to 18 October Kryviy Rih Round Table

**Workers International to Rebuild
The Fourth International
To: Round Table on “Socio-
economic protests and worker
participation in solving social and
industrial problems” on 18 October
2014 in Kryviy Rih.**

Dear Comrades,

We are an international organisation of working-class activists in Namibia, Britain, France and Germany who are endeavouring to rebuild the Fourth International founded in 1938 as a non-sectarian international mass party. Our aim is that all currents of our class unite under a programme of transition from capitalism to a socialist society where workers, the producers of all wealth, are its sole owners and decision-makers.

We have read with great interest about a first conference in Kyiv on 6 – 7 September at which you decided to constitute a party fully independent of the bourgeois order to consistently defend the interests of workers, the unemployed, students and intellectuals.

We hope that you know that you are not alone in this effort. In Europe, such efforts are ongoing in France, Greece,

Germany, Britain and several other countries. Moreover, since December 2013 a trade union of 430,000 South African metalworkers (NUMSA) has been preparing to constitute a new revolutionary socialist party based on the principles of Marx and Lenin.

We share your goal of an independent socialist Ukraine free from the rule of the oligarchs and in which Ukrainian, Russian and other nationalities can exercise all their democratic rights in the form they choose.

You are right to make every effort especially to restore the unity of Ukrainian-speaking and Russian-speaking workers of Ukraine against all war-mongers. We shall do our best to

support these efforts in the countries where we live and especially to promote a genuine workers' alternative to the EU-Association Treaty of Ukraine. In our view, a socialist Ukraine is only possible as part of a socialist Europe of free peoples, liberated from the unbearable yoke of finance capital and its undemocratic political institutions such as the European Commission. Workers of Ukraine need the support of those in the rest of Europe and vice-versa; there can be no free socialist Europe if European workers give up the freedom of Ukraine

Bob Archer

for Workers International

Left activists of Ukraine are uniting into a new party

The Ukrainian “new left” discussed the idea of creating a democratic party of labour on the basis of the political party “Socialist Ukraine”. Following this a Steering Committee was set up.

On September 6-7, 2014 a conference “The war in Ukraine and policies of the Left,” was held in the Ukrainian House, supported by the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation. It brought together about 100 participants from across Ukraine and abroad. It was stated that the war in the Donbas benefits only the ruling classes and imperialists of the West and East. Anti-social and anti-democratic changes have been given a new impetus. Social problems continue to be resolved at the expense of the workers.

Stopping the war and extending people's rights are possible only by the creation of a left-wing political force. Details of such an association were discussed on September 7th in a session devoted to the representation of the workers movement. The political party “**Socialist Ukraine**” is ready to provide a basis for the consolidation of the workers. Now, filling this project with revolutionary content depends upon all willing participants from the Left and trade union activists. (Party leader Volodymyr Hoshovsky is prepared to agree to changes in the name, charter and programme, as well as to

re-election of the leadership). Also participating in the discussion were representatives of the Independent Trade Union of Miners of Ukraine in Kryviy Rih.

A draft programme and statute were presented. The programme includes transformations that would help overcome the crisis in Ukraine, as well as reducing the domination of the oligarchs over the political process. The statute is based on the following principles:

- * Financial independence (of the party) and a developed internal democracy;
- * Full financial transparency (online publication of revenues) and limits to contributions to party funds. Complete financial independence from the oligarchs and businesses;
- * Minimising the delegation of authority to the centre, and creation of a collective leadership of the Party;
- * Taking decisions on all questions by electronic voting;
- * Creation of different factions as the guarantee of ideological diversity within an overall socialist and democratic trajectory for the party.

Opinions were expressed that the proposed draft programme is not much more radical than the programme of the Socialist Party, and that the statute – reproduces some atavisms of the Brezhnev era. At the same time, some

Thank you Workers International!

“Solidarnosc Trade Union” of Tuzla thanks you for the financial support which will be very welcome to strengthen our trade union. We are particularly touched by the fact that it is us who you have recognised as the strength of the workers' movement, which, in this country full of suffering, wants to restore to workers and the movement in general the dignity which has so long been downtrodden. We wish you every success in your future work.

Heartfelt greetings!

TANOVIĆ Enes

KOPIĆ Sakib

MUMINOVIĆ Hrustan

MUSTAFIĆ Enes

ĆEREMIĆ Ekrem

SADIKOVIĆ Adis

Ćasim

Tuzla, 3 August 2014

participants in the discussion said that a party with broad democratic mechanisms will be unable to respond quickly to events. In turn, the initiators of the organizing committee said that together we can overcome all these problems: to supplement the programme with radical strategic goals, to minimize the influence of central (party) organs and to encourage grassroots activity.

The conference formed an organising committee whose aim is to renew the party "Socialist Ukraine".

Activists from different cities of Ukraine (Kyiv, Odessa, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Zhitomir, etc.) have expressed a desire to join the organising committee. The next meeting will be held on 18 October in Kryvyi Rih. We invite everyone to join in the work of

the organizing committee (if you wish to join write to the email address: zpopovych@gmail.com). Our immediate plans concern working on the programmatic documents and the statutes, as well as holding discussions about them in the capital and the regions.

Earlier it was decided not to participate in pre-term parliamentary elections since the current electoral system allows only the rich to win. However, we will hold campaign events, persuading citizens of the need for their own political force. Temporarily, until the completion of the registration process, we will use the resources of the Assembly for Social Revolution, including its site REV.ORG.UA for informing people about our actions. This initiative has been supported by the human rights

activist Volodymyr Chemerys, the writer Artem Chapai, the initiator of the movement for the cancellation of the external debt of Ukraine, lawyer **Anatoli Bashlovka**, a researcher at the Centre for Social and Labour Studies **Volodymyr Ishchenko**, head of the NGO "Altera" **Ihor Panyuta**, culture and art critic **Lisa Babenko** and others.

The organising committee has been joined by the socialist union "Left Opposition", "Assembly for Social revolution", the movement "Against the Current" and other initiatives.

Translation by Chris Ford and Marko Bojcun.

Originally published by [ukrainesolidaritycampaign](http://ukrainesolidaritycampaign.com) website 15 September 2014.

South Africa:

Marx falsified and emasculated on the essential question of class

HEWAT BEUKES responds to an article in the *Mail and Guardian* newspaper

The article reproduced opposite expressing the class position of an Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) MP appeared in the *Mail & Guardian* newspaper in South Africa. Ironically, it is an article which exposes the tribal petit bourgeois method of dividing the working class. We need to answer this article in its essential conjectures.

A cursory perusal of Marx's writings will show that it is simply not true that Marx deliberately glossed over the race question. In fact Marx showed in all its profoundness that where national and/or race oppression is present the working class can only emancipate itself after the freedom of the race and/or the nation. Lenin took this further in his *The Right of Nations to Self-Determination* by showing that the working class can only unite and emancipate itself through a conscious struggle against such race and/or national oppression.

It is in this vein that Trotsky gave the choice to the South African white workers: either with the black working class or with imperialism. More cannot be said of the Marxist attitude to racism and particular oppression of sections of the class.

Karl Marx examined the historical development of human society as a scientist with the aim of acting upon it to change it, not only to interpret it. In

the process he uncovered amongst others, the social forces and the laws driving this development. Amongst them, he identified the central force as the struggle of the classes.

In capitalism he examined the process of the creation of value. He laid bare the social and property relations engendered by this capitalist production process of commodities. He examined the essential contradictory nature of these social and property relations which drives the conflict between the classes. He examined in the most minute detail the nature of labour including wage and chattel slavery and their impact on production of wealth, and the struggle of the working class. He even distinguished between the form and economic effects of ancient slavery and the trade with African slaves.

In his studies and analysis of class he did not find the national and/or race question a separate issue of interest, but a fundamental issue to be overcome by the revolutionary working class movement as of objective necessity of which moral or any other subjective considerations would naturally be concomitant, but not the starting point. This becomes clear in the following two quotes from Marx:

Letter of K. Marx to A. Vogt in New York London April 9, 1870: But the

English bourgeoisie has, besides, much more important interests in Ireland's present-day economy. Owing to the constantly increasing concentration of tenant-farming, Ireland steadily supplies its own surplus to the English labor market, and thus forces down wages and lowers the moral and material condition of the English working class. And most important of all! Every industrial and commercial center in England now possesses a working class divided into two hostile camps, English proletarians and Irish proletarians. The ordinary English worker hates the Irish worker as a competitor who lowers his standard of life. In relation to the Irish worker he feels himself a member of the ruling nation and so turns himself into a tool of the aristocrats and capitalists of his country against Ireland, thus strengthening their domination over himself. He cherishes religious, social, and national prejudices against the Irish worker. His attitude towards him is much the same as that of the "poor whites" to the negroes in the former slave states of the U.S.A. The Irishman pays him back with interest in his own money. He sees in the English worker at once the accomplice and the stupid tool of the English rule in Ireland. This antagonism is artificially kept alive and intensified by the press, the pulpit,

(Ctd. Page 6)

Class theory finally decolonised

By Andile Mngxitama

"Fanon creates a triad with Marx and Lenin, to help the EFF reclaim class from its racist foundations.

We need Frantz Fanon, the black thinker of anti-racism, to keep in check the European sensibilities of the first two (Vladimir Lenin and Karl Marx) in the holy triumvirate. (Supplied)

Ironically, "class" a putatively combative analytical category in the Marxian tradition, has been one of the most effective means to hide race oppression in racist and colonial societies.

This claim would surprise many because class, as a Marxist tool of analysis, seeks to identify more precisely the workings of capitalism and also to identify the social strata imbued with the capacity and interest to carry out the task of being the "grave diggers" of capitalism – those who would usher in the socialist society where suffering will cease to exist. That was Karl Marx's fantasy in any event.

The problem is that Marx was trapped in the Eurocentric, anti-black racism of his time. This truth is part of the DNA of his philosophy. Marx's racist, mechanical thinking on the movement of history leads him to call for the colonisation of non-European worlds to hasten the march towards communist nirvana. So, the foundation of class theory is anti-black.

Class analysis needs be decolonised and subjected to anti-racist analysis if it's going to serve black people. The hegemony of white thought has ensured the acceptance of class unquestioningly. In our universities, which are dominated by Western thought, class is seen as a scientific category, whereas race is considered a mere epiphenomena, a derivative of class, or even a non-category of "social constructionism".

From the above, the conclusion is drawn that race does not exist. Blacks cease to exist because, as we hear, class is the fundamental contradiction. But black radical thinkers such as Frank Wilderson have shown that class cannot account fully for black suffering, which exceeds the capitalist exploitation and alienation that affect white workers.

Black suffering also includes "fungibility", the idea that one doesn't just sell one's labour power as white workers do, but that one is sold as a commodity. White workers could buy themselves a black person off an auction block during the days of slavery, and they are known to have done so. This is over and above the fact that white workers benefit from the exploitation of blacks.

In South Africa, the early Afrikaner proletariat had access to the slave labour of Africans. Basically, they were workers who owned workers; the story of inboekselings – the African slaves of the trekboere – is still to be told.

Bad history

In South Africa, class reductionism has a bad history. White Marxists insisted on it as a choice weapon to avoid accounting for their complicity in black oppression. Often, the insistence on class instead of race in anti-black, racist societies actually meant the defence of the settler colony.

In South Africa this led to the bizarre situation where black people were trained to deny white oppression and say they were oppressed by an abstract, impersonal "system", not white people.

This saw guerrilla insurgents sent back from exile at great personal risk to destroy "economic installations" and to take care not to harm white people in the process.

We ended with a war without a war when on the side of the white oppressor, the black person was the actual subject of exploitation and violent repression, as demonstrated by the occupation of the townships by the army and police, hit squads and long-term jail sentences, if not capital punishment. White oppression was personal, the Marxist response was impersonal.

There is a bitter truth to face: to be a class warrior or even a Marxist doesn't mean one is above anti-black racism. The dramatic resignation of Aimé Césaire from the French Communist Party in 1957 shows this reality in clear terms.

Césaire, who was protesting the reality that Marxism was put to racist use, poignantly stated: "What I want is that Marxism and communism be placed in the service of black people, and not

black people in the service of Marxism and communism."

At times when listening to black people who have assumed Marxism, one can't fail to notice how their entry to the thought process requires that they deny themselves as black people.

Triad of Marx, Lenin and Fanon

Up to now difficulties of class theory have not been decisively resolved. The self-description by the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) as a "Marxist-Leninist-Fanonian" party presents a refreshing attempt to decolonise the anti-capitalist struggle. This triad of Marx, Lenin and Frantz Fanon is recognition that Marxist-Leninism in racist societies falls short of the task of emancipation.

We need Fanon, the black thinker of anti-racism, to keep in check the European sensibilities of the first two in the holy triumvirate.

As far as we know, it's the first time that a political movement has explicitly expressed its ideological framework in this way.

Fanon, a student of Césaire, was to turn the Marxist schema upside down, almost as profoundly as Marx had done with Friedrich Hegel.

Fanon argued that in colonial settings, "Marxist analysis should always be slightly stretched" because, he argued, "the economic substructure is also a superstructure. The cause is the consequence; you are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich".

The EFF's ideological innovation introduces a productive tension that may contribute towards developing a theory and practice of emancipation that reclaims class from its racist foundations and decolonises it in the service of black emancipation.

Class is too important to be left to racists to misuse at will in the defence of white supremacy.

Andile Mngxitama, an EFF MP, is co-editor of *Biko Lives!* to be launched on September 26, and is the founding editor of *New Frank Talk*, a journal on the black condition. He writes in his personal capacity"

(From Page 4)

the comic papers, in short, by all the means at the disposal of the ruling classes. This antagonism is the secret of the impotence of the English working class, despite its organization. It is the secret by which the capitalist class maintains its power. And that class is fully aware of it. But the evil does not stop here. It continues across the ocean. The antagonism between English and Irish is the hidden basis of the conflict between the United States and England. It makes any honest and serious cooperation between the working classes of the two countries impossible. It enables the governments of both countries, whenever they think fit, to break the edge off the social conflict by their mutual bullying, and, in case of need, by war with one another. England, being the metropolis of capital, the power which has hitherto ruled the world market, is for the present the most important country for the workers' revolution, and moreover the only country in which the material conditions for this revolution have developed up to a certain degree of maturity. Therefore to hasten the social revolution in England is the most important object of the International Workingmen's Association.
The sole means of hastening it is to make Ireland independent.

Excerpt from K. Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Vol. I (Chapter X, Section 7) *"In the United States of North America, every independent movement for the workers was paralyzed so long as slavery disfigured a part of the Republic. Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded. But out of the death of slavery a new life at once arose. The first fruit of the Civil War was the eight hours' agitation that ran with the seven-leagued boots of the locomotive from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from New England to California.*

It is clear from these quotes that to eliminate the race and national questions from Marxian science of class analysis is to stultify it, to pour concrete in its joints and render it meaningless and a futile exercise as in terms of Marx himself no revolution will emancipate the wage slave without addressing race and national oppression.

The EFF MP's position therefore seeks no less than to emasculate Marxism as the science of working class struggle and revolution. It seeks to do so without facts, by disregarding the written fact and replace it with fiction.

It is the petit bourgeois method of renouncing Marx and Marxism.

Fanon was not a Marxist. He treated racism as a thing in itself, some inherent psychological response from whites against blacks. He could perhaps be described as a black nationalist in essence. He was not concerned with the economic implications of racism and its relation to and effect on the class struggle. He was occupied by racism as an empirical manifestation, and not by racial exploitation as a variant form of labour for the creation of value, and he brought to bear on it subjective evaluations rather than scientifically founded expositions.

Two quotes illustrate this point:

"The Negro enslaved by his inferiority, the white man enslaved by his superiority alike behave in accordance with a neurotic orientation."

"When people like me, they like me "in spite of my color." When they dislike me; they point out that it isn't because of my color. Either way, I am locked in to the infernal circle."

It is clear that Fanon either did not read Marx, did not understand him or simply disregarded his work. From the Marxian quotes above it is clear that Fanon could not form a Triad with Marx and Lenin. Moreover, he does not approach the race question as an analyst or scientist, but as a victim.

The end result was as it is with all revisions, distortions and perversions of science, he could not put forward a relevant programme for the emancipation of the colonial working classes. With such a psychological baggage Fanon could not possibly reach at internationalism as a precondition for working class (and race) emancipation. He landed at guerrillaism of the peasantry, a class which Marxists consider the breeding place of individualist production, the embryo of capitalism if it develops outside the leadership control of the working class.

This was the model on which Southern African liberation movements built their incumbencies with dire consequences for the working class. This was done in full approval of the imperialists. In a central square in Harare a huge statue of a peasant with a sickle in his hand stares fiercely and derisively down on workers passing through or having their meals. The radio and media used to lambast them for their purported bourgeois values and individualism while the peasants had selflessly sacrificed for independence. It was never true. In Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique the urban proletariat provided the central-

isation and organisation for the liberation movement. Due to the need to scupper national self-determination imperialism and Stalinism wrested control away from them.

The intimation from black or race nationalists that imperialism and capitalism had some innate psychological partiality to race is belied by history of South Africa itself: During the Anglo-Boer war of 1899-1902 about 30,000 Boers mostly women and children died in the British concentration camps. Nothing equalled this in the 400-year colonial history of South Africa in terms of racial brutality. It was surpassed in extent only in neighbouring Namibia during 1904-8 with the near extermination of the Herero and the Nama nations for resisting subjugation and exploitation and not on the basis of racist compulsions.

The ease of the merger of black and white in their collective exploitation of the black and white workers and their collective hatred of the black working class as revealed in Marikana put the issue beyond doubt.

This is actually a phenomenon which was not understood by Fanon. Throughout the several hundred-year epoch of capitalist race exploitation, the emergent African feudal and tribal ruling classes were an indispensable part of that process. Basil Davidson in his "In The Eye of the Storm" relates how the ruling castes of the Central African Kingdom amongst others traded with slaves with European colonisers of the Americas. Likewise imperialism in post-colonial Southern Africa needed the tribal royalties and black petit bourgeoisie for its continuation.

We now turn to South Africa itself. The issues surrounding "black consciousness" – the central theme of the article – have been wracking Southern Africa since around 1970. A black consciousness movement which rejected any compromise with the white ruling class took root at the time. Steve Bantu Biko became its iconic leader. It essentially shunned class analyses, but it demanded no less than a proportional appropriation of the economic resources as a basis of any conciliation between white and black.

This militant black nationalism was counteracted by a "non-racial" alliance of black nationalists and the liberal bourgeoisie which eclipsed black consciousness in the 1980's with the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF), an ANC front. (During this period the ANC and the SWAPO were liquidating thousands of young activists in exile including the youth who had

fled Namibia during 1974 and South Africa in 1976 and its aftermath.) The UDF's black-white unity was conditional and they eclipsed the militants which had no class analysis and defence for their purported "reverse racism" against the former's pragmatic unity.

Of course, factors that assisted in the demise of the militants were the billions pumped into the promotion of the bourgeois alliance by imperialism, through the Anti-Apartheid Movement and physical elimination. Steve Biko is the most notable example of this physical annihilation by the South African State.

Epigones of the black consciousness proponents remain in South Africa. But, unlike their progenitors, they are eclectic and responsible for the attempts to fragment the working class in tribal and national groups and strata. Of course this is inevitable if one responds to class oppression in race and tribal terms. This position has much to do with the outlook of the petit bourgeoisie in general, the tribal petit bourgeoisie in particular.

There can be no doubt that the production of surplus value and its expropriation is the central objective of the capitalist. There can thus be no

doubt that racial exploitation of labour is a sub-relation of class exploitation.

But, in South Africa there is no longer exploitation based on race enforced by law. There remain no institutional obstacles to the unity of the South African working class.

The task is now to strengthen the United Front with NUMSA and to take it forward to build a revolutionary party for Southern Africa which shall seek unity with the international working class movement. This unity will be obtained within the struggle to redeem the true history of the working class.

South Africa Metalworkers' Union statement: Numsa and its united front allies march against 'fishy' R50-billion Transnet tender Union opposes "threat to thousands of jobs"

"On Thursday 16 October, led by their President Andrew Chirwa members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) from locomotive and rolling stock manufacturing firms around Gauteng will march in Ekurhuleni's town of Nigel against what they consider a 'fishy' R50-billion Transnet tender. Joined by communities from East Rand, the marchers will present a memorandum to the Minister of Transport Dipuo Peters calling for:

- a review of a R50-billion Transnet tender to build 1,064 locomotives that was awarded to four foreign companies and that threatens thousands of local jobs.
- a government commitment that as a shareholder, the state will ensure that Transnet prioritises South African companies with significant local capacity in the production and manufacture of rolling stock and locomotives in the state-owned company's infrastructure investment programme.

Transnet tender for trains another arms deal?

As part of the narrative that "we have a good story to tell", everyday ANC politicians and leaders tell us about a R827-billion that government is to spend on public-sector infrastructure; building roads, schools, hospitals, clinics and houses. According to government spokespersons, the public-sector investment programme is to refurbish South Africa's aging infrastructure through building electricity power plants; and investment in rail, ports, pipelines and

dams. The centrepiece of government's infrastructure programme is the R308-billion that Transnet is investing in freight transport and urban public transport.

If we take the R50-billion tender that Transnet announced in March 2014 for the manufacture of 1,064 diesel and electric locomotives, as Numsa we have serious doubts about whether there is a "good story to tell" about government's infrastructure programme. As a union we are asking ourselves whether the Transnet's investment programme will not be our arms deal No.2. The reason we are asking ourselves these questions are:

❖ The R50-billion tender which is the first tranche of R201-billion earmarked for Transnet Freight Rail (TFR) has been awarded to FOUR foreign companies.

■ China South Rail (CSR) ZhuZhou Electric Locomotive.

■ China North Rail (CNR) Rolling Stock.

■ Bombardier: a manufacturer of planes and trains that is headquartered in Montréal, Canada and that trades on the Toronto Stock Exchange.

■ General Electric: a US General multinational corporation incorporated in New York and headquartered in Connecticut in America.

❖ Key South African rail and locomotive manufacturers in which Numsa organises in such as Naledi Rail Engineering, Union Carriage & Wagon (UCW), Dorbyl (DCD), Commuter

Transport Engineering (CTE), Wictra Holding, RRL Grinrod and Electro Motive Diesel (EDM) have been excluded from the deal under the guise of strengthening Transnet Engineering (TE).

❖ None of the BEE partners appointed such as Mineworkers Investment Company (MIC) and Cosatu's Kopanoke Matla have any rail experience. Others such as Linontando and Makana Investment Corporation are reported to have links with ANC leaders.

❖ It looks as if government's regulations that set local content thresholds at 55% for diesel locomotives and 60% for electric locomotives have been flouted in the deal.

The Transnet decision to award the tender to foreign companies threatens thousands of our members' jobs and goes against Numsa and even government's vision of re-industrialising South Africa and building a manufacturing base in the country.

Numsa will not fold its arms while Transnet promotes crony capitalism through fronting and elite enrichment in our country."

Media reports state on 17 October NUMSA led at least 500 staff and residents from Duduza, KwaThema and Katlehong on a march protesting about the prospect of job losses at Union Carriage and Wagon.

The march also brought together the Democratic Left Front, the Workers and Socialist Party, unemployed members of the United Democratic Movement, and youth from areas near Nigel who are desperate for jobs.

UK, 18 October

Trades unions march for better wages and against austerity



Thousands of trade unionists and anti-cuts campaigners marched through London, Belfast and Glasgow on Saturday 18 October in a long-planned demonstration under the slogan "Britain Needs A Pay Rise."

Despite claims that the Tory-Liberal Democrat coalition government has protected Britain from the worst of the economic crisis by cutting public services to pay government debt, workers have suffered falling living standards and reductions in public service delivery.

Hospital Emergency Departments face closure and there is a growing shortage of school places and working-class housing.

Photo shows civil servants who have suffered huge jobs cuts over many years

Marxist Considerations on the Crisis: Part 1

by Balazs Nagy

Published for Workers International by Socialist Studies. ISBN 978 0 9564319 3 6

The Hungarian Marxist BALAZS NAGY originally planned this work as 'an article explaining the great economic crisis which erupted in 2007 from a Marxist point of view'. However, he 'quite quickly realised that a deeper understanding of this development would only be possible if I located it within a broader historical and political context than I had anticipated ... it would only be possible to grasp the nature and meaning of this current upheaval in and through the development of the economic-political system as a whole'

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