



The Spark



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Greece- lessons for a workers' United Front

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Unite the working class across Europe to support the masses in Greece

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The International Workers Left (DEA) in Greece is deliberately falsifying Trotsky's position and the Marxist position in general, on the United Front- There are major lessons for working class struggle locally and internationally on building a United Front and its relation to building a revolutionary working class party

The DEA (International Workers Left) in Greece published an Introduction to selected works in Greek of John Riddell's book, *Towards the United Front: Proceedings of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International*. This was the last Congress of the Third International, where both Lenin and Trotsky had active input. However, the Introduction by Antonis Davanellos, a leader of the DEA, contains a number of deliberate distortions. These distortions are to cover up the opportunist participation of the DEA in Syriza, which is today the ruling party in Greece. Drawing the lessons from what the actual positions of Trotsky and the Fourth Congress of the Third International, have major implications for current working class struggles in Greece and indeed for the world workers' movement. This exposure is important as many in the left are proposing Syriza-type 'united front' coalitions to be set up across Europe, in South Africa and elsewhere.

The current crisis of leadership

The recent wave of uninterrupted crisis of capitalism since 2008 has had several consequences:

- The capitalist class waged increasing attacks on the working class resulting in the loss of credibility of many of the bourgeois leaders as well as loss of credibility in the trade union leaders and many traditional leaders of the working class;
- With the leaderships that capitalism depended on to control the masses, being discredited, there started, in about 2011 a world-wide revolt against capitalism; today this revolt is still continuing;
- Due to the inexperience of the new emerging leadership, imperialism has managed to infiltrate the forces of mass resistance, and in many cases, attempted to divert struggles into dead-ends.
- Thus imperialism has shifted emphasis to boosting entities or creating new ones to divert the masses from overthrowing capitalist states (eg the boosting of Boko Haram, the creation of ISIS, the creation of al Nusrah, the creation of the Free Syrian Army, the establishment of the fascist regime in Ukraine, the establishment of a military dictatorship in Egypt).
- Imperialism has also long built up reserve political forces that could step into the vacuum, should their current political leaders be discredited. However even the social democratic forces are being severely discredited; it can be said that imperialism too has a crisis of leadership- they are running out of political forces to contain the masses and thus are increasingly turning to brute force as a means of control;
- Imperialism's support of Assad and of Sisi shows that they are attempting to bring in an era of fascism- they have not yet succeeded;
- Now, at imperialism's time of crisis of leadership, they also depend on 'left' forces or forces that pose as 'left' in order to win time for capitalism to continue. These are a whole range of forces, from taking an Obama out of nowhere to be President, to relying on forces like the DEA that can use Socialist rhetoric, and even raising the name of Trotsky to keep the struggle of the masses within the capitalist framework. **The exposure of the DEA is one of the purposes of this article.**

The electoralism of the DEA

The central quote which the DEA depends upon is from Trotsky's work **Whither France** (1934):



“The aim of the united front can be only a government of the united front, i.e., a Socialist-Communist government, a Blum-Cachin ministry. This must be said openly. If the united front takes itself seriously—and it is only on this condition that the popular masses will take it seriously—it cannot divest itself of the slogan of conquest of power. By what means? By every means which leads to that end. The united front does not renounce parliamentary struggle...”⁵”

Now, just looking at this it seems that Trotsky is proposing that a parliamentary road to a government of the ‘left’. But the DEA deleted the most important part of the sentence that follows:

*“ The united front does not renounce parliamentary struggle but **it utilizes parliament above all to unmask its impotence and to explain to the people that the present government has an extra-parliamentary base and that it can be overthrown only by a powerful mass movement.**” [our emphasis]*

Thus, the use of the parliamentary platform is not to gain a govt of the left though parliamentary means but to unmask its impotence and support an extra-parliamentary movement to replace the regime.

Trotsky’s approach leads to the building of workers’ organs of struggle outside and against parliament. The approach of the DEA is to focus on building a parliamentary majority and thus preventing the development of soviets/workers councils as they create the illusion that Trotsky, Lenin and the revolutionary Marxists in 1922 proposed a parliamentary road to Socialism.

The masses are demanding revolutionary change but the DEA and others are limiting the demands in order to turn the struggle away from revolution to only reforms within the system

When the masses in their tens of thousands, have entered Tahrir Square (Egypt), turned out as part of the Occupy Wall Street movement (USA), when the indignados entered the squares in Spain or entered Syntagma Square (Greece), they were demanding fundamental change in the system. When Numsa members at their Congress demanded an end to the alliance with the ANC and SACP, and the formation of a revolutionary workers party, they were demanding the formation of a vehicle to lead the struggle for fundamental change.

In each of these cases, the left entered these movements and instead of helping to build organs of struggle against the system, started to limit the demands of the masses, turning the eyes of the masses towards parliament, neutralizing its revolutionary essence. These left, in the milieu where all the traditional leaders in the working class had been discredited, became the new saviours of capitalism. The Communist Parties around the world are unable to control the masses even though they still divide the masses in struggle wherever they can. Now we see the rise of fake Trotskyists, who in Greece, use the banner of Trotskyism to attempt to become the new saviours for the imperialist-capitalists. Such is the role the DEA plays in Greece. They use the writings of the Third International in the time of Lenin and Trotsky, to distort the United Front tactic, to limit the masses to economic demands and thereby prevent the rise of combat organs that would end the capitalist system. This is the same intention of a section of the Numsa leaders when they promote the United Front although in their case, they limit themselves to the same programme as the SACP, namely the capitalist programme of the Freedom Charter. The result is the same, namely to put an obstacle in the way of the working class struggling for political power.

The DEA claims that the Communist International came up with the slogan of the ‘workers’ government’ to be used ‘while the conditions for actual workers’ power did not yet exist.’ But the crisis of regime is such that is expressed by the masses pouring into the streets in hundreds of thousands indicate that several of the conditions for workers’ power do



exist. In fact it can be said that a pre-revolutionary situation exists and it is as revolutionary as it can be considering the role of the reformist leaders and imperialism that do everything possible to snuff out the flame of revolution.

US imperialism is by far the biggest imperialist power in the world. Yet for the first time since its period of domination started, the US working class is no longer prepared to take orders from imperialism. There are even towns where the masses have rejected both Democrats and Republicans and voted in independents. US imperialism is building more prisons than universities, recognition that bourgeois parliamentarism has failed and that the state may have to rely much more on brute force to maintain capitalist relations. Recently, in the mid-term elections, only 30% of the electorate turned out to vote. US imperialist ability to act with impunity around the globe has been severely undermined. In South America the Bolivarian experiment of the bourgeoisie is falling apart as these Bolivarian regimes launch attack after attack on the masses; the masses are starting to resist. What better conditions are we waiting for when considering the prospects of a workers' revolution anywhere in the world? The most important factor that inhibits the revolution from taking place is the weakness of the revolutionary forces and the unwillingness of the left to take the path of Socialist revolution.

The Communist International proposed under these conditions a United Front of all forces of the working class in action against capitalism. The pre-condition that the Communist International spelt out is complete independence of the Communist forces and complete freedom of action and under no circumstance any fusion of the Communist forces with any other 'workers' parties', meaning specifically the reformist 'workers' parties'. The Communist International proposed the United Front to build unity in action to defend the gains of the masses and to take the masses through the process that they are won to Communism, meaning thereby the exposure of the limits and bankruptcy of the other forces that claim to stand for the working class but limit themselves to work within the capitalist framework only through reforms; in other words the reformists do not stand for revolution and the very struggle of the United Front exposes them. In other words, the United Front provides a means to unite the masses in struggle while winning the masses away from the reformist forces and to the party of Socialist revolution.

The DEA's approach is flawed in a number of different ways:

1. The DEA politically merged with the Synaspismos (the reformist majority party of Syriza) in 2013 to form a unitary party. This is what the DEA calls a 'political united front', which is something the Communist International and Lenin and Trotsky never called for. Irrespective of what the DEA claims, this merger with Synaspismos, meant that the DEA adopted its reformist programme. This politically liquidates the revolutionary programme and ties it and the masses that support them. to the reformist, ie capitalist programme; the Bolsheviks always kept themselves organizationally independent, even during the times when they were in the minority in the Soviets (workers councils) in February 1917. The DEA merged with the Greek Mensheviks, the Synaspismos. In 1922 when the revolutionary tide was weakening, the Communist parties did not dissolve themselves into the larger reformist parties, rather, the United Front tactic was a means to openly clash in front of the eyes of the masses, while uniting in struggle against the capitalist class. This was a tactic to win the masses to Communism as most of the Communist parties then were weak numerically, having been formed out of splits with the larger Social Democratic parties. For the DEA, the United Front becomes a principle of 'loyal opposition' while merging with reformist forces, thus burying the revolutionary programme and at best providing a left cover for tying the masses to bourgeois reformism. It was only through the Bolsheviks maintaining their independence at all times and the right to raise their positions at all times, that the masses were won to Communism and that sustained and developed the workers' councils as independent organs of struggle and as the basis of the working class dictatorship that took power in October 1917; It can be said that



only because the Bolsheviks never formed a 'political united front' with the reformists that they were able to win the masses to Communism;

2. The basis of the DEA's partnership with the reformists is justified as '*The United front must be supported by the Communist parties as an honest choice and not as a hypocritical tactical move aimed mostly in gaining members from the reformists, the social democratic parties.*' Thus the DEA did not aim to win the masses over to its programme, but rather aimed to win the masses over to Syriza, the reformist front. In this way, instead of preparing a path to expose the limits of parliament, the DEA tied the masses to a parliamentary path. The DEA provided a left cover for the reformist Syriza to grow. At first the Syriza was smaller even than the KKE, the Stalinist Greek Communist party. Thus, if it had openly maintained its independence and maintained a revolutionary programme and a revolutionary exposure of the reformist parties in Syriza, there was every possibility that the revolutionary forces would have grown and the task of the working class seizing power would have been on the agenda today; as we stated in our earlier positions on Greece, that we called for critical support in the elections then for the Syriza making it clear that they would betray the masses (as it is currently doing) and that it was necessary for the masses to build their own organs of struggle and the central task was the building and strengthening of a revolutionary working class party to lead the struggle against the bourgeois regime through uniting the revolutionary masses outside of parliament and against it; we pointed out that it was necessary for the masses to go through their own experience with Syriza to prove to them that our analysis of them was correct and that the only path forward was to build and strengthen extra-parliamentary working class committees of action that could lay the basis for an opposing power to the bourgeois regime;
3. The Communist International warns against link ups with bourgeois parties for electoral gains, yet the Syriza linked up with the ultra right wing party, The Independent Greeks, to form a government. This is not a 'government of the left' as DEA proclaimed to be fighting for. The Independent Greeks are anti-worker, they stand for lower taxes on the capitalists and are strongly anti-immigrant. Yet the DEA has no problem with defending and remaining within Syriza. What DEA should have campaigned for, is a linking up of Syriza with the Communist party to form a workers' government. If the KKE refused, their leaders would have been exposed and the path to unity in action with the base of the KKE would have been opened; if the KKE leaders agreed, then the masses would have been more united for the combat against the bourgeois forces that would invariably have raised their heads;
4. The most elementary aim of a workers' government, according to the Communist International Thesis on Tactics (1922) is to arm the proletariat, disarm the bourgeois counter-revolutionary forces and to take measures to establish workers' control over industry, shifting the burden of taxes onto the capitalist class. These aims are noticeably absent from the programme of the DEA for the workers' govt; instead they glorify the limited reforms of Syriza as if these are revolutionary; they point out the vocal opposition of the bourgeois forces even to the limited reforms of Syriza, as proof of them being 'revolutionary'. The first step that Syriza did was to form an alliance with the far right Independent Greeks. Instead of arming the masses, the ministry of Defence is placed under the control of the Independent Greeks, the very ones who stand for reducing taxes on the rich! Thus, despite the high sounding warnings of the DEA about the mistakes of the left in Chile under Allende, and in 1974 in Portugal, the DEA makes the same mistakes. In Portugal, Chile and now in Greece, the left formed, not a government of the left, but a multiclass popular front. The leftist Allende made the bourgeois general Pinochet head of the army, the Leftist Syriza has placed the rightwing Independent Greeks head of the military. No, these 'left' never learn, so desperate they are to save capitalism. The results could be disastrous for the working class.
5. Today the Syriza is implementing the same hated programme of the IMF, the European Commission and the ECB that Pasok and New Democracy did before them, albeit at a slower pace. What is the DEA doing? It is sitting on



its hands enjoying parliamentary privileges, being an 'honest' partner, a 'loyal opposition' of the reformist Synaspismos. We are loyal to the masses first and foremost, not parliamentary cliques. What it should have been doing is organizing mass marches and demonstrations in front of parliament, exposing the betrayal of Syriza and calling for workers' to defend the demands of cancelling the debt and stopping the austerity programme. If the DEA made the call for the masses to come to parliament to defend their demands, would they have come? Yes of course, by the millions. How would bourgeois counter-revolution have dared to rear their head then? A situation of dual power would have arisen, with the masses organized outside of parliament and the Syriza inside parliament. If Syriza still persisted in implementing the attacks on the masses, the organized mass outside of parliament would have stood poised to sweep them away. The DEA raises the tactic of a call for a workers' government to the level of a principle. The thesis on the United Front indicates that we have to point out to the masses that only a government of the Communists alone (ie revolutionary Socialists) would lead to the fulfilment of the working class taking power and the first steps towards Socialism. A government of the left means a resolute struggle against the bourgeois class and it follows that it has to be grounded in mass action outside of parliament. The DEA is silent on this, creating illusions instead that Syriza has a revolutionary programme and stands for working class interests. Completely ignored are the These on revolutionary parliamentarianism which always places mass action outside of parliament above any parliamentary campaign. The DEA deliberately only raises economic demands to as to self-limit the content of its government of the left, to concentrate on reforms only so that the bourgeois state apparatus remains intact. They refuse to raise a political campaign for real workers power despite the masses having engaged in more than 20 political strikes in the past 3-4 years. They refused to raise a call for workers' councils as a basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Instead they raise the call for '*socialism with democracy*'. Democracy, as Lenin elaborates in **State and Revolution**, is nothing but the class rule of the capitalist class. Socialism and Democracy are opposites- Democracy is the veiled dictatorship of the minority over the majority while the dictatorship of the proletariat is the open dictatorship of the majority over the minority of the exploiters and their hangers-on. The DEA deliberately poses the path to power as being an electoral one. This is further shown by their slogan: '*Now the vote is in the hands of the People! Now the People have the power!*' Here we have it, the vote in bourgeois elections will lead to power of the government of the left, which can only mean that the intention of the DEA is that such a government of the left can only be a capitalist government.

6. Despite its name (International Workers Left), the DEA has a nationalist, capitalist vision of Socialism. In **Electoral Breakthrough in Greece and the challenges of the left** (when the DEA leaders addressed a Socialist conference in Switzerland), this is what the esteemed leaders had to say: '*on the basis of international law and the principle of peaceful conflict resolution, we will pursue improvements in Greek-Turkish relations, a solution to the problem of FRYROM's official name and the specification of Greek's Exclusive Economic zone*'. Firstly, international law is based on capitalist principles; secondly, Turkey is a dictatorship so making peace with the regime of Turkey means making war on the Turkish masses; thirdly, Greek banks have vested interests in a number of Balkan countries- nowhere does the DEA make it clear that any Greek capitalist that exploits any masses in the Balkans or elsewhere, would be expropriated and placed under workers' control. Fourthly, by 'international law' there are a number of imperialist NATO bases in Greece. It follows that Syriza and the DEA will allow the presence of imperialist military bases on home soil- How can we take them seriously when they say they will fight for Socialism? The DEA views the struggle of the masses in Greece purely from the view of the privileged middle class that has been impoverished by plunder by world imperialism.
7. The DEA cries about the absence of a revolutionary International but their vision on Europe is nationalist. The existence of the EU and the start of its imposition of laws such as the one on reducing unemployed benefits has



provided a basis for European-wide action against the imperialist powers and their local capitalist henchmen. German and French banks have the biggest investments in Greek banks. When previous Greek governments bailed out the 'local banks, they were in fact bailing out German and French banks. To add insult to injury, the past Greek governments borrowed funds from the very same German and French banks to bail them out. This burden that is not the fault of the Greek masses, is being placed on their shoulders. The 'bailout' funds are not even entering Greece but go directly into the pockets of the German and French banks. The Greek masses are being made to pay to bail out these banks for debts that they had nothing to do with. Nowhere does the DEA appeal for the masses in Europe to unite against the main imperialist powers such as the French and German regimes in order, not only to block the cuts on unemployed benefits but to stop the plunder of Greece and all the masses in Europe. Surely a call for a Europe-wide general strike to stop the austerity attacks in Greece and elsewhere, is one which would galvanise all the masses into action. If the attacks are stopped in Greece then this would give courage to other workers across Europe to rise up against their own regimes. Would not this open a period of revolution? The Third International arose after the Russian working class took power. Would there not be similar mass development of a revolutionary International should Greece take the path of Socialist revolution? The conditions are over-ripe for this. Does the overnight decline of Pasok not show that overnight all the social democratic forces could similarly be discarded across Europe while a revolutionary International could arise in its place?

The tasks of the revolutionary left in Greece and elsewhere- a draft for consideration:

- The DEA and other left representatives in parliament should use its platform to call for the masses to come in their millions to demand an end to the austerity programme and for the restoration of salaries and jobs that were cut in the recent period; the call should be made for the formation of committees to take over the banks and other large industry to place these under workers' control; at the same time the call should be made for the formation of workers' militia to defend public services and to assist to ensure that all privatised entities are once again taken over and this time placed under direct workers' control; The DEA should call for the immediate granting of full rights to all immigrants;
- There should be a call to break ties with the capitalist Independent Greeks and in its place an alliance with the KKE, the Antarsya, the EEK, the trade unions, and other left groups and working class organizations. The DEA and other left forces within Syriza should break with it if it does not take this step.
- The Nato bases should immediately be expelled;
- Expropriation of the assets of the Greek banks and capital with assets in the Balkans and for these to be handed over to direct workers' control;
- A call for a European-wide conference of the left to support the masses in Greece and to consider steps to set up a new revolutionary International as well as a programme of action against imperialism capitalism across Europe.
- The revolutionary left around the globe should study, once again, the Thesis of the fourth Congress of the Third International on the United Front, drawing the lessons on what may be applicable today. Fundamentally, the United front is an action front where the revolutionary forces maintain their absolute independence and freedom of action and criticism, while uniting in combat against the capitalist class. We should remember that the reformists require a split so that revolutionaries are driven out of the workers' movement in order for the union bureaucracy to maintain their stranglehold over the masses. The United front is not self-isolationist. We should at all opportunities invite the CP's , the trade union leaders, the reformists that have a hold over the



masses, to actions of the masses. This is to expose them and undercut their base while at the same time, doing all we can to promote unity of the masses in action against the capitalist. In this way, the revolutionary forces and the revolutionary party will grow and take root.

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On the CIA death and human experimentation centres

On the 3rd December 2014, the Senate Committee on the CIA torture programme finally published a report, after a delay of 2 years and heavily edited. The original report is about 6000 pages but only 525 pages were approved by the state for publication. Even the watered-down version is a massive indictment on the systemic violence that imperialism requires in order for its total domination to continue. We present an initial analysis of the report which must be seen together with the report from the Open Society Foundation called Globalizing torture (which is in itself another watered-down version of the scale of the imperialist terror apparatus).

Not a single act of 'terror' was prevented through this torture programme

The report reveals that not a single act of 'terror' was prevented through information gathered from this torture programme. This means that through internet surveillance, tapping of phones, etc, imperialism gained all the information it needed to prevent planned terror attacks. No new information surfaced through torture. In fact, sometimes the information uncovered was false, which led to the unnecessary harassment of people who were innocent. Imperialism knew all this as they constantly monitored the programme.

So if preventing 'terror' was not the aim of this programme, what was?

Death and human experimentation centres

The report states that when the torture sites were set up, there was 'no release strategy'. In other words, once prisoners were sent to torture sites, there was no plan for them to be released. In other words, they were death camps. The report does not state how many prisoners died at the hands of the torturers. It only acknowledges that some died. Some died within a few days of release while the few who survived cannot take legal action against the CIA due to indemnity legislation that has been passed. The CIA deliberately chose operatives with a history of violence and a history of psychological problems. When prisoners died, the CIA took no measures to censure or remove the torturers; in fact they were kept in their positions.

The report cites that the CIA was reluctant for full details of the torture camps to be given to the public structures of state as they feared running foul of the existing US laws on human experimentation. Thus we can conclude that the prisoners were in fact being used for human experimentation on the limits of torture. This is further supported by the report which details that often techniques were repeatedly applied, even though the CIA knew they caused severe trauma.

2 psychologists, who had no background in interrogation, were given control of several aspects of the torture programme; they were allowed to test their theories and in several cases actually carried out the torture themselves. 2 private companies were set up, one run by the psychologists themselves, later carried out most of the torture, making up 83% of the torture staff.

The complicity of the US state in the death and human experimentation camps

The report contradicts itself when it claims that only the CIA knew and no other state structure was involved. Firstly, ex-President George Bush gave the order to set up the death camps. This meant that he and his administration knew about the programme in all its details. That Dick Cheney still defends the programme and would not hesitate for it to continue, also shows that the state apparatus knew about the extent of the torture. In fact the death camps were part of the normal operations of US imperialist control of the world.



The report claims that the programme was ended. How are we to believe this? Guantanamo Bay is still open, with the full blessing of the current state apparatus. How many more sites are still open? Who really knows?

That these death and human experimentation programmes are part of the 'normal' operations of imperialism is also shown by the repeated enactment of indemnity legislation and the refusal of the state to institute charges of any nature against the perpetrators.

It is claimed that Senator Rockefeller did not know about the full details of the programme, that the CIA lied to the state apparatus. This is just a cover up. The Rockefellers and other capitalists depend on the hundreds of US military bases around the world to enforce the domination of their monopoly capitalist control. The CIA faces no retribution for its 'lies', which shows that they were just carrying out their purpose, namely to assist and provide intelligence and support to the terror campaign of the state and imperialism.

In fact the report acknowledges that putting a prisoner in a coffin and burying them is part of the techniques used by the state, although they claim that it has been discontinued. This coffin technique was used in this programme, which shows that de facto, the practice has continued. It has been reported that a prisoner was buried in a coffin for 11 days and was subjected to the sounds of insects scratching the box. These incidents show that it was not a matter of 'poor training' or 'inexperience', but that torture is an integral part of the functioning of the imperialist state apparatus.

The report also states that torture should be limited to what is allowed in the military manual. This shows that torture is not only part of the CIA techniques but also that of the military. The report does not reveal what the contents of the military torture manual are.

The complicity of many capitalist governments

The report on Globalizing torture reports that at least 54 countries either hosted the death and human experimentation camps or facilitated rendition or kidnapping for these centres. The Senate report states that the CIA paid millions of dollars to government ministers and officials to allow these death camps to be set up in their host countries. These countries knew there was 'no release strategy' and thus are complicit in the atrocities committed by imperialism. Here we have a world network of torture and human experimentation, in more countries than the Nazis ever had. There is a long history of US imperialism making tens of thousands of activists disappear (through, for example, their dictatorships in South America). The kidnapping and disappearance of 43 leftist students recently, in Mexico, is a chilling reminder that the imperialist terror apparatus is very much alive and kicking. There are also strong parallels between the techniques used by both the CIA and the Israeli state. The Israeli state has strong links with the Kenyan regime. Khalid Rashid was kidnapped in South Africa and taken to Kenya for about 6 months. It is quite possible that his torture was overseen by the Kenyan, Israeli and CIA security. The existence of death squads among the Kenyan police for the purpose of assassinating political opponents, is further evidence of support from Israel who have the same policy but on a much wider scale.

The torture and human experimentation project of the CIA dovetails with the actions of the Israeli state towards the Palestinians, its long term torture and testing of weapons and chemicals on Palestinians and then arms fairs to market 'tested' products. That torture and human experimentation by US imperialism is systemic is evidenced by the \$2bn arms grants given to Israel every year, knowing full well what the uses of such arms are for. The Senate report does not even go into such detail which shows that they have self-limited their own scope, that their own role is really damage-control- rather let the state apparatus be seen to be the one revealing these atrocities than them appearing through another damning leak.

There is a lot of confusion in the left over the role of the Assad regime. Some even portray this regime as being 'anti-imperialist'. The reports on torture show the reality. In 2005 Canadian citizen Maher Arar was kidnapped by the CIA while in transit in New York. He was flown out to Jordan and then sent to Syria for torture. He was kept in a coffin-like hole in the ground for months. It was only after an international campaign that Arar was released.



Thus we can conclude that Syria held death and human experimentation centres for the CIA and that the Assad regime and quite likely Assad himself, received millions of dollars from the CIA for operating these. [2 CIA torture centres were in the Palestine prison and an area called 'the Grave']. Yes, Assad, like Saddam Husein, were puppets of imperialism. When it suits imperialism, such as when they prove incapable of controlling the masses on their behalf, they sometimes replace their puppet with a new puppet that is not so tarnished. This does not turn Assad into an 'anti-imperialist' hero; he remains a puppet being disciplined by imperialism so that he does their bidding.

The countries that co-operated with the CIA in the torture, death and human experimentation programme include, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Libya (in the time of Gaddafi), Egypt, Turkey, Syria, UAE, UK, Germany, Australia, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Gambia, Morocco, Algeria, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Ethiopia, Somalia (warlords there), Thailand, Malaysia, Afghanistan, Albania, Austria, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Bosnia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Djibouti, Hong Kong, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (in about 2002 when they handed over 15 kidnapped prisoners to the clutches of the CIA), Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Lithuania, Macedonia, Mauritania, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Yemen and South Africa.

Some of those kidnapped by the CIA are still missing.

The complicity of the SA government

Saud Memon was kidnapped by the South African Intelligence agency in 2003 and handed over to the CIA. He was suspected of being involved in the killing of journalist Daniel Pearl. He was tortured for years then handed over to the Pakistan authorities for release. He died within days. No trial was ever held.

In 2005 Khalid Rashid, a Pakistani citizen, was kidnapped by the NIA (National Intelligence Agency), held at Estcourt cells in KwazuluNatal; then he was taken to Waterkloof military air base and was flown out in a private plane of the AVE/ex-Phoenix Air to Kenya. There he was kept for 6 months and then taken to Pakistan, held in a CIA torture centre. He was released after 2 years without any charge or apology.

Ronnie Kassrils, who was Intelligence Minister at the time, claims he was not aware of the matter and thought that it was a normal immigration deportation. Since when are British and CIA agents involved in immigration deportations? Since when is it normal that a chartered plane from a shady military merchant from Uzbekistan allowed access to a military base to deport 1 person? No Mr Kassrils, your answer betrays your lies.

Now we can see from the Senate report that the SA government, possibly Mr Mbeki and possibly Mr Kassrils received millions of dollars to open access to the CIA for their death and human experimentation programme. Khalid Rashid was flown out to Kenya- this shows this was not a 'immigration deportation' but a kidnapping for and behalf of the CIA. Even the Supreme Court of Appeal has ruled on this matter to declare the deportation illegal but you, Mr Kassrils, still stick to the story that it was an immigration matter. Once Khalid Rashid went missing, you made no attempt to search for him and to secure his safety. No Mr Kassrils, your actions show that you were part of the CIA programme of death and human experimentation.

Even though, publicly, the programme was closed down in 2009, it is possible that the Zuma regime was and still is involved in partnership with the CIA for aiding the kidnapping and possible torture of whoever is deemed suspect.

Members of the Numsa United Front and activists in general need to raise questions about the role of the SA regime and in particular of Mr Kassrils in the death and human experimentation programme of the CIA, seeing that you have elected him as one of your leadership. During the watch of Mr Kassrils as Intelligence Minister, the now late Vice President of Samwu, cde Boss, was strip-searched by Mossad agents at OR Tambo, where Kassrils made sure Mossad has a permanent office. We are owed an explanation by Mr Kassrils and the current Zuma regime.



The open operation by Mossad and the CIA on SA soil show that US imperialism is in real control- this goes hand in hand with the fact that US imperialism controls the mines, banks and best land; this is not neo-liberalism but the nature of imperialist capitalist control of SA, Africa and the world.

Torture has become a branch of imperialist science

The torturers are still part of the CIA, in their same positions, which shows that the torture programme and the human experimentation and death centres that are associated with it, are an integral part of how imperialism exercises its domination over the masses of the earth. Torture and death has become a branch of imperialist science that receives regular budgetary support. This shows the hypocrisy of the sing song of Obama of 'universal human values'; The Senate report shows that monopoly capital is based on universal human terror. The United Nations and its so-called Human Rights agencies have not even raised a whisper of protest on the CIA death and human experimentation centres- this shows an acceptance of these practices as part of 'normal' monopoly capitalist control.

We should launch protests for the closure of all US embassies and consulates; for the closure of Guantanamo Bay prison and all other death and human experimentation centres, including those that may be in Africa and in SA. We demand that all the political prisoners of the CIA and Israeli state be released; that all the missing prisoners be delivered alive to their families. Where they have died, their bodies should be returned to their families. We should protest against the complicity of the various governments and in our case, against the ANC govt and their partnership with imperialism. We demand the closure of all the hundreds of US military bases, from Botswana, Diego Garcia, to Djibouti to Berlin, to Japan, etc.

We live in a period of barbarism and this is yet another reason why we need a revolutionary working class International to organise the vanguard fighters against the system and to spearhead the ushering in of Socialism.

Workers International Vanguard Party 16.12.2014

www.workersinternational.org.za email workersinternational@gmail.com ph or sms [+27 822020617](tel:+27822020617)



The US state routinely arrests and kills black working class youth, with impunity



Free the Boiketlong 4!

WIVP statement on Unfreedom day 27 April 2015

On the 21st April 2015 The court in Sebokeng sentenced 4 community activists from Boiketlong, to a total of 16 years in prison. The activists are: **Dinah Makheta, Siphon Mangane, Dan Molefe and Pulane Mahlangu** (in absentia). We call for the immediate and unconditional release and dropping of charges against all 4. Key witnesses could not even identify the 4 but this was immaterial to the judge, 'you opposed the ANC and therefore you are guilty', is the message from the courts. This marks a new stage in the desperation of imperialism to control the masses- the same dropping of the democratic mask of the state and the criminalization of protest, is seen across Africa, from Cape to Cairo. Special fascist gangs such as the Chrysalis black shirts are springing up like mushrooms. The fascist attacks on immigrant poor are also similar signs of desperation by imperialism to use terror and force to attempt to break the resistance of the masses.

The community of Boiketlong have long suffered from broken promises of the ANC government. Since the elections in 2006, the ANC has come with empty promises to upgrade the area that by then had already long suffered a lack of sanitation, lack of water, lack of electricity and lack of housing. The 4 are part of the collective leadership, assigned by the community to lead their struggle for houses. This is their only 'crime'. **They are political prisoners of the capitalist state. They are not criminals.**

The ANC government claims that there is a lack of resources and has even gone on the offensive by cutting pensions in real terms (recently giving a 4% 'increase' which is a cut of at least 2% in real terms), even wanting to give public sector workers an 'increase' of 4,8%. (they have now 'settled' on 5.25%, which is a disgrace, considering Cosatu and Nehawu leaders are selling this as a 'victory').

The SACP are the main theoretical wing of the ANC govt who claim that we have much to be thankful for, that at least we have had so many 'gains' over the past 21 years, that at least we have 'peace'.

In reality, the capitalists have had peace to make unprecedented profits, that have accelerated to a greater level than was ever dreamed of in the days of apartheid.

It is reported in the **Journal of Southern African Studies** that the mining giants have accelerated their theft through transfer pricing after 1994 to such an extent that in 2007 alone about R600bn was taken out by imperialism through illegal means. The amounts that imperialism has stolen over the years is in the order of trillions of dollars, and this is from SA alone. If the entire Africa is also considered, we are looking at several trillions of dollars stolen by imperialism.

Yet, across Africa, all the regimes, without exception, turn a blind eye to this and are instruments of keeping the masses in check while imperialist plunder continues.

SA and Africa has enough wealth to meet all our needs, with decent housing, free education, free, quality health care, decent jobs for all. Yet everywhere there is poverty and suffering and only the imperialists and their paid hirelings benefit. Indeed, SA has enough wealth to care for the whole of Southern Africa, but it is a giant prison for the masses of Southern Africa.

Boiketlong is a symbol of the capitalist injustice that there is. The imperialist who plunder and steal and cause the early death of millions, get off scot free. The masses and anyone who dares raise a question, are brutalised and suppressed.

There should have been houses and proper facilities in Boiketlong but instead it is a slum. It is being kept a slum by the ANC govt. That is why the 4 comrades were jailed because they dared to challenge the slum conditions.

The SA govt dares to blame the other African regimes for their 'nationals' coming to SA. The very same imperialism that plunders SA, also plunders Africa. All these regimes are responsible for the enforced poverty of the African masses. The SA govt has more blood on its hands. In the DRC imperialism funds the wars that have killed 6-10 million people. After the lands are cleared and imperialism opens up its mining operations for Cassiterite (raw material for cell phones, tablets playstations and laptops- 70% of the world's reserves are there) it is SA soldiers that are a free security force for the plunder. Each soldier is paid R50 000 a month for this work of protecting Anglo American from the starving masses in the DRC.

The spread of HIV-Aids in SA, according to credible research reports, was largely due to the collapse of the health system which led to the re-use of infected needles, among other unsanitary practices. Thanks to the ANC govt.

Yes, a lot of dwellings have been built but most of them are in the old group areas. In other words, the ANC govt perpetuated apartheid housing policies.

There is enough wealth for jobs for all, but due to the theft that the ANC (and DA) govts allow, there is mass unemployment and starvation everywhere. This is not peace but a sustained civil war against the masses which the ANC has continued from the old NP apartheid regime.



We call for activists to work together to form a revolutionary working class party, in every part of Africa and the world. One of the problems of 1994 was the presence of the counter-revolutionary SACP that led the struggle into a dead-end. We need to draw the lesson. Freedom will not fall from the sky. The working class needs to be organised. We need to tear down the artificial barriers that separate us. We announce today a national and international programme of action against the criminalization of protest, for the freeing of the 4 Boiketlong activists.

The same fate awaits other activists if we leave the state unchallenged on this. We call for letters of protest to ministry@justice.gov.za, deputyminister@justice.gov.za, president@presidency.gov.za (please cc all letters to workersinternational@gmail.com) and mobilisation of mass action on a wide scale, let us protest and use what channels are available to us. We appeal also to the honest activists in the ANC to also take up this struggle.

27 April 2015 Workers International Vanguard Party, 1st Floor, Community House, 41 Salt River rd, Salt River, 7925
Ph/sms/whatsapp: 27 822020617, Website www.workersinternational.org.za, Email workersinternational@gmail.com
Amended 30.05.2015

Free the Boiketlong 4! SPECIAL APPEAL

The activists **Dinah Makheta, Siphon Mangane, Dan Molefe and Pulane Mahlangu** are political prisoners of the capitalist state. We demand their immediate release. We call for all working class organizations to take up this call to campaign for the over-turning of their sentences, for an end to the criminalisation of protest and for the arrest of the bosses of Anglo American, Lonmin and other mining giants that have stolen hundreds of billions over the years that could have been used for decent housing for all, jobs for all, free, quality health care for all, free, quality education for all and all the needs of the entire masses.

More than 63% of deaths of children are caused by hunger. Hundreds of thousands of people are dying from diseases of poverty. Millions are crowded into small dwellings and shacks. More than half the youth that start school, drop out before matric because of poverty conditions. Our pensioners are starving; this year they received only a 4% 'increase', which is a cut in real terms. Meanwhile Anglo American and other mining giants not only take hundreds of billions of Rands of profits out of the country and the region, they also do not pay the taxes that they should. The government turns a blind eye to this theft while targeting activists who lead the struggles of the masses.

Cde Dinah has a 12 year-old boy and a 83 year old granny who is blind. Cde Siphon has 1 child; cde Dan has 3 children; Cde Pulane cannot care for her family as she is regarded as a prisoner-on-the-run.

Free Dinah Makheta, Siphon Mangane, Dan Molefe, Pulane Mahlangu and other political prisoners!

Workers should mobilise committees, at all mines and other workplaces. Forward to workers' control over the means of production! Arrest the mining bosses and the corrupt police and political leaders responsible for the Marikana and other massacres! The police are the executive arm of the big bosses. They are not there to protect the masses. They protect thieving big bosses.

A legal fund has been set up to help pay for the costs of the appeal process. Please contribute to

Name of account: Eastes Inc Trust fund

Absa bank

Northcliff branch (Johannesburg)

Account number: 2840184350

Branch code: 334705

Please use the **reference:** appealvdbp

Please also email or sms us how much you are depositing so that we can keep track of funds.

Email: workersinternational@gmail.com ph/sms/whatsapp +27 822020617



The Palestine 'statehood' bid- a publicity exercise to shore up Mahmoud Abbas?

On the 30th Dec 2014 the UN Security Council rejected a bid for Palestinian 'statehood'. On the same day 17 year old Jamil Dweikat was shot dead by the IDF at Zaatara checkpoint in the West Bank. This sums up the real role of the UN against the Palestinians.

During the August-September 2014 attacks by Israel on the masses in Gaza, the Mahmoud Abbas-headed Palestinian Authority (PA) has intensified a crackdown on protests in the West Bank. According to Ali Abunimah, Abbas has instilled a state of fear among the Palestinian masses. Despite this, protests have continued. The death rate of Palestinians killed by the Israeli army in the West Bank, is at its highest ever. The credibility of Abbas as a representative of Palestinian interests is seriously questioned.

The Palestinian police are trained and funded by Israel. The PA holds several Palestinian political prisoners on behalf of Israel under 'preventative detention'. Thus the PA under the leadership of Abbas is crucial to imperialist control over the Palestinian masses. The supposed bid for 'Palestinian statehood' should be seen from this perspective. Abbas is being shored up as a 'genuine' representative of Palestinian interests whereas he is the de facto jailor on behalf of imperialism and the Zionist elite.

The draft 'statehood' resolution does not meet even the basic elements of a 'state', namely a contiguous area and economic viability, among others. The hundreds of illegal settlements are left in place for 'land swaps'. The right of return of the biggest UN designated refugee group, 5 million Palestinians, is surrendered. It does not even call for the apartheid wall to be dismantled.

The Israeli state currently holds thousands of Palestinian political prisoners (6500 as of 1 Oct 2014). Since 1967 more than 800 000 Palestinians have been imprisoned at one time or another by the Israeli state (this makes up about 40% of the adult male population of Gaza, East Jerusalem and West Bank).

Simply put, any agreement with the PA would mean the release of the political prisoners and most likely the unseating of Abbas; it means a blow against the prison slave system that imperialism has over Palestinians.

Any democratic step would also immediately place the dictatorship regimes in Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Egypt under direct threat. The region is already ablaze, so imperialism builds up the profile of Abbas as if he really stands for Palestinian interests.

The 1993 Oslo Accords, which gave Israel control over 'internal' and 'external security' promised a final settlement within 5 years. The allegation that not enough time was allowed for negotiations does not hold water.

The Palestinian masses reject a separate state as current conditions are virtual slave camps- there is no freedom of movement nor freedom of association nor basic health and education facilities.

The Jewish Israeli proletariat has been fed a diet of fear of the Palestinian population and of the broader masses in the Middle East. This has been the basis for imperialism to use them as their bastion of control in the region. This psychology is changing as the Jewish masses are growing tired of a state of permanent war. There are a number of dissidents who refuse to serve in the IDF; there are a growing number of Holocaust survivors who distance themselves from the actions of the Israeli state. There is a growing movement against the Israeli state as demonstrated by the tent cities that thousands of youth set up 2 years ago. During the recent war, thousands of Israelis demonstrated in Tel Aviv against it.



The masses in the world are not anti-Jewish nor anti-Palestinian but there is a growing concern for the rights of Palestinians as is a growing concern against the state of Israel.

The flurry of UN and ICC 'activity' is to divert attention from a growing worldwide support for a unitary Palestinian state, including all its current inhabitants, from the river to the sea and the return of the 5 million refugees.

Thus the working class in the region, irrespective of religious belief, needs to stand up to the Israeli, PA, Hamas elites and their imperialist backers.



Any bourgeois Palestinian 'state' would be a total hostage of zionism and imperialism



The capitalist class is to blame for the fires on Table Mountain in the Southern Peninsula

Earlier this year in about the beginning of March there were devastating fires on the Southern Peninsula parts of Table Mountain, Cape Town. It was because of the drastic cuts in services by the capitalist that the fires spread rapidly, lasting almost 2 weeks, devastating more than 3000 ha and several homes near Tokai forest.

Over the years many workers had been moved out of the Parks and Forests division which meant there was very little staff to be called on to fight the fires. This understaffing played a major role in the spread of the fires. The Parks and Forests used to have an early warning system where some workers used to sleep on the mountains during the hot season when most fires occur. The City cut this system some time ago when they drastically cut the Parks and Forest budget. A number of workers used to be on standby. The City had also outsourced many services to private companies. This time there was no staff so the City had to fly in workers from other provinces, a time delay that was crucial in allowing the fires to spread. Even I as a worker, used to sleep on the mountain in 'fire season'; then they shipped me out to Sports & Recreation.

Now crucial services like 'Working on fire' are left in the hands of the Expanded Public Works Programme. To quote Public Works Minister J Cronin, 'Working on Fire is one of the flagship programmes of EPWP'. However these workers are the most exploited, without any benefits, low wages, no permanent work and no medical Aid. This EPWP programme is part of the imperialist capitalist agenda to make super-profits by having public services either collapsed or placed in their hands.

Now that it is winter, the fact that the fire has destroyed much of the plants that used to keep the soil in place, there will be a danger of mud slides near Hout Bay where many DA supporters live, other members of the middle class and many workers. The City has money for fake projects like the Cape Town stadium and expanding the Convention Centre, but collapsed the fire services. This shows that the DA and other bourgeois parties really only care for the capitalist and will sacrifice the middle class and worker, over and over again.

Many of the natural disasters are not 'natural'. Take Nepal, for instance. It is a tourist destination for the wealthy while workers are kept poor. So when there is an earthquake, it hits the poor harder. When there were earthquakes in Japan, much fewer workers died.

We can see that this system of capitalism benefits only a few imperialists and big capitalists. The only way for all to benefit is to get organised and in the process to build a working class party and to rebuild the Fourth International.



Greek masses protest outside their parliament



[we reprint an article from 2008, which is still relevant]

The Blackout scam- How workers are subsidizing big capital

It costs Eskom **16 cents** per KiloWatt Hour (KWh) to produce electricity. It charges industry only **16 cents** per KWh while the general public has to pay **44 cents** per KWh. Large customers of Eskom like BHP Billiton, pays even less, about **12 cents** per KWh. This means that the working and lower middle class are subsidizing the electricity cost of big capital. Residential use of electricity is only **19%**, while industry uses about **80%** of the overall total. But in terms of cost, residential users pay **43%** while industry pays only **57%**. In the past year BHP Billiton made a profit of R 6 Billion. Clearly the entire working class are subsidizing their profits.

How big capital benefits

Eskom plans to build 4 coal and 6 nuclear power stations, (creating a mere 200 jobs per station) despite there being cheaper and safer options available. Using older solar technology, a 70km by 70 km area in the North Cape desert could provide enough power for all power needs in SA. Spain recently built 10 000Mw of wind power in 3 years at 1/3 the cost of coal power. Wave power could provide 10 000 Mw continuous power in SA. Solar, wind and wave power require no fuel, unlike coal power which currently burns 120 million tons per annum. **Who gains?** General Electric, GE, benefits as they will get a substantial part of the R1300 Billion (R1.3 trillion) for the 10 power stations as well as the substantial ongoing contract for spare parts. The coal gang, Anglo American, BHP Billiton and Xstrata which controls the world's coal reserves, will get unlimited profits from coal supply to power stations. Anglo will also benefit from Uranium supply. Anglo American has also benefited from the artificial shortages for minerals such as gold and platinum. During the blackouts last month, Gold rose more than \$100 per ounce and platinum broke the record \$2000 per ounce barrier. Anglo American declared an annual profit of over R80 Billion for the period to February 2008. Banks like Chase Manhattan, Citibank, which have shares in Hitachi, GE, Anglo American, also benefit. Citibank predicts a gold price of between \$900 and \$1000 for 2008. Despite making massive profits, big capital are now calling for more retrenchments, using the power supply problems as a cover. In effect, big capital wants to increase the rate of exploitation. The ANC government provides the perfect cover for their plans, having been bought off for R6 Billion through their Chancellor House investment company, which has a stake in the building of the new power stations. Reuel Khoza, and ex-CEO of Eskom is also co-chairing one of the 'Independent power producers' , Coal Investment Corporation, CIC, that will supply coal-based electricity (R80 Billion contract).

Manuel's budget increases the burden on the poor

In the latest budget, the ANC government announced that an extra 2 cents per KWh will have to be paid by consumers. This is a further tax that brings the overall increase in electricity price to 19.5% (above what Eskom was demanding). The working class already buys the minimum electricity and thus will not be able to cut consumption by 10%. However, seeing that there is a decline in the world economy, it is easy for big capital to cut their use; they were probably going to do this in any case. Thus big capital would be exempt from the 2 cents levy, which means that a greater cost for building power stations will fall on the working and lower middle class. The setting aside of R20 Billion of the surplus for building new coal power stations also means that big capital continues to artificially profit from funds which could have been used to build houses, to train more teachers, to build more health services. The working class is, also carrying the burden of the government loan of R60 Billion to Eskom to help with these power schemes. [Capital does not really pay as they merely raise prices and pass the burden once again onto the working class]. The SA economy is not growing much and most of the growth does not require massive amounts of electricity. (How many KiloWatt Hours are needed to power the smile of a tour guide?).

The ANC leadership provides a mechanism for the profiteering of the multinationals from electricity

Last year contracts for 59 power stations in the US were either cancelled or put on hold. This is the backdrop against which the current trillion Rand campaign for power stations in South Africa, is taking place. Coal reserves were deliberately run down from 61 days to 1-3 days; Exxarro (Anglo American) supplied wet coal to power stations; Eskom managers decided not to keep power station spares on site. In addition, in 2001-2002



over 4000MW capacity was mothballed. These all contributed to the artificial blackout wave gripping the country. For major electricity users like Anglo American and BHP Billiton, a 14,2% increase in electricity amounts to less than 2c per KWh (still below cost), while the same percentage increase amounts to 6c per KWh for residential users. This means that the working and lower middle class will be paying for the new power stations that will be used mostly by big capital.

To add insult to injury, President Mbeki now argues for even further increases. Even if the electricity rate for big capital increases by 30%, they will be paying only 3,6c extra, still below the cost of production. The President has now redefined the meaning of 'cheapest electricity in the world' to justify the fleecing of millions of the working and lower middle classes to increase the rate of profits of the energy barons. We face annual increases of 20%+ for the foreseeable future. For the over 30% unemployed and millions of lowly paid workers, this 'cheap' electricity is not only beyond their means but will always be so. The Cosatu and SACP leaders offer no fundamental opposition to this human tragedy. Their new de facto slogan is "ALL POWER TO THE MULTINATIONALS!". But then again, such is the logical consequence of being in alliance with the point-men (and women) of imperialism.

Electricity everywhere (for big capital) but not a watt for the poor (those without power).

- **Scrap the new, coal and nuclear power contracts**
- **Scrap the electricity price increases for the working and middle class, let industry pay the same rate as residential users.**
- **Forward to a public investigation by the workers of NUM and Solidarity, into the blackouts.**
- **All future power should be based on renewable energy**
- **Down with privatization of Eskom!**

Forward to working class power!

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An Accident On Socialism Road.

"Evolution is revolution.
Just don't mind 'r' ",
They tell us.
And so United Front,
The legendary UDF
Now the Phoenix dizzily
awakes;
" Freedom Charter" the manifesto!
Bureaucrats, democrats
And other [c]rats
Seeking revolution's downfall.

Comrades, the Charter did not free
England's workers

Two hundred
years before us.
Can the Charter
Now two centuries old and tired
Liberate our Class?

Did we not learn from the French
On their first revolution?
Do we not know
Of Paris' Commune?
What scatters us asunder now
In bubbly-babbly wahwahwah?

G. K. Faleni



Internationale

**Arise ye workers from your slumbers
Arise ye prisoners of want
For reason in revolt now thunders
And at last ends the age of cant.
Away with all your superstitions
Servile masses arise, arise
We'll change henceforth the old tradition
And spurn the dust to win the prize.**

**So comrades, come rally
And the last fight let us face
The Internationale unites the human race.
So comrades, come rally
And the last fight let us face
The Internationale unites the human race.**

**No saviour from on high delivers
No faith have we in prince or peer
Our own right hand the chains must shiver
Chains of hatred, greed and fear
E'er the thieves will out with their booty
And give to all a happier lot.
Each at the forge must do their duty
And we'll strike while the iron is hot.**



Resistance- the Intifada of 1987



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