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WP

Workers World Party and Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST) statement:

SOCIALISTS UNITE!

Something important happened last November that did not seem to elicit the widespread interest that it should have. In a speech to a large gathering in Caracas, Venezuela, of communist, socialist and left parties, and social movements from around the region and the world, Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez made a call for a new Fifth International of socialists and communists.

Chávez said the Fifth International must be "an instrument for the unification and articulation of the struggle of the peoples to save this planet."

Set aside for the moment a discussion of what became of the earlier internationals, or what will come out of this new call for unity amongst revolutionaries. The fact that a leader as prominent on the world scene as Hugo Chávez made this call, and the sense of urgency in the motivation of this call for unity, is something that all who are dedicated to making another world possible should take heed of.

Socialists across the world need to unite. The need for such unity is all the more urgent here in the U.S., because the capitalist system here remains at the center of world imperialism. A socialist front of organizations, parties and individuals -- whose agreement on fundamental questions outweighs whatever differences they might have -- could greatly advance the work of revolutionaries on many levels.

[photo of Che Guevara]



The biggest capitalist global economic crisis since the 1930s, far from being over, is now moving into a deeper phase. This phase is characterized by the world's big banks demanding sweeping austerity programs intended to deprive workers across the globe of jobs, pensions, health care, education, etc. -- basically the requisites of a reasonable life. The real unemployment rate is not only at depression level and worse for young African Americans and Latinos/as, but it also represents structural or permanent unemployment. BP's destruction of the Gulf is the latest example of how the capitalist drive for super profits is destroying the planet. We've come to a teachable moment.

The capitalist system has reached a historical tipping point. From now on, it is going to be increasingly harder for the ruling class -- even with all of its control over what people read, hear or see -- to stop the inhabitants of the world from concluding that capitalism is the number one enemy of the people, social justice, human progress, and the ecology of the planet. In fact millions of people have already come to that conclusion.

It is time to cast away all illusions. The prolongation of capitalism and imperialism constitutes an existential threat to the future of humanity and the future of the planet. It will become more and more apparent that capitalism can't be reformed. We no longer have the luxury of viewing the end of capitalism as some abstract, distant and irrelevant concept.

Certainly, as activists and as revolutionaries we must continue the day-to-day struggle for measures of justice on many fronts and around many issues. However, the understanding must be engendered and fought for that the number one imperative on the historical agenda must be THE ABOLISHMENT OF CAPITALISM AND ITS REPLACEMENT WITH SOCIALISM. Moreover, this understanding must influence how we fight the day-to-day battles.

SOCIALISTS UNITE!

What might be some of the fundamental points that could serve as the basis for a new socialist unity?

* NO RELIANCE ON THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Amongst such points would certainly be an understanding that the strategy of trying to build a left pole within the Democratic Party has, time after time, only served to tie the left to the prevailing position of the Democratic Party leaders. And their position is to defend and promote capitalist and imperialist interests.

Many of us appreciate the enormous historical significance of the election of the first African-American president, Barack Obama. Moreover we are mindful of how important this development is to the African-American people. We are also aware that right-wing, neo-fascistic groups like the Tea Party are waging a dangerous, racist campaign against Obama that activists cannot be indifferent nor neutral about and must be on guard to distance themselves from.

The fact, however, remains that Obama represents U.S. imperialism. Part of the ruling class support for Obama's presidency is their calculation that he can keep a lid on the working class and the poor, and either stop or restrain the ability of the people to take to the streets and defend themselves against unemployment, cutbacks and all of the other attacks that are intensifying. This aspect of Obama's presidency is the most problematic for the working class movement.

If there is no strong fightback from the working class, especially during a capitalist crisis, racist and neo-fascist elements will seek to fill the vacuum -- diverting what should be a rising class struggle into a campaign against immigrant workers, the poor, oppressed youth, women and lesbian, gay, bi, transgender and queer people.

* SOLIDARITY WITH OPPRESSED PEOPLES --
SUPPORT THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION

For this reason, the central principal of socialist unity must be real solidarity with Black people, Latinos/as, Asians, Arabs, Muslims and Native Indigenous people, and their right to self-determination. Without such solidarity, no united movement is possible. This principle must be extended to women and the LGBTQ community.

* ANTI-IMPERIALISM & INTERNATIONALISM

These should be high on the list of unifying principles. U.S. imperialism does not wage some bad wars and some good wars. All imperialist wars and occupations are for imperialist interests. The greater this understanding, the stronger the movement will be.

A NEW socialist unity must strengthen internationalism. Workers, the oppressed and poor people everywhere must know that they have steadfast class allies in the U.S. Internationalism means the defense of revolutionary governments like Cuba and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It also means support for national liberation struggles, such as the Palestinian people, and all who are fighting imperialism -- from Haiti to Venezuela and Bolivia; from Iraq to Afghanistan, Iran, Africa to the Philippines.

* CENTRALITY OF THE WORKING CLASS

Socialist unity needs to be centered in the struggle of the working class. Ultimately it is the advancement of the multinational working class, no matter where workers reside or what their immigration status is. This includes the unemployed in the communities, schools and prison; those in the workplace; the organized, unorganized and undocumented of all abilities.

The times oblige serious revolutionaries to find the basis for concentrating their forces on a higher level. The larger the steps taken in that direction, the brighter the prospects for revitalizing the social forces that are essential to making the social revolution that makes the new world possible.

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