



The WORKER

New Unity Movement

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We Fight Ideas with Ideas

Message from the President, Dr. BG Brown

We extend season's greetings and best wishes for the New Year to all our members, supporters and fraternal organisations.

The year 2020 has aptly been described as having been an annus horribilis for almost everyone on earth. It is one's fervent hope that 2021 will see some respite from all the travails that have befallen us in 2020.

Needless to say, Covid-19 has occupied centre stage in all aspects of our lives. In particular, it has cruelly exposed the stark reality of the great disparities that exist in the quality of life between the rich minority that comprises only 1% of the world's population and the poor majority.

This is vividly illustrated by the following facts: Since the beginning of 2020, the wealth of the world's richest 500 people has increased by approximately \$1.8 trillion, to a total of \$7.6 trillion. Five of these are said to now have more than \$100 billion each. For example, Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos with \$190 billion and Tesla CEO Elon Musk with \$170 billion head this list. Musk who is South African by birth was recently declared the richest man on earth!

The great disparities that exist between rich and poor can be unequivocally shown to lie at the door of the rapacious system of Neo-Liberal Capitalism—Imperialism. And South Africa, which is well known for being the most unequal country in the world represents a microcosm of this system.

The nature and forms of the disparities are legion being easily demonstrated in most areas of socio-economic existence.

Whether it is in respect of health care, education, housing, access to water and sanitation, it is the poor majority, especially those in the global South who withstand the worst of the gross inequalities. Here in South Africa the informal settlements where the majority are forced to eke out an existence stand in stark contrast to the plush surroundings of the leafy suburbs occupied by the upper classes, both Black and White.

All indications are that despite the availability of a vaccine the Covid-19 pandemic will continue to afflict us during 2021 and beyond.

With reference to, the governments promised rollout of a vaccination campaign, one could only commend for further study the article written by our sister organisation, APDUSA, in which they provide an excellent analysis of what they call "GOVERNMENT'S COVID 19 ECONOMIC FALLACIES". Hence the

Special points of interest:

- Season's Greetings
- 2020 — Annus horribilis
- Jeff Bezos
- &
- Elon Musk

- Roll-out of vaccines
- ♦ ANC Corruption

numerous challenges we faced in 2020 are likely to persist and become seemingly insurmountable.

Therefore it is sobering to realise that the year ahead will very likely throw up even more challenges that will need to be confronted by all the people of the world. None more so than on the political front.

We believe that it is in this time of crisis that the task of the Left is to mount

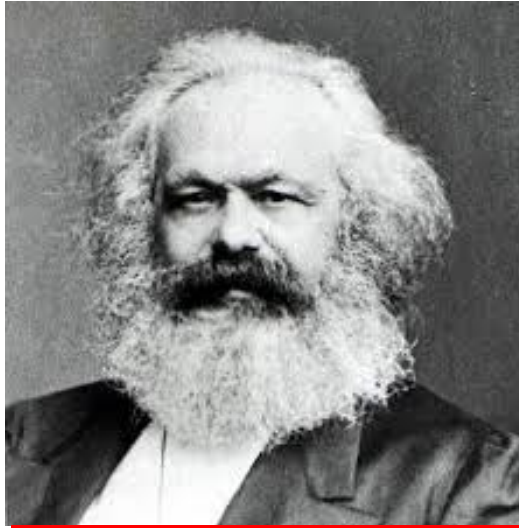
a challenge to the hegemony of the system of capitalism-imperialism, which in this country is represented by the ANC-led parliamentary system.

And, it is our fervent hope that we as a part of the Left in this country will during 2021 make some strides in at least starting a process of building a movement for socialism.

What needs to be done must take into account the following:

The ANC whilst it is mired in corruption, factionalism and a manifest failure in providing service delivery to the majority of its supporters nevertheless seems assured of retaining power in the forthcoming municipal and national elections.

There should be no illusion about the fact that none of the other parties represented in parliament is capable of bringing about the much-vaunted better life



Karl Marx (1818–1883)

for all mouthed by every one of them.

The most daunting task facing the Left, not only in this country, but in the world at large, is not merely to seek to change the system of neoliberal capitalism, but to overthrow it completely and to replace it with a democratic socialist system.

The current state of geopolitics in the world overshadowed as it is by the Covid-19 pandemic seems to suggest that it is now, more than ever, that the unity of the Left has

become a prerequisite for challenging the hegemony of capitalism-imperialism.

The current state of the world brings to mind the cry of WB Yeats, who in his poem, "The Second Coming" written in 1919 stated, "Things Fall Apart; the Centre Cannot Hold".

In addition, it was at the end of the 19th century that Rosa Luxembourg declared that the choice facing humankind then was that between Reform and Revolution. Socialism or Barbarism!

It should be readily apparent that as things were at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, so is it is now at the beginning of the 21st.

The current geopolitical milieu is characterised by:

- ∂ The outcome of the recent American Presidential elections has served to emphasise the fact

that the USA, contrary to its much-vaunted status as being the epitome of democracy has confirmed that it is anything but that. Moreover, there should be no illusion about the fact that even with Joe Biden as president, the USA will continue to pose a threat to the well-being not only of all the people in the world but to the continued existence of the world itself! In addition, the manifest rise of right-wing extremism in that country bodes ill for the world.

The rise of the right-wing in virtually all the nations of the global North as well as in some in the global South (Brazil and India amongst others) bodes ill for the Left, as it presages the rise of Fascism around the world.

China has become the chief whipping boy of Imperialism not only because of Covid-19 but also because of the serious challenge it poses to the hegemony of the USA on many other levels. Perhaps this presages the rise of military conflict between these two super-powers. How China's ascendancy will impact on the anti-imperialist struggles of the oppressed and exploited masses of the global South remains to be seen

The oppression and the suppression of the rights of the people of Palestine have continued unabated under cover of the tendency within countries of the global North to equate anti-Zionism with Anti-Semitism

The apparent resurgence of the socialist alternative as exemplified by developments in Venezuela and Bolivia is encouraging. However, in reality, only Cuba, beleaguered as it is by USA imposed sanctions, remains a beacon of hope for the millions of people in the global South suffering under the oppressive yoke of capitalism-imperialism.

Serious fault lines within the ruling class in general but in the ANC, in particular, have recently come to the fore. These fault lines are indicative of serious splits within the ruling class. These include revelations by the Zondo Commission of Inquiry into State Capture. The impending prosecution of Ace Magashule, the General Secretary of the ANC that will have serious repercussions. But, added to this must be the signs of serious discord within the judiciary.

Examples of this are the public utterances by judge Hlophe the Chief of the Cape High Court wherein he challenges the authority of the Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng as well as the bigoted and reactionary utterances by the latter in respect of Israel and the Covid-19 vaccine.

These manifestations of divisions within the ranks of the ruling class when taken together with a raft of other serious problems, like, the second surge in the Covid-19 pandemic that is threatening to overwhelm our health care system; the economic recession, the high



unemployment rate, social upheavals related to poor service delivery and manifestations of racism, all point towards a bumpy road ahead for the people of this country.

All of the factors mentioned above serve to emphasise the fact that we, as a part of the Left not only in this country but internationally, are facing very serious challenges. For our part, we will as part of the Left continue to propagate our principles and policies of non-racialism, anti-imperialism and the building of a People's Democracy based on our Ten Point Programme of Minimum Transitional Demands, as the basis for our participation in a process that will build a movement for socialism

In respect of the necessity for building the unity of the Left, and defining its tasks, we agree with Bhaskar Sunkara of Jacobin magazine who in a recent editorial stated:

Our contributors didn't always agree, but they shared a desire to win a tiny, fragmented left back to fundamentals: a class-based analysis of the world that knew (if not exactly how) that

the Left's task was to rebuild working-class organizations capable of capturing and transforming state power.

In the same editorial, he makes a more contentious statement: "We, like many



be-

fore us, see the working class as an agent of change. While working people are as different and divided as ever, they are still positioned to rattle the capitalist cage and win real gains. As socialists, we believe the short-term struggle for reforms can not only help millions suffering today, but also put workers in a better position to win more radical demands in the future." It's the final sentence that might not find general acceptance by the Left.

The above thoughts are offered for your consideration.

Let 2021 see the start of the process of Rebuilding, Mobilising and Organising for a Movement for Socialism!

**Rebuilding,
Mobilising
Organising
For a
Movement
For
Socialism**

Workers of the world unite!! You have nothing to lose but your chains!!

The Secretariat

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