

# CREATE TWO, THREE, MANY VIETNAMS:

## THE LESSONS OF CHILE

September 11 marks the 4th anniversary of the coup in Chile. For 4 incredibly difficult years, the Chilean people have been engaged in a new stage of the war for national liberation, struggling to build a popular resistance movement under the conditions of brutal military repression.

Those of us who have fought to build solidarity with the Chilean people, while we have accomplished a lot in these 4 years, have little to celebrate: the dictatorship continues. But if we can understand the lessons and meaning of Chile, we can turn defeat into strength by understanding how we can advance the struggle.

### NATIONAL LIBERATION AND IMPERIALISM

What happened in Chile in 1973 was a defeat. But we must understand that underlying that defeat was a much more fundamental advance. What defines the world situation today is the struggle between U.S. imperialism and the national liberation struggles of the oppressed workers of the Third World, and the rising strength of the national liberation forces.

From Puerto Rico to Indochina, from Attica to Argentina, from Soweto to Santiago, the oppressed peoples of the world have learned in struggle that U.S. imperialism is their main enemy. The vicious reaction of the U.S. to the struggles of oppressed peoples to reclaim their land, resources, and national identity has been a brutal lesson. It is the U.S. multi-national corporations that are the main thieves of the national resources and labor of Third World peoples, and the U.S. government and military that finance, support and back up the dictators and fascists of the world.

But the victory of the Vietnamese marked a turning point for U.S. imperialism. The Indochinese peoples' victory was not contained to their countries. The Viet Nam Workers Party led a world wide united front against imperialism and an interna-

tional solidarity movement that brought the lessons of the Vietnamese Revolution to people in struggle throughout the world. Vietnam proved that even a small and weak nation, united behind the politics of national liberation, can defeat the imperialist monster, and was an impetus to the growth of national liberation forces in oppressed Third World nations, including the oppressed Black, Native American, Puerto Rican, and Chicano/Mexicano nations within and crossing U.S. borders.

Today, the victories of the national liberation struggles have turned U.S. imperialism into an empire in decline and everywhere under attack. This is the context in which we understand the Chilean Revolution.

The U.S. backed gorilla dictatorship in Chile reflects not the crushing of the Chilean people but a brutal, defensive strategy of imperialism under siege. The Popular Unity(UP) government which was overthrown in 1973 had implemented a series of progressive measures which threatened imperialist interests and improved the general standard of living for the Chilean masses. But the UP government was the product of both the Chilean peoples' struggle for liberation from imperialist domination and the reformists' illusions that there could be peaceful transition to socialism without destroying the bourgeois state apparatus and without a violent confrontation with U.S. imperialism. Such phenomena during the UP years as workers seizing of factories, peasants and Mapuche Indians seizing farms and reclaiming their land, the setting up of armed defense units, the development of the embryos of direct peoples power, and the building of a truly revolutionary working class party, the MIR, sharply exemplified the threat posed to U.S. imperialism by the Chilean people's struggle for national liberation.

### REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALISM

Imperialism is not just a policy of the U.S. government but a stage of development of capitalism-the highest and final stage. The development of imperialism, and in specific the division of the world into oppressor and oppressed nations(which Lenin called its"characteristic feature"), has completely transformed every aspect of the world we live in.

Under imperialism today, workers in the oppressor nations have largely been "bought off" by the privileges of imperialism, a system of economic, political, and social benefits that bind us to the imperialists at the same time as we are exploited by them. In the U.S. white oppressor nation, the main forms of these privileges are the systems of white and male supremacy and their accompanying ideologies of racism and sexism. This is the material basis for masses of white workers joining with the Klan or the "anti-busing" movement or Anita Bryant.

But the fact that imperialism exploits and oppresses whole nations creates the conditions for whole peoples to unite in the struggle against imperialism and for national liberation struggles that increasingly only the working class can lead. This is the history of our time, the history of Viet Nam, Puerto Rico, and the Black Nation. Today, the oppressed nations struggle for national liberation not only is part of but is the leading force of the struggle for proletarian revolution and socialism. Revolutionary nationalism is the leading form of class struggle in our time.

Nowhere is this process more clear than in Southern Africa, the leading front of world revolution today. It is in Southern Africa, where imperialism has taken the form of entrenched white settler colonism, that the contradictions stand out most sharply; Rhodesia whites have the highest standard of living in the world, while the African masses live in brutal pverty. This is why the imperialists are mobilizing to shore up the Southern Africa regimes, and why the revolutionary forces there are on the verge of destroying the illegal settler nations and building new socialist nations to replace them.

The Chilean revolutionaries recognize this. They have exposed the growing political, economic and military ties between Latin America and Southern Africa dictators, and have made solidarity with southern Africa a priority in their work. We, too, must fight for this perspective.

But we must also understand that revolutionary nationalism is the leading political force in the United States as well. Too many people in our movement would have us forget that the struggles of Third World people in the U.S. have consistently demanded self-determination. This is the lesson of Malcolm X the Black Panther Party, Attica, Wounded Knee, the Young Lords,

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and the Chicano/Mexicano land-grant movement, and the consistent demand, changing in form but not in essence, of the Third World masses. It must be our demand as well.

This is not an abstract point of theory. There has been a struggle in the Chile movement from the very beginning: was the UP defeated because it failed to prevent the masses from committing "excesses" or because it stopped short the process of national liberation by seeking a peaceful accommodation with imperialism? History has answered this question. Understanding the politics of revolutionary nationalism today is necessary if we are to avoid repeating the UP's errors and their brutal effects.

#### THE TREND TOWARD FASCISM

There is a massive rightward trend, worldwide, today. This should not surprise us. As national liberation struggles continue to choke off the lifelines of US imperialism, the only alternative is a counter-revolutionary offensive, increasingly relying on reactionary, racist and fascist repression.

Since the coup in Chile, the U.S. propped up junta has killed over 30,000 and imprisoned and tortured over 100,000 more workers and revolutionaries. They have violated every human and civil right, dissolved parliament, trade unions and political parties, and plunged the Chilean people into abject poverty, malnutrition and starvation. They have conducted a systematic genocide campaign against the Mapuche Indians and grossly intensified the brutal oppression of women. It is one of the most ferocious dictatorships in modern history.

The rise of fascism has been historically bound up with the rise of white supremacy and national chauvinism. Leading this trend on an international level, the U.S. government openly defies the U.N. boycott of the racist Ian Smith regime in Rhodesia, it props up South Africa's brutal apartheid regime, it militarily, financially and politically assists the Israeli settler colony's attempted decimation of the Palestinian nation. It is the back-up to the most repressive governments and settler colonies in the world.

This reaction to national liberation doesn't stop at the U.S. border, nor is it limited to the government or the ruling class. The response to the struggles for national self-determination and liberation of the Black, Native American, Puerto Rican, Chicano/Mexicano nations has been a tremendous white supremacist offensive within the U.S.: the recruitment

of white mercenaries to fight for racist rule in southern Africa, police and military attacks in Black and other Third World communities, the rapid growth of the Klan and the Nazi Party with clear approval from the State, the re-institution of the death penalty (which is mainly aimed at the genocide of Black and other Third World people), the massive sterilization of Third World women. The imperialists lead this growing fascism, but its potential footsoldiers are all members of the white oppressor nation who have refused to struggle against our hite and male privileges and to concretely uphold the right of oppressed nations to self-determination and support the revolutionary struggles for national liberation.

#### PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM AND OUR TASKS

The Chilean Revolution has consistently fought for and practiced the highest form of proletarian internationalism. The Revolutionary Coordinating Council (JCR), composed of the Chilean MIR, the PRT-ERP of Argentina, the MLN-Tupamaros of Uruguay, and the PRT-ELN of Bolivia, is a form through which the revolutions of the southern cone of Latin America concretely aid the struggles in each country practically, politically and militarily. This cooperation among revolutionaries has set an example to the whole world.

Proletarian internationalism is our duty as well, but it is a duty that cannot be understood in the abstract. For us, it means both supporting the struggles of the oppressed nations for self-determination, both politically and materially, and struggling against our own privileges and the opportunism in our movement that flows from them. It means understanding that Chile is much more than an exercise in inhumanity and terror, and that the errors that have set back the Chilean Revolution are errors our own movement has far from overcome. And it means fighting for these understandings in our practice. It means organizing white workers to understand the politics of national liberation and thus become a part of world revolution rather than an obstacle to it. The practical work of organizing revolutionary solidarity is completely tied to these political tasks.

It is right that we are coming together not to just talk about Chile and reflect about the last four years but to continue thr fight. This is the main lesson of Chile: that the way to overcome our weaknesses and defeats is to struggle against the enemy.

VIVA LA RESISTENCIA CHILENA!

Free all political prisoners  
Save the disappeared  
End all aid to the military dictatorship  
End the coverup of Letelier-Moffit assasination

DEFEAT U.S. IMPERIALISM  
SELF-DETERMINATION FOR ALL OPPRESSED NATIONS



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