

SOCIALIST REVIEW

Cost \$3, Solidarity \$5



STATION
ELECTION
ELECTION



To Arms!

Capitalists, Parsons, Politicians,
Landlords, Newspaper Editors and
Other Stay-At-Home Patriots.

**your country needs
YOU
in the trenches!!**

WORKERS

Follow your Masters

Resistance to
conscription in
World War 1



Far right wins
Indian election



Marxism and
religion

Where We Stand

The International Socialist Organisation is a group of revolutionaries that are part of Te Mana movement. We are active in campaigns, protests, on campuses, and in the union movement.

Socialism

Capitalism is a system of crisis, exploitation and war in which production is for profit not human need. Although workers create society's wealth, they have no control over its production or distribution. A new society can only be built when workers collectively seize control of that wealth and create a new state in which they will make the decisions about the economy, social life and the environment.

Workers' Power

Only the working class has the power to create a society free from exploitation, oppression and want. Liberation can be won only through the struggles of workers themselves, organised independently of other classes and fighting for real workers' power – a new kind of state based on democratically elected workers' councils. China and Cuba, like the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, have nothing to do with socialism. They are repressive state capitalist regimes. We support the struggles of workers against every ruling class.

Liberation From Oppression

We fight for democratic rights. We are opposed to all forms of racism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia. These forms of oppression are used to divide the working class. We support the right of all oppressed groups to organise for their own defence. All these forms of liberation are essential to socialism and impossible without it.

Revolution Not Reformism

Despite the claims of the Labour Party and trade union leaders, the structures of the present parliament, army, police, and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against workers. There is no parliamentary road to socialism.

Internationalism

Workers in every country are exploited by capitalism, so the struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We oppose everything that divides workers of different countries. We oppose all immigration controls. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries. We oppose imperialism and support all genuine national liberation struggles.

Tino Rangatiratanga

We support the struggle for tino rangatiratanga. Maori capitalists and corporate Iwi leaders have no interest in achieving tino rangatiratanga for working class Maori. The



government and corporate warriors' approach to Treaty claims has benefited a Maori elite while doing little for working class Maori. Tino rangatiratanga cannot be achieved within capitalism. It will only become a reality with the establishment of a workers' state and socialist society.

Environment

Exploitation of nature is as central to capitalism as exploitation of labour. Capitalism everywhere drains the earth of its resources for the profit of the few, devastating the environment and the lives of ordinary people in the process. Climate change is transforming the earth and threatening life as we know it. To stop it, humanity must re-organise its relation to the earth. The fight for socialism, led by the working class, is at the same time a fight to create a world where human beings live sustainably with the environment.

Revolutionary Organisation

To achieve socialism, the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party. Such a party can only be built by day-to-day activity in the mass organisations of the working class. We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions. If you agree with our ideas and want to fight for socialism, we urge you to join us.

Join the International Socialist Organisation

Email: contact@iso.org.nz

Website: www.iso.org.nz

Tamaki/Auckland

021 253 4713

Poneke/Wellington:

022 312 8018

Otepoti/Dunedin:

022 473 0502

ISSN 1175-2629



Right wing, wrong direction

This is an election year. It's a chance to have conversations about politics – and the state of the world in general – where usually you might talk about the weather.

At the petrol station, at school, with family and workmates, elections are one of those rare moments where we have the sense that we can make decisions together about the future. Either that, or it's just another Saturday.

Almost one million eligible voters saw no point in the 2011 election. Our last magazine featured the “rich, rotten and corrupt” Judith Collins on the cover.

Passersby in Cuba St recognised her, but her face meant nothing in Porirua.

Whole sections of the working class are completely cynical about politicians and pay no attention to their games.

Nonetheless, elections matter. This National Government has inflicted a

thousand cuts on the public sector – especially targeting the poorest and most vulnerable.

The Budget surplus of a billion dollars was stolen directly from the welfare system, without raising any wave of protest.



John Key is a gambler. He is a smooth politician. He is a smiling assassin. He is not a fascist, nor is he a genius. His economic plan for the country is non-existent.

Under Key, New Zealand has become a two-trick pony relying on drilling and dairying.

It's vital that socialists get involved in the elections.

It's vital that we stand up and ask “what about the working class?” in response to every issue. We are the majority but our voice is muted.

The election is front and centre in this magazine, with a spread on why socialists should support the Mana Party but we also cover the rise of Hindu nationalism in India, the fight against conscription in World War 1 and the Santa Barbara massacre.

There is also a review of *Criminal Injustice*, a pamphlet recently

published by the International Socialist Organisation, which details the racist nature of the prison industry in New Zealand.

We hope you enjoy this magazine – if you do, get a subscription, or even better, join the fight!

Magazine appeal: \$2.4K raised

At the start of this year we set ourselves the tasking of fundraising \$3000 to make Socialist Review a more regular and more professional publication. In the last four months we have managed to raise \$2385. This has come from donations from readers in Auckland, Whanganui, Wellington and Dunedin, and from tickets sold to Marx in Soho, a performance generously put on by Anya Tate-Manning and Sarita So as their contribution to this appeal.

Can we make our \$3000 target? Every donation, large or small, goes towards producing a magazine dedicated to

supporting the resistance to National and the bosses. We're a pro-worker, pro-union, socialist publication. We're produced by activists who support the Mana movement, and who are arguing for anti-capitalist politics in their workplaces, communities and campuses. We don't just report, however; Socialist Review makes the case for revolutionary socialism, for clear-cut Marxist politics, for the need for a socialist alternative to capitalism and war. We think these ideas are essential for our side.

Already this year we have been able to bring out more issues than before, and

to get longer, more in-depth articles up on our website. Your support is making a difference. Every donation will help get out more arguments for socialism; more arguments against National; more magazines backing the movements and campaigns from below.

Please donate to help our appeal. You can make cheques out to “ISO – Wellington” and send them to Socialist Review, PO Box 7513, Newtown, Wellington, or make a bank transfer directly to BNZ 02-0536-0456903-001

Right wing, wrong direction

The coming election will be the closest battle for the incumbent National Government since its election in 2008. Largely this is because of National's repeated failings instead of an opposition worth challenging them. The legacy of the fifth National government will be one of misspent funds, complete and utter abandonment of the poor and lording over the destruction of the environment. National has overseen skyrocketing rates of poverty. Inequality and social deprivation tear at the fabric of many working-class communities. Yet "Teflon" John has up until this year had very little scrutiny in the mainstream media of his actions, his statements and the policies he has introduced. Josh O'Sullivan explores National's record.



John Key: the smiling assassin

Key is lauded as a mastermind of business, for pulling New Zealand through the worst of the recession. These mistruths have been perpetuated throughout our media.

National talks of a "Brighter Future". But it is a future that is bright only for those who are already well off. Those not on the top rungs of the social ladder have no friend in John Key.

The National Party has talked of social unity all through its 78-year history. But its policies show its true face, one contorted with cronyism, corruption and cut-throat capitalism.

Today the National party is unashamedly the party of big business, handing out parliamentary favours for money.

John Key is an excellent representative of the National Party's interests and modus operandi. A big-shot banker, Key had barely been in Parliament six years before becoming Prime Minister.

Out of business and into parliament, the revolving door as it is sometimes called.

Who's to bet that he ends up on the board of a large bank or in a WTO sinecure after his parliamentary career?

John Key is the epitome of a bankster. He made his mark on the international banking sector by colluding with large banking trader, Andrew Krieger, to crash the New Zealand currency during 1987, known in New Zealand as "Black Monday".

He did this at Banker's Trust New Zealand by manipulating the New Zealand currency just as it was being first floated on the international market.

By trading far more than the entire amount of New Zealand currency in circulation he was able to drop the value of the dollar to record lows. This was one of the first recorded events of a private company crashing a national currency, according to the International Monetary Fund, who investigated Andrew Kreiger shortly afterwards. This attack on the New Zealand

currency gave him a name in the international scene and got him his job with Merrill-Lynch Foreign Exchange where he went on to make his millions manipulating trades in the derivatives market.

Merrill-Lynch is the largest trader in the 700 trillion dollar derivatives market and was deeply involved in selling collateralised debt obligations among other things.

John Key was head of their Forex department, directly linking him to the beginning of the US housing collapse. Merrill-Lynch was also where his famous nickname the 'smiling assassin' came from: he fired 400 employees in one day, all with a smile on his face.

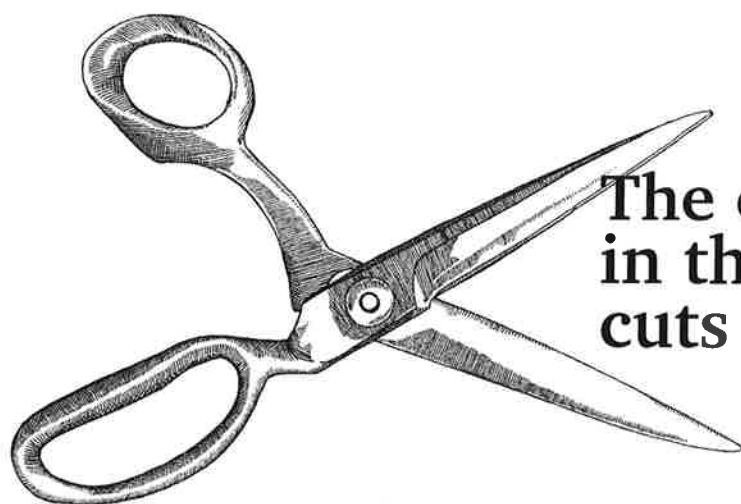
He was rewarded for his "good work" with a position at the New York Federal Reserve.

Since attaining government, the National Party has followed an agenda of death by a thousand cuts, where neoliberalist policies have been

Right wing, wrong direction

introduced to facilitate the loss of the public sphere, a reduction in workers' rights and the fostering of an underclass of thousands for whom accessing basic amenities is a struggle. Neoliberalism's chief policies include privatisation, deregulation, tax cuts, and the erosion of worker's rights. The latest Budget has been positioned by the National Party as a return to surplus. Really it is a continuation of the sell-off of assets and cuts to all public services.

John Key was head of the Merrill-Lynch Forex department, directly linking him to the beginning of the US housing collapse. Merrill-Lynch was also where his famous nickname the 'smiling assassin' came from: he fired 400 employees in one day, all with a smile on his face.



The only thing generous in the Budget is the cuts

frighteningly little to address child poverty in New Zealand,

of the \$3.5 billion dollar surplus National has promised by 2017. That surplus is supposedly paying for the tax cuts to the middle class.

National positions itself in the centre at the moment, and it emphasizes small concessions to make its current budget seem generous.

The talking points National wants you to see are the free GP visits for under 12s, the extension of paid parental leave, tax cuts for the middle class, and more early childhood, vulnerable children and sexual violence funding. It all sounds good.

But it all sounded good 10 years ago as well when National cut this funding. This is a drop in the bucket in terms of what would be needed to reduce inequality.

National originally cut funding for Rape Crisis when it came into power, and now six years later they have graciously decided to give some of it back. GP visits free for under 12s will do

which is astronomically high.

Social welfare spending is forecast to drop by 3-5% by 2016.

Tertiary education funding is cut, and the education system is to get a nominal increase of \$30 million in the next two years which amounts to a 5.5% cut when adjusted for inflation.

The healthcare system, suffering from a lack of funding for a decade, was looking at a shortfall of \$499 million just to maintain staff and current services this year, according to the CTU. It needed at least a 4% increase to do this, and yet it is heading for a cut (adjusted for inflation) of 11.1% by 2017.

With cuts like these to already over-pressured systems there will be large public sector layoffs. The cuts in healthcare and education alone are 2/3

National has no vision for what could create a stronger economy. This is shown even in their own projections for growth.

They are relying on the Christchurch rebuild to stimulate the economy. But this rebuild has been extremely unequal. At the same as the government is paying for huge renovations to buildings in the CBD, there is very little for the most important part of a city, its infrastructure.

National has also allowed the poorer suburbs to wallow in misery by closing down local community centres such as schools.

Even outside of Christchurch, National is not investing in developing infrastructure. They are sitting back as sawmills, and other manufacturing jobs are cut, while raw materials are exported at a bargain basement rates.

Cuts to welfare

Paula Bennett as Minister for Social Development has overseen one of the largest overhauls of the welfare system since its inception in 1938.

She has reduced benefits for all beneficiaries and has declared them all to be "jobseekers". This term has been used to force sickness beneficiaries, sole parents and widows with no children under 14 to look for work and prove every six months that they still require assistance.

This includes drug testing and clearing arrest warrants for such issues as unpaid fines for beneficiaries. You are not allowed to leave the country on a benefit, you must notify WINZ and they will stop your benefit for the time you are out of the country.

If you are fired or resign from a job, you must wait 13 weeks before your application for the benefit can be approved. What you are to do for 3

months without income is your problem, according to National. Welfare is no longer about supporting you or your family, to get you into an acceptable job, to support you in your time of need. WINZ is now dedicated solely to getting you off the benefit.

Changes to the structure of welfare delivery have occurred. Housing New Zealand, Child Youth and Family (CYF), and WINZ have all merged into one super-inept organisation.

As well as merging and laying off staff, the Ministry of Social Development is outsourcing its work, particularly with CYF, to private companies.

The Ministry is now operating all these



departments under the assumption that they should act like state-owned enterprises.

The Ministry of Social Development has begun selling off large amounts of state housing in key areas for redevelopment and of course to make money. These are places like Takapuna and Glen Innes.

This is at a time where the shortage of affordable housing is approaching crisis levels.

Prison system and police powers

Under National we have seen the very first private prison in New Zealand being built at Mt Eden at the moment. This will be run by the British company Serco, infamous for brutally running the refugee detention centres in Australia. The terms of their contract with government means they get paid as if the prison is full, so of course the incentive is to fill it. The police in New Zealand are well on track to achieve that.

The prison population has doubled since 2002 as has the incarceration rate.

Arrests are largely along class lines but Maori are massively over-represented in this racist injustice system.

Police powers have been increased.

Police have more ability to search your home, office and car without a warrant, force you to answer questions in a police



The prison population has doubled since 2002 as has the incarceration rate. Arrests are largely along class lines but Maori are massively over-represented.

interrogation and M4 assault rifles are in the boot of every highway patrol car. Police have trialled three listening vans, which roam South Auckland streets honing in on private conversations at home.

They are trying to institute facial and license recognition across all CCTV cameras across the Auckland area, as a pilot for the entire country.

And then there is the GCSB. The Snowden documents revealed that New Zealand is part of an international spying collective trying to gather all of the data that passes through the internet. Spying by the GCSB has resulted in the murder of at least one New Zealand citizen through a CIA drone strike.



Cuts to workers' rights

National passed the 90 day bill, saying that for the first 90 days of an employment agreement you can be fired without warning and essentially have no rights as an employee.

Also within this bill are provisions on collective bargaining, restricting union access to the workplace unless the employer gives consent, allowing employers to leave and cancel negotiations whenever they like and also changed classifications so that youth workers (under 19) have a minimum wage of \$11 an hour. Another change that was implemented with youth rates

in 2013 in the employment relations amendments act was the removal of compulsory breaks.

This has encouraged businesses with a high turnover of staff to cycle employees through the 90 day "Hire and fire" period. This has affected sectors like the fast food industry or seasonal labouring work.

By reducing union access to workplaces, unions are hamstrung and unable to help many of the most exploited sections of their workers.

Employment law favours bosses, who can abandon negotiations and lock out

workers during collective bargaining.

This tactic was at the heart of the latest large workers' struggles in New Zealand, the lockout of the AFFCO and Port of Auckland workers.

AFFCO wanted their staff to take a 25% pay cut instead of the meagre 1% rise in wages asked by the union, so the Talley family locked them out. At the Ports of Auckland, Rob Campbell, the class-traitor, tried to attack the union by changing the collective agreement to allow two other stevedore companies into the port to compete for contracts, break the union and drive down wages.



Cuts to education

National has introduced "National Standards" to grade schools based on 'key performance indicators' and then has released this information to the media, who have, of course, created "league tables" to pit schools against each other.

This government-prescribed teaching plan limits teachers' ability to teach. Research by University of Waikato has shown it has narrowed the curriculum available, destroyed individualised teaching and resulted in more tests and less teaching – exactly as teachers' unions predicted. It has increased inequality by producing a two-tier system where poorer schools can offer only a restricted curriculum in order to achieve national standards.

Then there was the Novopay debacle which still isn't resolved – 2 and half

years after it was implemented teachers are still suffering irregularities in pay.

Hekia Parata has overseen the closure of many small public schools across the country and has helped shape the growth of charter schools.

Charter schools in themselves further increase inequality amongst both students and teachers. The average cost of a student at a public school is \$6000 a year, and yet at one South Auckland charter school it is on average \$9,688 per student.

Not only do they get more taxpayers' money, they are not required to have qualified teaching staff, do not have to follow the national curriculum, and can selectively pick who is allowed to be enrolled at their schools.

Charter schools vastly increase inequality and are part of a major

international effort to privatise education.

Furthering this drive to privatise education is the attack on tertiary education. Student unions across the country have been devastated by the introduction of voluntary student membership.

At the University of Auckland, student services and the union's budget have been contracted to the "Campus Life" organisation. Auckland has seen the closure of 50% of the humanities courses - almost all of them in critical theory.

Student allowances for postgraduates have been axed, along with a raft of new rules around student loans. This has its effect in further 'gentrifying' universities nationwide.

Asset sales and tax cuts for the rich

Genesis Energy is the last of the four companies sold or partially sold off – supposedly to ‘mum and dad’ investors – including Mighty River Power, Meridian and Air New Zealand, with Solid Energy’s sell-off being cancelled after the embarrassing failure of the Mighty River Power sale.

This was against the wishes of the New Zealand public, as National ignored the results of the referendum.

None of the assets sold were in financial jeopardy, all of them were making money as of 2013. The four companies had assets worth more than \$11.4 billion, the Government sold them for a paltry \$4.67 billion – yet another giveaway to John Key’s rich mates.

Most of these electricity companies used to be part of the publicly-owned New Zealand Electricity Department, whose assets were split up and divided into

separate, “competing” state-owned enterprises in 1999.

What we can expect from this sale is a general increase in the cost of electricity, exactly as Meridian and Mighty River Power did the year before their sale to “sweat their assets” – to show investors how much money they could expropriate from us.

John Key has sold off productive assets for a one-time deal that won’t even cover the cost of the tax cuts he brought in.

Those tax cuts total over \$5.5 billion dollars so far and have not affected tax evasion rates as they were supposedly implemented to do.

The Prime Minister has often made the allusion to the national economy being run like a household; if you don’t have enough coming in you can’t spend on things going out.

In reality things are not as simple.

National have given large tax cuts to the rich and subsidies to multinationals, while at the same time cutting spending on all public services, and to cover the cost of the shortfall is borrowing billions a year from international lenders just to keep afloat.

New Zealand debt has grown massively during the term of the National Government. During the Clark Labour government, debt levels were steady at around \$20 billion, this has more than doubled from 2008 to 2012, and with the government’s own projections from this year’s budget will grow by a further \$61 billion in the next 5 years.

It is typical of a government demanding austerity from the populace. It’s austerity for workers and the poor, and subsidies and handouts for the rich.

No long term plan

Far from looking out for ordinary people, National doesn’t even have a plan for capitalism in New Zealand in general. Their strategy is cronyism, corruption and cut-throat capitalism. Key’s New Zealand is a three-trick pony, dairying, drilling and the construction chaos. Dairying and drilling are short-term, high-profit industries.

Construction in Christchurch and Auckland, which could have been a golden opportunity to reinvigorate the trades sector and improve housing, is chaotic. Job security does not exist and disorder and mayhem rules.

It’s obvious National does not deserve your vote. But what does that leave us with?

Labour have a bob each way – they have moved to the left by supporting extended paid parental leave, while in

others, such as increasing the retirement age and denigrating migrants, they have tried to out-tack National from the Right.

Labour cannot tap into the anti-National sentiment that exists because it is only half-heartedly opposed to the government’s direction.

The International Socialists support a party vote for Internet Mana. Mana is standing on a clear left-wing platform – for the right to strike, for free education and for free healthcare. Mana could, regardless of which major party is in power, act as a voice for resistance in parliament. And the stronger the vote for Internet Mana, the more confident those preparing to fight will feel.

But, ultimately, real power does not lie in Parliament. National and Key are serving their rich mates, the ruling class

who exercise real power in boardrooms and company offices, not in Parliament. Democracy should not stop after the votes have been collected.

National’s agenda can be stopped by strikes, determined protest campaigns and disruptions to the normal order of things. That requires us looking beyond parliament to our self-activity as workers.

The only way to get what we need and deserve – free universal healthcare and education, free water, electricity, housing, and even food, in other words, a true society of equals run by the workers, is by collectively organising in workplaces, homes and schools. A first step along that road will be voting National out. In the long run, we need a revolution.

Get rich or die trying

Between 2008 and 2013 there were 28 deaths and 967 serious harm notifications in the forestry, according to Work Safe New Zealand. Why is it that a New Zealand forestry worker is six times more likely to die than a British forestry worker, asks Rowan McArthur.

On June 13, Harvest Pro New Zealand Ltd was ordered to pay \$120,000 for failing to protect a worker from a falling log. The court fined Harvest Pro \$80,000 and ordered them to pay the injured worker \$40,000.

"That work, as well as this prosecution and fine, sends a clear message to the industry about their duty to protect workers at every stage of the tree harvesting process," Work Safe New Zealand health and safety operations general manager Ona de Rooy said. But these fines are doing little to change work conditions.

Forestry is New Zealand's third biggest export industry, bringing in \$4 billion a year. These fines are just a drop in ocean. And, for the bosses, the lives and well-being of the industry's 5000 workers are only valuable in so far as they contribute to profits.

In 2012, after three workers had died in the space of 18 months, Sheldon Drummond, of the Forest Owners Association, commented that it was "most unfortunate".

Fortune has nothing to do with it. Since the mass privatization of the 1980s and the smashing of unions in the 1990s, collective contracts have become a thing of the past and contracting out the new norm in forestry. Contractors compete for work from forest owners, promising faster turnover at cheaper prices. This puts massive pressure on workers to work longer hours, sometimes 13 or 14-hour days, often in dangerous weather to fulfil these contracts, often putting their own and their co-workers' health and safety at risk. Contract work means bosses offer lower wages are offered and disregard

training.

Since the 1991 Employment Contract Act (ECA), New Zealand has seen the decimation of union numbers and the destruction of rank-and-file activism in unions, and with it the rise of longer hours, lower pay and increased fatalities. You are now twice as likely to die at work in New Zealand as you are in Australia.

The Council of Trade Unions (CTU) has been increasingly critical in the last few years of the bad work practices and



incidents. On June 19, CTU President Helen Kelly (above) wrote in the Rotorua Daily Times that "owners are reviewing their processes. The contractors are meeting the review panel to talk about solutions and the workers are too. Workers and contractors are joining the union campaign and helping us contribute to the various initiatives and to maintain the momentum for change."

But a partnership model will not work. The bosses are making money from death. They have no interest in health and safety. It will take fighting unions – unions that frighten forestry bosses – to force changes.

Worse, partnership models shift blame onto workers. Instead of slowing production to a safe speed and making sure workers are getting enough breaks, it could mean that workers have to do more in the name of "safe practice" while not slowing down production.

This would only increase stress and fatigue, making fatal mistakes more likely.

There has already been too much focus and blame placed on individual workers, with drugs and alcohol being used by bosses as an excuse for fatalities.

No amount of drugs and alcohol can explain the gap between New Zealand's forestry fatalities and the United Kingdom's - but the bosses nonetheless will no doubt use this as an excuse to intimidate workers into random drug testing.

Allowing bosses to call the shots on 'health and safety' guarantees we will see workers being fired for events beyond their control.

So if we can't trust those at the top, then who?

The process has already begun. There is a new union in forestry - First Forestry Union. Although only in its infant stages, if workers can join and win collective contracts, this will be a massive step forward.

Forestry workers are the experts in their field. They do not need endless bureaucratic reports and regulations.

The best way to win real change is for the workers to get together and make demands for themselves, and not just around health and safety either but for wages, conditions and anything else.

Forestry workers in Aotearoa have a history of being at the forefront of workers struggles and strikes. There is a long road ahead but the first step has been taken. For as long as profits are the driving force the workers safety will always come second. Collective strength on the ground, nor more top-down rules, is the way forward.

The rise of Hindu nationalism

When politicians cannot promise prosperity, identity is a cheap alternative. In India, the eclipse of Congress by the BJP is the triumph of the shadow side of Indian nationalism, writes Andrew Tait.

“Saffron is the colour of hindutva, but for quite some time, it is also the colour of death or shivering fear for the religious minorities of India. For some of them, it is the colour that made their life colourless, it is the colour that brings back chilling memories of those days they ran for life, leaving behind everything and everyone they thought precious till that moment, it is the colour that made them refugees in their own land... This was India’s western state of Gujarat in 2002. After the massacre, independent investigations were made and all the findings pointed to one person for ultimate responsibility, the then chief minister Narendra Modi. And now he is at the helm of the country, the prime minister.”

That was the reaction of Sajeev Kumar, an Indian comrade based in Auckland, to the election of Modi, the darling of the corporate media. The reaction of the media has been different. The *Otago Daily Times* approvingly quoted an Indian industrialist who described Modi as “a king among kings”. Although the paper mentions “sectarian tensions”, Modi’s task, the paper says, is to tackle inflexible labour laws, support manufacturing and get rid of corruption. These reactions come from two different planets and demonstrate how successfully Modi has reinvented himself as “Mr Development”.

Modi’s right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party won the election with only 31% but its ability to rule alone is a historic defeat for the Indian National Congress, the political party that created the Indian state. Congress won only 44 of the 543 seats in the latest election. The party of Gandhi and the independence struggle

has been demolished by the party of Gandhi’s assassins. Modi is a member of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a Hindu nationalist organisation modelled on European far-right movements on the 1930s, whose founder was an admirer of Hitler’s race purity doctrines. Gandhi’s assassin was a former member of RSS. The aim of the assassin, the RSS and the BJP is to define India as a Hindu nation, with Muslims and other religious minorities either forced out or forced into second-class citizenship.

India is the second most populous state in the world, and the world’s largest democracy. A federation of 24 states with as many official languages as well as hundreds of “tribal” peoples with their own languages, it makes more sense to compare the subcontinent with the EU than with France or the USA. India was the “jewel in the crown” of the British Empire, its largest and richest dominion. Congress was not a revolutionary party, but it was left-wing, committed to erasing caste differences, untouchability, poverty, and religious and ethnic boundaries. The first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru, the architect of the modern Indian nation-state, aimed for a sovereign, secular and democratic republic. Nehru described himself as a “Hindu agnostic”, saying “No country or people who are slaves to dogma and dogmatic mentality can progress, and unhappily our country and people have become extraordinarily dogmatic and little-minded.”

His vision was of state-promoted industrialisation focused on heavy industries. Caste oppression, women’s

oppression, and religious discrimination were opposed. Attempts were made at redistributing land from wealthy landowners but these aims were undermined at every turn by the right-wing of Congress, bankrolled by landlords and capitalists. Congress’ cross-class unity meant the promises of independence – freedom, equality, and prosperity – were always hollow. Worse, fear of Hindu nationalism meant the birth of secular India was accompanied by the birth of an explicitly Muslim state – Pakistan. India was a secular, democratic state born in a bloody ethnic cleansing.

India fought a series of wars against Pakistan. Kashmir, a Muslim-majority territory between Pakistan and India, now hosts the biggest, bloodiest and also the most obscure military occupation in the world. Nehru was the founder of India’s atomic programme, set up one year after independence. The programme was a public-private partnership with the Tata Group, now one of the small class of super-oligarchs that control India.

The wheels started falling off India’s modernisation in the 1980s, as the rapid international growth of the post-war economic boom faded. Not only India suffered – the world economy was mired in stagnation and inflation, and rising unemployment. The United States was plunged deeper into debt than ever before thanks to its disastrous adventure in Vietnam, while the USSR was spending billions on war in Afghanistan instead of providing consumer commodities to its people.

Internationally, the left was wedded to one version or another of state capitalism. The Communist Parties of India, which had long been in power on the state level in India, looked to either China or the USSR for inspiration and were sorely disappointed. The Stalinist version of industrialisation had catapulted Russia from the middle ages to the space age in a generation, but by the 1980s, it was played out and bankrupt.

The ruling class seized on the economic slowdown as an opportunity to roll back the gains of national liberation struggles and of workers, women, and the poor. Chile was their model, where General Pinochet in 1973 overthrew the left-wing government and instituted a reign of terror against trade unions, leftists and indigenous people, opening up to foreign capital and driving down wages. This model was followed in New Zealand under the 1984 Labour Government, and by Reagan in the US and Thatcher in the USA.

In India, Congress was slower to adopt neoliberalism but its impacts have been devastating. Author and activist Arundhati Roy says that after the opening up of the economy, “we are in a situation where, you know, 100 of India’s wealthiest people own – their combined wealth is 25 percent of the GDP, whereas more than 80 percent of its population lives on less than half a dollar a day ... these new economic policies created a big middle class, which, given the population of India, gave the impression of—it was a universe of its own, with, you know, the ability to consume cars and air conditioners and mobile phones and all of that. And that huge middle class came at a cost of a much larger underclass ... millions of people being displaced, pushed off their lands either by big development project or just by land



Hindu nationalist Narendra Modi has been hailed as business-friendly.

which had ceased to be productive. You had—I mean, we have had 250,000 farmers committing suicide, which, if you even try to talk about, let’s say, on the Indian television channels, you actually get insulted...”

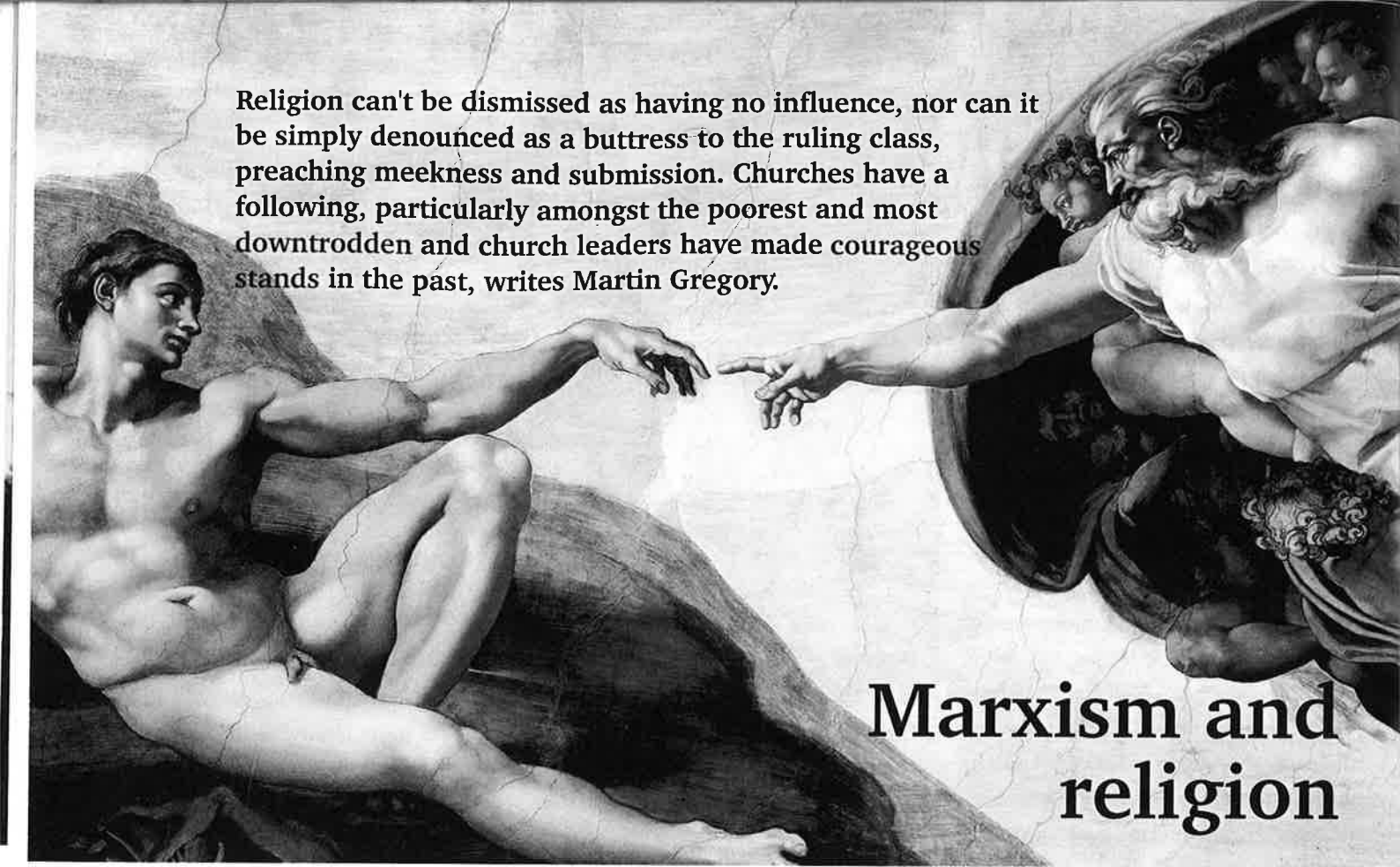
When politicians cannot promise prosperity, identity is a cheap alternative. In India, the eclipse of Congress by the BJP is the triumph of the shadow side of Indian nationalism. Hindu nationalism makes explicit what was always implicit in Gandhi’s India – the domination of the higher castes, the subjugation of women and persecution of queer people, the theft of land and resources for the sake of the rich and the expropriation of indigenous people and peasants.

But despite the dominance of the right and the real danger of (another) nuclear-armed religious nationalism to world peace, India has a proud tradition of resistance. The biggest general strike in all history was only a couple of years ago in India. The titanic world-shaking movement of 1968, which almost overthrew capitalism in France and finally drove the stake into the 19th century vampire colonialism, did not

have a massive impact in India. Struggle comes in waves and the success of one struggle pushes the next on to greater victories.

As India becomes more central to the world economy, so too does the latent power of the Indian working class grow. An Arab Spring in India would not only have a greater impact on the world economy, the revolutionaries in India would be able to communicate far more readily in English – the world’s lingua franca; and revolution would spread rapidly through the Indian diaspora.

Rosa Luxemburg rightly said we are confronted by a choice between barbarism and socialism. Our choice is either the suicidal madness of unleashing tribalist savagery in an era of nuclear weaponry or the deliberate conquest of power by the democratically organised majority of humanity. That means on the one hand we recognise the threat of madmen like Modi and fraudsters like John Key, but we don’t take them too seriously. It’s our labour that makes the world work, and our side is infinitely more powerful, if we can but organise.



Religion can't be dismissed as having no influence, nor can it be simply denounced as a buttress to the ruling class, preaching meekness and submission. Churches have a following, particularly amongst the poorest and most downtrodden and church leaders have made courageous stands in the past, writes Martin Gregory.

Marxism and religion

Brian Dawson, the Anglican vicar of St Peter's on Willis (Wellington), has been active in the Living Wage Campaign. He organised a rally last December, complete with carols, to celebrate Wellington City Council becoming a Living Wage employer. Campaigners had put low pay on the political map. In local elections, 25 Wellington mayoral and councillor candidates committed to the Living Wage. The Public Services Association is the main union at the council. As the PSA delegate convenor, I have to admit this victory, so important for the 400 lowest paid council staff, had little to do with me, my fellow delegates or the union. The credit is due to the likes of Brian Dawson and other religious leaders who drove the Living Wage Campaign.

It is true churches do deflect working-class people away from taking action for themselves. However, religions, in a world of class division, must reflect the oppression suffered by their adherents. On a world scale, another divide is between the imperialist nation states and subjugated peoples. For many of these people, Islam is their religion. From

Morocco in North Africa to China, from Bangladesh to Indonesia, Muslim peoples have suffered under Spanish, French, Italian, British, Russian, Chinese, Dutch and US imperialisms.

Since the Iranian Revolution of 1979 deposed the pro-western Shah and brought political Islam to power, resistance to imperialism across these regions has, increasingly had religious leadership. In reaction, western media and politicians have churned out Islamophobia (fear of Muslims), demonising Islam as a reactionary religion. But illiberal attitudes in Muslim societies towards women, gays and religious authority reflects economic backwardness compared to the more industrialised West.

Traditional Christianity is, if anything, more reactionary. During the decline of the Roman Empire in Europe, the Dark Ages and the Medieval period, Christendom was mired in low-level agricultural production, while the Caliphate attained a far higher cultural level in which trade played a much

greater role.

There is nothing intrinsically backward about Islam as a religion. However, in fact there is nothing intrinsic about religion at all. As German revolutionary Karl Marx wrote in 1843:

The foundation of irreligious criticism is: Man makes religion, religion does not make man . . . But man is no abstract being squatting outside the world. Man is the world of man – state, society. This state and this society produce religion, which is an inverted consciousness of the world, because they are an inverted world . . . Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people.

This still serves as a guide today: Firstly, he argues religion did not come to people from outside, but was made by people; and not by people in the abstract, but by people living in specific societies and

states. Secondly, religious feeling (or religious suffering) is both an expression of real suffering and a protest against suffering. Religion, to have any appeal, must cry out against suffering.

We Marxists have nothing in common with liberal atheists who, with their air of intellectual superiority, look down upon hoodwinked religious believers. Religion gains its power by giving words of consolation to the suffering, offering hope, redemption or even only meaning. The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus is a story that offers people, crushed under intolerable burdens, dignity and hope by wrapping their humble, voiceless suffering in the glorious suffering of Christ.

Marxism is a materialist philosophy and incompatible with religion. Ideas arise out of our ever-changing societies, rather than causing change. For example, the merchants and small manufacturers that emerged in European feudal societies fought for the Protestant reform of Christianity because that accorded with their economic situation. Their version of Christianity embodied their ideals of individual effort and thrift. They preached a personal relationship with God and a personal reading of the Bible. Protestantism ditched the expensive priests, bishops and popes of Catholicism and its lavish ceremonies.

Here is Marx explaining the economic roots of ideas.

In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitute the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which

correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness.

To combat religion it is necessary to understand it in a materialist way. As we have seen, religion is not only about passivity but can express the protest of oppressed people. Herein lies the key to combating religion.

This is how Lenin put it.

The combating of religion cannot be confined to abstract ideological preaching, and it must not be reduced to such preaching. It must be linked up the concrete practice of the class movement, which aims at the social roots of religion. Why does religion retain its hold? . . . Because of the ignorance of the people, replies the bourgeois progressivist, the radical or the bourgeois materialist. And so: "Down with religion and long live atheism; the dissemination of atheist views is our chief task!" The Marxist says that this is not true, that it is a superficial view, the view of narrow bourgeois uplifters. It does not explain the roots of religion profoundly enough; it explains them not in a materialist, but in an idealistic way. In modern capitalist countries these roots are mainly social. The deepest root of religion today is the socially downtrodden condition of the working masses and their apparently complete helplessness in the face of the blind forces of capitalism. . . . No educational book can eradicate religion from the minds of the masses who are crushed by capitalist hard labour, and who are at the mercy of the blind destructive forces of capitalism, until those masses themselves learn to fight this root of religion, fight the rule of capital in all its forms, in a united, organised, planned and

conscious way.

Lenin argues that not only should workers who believe in God be allowed to join the revolutionary socialist party, socialists must deliberately set out to recruit them!

Lenin steered a course between an abstract militant atheism and opportunism which drops principled positions on religious issues so as not to scare away religious voters.

Finding a way between being too soft on religion and being too sectarian is still an important matter for socialists as it was in Lenin's time. In conclusion, here are five propositions on religion relevant to socialist organisations today.

- 1. We are not elitist.** We are not intellectuals who look down on believers as reactionary. We do not give offence to religious beliefs. Attacks on religious belief only reinforces the influence of the clergy.
- 2. We are against anyone being oppressed because of their religion,** including bans on wearing veils, the turbans or crucifixes.
- 3. We are for religious freedom now and in a socialist state.**
- 4. We are for the separation of church and the state.** State-funded schooling should not be linked to any religion. We are in favour of state schooling for all children, but we are against laws to suppress religious schools.
- 5. Religion is not a private matter** within socialist organisations. We accept recruits who are religious believers, but, along with all members, we aim to educate them in Marxist materialist philosophy. Unlike Labour, which allows religion to be a private matter, members of a revolutionary socialist party in any responsible capacity must take the agreed socialist position on moral questions.

Workers fight WW1 conscription

Amid the patriotic furore over Anzac day, the real history of the wars our parents and grandparents lived through is all too easily forgotten. The government and the opposition alike cry crocodile tears for the fallen and call "Never again!" while daisy cutters are dropped on Afghanistan and history books re-written, Cory Anderson says.

In high-school classrooms and history-books, we are taught a version of the war in which a well-fed, well-bred (and mostly white bread) nation proudly sacrifices its sons for "God, King and Country". Mention of wartime dissent is limited to footnotes about "conscientious objectors" who are presented as a tiny minority of idealists, and perhaps a few comments on the cost of living. This story is designed to create a placid and pliant society, ready fodder for future wars. History is different. In New Zealand, there was a great movement against the continued prosecution of the war, and for peace. It wasn't a minority, and it wasn't isolated. Hundreds were jailed, and thousands condemned the war in public meetings, in their workplaces, and on the streets.

Workers, organized in unions and socialist parties, opposed conscription from the start. When the government started a National Register in 1915, it sounded alarm bells. All men over the age of 19 were required to register. Despite assurances the register was not preparation for conscription, men of military age (19-54) had to answer questions about their willingness for service. A clear majority of 'eligible' men were against conscription. Of 195,341 respondents, 33,785 were totally

unwilling to serve in the armed forces, and an additional 44,338 would not serve overseas. 137,807 respondents had dependents, leaving only 34,103 men willing and available to serve without qualification.

As further moves were made towards conscription, the labour movement began to register its opposition. Mass meetings were popular. The coal miners at the West Coast town of Blackball

declared: "We, the members of the Blackball Miner Industrial Union of Workers strongly resent the utterances of certain members of the Ministry and writings of the press ... We consider that the most effective method would be to rationalize the wealth and property of the rich, and not have

conscription of the flesh and blood of the working classes of New Zealand.

Furthermore, we are prepared to resist such a calamity as conscription with industrial revolt."

On January 25, 1916, during the war, the United Federation of Labour held a conference on the issue, attended by over 200 union representatives. Only one delegate spoke in favor of conscription. Women delegates gave speeches against the increasing attempts of employers to exploit women's labour, and lower wages paid to women. They declared themselves against division between the sexes in the working class movement and for internationalism. Ex-soldier delegates spoke, exposing the self-serving intent of the generals that

favoured conscription and noting the use of soldiers to suppress strikes, as had happened in Bermuda when black colliers struck. The conference adopted a manifesto calling for opposition to the conscription of life, demands for the conscription of capitalist wealth, wages for soldiers set to the level of the highest skilled artisan, higher pensions for disabled men, orphans and widows, and the statement of the Allied Nations terms for peace.

"We, the members of the Blackball Miner Industrial Union of Workers ... consider that the most effective method would be to rationalize the wealth and property of the rich, and not have conscription of the flesh and blood of the working classes."

The fight for women's liberation was made all the more urgent by the war, and union papers like The Maoriland Worker carried articles on issues that most affected women, as well as agitating for organization of women workers. Pains were also made to point out the need for solidarity with German and Austrian workers. Nevertheless, the government was determined

to push through with conscription.

The Military Service Bill was introduced to Parliament at the end of May 1916. Unions responded with mass meetings that began to taken on the character of spontaneous demonstrations. Alexandra Hall in Wellington was filled beyond capacity and demonstrators flowed onto the street outside, where the likes of Bob Semple and Adela Pankhurst rallied the crowd. Outdoor demonstrations stopped traffic at Cuba St and at the intersection of Lambton Quay and Willis St. In rural towns, too, there was uproar. Record meetings were held in Dargaville, and Thames was unanimously against conscription. Rural workers in Canterbury declared their opposition.

1914 - 2014: Centenary of slaughter

But an unholy alliance of the Liberals and Tories, once bitter enemies, rushed the bill through in a matter of days. Only four MPs (socialists) and one left-leaning independent opposed the bill at the final reading, and conscription was enacted on June 9, 1916. The government then went on the attack, arresting Semple ahead of his speech in Christchurch; he was charged with sedition, and sentenced to one year's hard labor. Within a week, five of the most prominent anti-conscription unionists were arrested, tried for sedition and sentenced to a year's hard labor imposed. The offices of The Maoriland Worker were raided by police, and a Justice of the Peace suggested one of editors might be hanged. Regulations were pushed through, giving the police the power to ban any meetings that "might be injurious to the ... interests of His Majesty". Unions began a "freedom of speech" movement for the release of all those arrested for sedition and collecting funds to support their families.

On January 30, 1917, coal miners on the West Coast began a "go-slow", demanding higher wages and the repeal of conscription. The go-slow became a strike that spread until nearly all coal and gold-mining was shut down. Despite the arrest of nearly a dozen union officials, the strike continued and gained the support of other unions. Australian miners declared that they would strike if attempts were made to supply New Zealand with Australian coal. Acting Prime Minister Sir James Allen was forced to intervene when waterside workers in Wellington threatened a wider strike and refused to unload ships carrying the vital fuel. After nearly three months, the miners won an important victory. The government agreed not to press for penalties against those arrested in connection with the strike and to allow the appeal of "every

essential worker in the essential industries in coal and gold mining", should they be balloted. Although not full repeal, it set a precedent.

Not all opponents of the war were conscientious objectors, but objectors were heroes for the anti-war movement. By the end of the war there were between some 300 and 400 conscientious objectors doing time in prison or labour camps. In July 1917 it was decided an example would be made of the most recalcitrant objectors and 14 were loaded on the transport ship Waitemata and deported to France. On board the Waitemata, the prisoners were placed in a cell without ventilation or a bucket for sea-sickness, stripped and forced to wear uniform. Three became so ill that they had to be left behind in Cape Town. Another fell ill in England, but the remaining 10 were sent to France. On arrival, several were threatened with execution. After some time in hard labor, three - Mark Briggs, Archibald Baxter and Lawrence Kirwin - were sent to the front. Others became stretcher-bearers. After beatings, forced labor, shelling and "Field Punishment No. 1" (being bound and tied to a post for periods up to four hours), Baxter and Briggs were classified as unfit for service and transferred to field hospitals before being returned home.

In New Zealand, resistance continued. After the 14 famous objectors were sent to France, the uproar was such that the government was forced to deny it ever had a policy of deporting objectors. In prisons, hunger strikes and other forms of disobedience were the methods of resistance. A hunger strike by objectors in prison at Waikeria in 1919 developed into a strike against the whole prison system. At Papanui a strike occurred when a prisoner from the West Coast refused fire drill duties and at Kaingaroa

Prison prisoners disregarded orders not to remove their blankets from their beds on cold days when they weren't working. When one objector imprisoned in Waikeria needed to see his ailing wife, he struck food and work and was 'locked up'. Another prisoner supported his cause and after 7 days he was transferred nearer to his home in Wellington.

It's important to remember the real history of World War 1, not just to set the record straight, but to recognize how far those who rule the world will go to defend their wealth. They sent the working classes of the world into the trenches to be murdered in their millions. Beyond that, all the rhetoric of 'freedom against tyranny' is exposed when we remember the assault on democracy. When socialist MP Paddy Webb was jailed for refusing to report he was told the military authorities did not "think that Parliament can be regarded as essential... that the men at the head of affairs are capable of governing the country". If we forget the thousands of workers, soldiers and sailors, men and women who resisted, then we truly have forgotten. But that's what our rulers wanted all along.

To Arms!

**Capitalists. Parsons. Politicians.
Landlords. Newspaper Editors and
Other Stay-At-Home Patriots.**

**your country needs
YOU
in the trenches!!**

WORKERS
Follow your Masters

Vote left, vote Internet-Mana

Sue Bradford has walked, reportedly describing the Mana-Internet alliance as a “sugar hit” of mass media publicity and cash – which, she predicts, will be followed by a crash. A sugar hit is not a bad way of describing the deal. But a sugar hit isn’t necessarily fatal if you don’t make it a habit, writes Andrew Tait.



The alliance announced last week between Mana and the Internet Party has injected a bit of excitement into what was looking like the most dismal election in recent history.

Before the alliance was announced, polls predicted veteran activist and leader of the Mana Party Hone Harawira was likely to hold his seat but the chances of him being joined by another MP were slim. Annette Sykes, second on the Mana party list, was polling at about 40% in her electorate battle against Maori Party leader Te Ururoa Flavell.

The alliance has changed all that, especially since the Internet Party announced that it had appointed trade unionist Laila Harre as its leader. This came as a shock to many – the party is the creation of millionaire new media mogul Kim Dotcom, whose first port of call politically was the far right. The Internet-Mana alliance looks likely to bring three MPs into Parliament – Harawira, Harre, and Sykes, with the possibility of John Minto joining them.

The International Socialist Organisation (ISO) has supported the Mana movement from the start. But not surprisingly, given our name – we were against an alliance with a millionaire, although we don’t care whether he is German or Chinese or Mongolian. We would have preferred to see a hard-out campaign in the Te Tai Tokerau and



The International Socialist Organisation (ISO) has supported Mana from the start. But we were against an alliance with a millionaire. We would have preferred a hard-out electorate campaign. But the majority of Mana members – especially those on the frontlines in key electorates – thought an alliance made sense.

Waiariki electorates on a straight Mana ticket. But the majority of Mana members – especially the members who are on the frontlines in those key electorates – thought an alliance made sense.

Accusations of hypocrisy from the right are ridiculous. In the last week, Sue Bradford has been the darling of right-wing columnists for her “principles” since she described the Dotcom deal as 21st century “beads and blankets” colonisation. Her integrity and principles for her decades as a staunch defender of beneficiaries’ rights have never won her anything but mockery

and attacks from the same columnists.

This is parliamentary politics. Mana has the right to make deals with other parties to improve chances in an election. This is a limited deal, with a “divorce clause” built in, which has given Mana a much-needed boost before the election. But like any deal, there are upfront costs, potential pitfalls and long-term dangers.

The deal reflects the strength of Mana’s support as against the Internet Party, and strengthens Mana in this election, but the movement as a whole is weaker now than at the last election. If Mana –

If Labour had rolled out a strong left-wing campaign to energise non-voting communities (the kind of campaign David Cunliffe promised when he stood for leader) then Mana members would have seen Dotcom as an irrelevant distraction from the real battle.

and the struggle on the streets more generally – had grown the way we had hoped in 2011 Mana would never have had to make this deal. If Labour had rolled out a strong left-wing campaign to energise non-voting communities (the kind of campaign David Cunliffe promised when he stood for the leadership) then Mana members would have seen Dotcom as an irrelevant distraction from the real battle.

The long-term aim of the ISO is to help build a mass, democratic working class party in Aotearoa and the Pacific that can play a part in an international revolutionary struggle to overthrow capitalism. We support Mana because, although it is not a revolutionary party, it is the only party standing on an anti-neoliberal platform – for full employment, state housing, free health and education, workers' rights and a living wage. Mana's profile as a party with parliamentary representation means these policies reach a much

wider audience. Although we opposed the deal with Dotcom, the leadership won Mana members over to the alliance by promising the deal would increase Mana's profile without compromising the policies.

Cynics like John Key argue Dotcom's main motivation is avoiding extradition to the USA, where he is wanted by Warner Brothers for copyright violations. Key said people could choose to vote for the Internet Party, but they should realise they would effectively be voting for the far left. Key's probably right on both counts, but hardly in a position to complain after his craven capitulation to US corporations – he smashed unions for the sake of the film industry bosses and then sicced the secret police and armed offenders' squad on Dotcom for the same corporations. What else can a poor boy like Dotcom do, when the right-wing politicians are in the pocket of the US multinationals, but bankroll the far left?



It's moments like these you wish a band of orcs would burn Hobbiton. John Key (pictured with Peter Jackson) argue Dotcom's motivation is avoiding extradition to the USA, where he is wanted by Warner Brothers for copyright violations. Key's may very well be right but he is hardly in a position to complain after his craven capitulation to US corporations – he arbitrarily removed the right of film staff to join a trade union and be covered by a collective contract for the sake of Peter Jackson and the film industry bosses and then sicced the secret police and armed offenders' squad on Dotcom at the behest of the same corporations.



While the appointment of Harre, who is a former leader of the left-wing Alliance Party, may have scared off more right-wing potential supporters of the Internet Party, it has strengthened the alliance with Mana and will reassure left-wing voters and supporters that Internet-Mana is a safe party to vote for. The appointment of Harre means the Internet-Mana alliance looks less like a cynical stitch-up and more like “Super Mana” – a party with broader appeal and deeper pockets (Dotcom has reportedly donated \$3 million to the party) but firmly on the left of the political spectrum.

What kind of party is the Internet Party? First and foremost, the Internet Party is the creation of German millionaire Kim Dotcom. Although he has taken a back seat since the appointment of Laila Harre as party leader, his politics are likely to continue to be the guiding influence in the party. He even has an official title “Party Visionary”. There is something more than a little creepy about this.

It is significant though, that the first policy announced by the Internet Party was for free tertiary education. Dotcom himself signalled this at the Mana hui in Rotorua, well before any deal was signed. This is less a sign of the radicalism of Dotcom than of the radicalism of neoliberalism in New Zealand. Free education, which used to be standard here, has been so eroded that the common sense of Germany's generous education system, which Dotcom is used to, seems crazy.

However, the Internet Party is more than



The appointment of Laila Harre as Internet Party leader makes the alliance a clear left vote. The agreement leaves room for the two parties to articulate separate policies but there seems little danger of serious contradictions in policy at this stage – that is more likely to emerge after the election.

just Dotcom's creation. It is built on the basis of networks like Vikram Kumar's Internet Association. In northern Europe, "Pirate Parties" campaigning on free information, anti-surveillance, anti-copyright platforms, have had some electoral success, most notably winning 7% of the Swedish vote in recent European Union elections. The "Anonymous" network of hackers, which has targeted the websites of repressive governments such as Israel in online DOS attacks, is another example of cyber-activism.

Cyber-activism is not necessarily left-wing though. The internet is disproportionately dominated by the US, with all of the kooky craziness of American libertarianism. In the "Third World" internet access is restricted to the upper classes. "Cyber-unions", for instance of finance workers or computer programmers, are not yet a force – although their emergence is inevitable. Most people engage with the internet as atomised individuals.

The formation of the Internet Party in an alliance with Mana will drive away any right-wing libertarians but we can then expect a mixture of utopian thinking and neoliberal "business-as-usual" thinking from the Internet Party.

What does this mean for the 2014 election?

The appointment of Laila Harre as Internet Party leader makes the Internet-Mana alliance a clear left vote. A vote for that party list is a vote for Harawira, Harre, Sykes and Minto – a strong team. The agreement leaves room for the two parties to articulate separate policies but there seems little danger of serious contradictions in policy at this stage – that is more likely to emerge after the election. It is possible to campaign on Mana's key policies – state housing, full employment at a living wage, and a financial transactions tax on the rich to replace the GST.

Mana has already used the profile won from the alliance to put pressure on Labour for its anti-immigration stance, calling for an amnesty for Pacific overstayers. Its worth noting though that Mana has not directly criticised the anti-Asian spin of Labour's immigration pitch.

Plans are being laid for an anti-GCSB speaking tour. John Key is complicit in the drone killing of New Zealand citizens in Yemen. He has smashed through some of the most basic and

fundamental principles of the rule of law. A speaking tour focused on state surveillance could bring together Mana's audience with Internet Party supporters (and people otherwise inclined to vote Green or Labour).

Mana may also prise the Maori electorates out of John Key's grasp, if Sykes can defeat Maori Party leader Te Ururoa Flavell in Waiariki. As *Herald* columnist John Armstrong writes: "Internet Mana poses a very real threat to National. It is not just that Hone Harawira, Laila Harre and Co might carve out new territory by appealing to young non-voters and thus expand the left's share of the vote. The far bigger danger to National is that Internet Mana wipes the floor in the Maori seats and obliterates the Maori Party."

National's other partners – United Future and ACT – are both political jokes. ACT has been living on borrowed time for most of a decade, and United Future only exists thanks to National. A "loony left" outfit like ourselves can get more members to a meeting than United Future could get to their Annual General Meeting.

Armstrong continues: "That leaves

National relying on the Maori Party. If the party makes it back into Parliament, signing up with National for a third time would be the kiss of death. But the odds on it holding any of its current three seats look increasingly bleak. Its poor showing in the Ikaroa-Rawhiti byelection — it came third behind Labour and Mana — was a wake-up call.”

What does this mean for the future of the Mana movement?

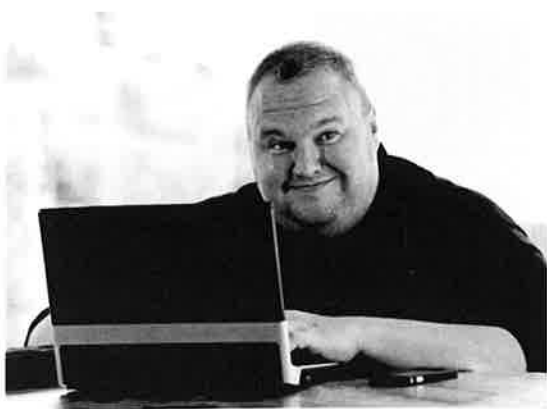
Sue Bradford reportedly described the alliance as a “sugar hit” – the deal with Dotcom provides mass media publicity and an injection of cash – which, she predicts, will be followed by a crash. Or worse, we will realise we have been taken for a ride by a smooth-talking con man.

A sugar hit is not a bad way of describing the deal.

Mana was born in 2011, the year of Occupy and the Arab Spring, when mass movements seemed to be stirring in reaction to economic disaster and bank bail-outs. Mana aspired to be more than just a party, to be a movement of the people, with branches everywhere that were involved in a myriad of campaigns in their communities, but united in a nationwide network.

That has not happened. John Key has enjoyed another three quiet years. He has been able to avoid massive scraps with organised workers and managed to stop the frustration felt by earthquake-hit Christchurch residents from infecting the national mood. He has delivered a budget surplus by a thousand cuts to welfare, without sparking a backlash.

This has meant three years of hard grind for Mana activists – Harawira included. He has suggested that unless another Mana MP is elected, he would resign.



Some, like party secretary Gerard Hehir, reckoned a “sugar hit” was just what the doctor ordered. If media time and a millionaire’s money could get Mana over the line one more time, the project – a nationwide, Maori-led, left-wing movement – might survive for another three years.

There are risks, if course. First and foremost, a millionaire cannot help but tread on our mana. Dotcom obviously believes he has gone from rags to riches because of his own genius. As he told the Mana AGM “I have the ability to create value” (as oppose to you lot who should be grateful to me for the jobs I create). We live in an increasingly unequal society where a lucky few (growing fewer all the time) are rewarded disproportionately while human genius is squandered and destroyed by unemployment, miseducation, incarceration and the ego-smashing machine that is Winz and work.

If Mana does well in the next election, many members may feel more grateful to Dotcom than he deserves.

Secondly, if Mana does well, it will also be thanks to astute manoeuvring by Gerard Hehir and Harawira. There is nothing wrong with wheeling and dealing in itself. Cutting deals in parliament and dealing with the media circus that surrounds it is a necessary part of broadcasting political ideas. But what are those ideas?

Working with Kim Dotcom poses risks for Mana, by shifting the focus of members from the streets to Parliament, and by buying into the worship of the rich as better, smarter, faster than the rest of us.

Fundamentally, the mission of the MANA Movement is to “bring rangatiratanga to the poor, the powerless and the dispossessed; to empower them against government by the rich and powerful for the rich and powerful”.

In so far as the Mana Party builds up the mana and the tino rangatiratanga of working people and the poor – our self-activity and autonomy – it will be a project that the International Socialist Organisation supports. In so far as it teaches a generation of activists that success comes from playing parliamentary games with millionaires, it will be a failure.

What is needed, after this election and before, is a clear-cut working-class political project around an explicitly revolutionary programme.

That means workers looking to political questions as class questions.

What will encourage our independence from other classes and other classes’ ideas? What will advance the project of working-class self-emancipation?

We are trying to build a revolutionary socialist organisation in the here and now around these goals.

It will take workers’ action outside parliament – in strikes and protests – to foster that confidence.



Massacre part of rape culture

"Tomorrow is the day of retribution, the day in which I will have my revenge . . . you girls aren't attracted to me, but I will punish you all for it. I'll take great pleasure in slaughtering all of you. You will finally see that I am in truth the superior one, the true alpha male." Elliot Rodgers recorded this manifesto a day before he murdered 6 people and injured 13 others then killed himself. The Santa Barbara massacre was an act of terror, writes Rowan McArthur.

Laurie Penny writes: "The ideology behind these attacks [...] is simple. Women owe men [...] We owe them respect and obedience, and our refusal to give it to them is to blame for their anger, their violence - stupid sluts get what they deserve. Most of all, there is an overpowering sense of rage and entitlement: the conviction that men have been denied a birthright of easy power."

Capitalism commodifies that rage and spreads it through advertising, pornography and forums, Penny says. But capitalism commodifies misogyny; it is its driving force. Women's oppression existed before capitalism, but it takes on specific forms in specific societies. The nuclear family and women's role within it is essential to the smooth running of capitalism and the reproduction of the next generation of workers. Unpaid domestic chores conducted in the home (still mainly done by women) if valued makes up something like a third to half of the world's GDP.

Unpaid work raising healthy workers to take the place of the old is fundamental to the profitability of the economy, and this is what drives sexist ideology, not individual men's ego and sense of entitlement.

Men and women are treated differently from birth. Boys as strong and resourceful, girls as sweet and sensitive. Men on top, women on bottom. Women are portrayed as sex objects to be had and owned, as domestic slaves happy to work for free. This feeds into entitlement and misogyny and can explode into outbursts of public violence. But usually violence towards women is not public - often it is behind closed doors. Sometimes it isn't even noticed or acknowledged and sometimes it is joked about; catcalls on the street, the fear of being taken advantage of after drinking, demeaning language, not being taken seriously, being spoken over.

Misogynist violence is often portrayed as a "Third World" problem. One reason

President George W. Bush gave for the invasion of Afghanistan was violence against women - never mind the violence of the US invasion. Kidnappings in Nigeria and rape in India are other examples of non-western atrocities towards women.

Sometimes these events are used to argue that women have it good here in New Zealand and to dismiss calls for equality. But in New Zealand one in three girls will have had an unwanted sexual experience by the time they are 16 and one in five women will experience sexual assault as an adult. Reporting of sexual violence in New Zealand is low, with only an estimated 9% of incidents ever reported to police, and only 13% of cases recorded to the police result in conviction. In the United Nations Report on the Status of Women published in 2011, New Zealand was ranked worst of all OECD countries in rates of sexual violence. Just because it isn't in your face does not mean it is not happening.

Women's liberation

Recently in Wellington there was a 'Let me go home' protest against attacks on women walking home from Victoria University. It is great that people are talking about the issues. Up to 200 people marched on the 'Let me go home' demo, with many staying to organize ways to keep women safe on the streets. Some called for more police participation and involvement while others for more grassroots action. The debate touches on our strategies and analysis for liberation.

That people were talking about sexism is a success but the feminist movement has been on the back foot for so long, there are many lessons to relearn. We cannot rid ourselves of sexism without ridding ourselves of capitalism, but we can and already have made significant gains. In Aotearoa, women have always had to participate in struggled to gain rights and recognition - nothing was gained without a fight.

The 1960s and 70s were the height of the struggle for women's liberation with many gains won: the domestic purposes benefits, laws against marital rape and

The 1960s and 70s were the height of the struggle for women's liberation with many gains won. Where once there were scores of different women's organisations in Aotearoa, there are now only a handful. But in recent years we are seeing more dialogue around women's liberation and sexism and more protests around the world in response to misogyny and "rape culture".

some access to abortion. But gains have been pushed back - as with equal pay laws - as the struggle has ebbed. Where once there were scores of different women's organisations in Aotearoa, there are now only a handful.

But in recent years we are seeing more dialogue around women's liberation and sexism and more protests around the world in response to misogyny and "rape culture". The internet has opened up space in which women and girls can share their experiences beyond the confines of the nuclear home. But the internet also opens up space for hatred

towards women, making people like Elliot Rodgers feel justified.

Laurie Penny writes 'We have been told for a long time that the best way to deal with this sort of harrassment and violence is to laugh it off. Women [...] have been told that online misogynists pose no real threat [...] Well, now we have seen what the new ideology of misogyny looks like at its most extreme. We have seen incontrovertible evidence of real people being shot and killed in the name of that ideology, by a young man barely out of childhood himself who had been seduced into a disturbing cult of woman-hatred. Elliot Rodger was a victim - but not for the reasons he believed.'

Forums and hashtags are not enough to challenge this culture. Most important is connecting to other struggles and recognising the root of all oppression. Fighting for equal rights for women while not supporting liberation of other oppressed groups under capitalism is impossible. An injury to one is an injury to all.



Criminal Injustice

Maori, Racism and Mass Incarceration

By Derwin Smith

Published by the International Socialist Organisation, March 2014

Reviewed by Jen Wilson

In April 2014 the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention visiting New Zealand expressed concern about the high rates of Maori imprisonment and in particular the imprisonment of Maori women who make up a staggering 65% of the female prison population.

The working group, having recognised the existence of systemic bias against Maori, recommended that a review of the extent of that bias be undertaken at all levels of the criminal justice system and stated that "incarceration that is the outcome of such bias constitutes arbitrary detention and is in violation of international law".

A month earlier, in March 2014, after 21 years imprisonment for a crime which he almost certainly did not commit, Teina Pora, a 32 year old Maori man, was released on parole.

Pora's innocence is widely accepted, with even the victim's brother expressing relief at his release. His parole conditions include a gagging order which prevents him speaking to the media about his case. His appeal to the Privy Council has yet to be heard.

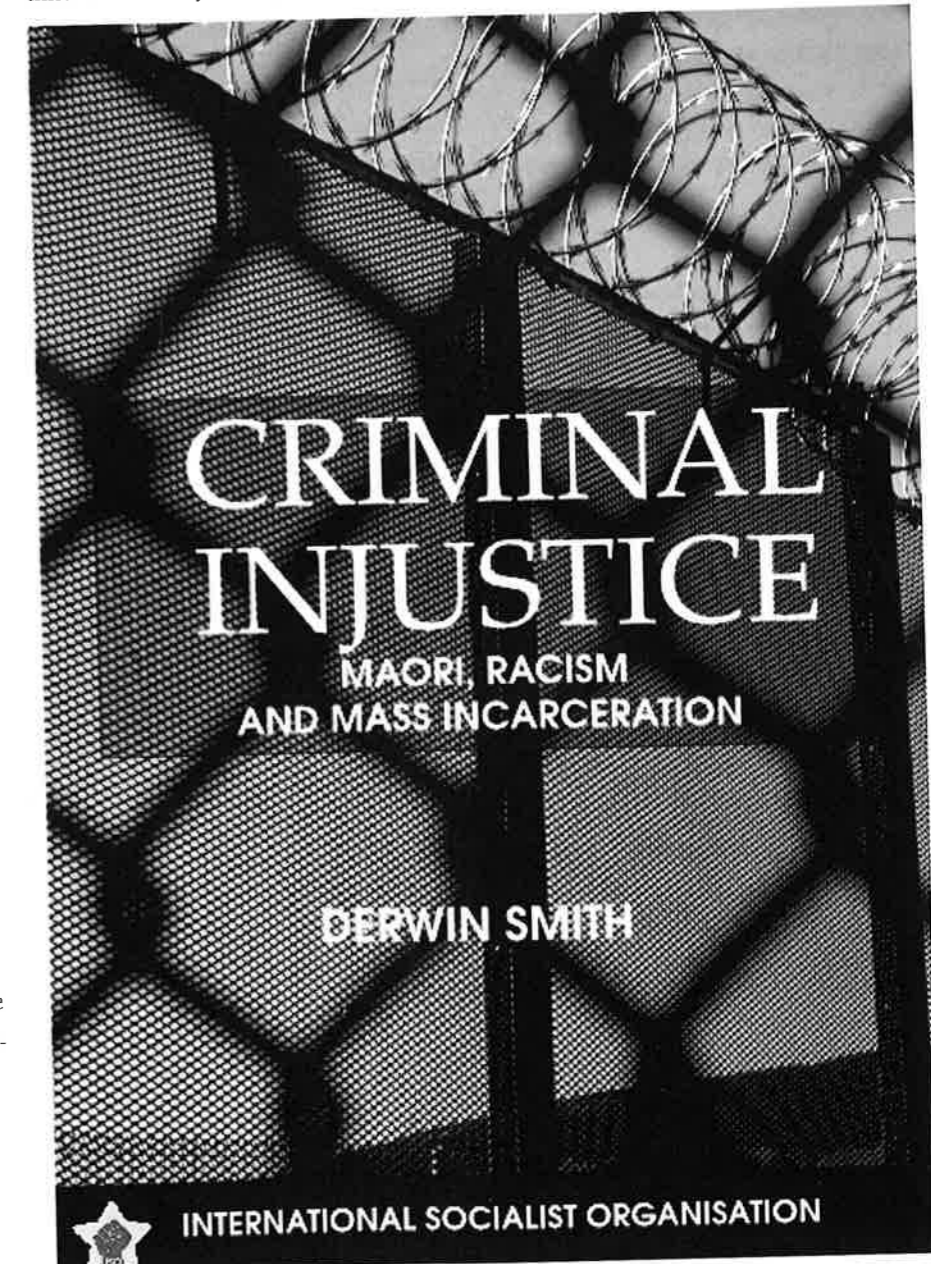
It is clear that racism within the justice system is finally being exposed.

How that racism operates and its relation to the capitalist enterprise is the subject of a pamphlet, *Criminal Injustice- Maori Racism and Mass Incarceration* written by Derwin Smith and published by the ISO in 2013. It is an important pamphlet and one which should be widely read.

Smith begins by making the case that racist injustice is endemic in Aotearoa. He cites both individual cases of injustice- for example that of Rawiri Falwasser- pepper sprayed and beaten at length by Police till blood covered the floor of his cell, and our shameful statistics - Maori, who make up 12% of the total population make up over 50% of the prison population and are 7½ times more likely to be given a custodial

sentence than non Maori. Those sentences are on average 15 to 18 times longer than those handed down to Pakeha.

However Smith goes further. His pamphlet, drawing on and critiquing Michelle Alexander's 2010 book, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colourblindness* examines how racism has developed alongside capitalism in Aotearoa and how its



purpose, as a tool of capitalism, has changed over time.

Part one of the pamphlet provides a brief outline of a "Marxist Theory of Racism" placing the colonisation of Aotearoa in its international historical context. Smith refers to Alexander's argument that the concept of race itself is a relatively new phenomenon arising from European imperialism, the plunder of Africa and the Americas for resources and labour and the growth of the African slave trade.

He points out that racism, as a legal and pseudo-scientific theory (the idea that Africans and people of colour were less than human) was developed in order to justify and explain the use of African slaves (an economic necessity for the imperial enterprise) when at the same time the notion of human equality was being enshrined in the US Constitution. Smith accepts the argument of Evan Poata-Smith, that the colonisation of Aotearoa was not driven by these racist philosophies alone, but rather by the economic and social crisis unfolding in Europe.

As in America the earliest purpose of racism in Aotearoa was to further the aims of the capitalist enterprise. He argues that the period from 1860-1940 marks the first stage of "legal racism" in Aotearoa with the purpose of the legal system and its application of racist ideology then not being to imprison or mark Maori as second class citizens via criminal records as it is now, but rather to steal Maori land and create a basis for capitalist farming, using Maori as a source of labour

Smith then argues that the purpose of systemic "legal racism" now serves a different purpose and that since the 1980's it has manifested itself in a different but equally destructive form, namely the criminalisation and mass incarceration of Maori.

The second section of the pamphlet

discusses how, even in an era of biculturalism, where overt racism based on genetics and skin colour is no longer widely acceptable in Aotearoa, the oppression of Maori continues.

Smith draws a clear parallel between the situation in the USA, as described by Alexander and the situation for Maori in Aotearoa. In both countries discrimination on the basis of race is

now illegal but discrimination against those with criminal records is not. In the USA the disproportionate criminalisation and mass incarceration of the black population allows the continuation of racist discrimination and social exclusion albeit covertly.

In Aotearoa the same applies to Maori. Smith then describes in some detail the mechanisms that lead to the

disproportionate imprisonment and criminalisation of Maori.

Briefly the argument is that at every stage of the justice system, be it the likelihood apprehension by Police, Police decision making regarding whether to prosecute, the likelihood of conviction and the severity of sentence, Maori are treated more harshly than Pakeha.

Smith backs up his argument with statistics gleaned from a number of sources including Statistics New Zealand, the Ministry of Justice and the Corrections department.

The multiple disparities he outlines explain the significant overrepresentation of Maori in our prisons and in the criminal statistics and represent a system of racist control over Maori.

Finally Smith asks why and who benefits from this system of mass incarceration and criminalisation. Alexander's

argument is that in an era of mass unemployment and a jobless recovery, mass incarceration provides a solution to the problem of excess of labour. Mass imprisonment is described by Alexander as way of "warehousing" unneeded labour. However Smith disagrees with this aspect of Alexander's argument, or at least disputes its applicability to Aotearoa.

Having a criminal record restricts a person's employment opportunities and prospects, makes it more likely that they will accept poor wages and safety standards and makes them more vulnerable and therefore less likely to complain about their pay and employment conditions.

Smith's conclusion is that the capitalist enterprise benefits from the mass criminalisation of Maori in different ways. Firstly by creating a class of people (those with criminal records) who can be legally discriminated against and who are therefore forced into work in low paid industries which are less strict about

employing those with criminal records. Having a criminal record restricts a person's employment opportunities and prospects, makes it more likely that they will accept poor wages and safety standards and makes them more vulnerable and therefore less likely to complain about their pay and employment conditions.

Secondly the creation of a new racist stereotype about Maori - that they are predisposed to criminality and therefore deserve to be discriminated against - allows racism to continue to divide the working class, leaving the ruling class free to continue their exploitation or workers and the environment, largely unchallenged.

Smith's work is well-researched and referenced and provides important insights into the way racism and capitalism continue to work hand in hand in Aotearoa.

Vote left but let's build resistance on the streets

**Internet
MANA**

“Doesn't it feel good to be a member of the National Party?” John Key started his address to National's June conference. National are high in the polls. Two terms in and the carefully-crafted centrist rhetoric has started to slip. National is ruling for the rich, and enjoying the ride. They have left their plans for a third term vague but, if what we have had to live through these last six years are an indicator, a National-led government will mean more attacks on beneficiaries, more neglect of the environment, and more attempts to wind-back union rights in the workplace. National looks all-powerful currently, but looks can be deceiving. Take the example of union rights. National was all set to carry through new laws that would have attacked everything from unions' rights in bargaining to workers' rights to tea breaks. But those plans were scuppered when John Banks was convicted in June. That is how meagre a majority they have: if just one of their rag-tag of following parties falls away then National's programme is threatened. Another term of tax cuts, charter schools, privatisation and union busting will damage the lives of working people. We

want to see National defeated. If National lose this election it will give confidence to ordinary people that right-wing attacks can be beaten back. It would be a step in re-gaining our confidence as a class. We would love to see National defeated, but we know that, whoever wins come September, ordinary life under capitalism will continue. Our bosses will still be able to order us around. Low wage workers will still face barriers to organising. The truth is that real power lies outside Parliament: in the board rooms of the big corporations, in the unelected heads of the public service, with the ruling class. This does not mean it is irrelevant who is in government. National is the open party of big business. It's natural for workers to want to see them set back. But one reason why National seem so all-powerful is because the opposition to them has been so muted. David Cunliffe was elected Labour leader on the back of ordinary members' disillusionment with the party's centrist drift. He had a mandate to push left and oppose Key on the basis of appeals to the poor. He hasn't done that. That is one reason why we are

calling for a vote for Mana. A strong vote for Mana – standing as it is for the right to strike, to feed the kids and to bring protest into Parliament – will build the anti-National vote without endorsing Labour's right-wing direction. The stronger the vote for Mana, the more of a sign that will send that there is a bloc of workers, students and the poor looking for a left prepared to fight. Electorate votes matter less. In the Maori seats workers will have a choice to back Mana. In the general seats many of us will vote Labour to see off National. But whatever you box you tick in September, real politics will be about what happens afterwards. Whoever wins we need to be getting ready now – with protests, like those pioneered by Auckland Action Against Poverty, with campaigns in our unions to oppose anti-worker laws, with rebuilding student campaigns after a quiet decade. As socialists we want to lay the basis for ongoing resistance. Voting Mana in September can play a part in that. Seeing National out of electorate seats will be a nice sweetener. But our real tasks remain in our workplaces and on the streets.