

Revolutionary Leaders on Socialism and Marxist Study

edited by
Workers Voice
Socialist Movement

Revolutionary Leaders on Socialism and Marxist Study

Edited by Workers Voice Socialist Movement

The real history of the struggle and its leaders has always been wiped out by the capitalists to prevent the spread of revolutionary ideas and goals. This pamphlet restores the heritage of leaders from around the world as Marxists organizing for socialism.

Published by Workers Voice Socialist Movement

We are workers, employed and unemployed, youth, students, and seniors. We are multi-racial and multi-national and organize for the unity of the working class. We are funded by and for workers, for the liberation of all workers and oppressed people.

We organize for jobs and higher wages, against racism, women's, and LGBTQ oppression, and for solidarity with immigrants. We organize for community schools, lower rents, and food on our tables. We organize for workers' power so that everything will one day be removed from the capitalists' private ownership.

We oppose the Pentagon, which is looting our tax dollars and handing them over to war-profiteering private companies, while social programs are gutted. We oppose war for empire which is pursued only to lower our wages and plunder the world's resources while destroying the environment. We reject the monopoly media who feed us lie after lie.

The labor of workers produces enormous wealth here in Louisiana, the U.S. and the world—so much wealth that everyone could have housing, meaningful jobs, education, healthcare, and genuine equality. But this wealth is stolen and privately owned by the capitalist class for their greed and profit. We believe that we, the workers of the world, can unite in revolution to overcome capitalism and build a better world.

nolaworkers.org

WorkersVoiceSocialistMovement@gmail.com

February 2021

Printed in New Orleans

“There are no other alternatives; either a socialist revolution or a make-believe revolution.”

—Che Guevara

“Theory without practice is just as incomplete as practice without theory. The two have to go together.”

—Assata Shakur

“Without Revolutionary theory, there can be no Revolutionary Movement.”

—Vladimir Lenin

Fred Hampton (1948–1969)

Revolutionary socialist chairman of the Illinois chapter of the Black Panther Party (BPP) and deputy chairman of the national BPP



“You don’t fight fire with fire. You fight fire with water [...] We’re gonna fight racism with solidarity. We’re gonna fight capitalism with socialism. Socialism is the people. If you’re afraid of socialism you’re afraid of yourself.”

“We say we’re not going to fight capitalism with black capitalism, but we’re going to fight it with socialism. [...] We’re going to fight their reactions with all of us people getting together and having an international proletarian revolution.”

“If you ever think about me, and you ain’t gonna do no revolutionary act, forget about me. I don’t want myself on your mind if you’re not going to work for the people.”

“We ain’t gonna fight no reactionary pigs who run up and down the street being reactionary; we’re gonna organize and dedicate ourselves to revolutionary political power and teach ourselves the specific needs of resisting the power structure, arm ourselves, and we’re gonna fight reactionary pigs with international proletarian revolution.”

“We might not be back. I might be in jail. I might be anywhere. But when I leave, you’ll remember I said, with the last words on my lips, that I am a revolutionary. And you’re going to have to keep on saying that. You’re going to have to say that I am a proletarian; I am the people.”

“We say primarily that the priority of this struggle is class. That Marx and Lenin and Che Guevara and Mao Zedong, and anybody else who ever said or knew or practiced anything about revolution, always said that a revolution is a class struggle.”

Amílcar Lopes da Costa Cabral (1924–1973)

Revolutionary, anti-imperialist, socialist leader of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde Islands' struggle for liberation from Portuguese domination

“Every practice produces a theory, and though it is true that a revolution can fail even though it be based on perfectly conceived theories, nobody has yet made a successful revolution without a revolutionary theory.

“In 1960 we created a political school in Conakry, under very poor conditions. Militants from the towns—party members—were the first to come to receive political instruction and to be trained in how to mobilise our people for the struggle. After comrades from the city came peasants and youths (some even bringing their entire families) who had been mobilised by Party members. Ten, twenty, twenty-five people would come for a period of one or two months. During that period they went through an intensive education programme; we spoke to them, and night would come and we couldn't speak any more because we were completely hoarse.”

“Educate ourselves, educate other people, the population in general, to fight fear and ignorance, to eliminate little by little the subjugation to nature and natural forces which our



economy has not yet mastered[...]Learn from life, learn from our people, learn from books, learn from the experience of others. Never stop learning.”

“In our present historical situation—elimination of imperialism which uses every means to perpetuate its domination over our peoples, and consolidation of socialism throughout a large part of the world—there are only two possible paths for an independent nation: to return to imperialist domination (neo-colonialism, capitalism, state capitalism), or to take the way of socialism.”

“How is it that we, a people deprived of everything, living in dire straits, manage to wage our struggle and win successes? Our answer is: this is because Lenin existed, because he fulfilled his duty as a man, a revolutionary and a patriot. Lenin was and continues to be, the greatest champion of the national liberation of the peoples.”

“We want to mention the special aid given to us by the peoples of the socialist countries. We believe that this aid is a historic obligation, because we consider that our struggle also constitutes a defence of the socialist countries. And we want to say particularly that the Soviet Union, first of all, and China, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and other socialist countries continue to aid us, which we consider very useful for the development of our armed struggle. We also want to lay special emphasis on the untiring efforts – sacrifices that we deeply appreciate – that the people of Cuba – a small country without great resources, one that is struggling against the blockade by the US and other imperialists – are making to give effective aid to our struggle.”

Assata Shakur (b. 1947)

Revolutionary from Queens, NY, now living in exile in Cuba

“I wasn’t against communism, but i can’t say i was for it either. At first, i viewed it suspiciously, as some kind of white man’s concoction, until i read works by African revolutionaries and studied the African liberation movements. Revolutionaries in Africa understood that the question of



African liberation was not just a question of race, that even if they managed to get rid of the white colonialists, if they didn’t rid themselves of the capitalistic economic structure, the white colonialists would simply be replaced by Black neocolonialists. There was not a single liberation movement in Africa that was not fighting for socialism[...]

“The whole thing boiled down to a simple equation: anything that has any kind of value is made, mined, grown, produced, and processed by working people. So why shouldn’t working people collectively own that wealth? Why shouldn’t working people own and control their own resources? Capitalism meant that rich businessmen owned the wealth, while socialism meant that the people who made the wealth owned it.

“[Earlier in my life] When someone asked me what communism...I realized i didn't have the faintest idea. My image of a communist came from a cartoon. It was a spy with a black trench coat and a black hat pulled down over his face, slinking around corners ...I never forgot that day. We're taught at such an early age to be against the communists, yet most of us don't have the faintest idea what communism is. Only a fool lets somebody else tell him who his enemy is... It's got to be one of the most basic principles of living: always decide who your enemies are for yourself, and never let your enemies choose your enemies for you.”

Che Guevara (1928–1967)

Argentine Marxist revolutionary who was a prominent figure of the Cuban Revolution



“The merit of Marx is that he suddenly produces a qualitative change in the history of social thought. He interprets history, understands its dynamic, predicts the future, but in addition to predicting it (which would satisfy his scientific obligation), he expresses a revolutionary concept: the world must not only be interpreted, it must be transformed. Man ceases to be the

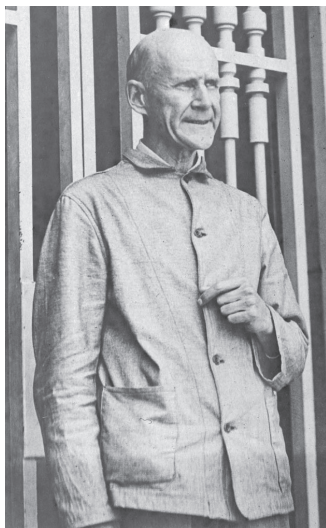
slave and tool of his environment and converts himself into the architect of his own destiny.”

“The laws of capitalism, blind and invisible to the majority, act upon the individual without his thinking about it. He sees only the vastness of a seemingly infinite horizon before him. That is how it is painted by capitalist propagandists, who purport to draw a lesson from the example of Rockefeller — whether or not it is true — about the possibilities of success.

“The amount of poverty and suffering required for the emergence of a Rockefeller, and the amount of depravity that the accumulation of a fortune of such magnitude entails, are left out of the picture, and it is not always possible to make the people in general see this.”

Eugene V. Debs (1855—1926)

Railroad union organizer, socialist, sentenced to jail for opposing imperialist WWI. In prison, ran for president, receiving 8 million votes.



“I am opposing a social order in which it is possible for one man who does absolutely nothing that is useful to amass a fortune of hundreds of millions of dollars, while millions of men and women who work all the days of their lives secure barely enough for a wretched existence.” (from *Statement to the Court Upon Being Convicted of Violating the Sedition Act*, September 18, 1918)

“As a revolutionist I can have no respect for capitalist property laws, nor the least scruple about violating them. I hold all such laws to have been enacted through chicanery, fraud and corruption, with the sole end in view of dispossessing, robbing and enslaving the working class.”

“The sound education of the workers and their thorough organization, both economic and political, on the basis of the class struggle, must precede their emancipation. Without such education and organization, they can make no substantial progress, and they will be robbed of the fruits of any temporary victory they may achieve, as they have been through all the centuries of the past.”

"[T]he class which has the power to rob upon a large scale has also the power to control the government and legalize their robbery."

"I am not a capitalist soldier; I am a proletarian revolutionist. I do not belong to the regular army of the plutocracy, but to the irregular army of the people. I refuse to obey any command to fight from the ruling class, but I will not wait to be commanded to fight for the working class.

"I am opposed to every war but one: I am for that war with heart and soul, and that is the world' wide war of the social revolution. In that war I am prepared to fight in any way the ruling class may make it necessary, even to the barricades." (from *In What War Shall I Take Up Arms and Fight*, September, 1915)

"While there is a lower class, I am in it, while there is a criminal element, I am of it, and while there is a soul in prison, I am not free."

"In every age it has been the tyrant, the oppressor and the exploiter who has wrapped himself in the cloak of patriotism, or religion, or both to deceive and overawe the People." (Canton, OH, Anti-War Speech, June 16, 1918)

"I have no country to fight for; my country is the earth; I am a citizen of the world."

Helen Keller (1880–1968)

American author and activist, advocate for the deaf and blind



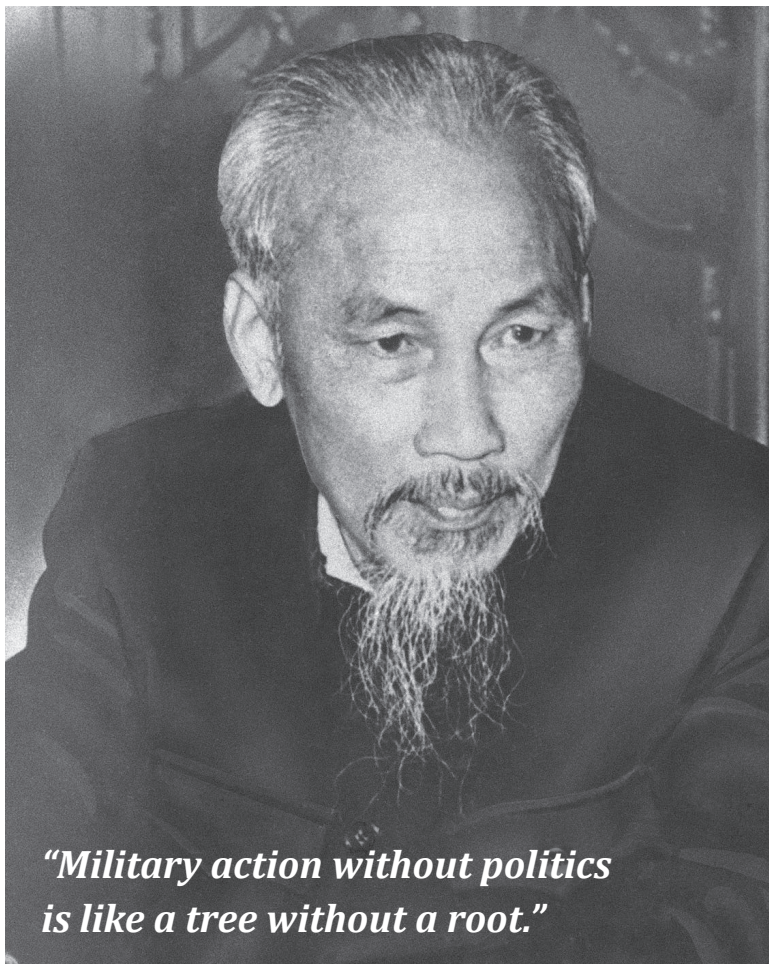
“It costs them nothing to give their aid to work for the blind and other superficial charities. But socialism—ah, that is a different matter! That goes to the root of all poverty and all charity. The money power behind the newspapers is against socialism, and the editors, obedient to the hand that feeds them, will go to any length to put down socialism and undermine the influence of socialists[...]. I am

no worshiper of cloth of any color, but I love the red flag and what it symbolized to me and other socialists. I have a red flag hanging in my study, and if I could I should gladly march with it past the office of the [New York]Times.”

“Are not the dominant parties managed by the ruling classes, that is, the propertied classes, solely for the profit and privilege of the few? They use us million to help them into power[...]. We, the people, are not free. Our democracy is but a name. We vote? What does that mean? It means that we choose between two bodies of autocrats. We choose between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. We elect expensive masters[...]. and then blame them because they work for themselves and for their class.”

Ho Chi Minh (1890–1969)

Leader of the Vietnamese Communist Party and the liberation struggle that defeated U.S. and French imperialism after a 30-year fight



*“Military action without politics
is like a tree without a root.”*

James Connolly (1868–1916)

Socialist Irish Republican freedom fighter



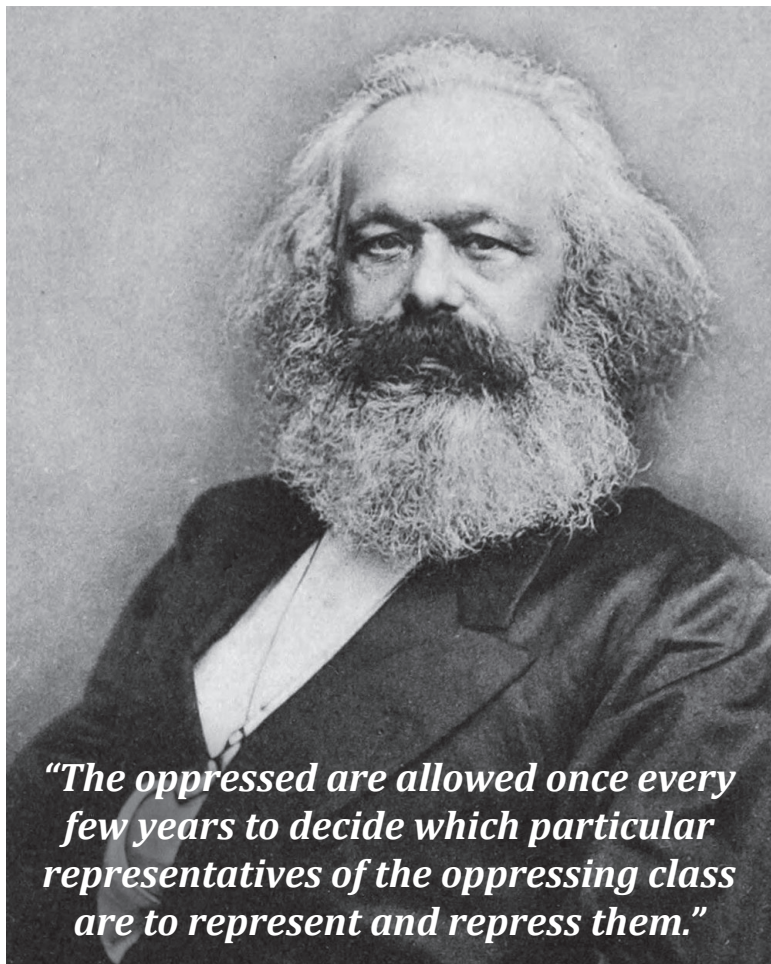
“If you remove the English army tomorrow and hoist the green flag over Dublin Castle, unless you set about the organisation of the Socialist Republic your efforts would be in vain.”

“England would still rule you. She would rule you through her capitalists, through her landlords, through her financiers, through the whole array of commercial and individualist institutions she has planted in this country and watered with the tears of our mothers and the blood of our martyrs.”

“Nationalism without Socialism—without a reorganisation of society on the basis of a broader and more developed form of that common property which underlay the social structure of Ancient Erin - is only national recreancy.”

Karl Marx (1818–1883)

German philosopher, economist, historian, political theorist, and socialist revolutionary.



"The oppressed are allowed once every few years to decide which particular representatives of the oppressing class are to represent and repress them."

Leslie Feinberg (1949–2014)

Trailblazer of the trans liberation struggle



“Trans liberation is inextricably linked to other movements for equality and justice.” In other words, to achieve social equality, no one cause can be lifted over another in the struggle for human rights; all causes should be acknowledged as connected and championed as such.

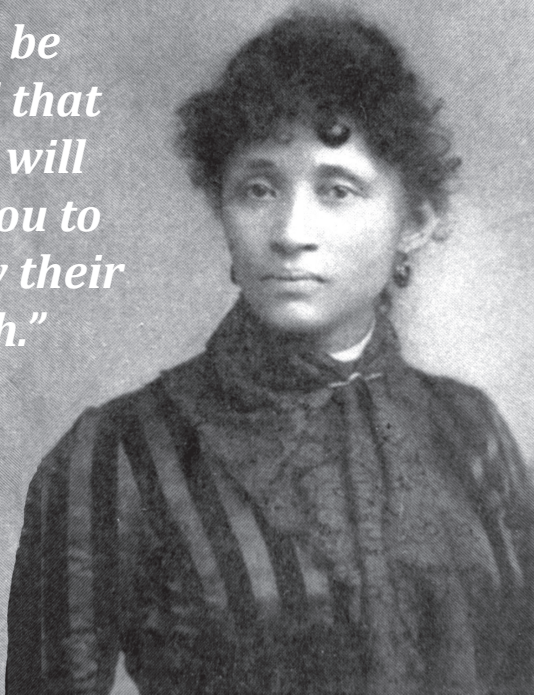
Feinberg’s last words were, “Remember me as a revolutionary communist.”

Lucy Parsons (1851–1942)

Communist from Chicago, leader of the anti-racist, union and women's movement

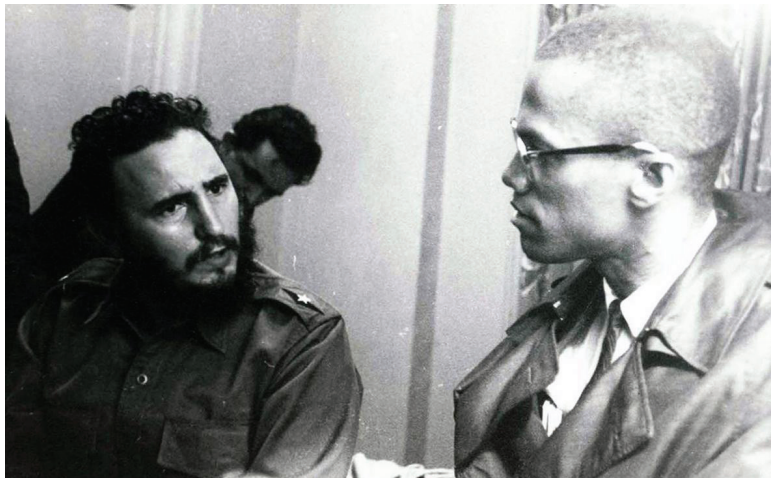
"Let the masses understand that these robbers hold this property (which is so much unpaid labor) under the plea of the laws which they themselves have made...and further, that these so-called laws would not be worth the paper they are written on, twenty four hours after the producers of all wealth had willed it otherwise."

*"Never be
deceived that
the rich will
permit you to
vote away their
wealth."*



Malcolm X (1925–1965)

Leader in the Black liberation struggle



Malcolm X with Fidel Castro

“I believe that there will be a clash between those who want freedom, justice and equality for everyone and those who want to continue the systems of exploitation. I believe that there will be that kind of clash, but I don’t think that it will be based upon the color of the skin.”

“It is impossible for capitalism to survive, primarily because the system of capitalism needs some blood to suck. Capitalism used to be like an eagle, but now it’s more like a vulture.... As the nations of the world free themselves, capitalism has less victims, less to suck, and it becomes weaker and weaker. It’s only a matter of time in my opinion before it will collapse completely.”

Mao Zedong (1893-1976)

Communist revolutionary and former Chairman of the People's Republic of China

“‘Facts’ are all the things that exist objectively, ‘truth’ means their internal relations, that is, the laws governing them, and ‘to seek,’ means to study. We should proceed from the actual conditions inside and outside the country, the province, county or district, and derive from them, as our guide to action, laws that are inherent in them and not imaginary, that is, we should find the internal relations of the events occurring around us. And in order to do that we must rely not on subjective imagination, not on momentary enthusiasm, not on lifeless books, but on facts that exist objectively; we must appropriate the material in detail and, guided by the general principles of Marxism-Leninism, draw correct conclusions from it.

“The socialist system will eventually replace the capitalist system; this is an objective law independent of man’s will. However much the reactionaries try to hold back the wheel of history, eventually revolution will take place and will inevitably triumph.”

“A revolution is not a dinner party, or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery; it cannot be so refined, so leisurely and gentle, so temperate, kind, courteous, restrained and magnanimous. A revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence by which one class overthrows another.”

“To rebel is justified”



Beijing, 1962: Mao Zedong (r) greeting Kwame Nkrumah, then President of Ghana

“[...]the evil system of colonialism and imperialism arose and thrived with the enslavement of Negroes and the trade in Negroes, and it will surely come to its end with the complete emancipation of the Black people.”

“The struggle of the Black people in the United States for emancipation is a component part of the general struggle of all the people of the world against U.S. imperialism, a component part of the contemporary world revolution. I call on the workers, peasants, and revolutionary intellectuals of all countries and all who are willing to fight against U.S.

imperialism to take action and extend strong support to the struggle of the Black people in the United States! People of the whole world, unite still more closely and launch a sustained and vigorous offensive against our common enemy, U.S. imperialism, and its accomplices! It can be said with certainty that the complete collapse of colonialism, imperialism, and all systems of exploitation, and the complete emancipation of all the oppressed peoples and nations of the world are not far off."

"If the U.S. monopoly capitalist groups persist in pushing their policies of aggression and war, the day is bound to come when they will be hanged by the people of the whole world. The same fate awaits the accomplices of the United States."

"A potential revolutionary situation exists in any country where the government consistently fails in its obligation to ensure at least a minimally decent standard of life for the great majority of its citizens."

"The theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin is universally applicable. We should regard it not as dogma, but as a guide to action. Studying it is not merely a matter of learning terms and phrases but of learning Marxism-Leninism as the science of revolution."

Margot Honecker (1927–2016)

Former Minister of Education of the socialist German Democratic Republic



“I not only consider myself one — I am a communist. Loyalty is probably not the appropriate term. Marxism-Leninism is an ideology, a method of investigation to understand the world, the laws according to which it moves, so you can orient yourself in the world. Some believe in a divine will, others in a predetermined fate. We communists are materialists. We follow a scientific outlook, which assumes that the society and everything that arises in it are the work of human beings. Exploitation and oppression are neither divinely ordained, nor are these evils acceptable.

“We have to fight for a humane, fair, peaceful world, and today that is more urgent than ever. We must refuse to allow that people perish from war, hunger and disease, and that natural resources and the livelihood of the people be depleted or destroyed by ruthless capitalist exploitation, solely for profit. If humanity is to have a future, the power of the banks and corporations must be broken. They will not give up their power voluntarily.”

Maurice Bishop (1944–1983)

Revolutionary socialist and leader of the Grenada revolution

“The colonial masters recognized very early on that if you get a subject people to think like they, to forget their own history and their own culture, to develop a system of education that is going to have relevance to our outward needs and be almost entirely irrelevant to our internal needs, then they have already won the job of keeping us in perpetual domination and exploitation. Our educational process, therefore, was used mainly as a tool of the ruling elite.”



Rosa Luxemburg (1871–1919)

Revolutionary socialist and co-founder of the Spartacus League, later the German Communist Party



“Today, we can seriously set about destroying capitalism once and for all. [...] our solution offers the only means of saving human society from destruction.” (Berlin, January 1, 1919)

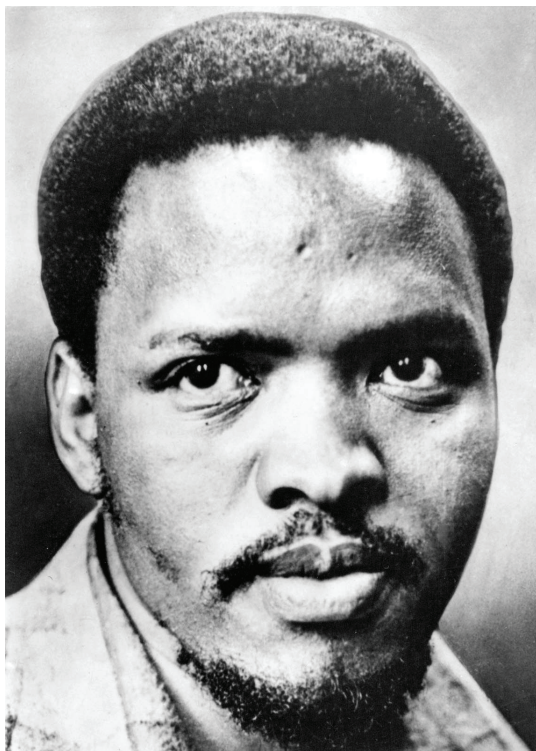
“What presents itself to us as bourgeois legality is nothing but the violence of the ruling class, a violence raised to an obligatory norm from the outset.”

“People who pronounce themselves in favor of the method of legislative reform in place of and in contradistinction to the conquest of political power and social revolution, do not really choose a more tranquil, calmer and slower road to the same goal, but a different goal. Instead of taking a stand for the establishment of a new society they take a stand for surface modifications of the old society. . . . Our program becomes not the realization of Socialism, but the reform of capitalism; not the suppression of the system of wage labor, but the diminution of exploitation, that is, the suppression of the abuses of capitalism instead of the suppression of capitalism itself.” (from *Reform or Revolution*)

“It [the proletariat] should and must at once undertake socialist measures in the most energetic, unyielding and unhesitant fashion, in other words, exercise a dictatorship, but a dictatorship of the class, not of a party or of a clique – dictatorship of the class, that means in the broadest possible form on the basis of the most active, unlimited participation of the mass of the people, of unlimited democracy.” (from *The Russian Revolution*)

Steve Biko (1946–1977)

Leader in the struggle against U.S.-backed South African Apartheid



“We believe it is the duty of the vanguard political movement which brings change to educate people’s outlook.”

Samora Machel (1933–1986)

Co-founder of FRELIMO and leader in the liberation movement in Mozambique

“Political study strengthens our awareness and analytical capacity, enriches the content of our struggle, raises our revolutionary practice and level of commitment, and teaches us how to change society. So

long as there is capitalism and imperialism in the world, its propaganda and subversion will make itself felt against us, and the winning of independence and power will be no guarantee of our invulnerability to degenerate values.”



“International solidarity is not an act of charity: it is an act of unity between allies fighting on different terrains toward the same objectives. The foremost of these objectives is to assist in the development of humanity to the highest level possible. Solidarity is an assertion that no people is alone, no people is isolated in the struggle for progress. Solidarity is the conscious alliance of the progressive and peace-loving revolutionary forces in the common struggle against colonialism, capitalism and imperialism. In short, against exploitation of man by man. And this struggle may be in Asia, in Europe, or in America, or the struggle may be in Africa, but it is the same struggle.”

Vladimir Lenin (1870-1924)

Russian revolutionary, political theorist, and Soviet leader



“Without Revolutionary theory, there can be no Revolutionary Movement.”

“Can a nation be free if it oppresses other nations? It cannot.”

“All official and liberal science defends wage-slavery, whereas Marxism has declared relentless war on that slavery.”

“Freedom in capitalist society always remains about the same as it was in ancient Greek republics: Freedom for slave owners.”

“America, like a few other nations, has become characteristic for the depth of the abyss that divide a handful of brutal millionaires who are stagnating in a mire of luxury, and millions of laboring starving men and women who are always staring want in the face.” (from Lenin’s *A Letter to American Workingmen: From the Socialist Soviet Republic of Russia*, 1918)



Published by Workers Voice Socialist Movement