

ANOTHER POLICE KILLING IN CINCINNATI

Black community calls boycott

By Monica Moorehead

It is a very familiar story with an all-too-familiar tragic ending. The victim in this case is Nathaniel Jones, a 41-year-old, unarmed African American who was savagely beaten to death by at least eight Cincinnati police officers on the morning of Nov. 30. Cincinnati, located near the Kentucky border, has an incredible history of police brutality.

In the summer of 2001, a rebellion erupted for several days in Cincinnati's Black community over the police killing of 19-year-old Timothy Thomas. The police officer involved in that shooting was never arrested.

Jones is the ninth Black man to die at the hands of the Cincinnati police since Thomas' death.

Like the police beating of Rodney King by Los Angeles police in 1991, portions of the Jones beating were captured by a video camera. This one was mounted in a police cruiser. The police had been summoned to a White Castle to arrest Jones on disorderly conduct charges outside a restaurant where he was found sleeping. Jones reportedly suffered from a sleep disorder.

The police excuse for bludgeoning Jones at least 28 times with night sticks was that he weighed 350 pounds and lunged at them. This is another attempt by the police to paint a racist stereotype in the minds of the general public that a large Black man automatically is a menace. The police have also claimed that Jones had traces of drugs in his blood system as another justification for their fascist beating.

The white mayor of Cincinnati came out publicly in support of the actions of the police.

The police are attempting to use the video to demonize Jones and neutralize anger but it has been pointed out that at least 97 seconds of the tape has mysteriously disappeared.

However on Dec. 3, a coroner officially ruled Jones' death as a homicide.

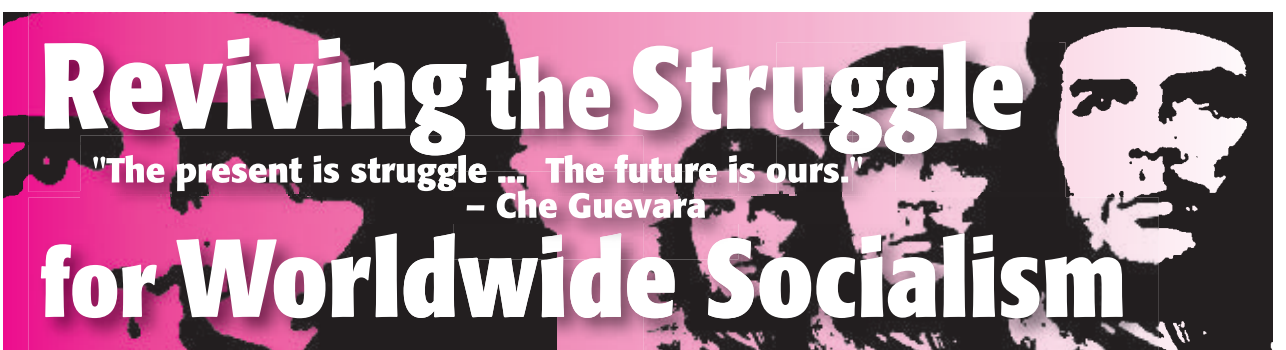
Cincinnati's Black community is righteously outraged by this latest incident of police brutality, which has claimed yet another life.

Members of the Coalition for a Just Cincinnati know all too well that the armed police are always portrayed as the "victims" and the unarmed victims as the "perpetrators." The coalition has called for a citywide protest boycott of all events in Cincinnati.

What happened in Cincinnati is far from being an isolated incident of police brutality. This systematic

state violence occurs throughout the U.S. Under capitalism, the police brutally occupy whole oppressed communities, much as the U.S. military acts as a boot heel on whole countries in the interests of extracting super-profits.

The Black people of Cincinnati need the solidarity of all anti-racist forces in their quest for social justice. □



GRAPHIC: MIGIWA KANAZAWA

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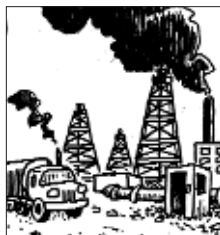
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Workers World Party

Who we are and what we stand for

A great social earthquake is coming. Our 21st-century global economy is being run by a 19th-century class of robber barons. Their unbridled greed is leading humanity and the planet we share toward catastrophe. As poverty and misery grow, the rich keep getting richer. A small group of imperialists are sucking out profits from all over the world.

This boss class is cutting millions of jobs while promoting every vile prejudice to try to turn worker against worker. It is in a union-busting frenzy, attempting to root out any form of worker organization. This big business government has rounded up thousands of immigrants. And it's using the economic draft to militarize the youth and send them to war yet again.

This increasingly repressive rule of a wealthy oligarchy just can't go on forever. There's a fightback coming.

Workers World Party was built on the confidence that regular working people CAN overcome capitalism, can take back from the class of exploiters the wealth they have created, and create a society that meets the needs of all.

Can't we control technology to make work lighter and our lives better, instead of having it threaten our jobs?

Can't people of different nationalities, sexes, gender expressions and sexualities cooperate and share the resources equitably in our increasingly diverse societies?

Can't we radically restructure the economy and put billions into solving basic human needs—food, housing, health care, education—instead of letting the wealth be channeled into private fortunes and into armies, weapons, prisons and police that protect this unjust status quo?

Workers World says YES! There is a way to do all this. If workers organize to fight, nothing is impossible. The key is class solidarity and the building of a mighty movement for socialism.

Solidarity against all forms of oppression

Since its founding in 1959, this party has been putting into practice what it means by solidarity. It has supported the struggles of all oppressed peoples. It has recognized the right of nations to self-determination, including the

nationally oppressed peoples inside the United States. It supports affirmative action as absolutely necessary in the fight for equality. It opposes all forms of racism and religious bigotry.

Solidarity means fighting for an end to sexism and women's oppression. Women's right to control their bodies must not be restricted. Women must be able to decide freely whether or not to have children—which means having access to legal, safe abortion as well as to free quality healthcare and childcare. Women need equal pay for comparable work, and recognition/compensation for housework.

Solidarity means support for the struggle of lesbians, gays, trans and bis for full social rights and an end to harassment and discrimination. Love is not a crime and should not have to be in the closet.

Solidarity means guaranteeing immigrants the same rights as all other workers, no matter how they got here. Many immigrants leave home because the same banks and corporations that oppress workers here have taken over their countries. Discrimination is unjust, especially on this continent where everyone except the Native peoples came from somewhere else. Solidarity means building bridges to workers' struggles in other countries.

When one section of our class is held back, all suffer eventually. Uniting to fight against all forms of oppression helps raise the whole class.

Where is the world going?

A new internationalism is developing. As problems go global, so does the people's response. We have demonstrated together by the millions to stop U.S. imperialism's war on Iraq. Worldwide protests have condemned the unjust world economic order and the colonial occupation of Iraq and Palestine and supported the peoples' resistance there. How can we build on that international solidarity?

Workers World respects the many social revolutions of the last century. Some were for national liberation from colonialism. Others went further and tried to build social-

Continued on page 4

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'BRING THE TROOPS HOME!'

Reaching out to workers in uniform

By Judi Cheng and Dustin Langley

"In the face of this unjust war based on deception by our leaders, I could not remain silent. I spoke out so that others in the military would realize that they also have a choice and a duty to resist immoral and illegitimate orders. You don't have to be a cog in the machinery of war ... I wanted those who may be thinking about enlisting to hear and learn from my experiences."

—**Stephen Funk**, Marine Corps resister and political prisoner

President George W. Bush demonstrated utter disregard for the lives of U.S. soldiers on July 2 when he said "Bring 'em on"—essentially inviting attacks against enlisted personnel in Iraq for the purpose of selling his "war on terrorism." More than 200 soldiers have died since Bush's invitation.

Bush—on behalf of Big Oil and Corporate America—put U.S. soldiers in the position of being enforcers of a racist colonial occupation. Now a broad, justified resistance is building among the Iraqi people. As U.S. casualties mount, more and more GIs, not content with being cannon fodder for the Empire, are speaking out and looking for ways to resist.

One soldier wrote home about Bush's boast: "We are here because he ordered us to be here and now for him to make such a ridiculous statement inviting violence towards us causes us to lose respect for him and his judgment. We are learning that we never should have come here in the first place." (Nashville Tennessee online bulletin board, July 4)

Many soldiers want out, as evidenced by the flood of calls received by the GI Rights Hotline, which have increased by 75 percent since Bush's statement. Many of these calls are questions about the penalties associated with going AWOL (Absent Without Leave), according to volunteers and staffers.

'Organize the barracks!'

Plummeting morale offers new opportunities for revolutionists to organize among soldiers and their families.

Marxists have a long history of organizing soldiers in the imperialist military, going back to World War I. In his book "The Bolsheviks and War," Sam Marcy—founder of Workers World Party—noted that Russian revolutionary leader V.I. Lenin praised anti-militarist work carried on among the soldiers throughout Europe, particularly in Belgium, during WWI.

Lenin wrote: "Anti-militarism propaganda does not halt at the threshold of the barracks, and socialist soldiers form propaganda groups within the army. At the present time there are about 15 such groups." The Bolshevik leader reported that the Belgian example was followed in France, Austria, Switzerland and other countries. Russian and German revolutionaries also organized soldiers to resist the war.

Marcy explained: "During the Vietnam War, only one such group was formed in this country which had a somewhat similar program and was oriented towards the working class. It was the American Servicemen's Union (ASU), founded by Andy Stapp."

The ASU, founded by activists from Youth Against War and Fascism (YAWF)—the youth group of Workers World Party—had over

30,000 members. It organized and supported GI resistance in Southeast Asia and at home. It assisted soldiers who were punished for standing up against the racist war.

Resistance inside the U.S. military became an important factor in ending the war of aggression against Vietnam, as GIs became aware that they were fighting and dying for the interests of big banks and corporations.

"Very wealthy people are sending working-class people to war and the people commanding the troops are from a wealthier class," said ASU founder Andy Stapp. "That causes antagonism, no doubt about it. In Vietnam, most soldiers were against the war, but everyone hated the officers. Many troops sided with me because I fought against the officers."

Larry Holmes, a Vietnam-era resister and ASU organizer, said: "Class structure in the army is a microcosm of class structure in society. The top management, the CEOs, are like the generals. Management is the officer caste. The non-commissioned officers are like foremen and forewomen. Workers are like the rank-and-file GIs. It may not always seem this way, but the ordinary soldiers' class interests are diametrically opposite and opposed to those of the officers."

Activists support GI resistance

Soldiers and families are beginning to speak out against the war and occupation. This shows that the time is ripe to organize among the disaffected troops.

Listen to Tim Predmore, a U.S. soldier on active duty with the 101st Airborne Division based near Mosul in northern Iraq. He said: "I once believed that I was serving for a cause—to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States.' Now I no longer believe that. I have lost my conviction, as well as my determination. I can no longer justify my service on the basis of what I believe to be half-truths and bold lies."

Soldiers are also deserting. Between September 2002 and September 2003, Fort Bragg listed 235 total cases of absent without leave and desertion, up from 107 the prior year. The Army said 133 deserters and AWOL soldiers turned themselves in this year versus 73 the previous year. And 100 were apprehended this year compared to 43 the previous year. (Reported by NBC affiliate Channel 17 in Raleigh, N.C.)

The Support Network for an Armed Forces Union (SNAFU) was formed in January 2003 by activists working with the International ANSWER coalition on the eve of the invasion of Iraq. Inspired by the ASU example, SNAFU has been active in counter-recruiting, discharge counseling and other support for GI resisters.

The SNAFU website at www.join-snafu.org contains information on GI

rights, discharges and cases of resistance. It receives over 300 hits each day, many from military personnel and their families. SNAFU organizers traveled to Ft. Drum, N.Y., to defend Kamila Iwanowska, who refused to take the military's potentially dangerous anthrax vaccine. The group also organizes support for Marine Corps resister Funk.

On Nov. 15, SNAFU activists traveled to the Camp Lejeune Marine Corps base in Jacksonville, N.C., where Funk is serving a six-month sentence for refusing to fight. They went to visit Funk, demonstrate public support for him and speak with military personnel in the community.

At a roadside rally, SNAFU members held signs reading, "Bring the troops home now!" and, "Big Oil gets rich while GIs die!" The rally met with much support and enthusiasm—a striking fact given that the town is 80 percent active and retired military personnel. The positive

response to this effort is more evidence that the time is right to reach out to GIs.

Funk continues to garner worldwide support. He's received more than 700 letters while in prison, from nearly every state and 11 countries.

SNAFU, meanwhile, receives phone calls and emails daily from soldiers looking for ways to oppose the war or get out of the military.

The coming months will offer many opportunities to reach out to military personnel as long tours of duty stretch on and the Iraqi resistance movement grows. SNAFU says activists are needed to do outreach at military bases and reserve centers, organize public forums around issues like the dangers of depleted uranium (DU) weapons, speak to high school students about recruiters' lies and abuses, and counsel GIs about their rights.

Cheng and Langley are SNAFU organizers. □

Battle for same-sex marriage is joined

By LeiLani Dowell

Three U.S. Senators introduced a "Federal Marriage Amendment" on Nov. 25. The proposed constitutional amendment reads: "Marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman. Neither this Constitution nor the constitution of any State, nor state or federal law, shall be construed to require that marital status or the legal incidents thereof be conferred upon unmarried couples or groups." The FMA had previously been introduced in the House of Representatives on May 21.

The FMA is one of a slew of reactionary initiatives being pushed ahead in response to the Nov. 18 Massachusetts Supreme Court ruling in favor of same-sex marriage rights. The court's ruling that marriage is "among the most basic of every individual's liberty and due process rights," and that attempts to limit marriage to heterosexual couples are unacceptable, is a major victory for the lesbian, gay, bi and transgender movement.

Like opponents of interracial marriage in 1960s, today's reactionaries are rallying around slogans like the "sanctity" of marriage and whipping up homophobic stereotypes to deny legal recognition to LGBT couples. Matt Daniels, president of the so-called Alliance for Marriage, said, "Americans believe that gays and lesbians have a right to live as they choose, but they don't have a right to redefine marriage for our entire society."

In a wild bout of gay bashing, William Donohue of the Catholic League claimed the ruling would lead to polygamy, and Nebraska Attorney General Jon Bruning asked if a man could now "marry his pet." (New York Times, Nov. 28)

Lesbian, gay, bi and trans people, along with their straight allies, are determined to spread the Massachusetts decision to other states and keep up the fight to end other attacks on the LGBT communities. Meetings have been convened in many parts of the country to strategize about how to push forward the recognition of same-sex marriage rights state by state.

And opinion polls show public support for the LGBT communities. Polls in Massachusetts and around the country

have shown broad support for extending marriage rights to same-sex couples. This alone demonstrates the enormous strides made by the movement 34 years after the Stonewall Rebellion.

LeiLani Dowell, a member of Workers World Party, is running for Congress in 2004 in the Eighth Congressional District (San Francisco) on the Peace and Freedom Party ticket. See article, page 14. □

Honor the fallen, fight for the living

By LeiLani Dowell
San Francisco

Two recent events honored and celebrated the lives of slain members of the lesbian, gay, bi and trans communities.

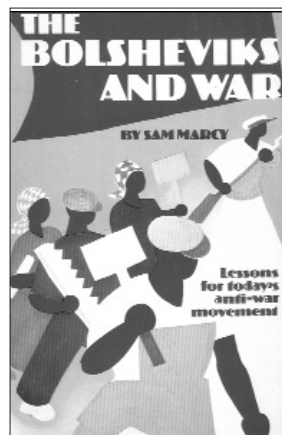
Nov. 20 marked the fifth annual Transgender Day of Remembrance. Events were held in 77 U.S. cities and 21 cities around the world. This year already 39 murders of transgender individuals have been documented, an increase over last year's high of 30.

And on Nov. 23, some 1,000 people in San Francisco marched by candlelight to remember Harvey Milk and George Moscone on the 25th anniversary of their assassinations. Milk, San Francisco's first openly gay supervisor, is considered one of the founders of San Francisco's progressive LGBT movement.

Former police officer Dan White shot Milk and San Francisco Mayor Moscone to death. White was acquitted of first-degree murder charges under the now-infamous "Twinkie defense" of diminished capacity. White's 7-year sentence, a slap on the wrist, ignited the White Night Rebellion in San Francisco, led by enraged lesbian, gay, bi and trans people.

At the Nov. 23 commemoration of the assassinations, artists, activists and relatives of Milk and Moscone demanded full rights for the LGBT communities, people of color and immigrants. Some spoke in defense of gay Marine resister and political prisoner Stephen Funk, who is refusing to serve in Iraq.

They vowed to continue Milk's legacy of resistance. □



The Bolsheviks and War

Lessons for today's anti-war movement

By Sam Marcy

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Trade wars, shooting wars and the dropping dollar

By Milt Neidenberg

Is the good old almighty dollar on a slippery slope? Losing its clout in the global markets? Is the recent 25-percent drop in the value of the dollar a sign of weakness that will lead to further devaluation?

Gold, the absolute arbiter of all currency, has begun to attract the big investors. They smell economic and political turmoil ahead. "Weak Dollar and Tense Times Spurs a Rise Toward \$400 an Ounce," was the headline on a Nov. 27 New York Times article, which observed that the price of gold "has risen over 50 percent since April 2001."

The next day, "The dollar plunged to a new record low against the euro ... on the back of aggressive speculator-driven selling." (Wall Street Journal, Nov. 28) If the dollar continues to fall, foreign investors will see their gains erode and could pull out of U.S. markets. And head for gold or other safer investments.

Asian central banks alone now own almost \$700 billion in U.S. Treasury notes. They recently suffered a paper loss of almost \$200 billion from the dollar devaluation. Continued lending to the U.S. depends on whether or not the dollar continues to decline. U.S. paper currency and debt is flooding the global markets.

The U.S. National Debt Clock reports that the debt has reached \$7 TRILLION, and has been growing at the rate of \$2.64 billion a day since Sept. 30, 2003. How about that!

A week earlier, the Treasury Department, which cranks out tons of paper currency, admitted that "the ballooning current-account deficit requires an

increasing amount of financing from abroad to keep the dollar from falling." However, it was reported that there had been a big pullout in foreign investment in Treasury bills and in the stock market. (Wall Street Journal, Nov. 19)

Felix Rohatyn, former managing director of Lazard Freres, a giant international banking corporation, recently expressed deep concern over paper wealth becoming the new standard and the astounding concentration of wealth at the upper end of the income scale. Corporate profits, he said, had jumped 11.6 percent to over a trillion dollars and the rate of growth of the Gross Domestic Product hit a 20-year high.

Rohatyn continued: "Keep in mind that foreigners own about \$2 trillion or about 20 percent of all listed stocks in the U.S. ... To service [just] our foreign debt of \$3 trillion requires an inflow from abroad of \$1.5 billion daily. ... A breakup of the transatlantic partnership would have serious economic consequences for the U.S.; Europe and the U.S. are each other's most important trade partners and investors. No other economic relationship comes near." (Wall Street Journal, Nov. 11)

Alan Greenspan, chairperson of the Federal Reserve Board, the Wall Street bankers' bank, issued a warning about new quotas that had been set on selected Chinese textiles: "The clouds of emerging protectionism raised new risks for the global economy ... the current account deficits are at record levels and are unsustainable." (New York Times, Nov. 21)

Since then, tariffs have been applied to Chinese-made television sets. The Bush administration is expected to lift quotas on steel imports, but that will

only anger the protectionist wing of the capitalist class.

While Greenspan, a master of double-talk, preaches concern for creeping protectionism and record-level debt, the FRB has kept its interest rates at a historic low of 1 percent. This has triggered an unprecedented level of borrowing and lending by banks and other financial institutions. It profits them but weakens the dollar.

Trade wars and shooting wars

The cheaper dollar has infuriated their imperialist trading partners. It has given U.S. exports a competitive edge abroad. But it hurts workers here, who have to pay more for foreign products when there's a devaluated dollar. The truth is, the U.S. is edging closer to a trade war with its major trading partners.

Can the U.S. superpower sustain global domination as its monumental problems grow? Bush's unilateral empire building and preemptive war have stretched the government's resources to the limit militarily and economically. As guerrilla attacks in Iraq intensify, as the war seems endless and the wounded and dead come home, doubts are mounting in Wall Street about the direction in which Bush and his sycophants are taking the ruling class.

The issue for the workers is not Democrats versus Republicans, but a general crisis looming within the capitalist system. Volatility, scandals, fraud and corruption in the stock exchange and mutual funds, as with Enron and WorldCom, have become more and more public, dampening the mood of Wall Street.

The "jobless recovery" has begun to instill anger in the workers, the poor and the oppressed nationalities. Some 9 million workers are still unemployed, health care is out of reach for millions of adults and children, and personal bankruptcies are at an all-time high. Black, Latino and other people of color, along with growing numbers of whites, are economically marginalized by the Bush administration's drastic cuts in social services.

Corporations continue to downsize wages and benefits. It's called the "Walmartization of labor," a race to the bottom that is the hallmark of the largest non-union, low-wage retailer in the world. The workers are paying the price for an unprecedented conjunction of two wars going badly—Iraq and Afghanistan—and a capitalist economy that has revealed deep flaws. All of this is debilitating the superpower.

A fightback is bubbling up from below with strikes and other forms of struggle. Many are isolated and out of sight. But the splendid resistance of grocery workers in the United Food and Commercial Workers union in Southern California has received national media attention. These low-paid workers, so many of them women and/or from oppressed nationalities, need the support of the powerful anti-war, anti-imperialist movement.

It is beginning to happen in the California strike/lockout—a significant development that could spread. The class war is heating up at home.

The merger of these forces will strengthen class-wide unity in preparing for the critical struggles that lie ahead. □

ON THE

Labor, community support Borders strike

Every struggle includes acts of solidarity, some small, some big. The Borders workers in UFCW Local 876 on strike in Ann Arbor, Mich., and Minneapolis are posting examples on their Web site: www.Bordersreadersunited.blogspot.com.

For instance, they cheered when the UPS driver refused to cross the picket line. The mail carrier did likewise, demanding that management come outside to pick up the mail. And the Emerson School cancelled a "buying night," which had netted \$40,000 in the past.

Though the union has offered three dates for negotiation since the strike started on Nov. 8, management refused to meet until Dec. 1. One of the strikers' demands is to raise starting pay from \$6.50-\$7.00 an hour to \$7.95 an hour and a hike after two years to \$9.95. Instead of annual increases of 3 percent to 3.5 percent, the workers are demanding 4.5 percent. As a recent flyer issued by the strikers noted, "We lose economic ground every year."

One of the strikers' top demands is to stop the company from unilaterally changing or eliminating benefits without negotiating with the union. Gayle Stuhrberg, who has worked at Borders for nearly seven years, is striking because she's fed up with the "hostile work environment."

Support the strike by boycotting all Borders bookstores, as well as Waldenbooks and Amazon.com. Contact Borders at www.bordersstores.com or call the Ann Arbor store, (734) 668-7652, or the corporate headquarters, (734) 477-1100, to demand they bargain in good faith. For updates on the strike, visit www.bordersunion.org and sign the online petition.

To the negotiating table

Compagnie de Saint-Gobain controls a billion-dollar global empire. But it only took a couple of weeks on strike for the more than 700 workers in UAW Local 4069 at Saint-Gobain Abrasives Inc. in Worcester, Mass., to force the U.S. branch of the company to the negotiating table. The first session was on Nov. 25, with more scheduled after Dec. 1.

One of the major issues in the strike was that the company has not yet instituted pay raises that should have gone into effect in April 2002 and has unilaterally changed healthcare benefits despite protests from the union. A recent National Labor Relations Board finding that the company acted illegally when it cut benefits reinforced the strikers' demands.



'Boycott Borders!': picketing store in

WORKERS WORLD PARTY Who we are and what we stand for

Continued from page 2

ism. Their biggest internal problem was starting out from a level of extreme underdevelopment. Every revolutionary state immediately became the target of subversion, sanctions and often outright military aggression by hostile and powerful imperialist powers. Many have received terrible setbacks.

Nevertheless, these revolutions inspired the workers and oppressed of the world. They showed that it's possible to kick out the bosses and reconstruct society without them. WW supports those trying to hold on to the gains of those great mass struggles and resist the tide of reaction and corporate globalization washing over the world. We want to learn from the mistakes and from the accomplishments in order to build a socialist future.

The U.S. rulers have used their victory over the Soviet Union in the Cold War to launch a new and "endless" war for total domination of the globe. They claim "Marxism is dead" and U.S. empire is all that's left. But Marxism is based on the class struggle, and that is growing every day along with capitalist globalization.

It is time that we in this rich, powerful, oppressor country do our share to revive the hope of humanity that a better world is possible for all. The key to transforming the world is here, in the

"belly of the beast."

The corporate bosses are handing this task to us. They are bringing back home the kind of super-exploitation they have imposed on the Third World. They are dragging off our young people to oppress others in wars of plunder and profit. They are forcing the working class to organize and fight back just to survive.

So Workers World has been building a party, based on the great revolutionary concepts of Marx and Lenin, which learns from the mass movements while helping them grow and develop. It works with others to build the broadest mass actions while promoting the struggle for socialism and exposing the deceptions of both Democrats and Republicans—two capitalist parties that have always supported imperialist war and plunder.

Read Workers World newspaper—in print or on the Web at workers.org—and you will see what we are doing in the struggle movements. You will see that this is a party that welcomes everyone who wants to fight for socialism and against oppression. You will see how we bring a revolutionary analysis to current events.

You're welcome to write us or contact our branches to ask questions, learn more about the Party, and find out how to join. □

PICKET LINE

SUE DAVIS

Only 9 hours on the picket line!

It only took nine hours of picketing the Jung Sun industrial laundry in Queens on Nov. 28 for 100 workers to win their demands. Until then the bosses had refused to accept a UNITE contract signed recently by 36 other New York laundries.

The workers, who average \$8.60 an hour to supply clean linens to major hospitals, restaurants and hotels will receive a 9.3 percent raise over the three-year agreement, with a \$300 bonus in the second year and an increase in health insurance and pension provisions.

"We think this contract reflects progress for the workers in this industry," UNITE leader Wilfredo Larancuent told the Nov. 29 New York Times. "We granted zero concessions in this contract."

Striking to get a union

Mariana Alberti, who emigrated from El Salvador in 1990, has been leading the struggle of 56 immigrant workers to form a union at Sterling Laundry in Washington, D.C. Fed up with horrendous sweatshop conditions, the workers signed on with UNITE and have been on strike since early September.

The unfair labor practices strike exposes horrendous conditions. The workers are often forced to work seven days a week with no overtime pay. They get minimum wage with no raises—Alberti, who has worked there since 1992, makes \$6.15 an hour. They don't get credit for all the hours they worked, resulting in short paychecks. To use the bathroom they must get signed permission, which is often denied. Plus they endure dangerous working conditions, psychological abuse, not enough breaks, health insurance they can't afford, and threats against and intimidation of union organizers.

(www.commondreams.org/views03/1022-11.htm)

A number of D.C.-area unions and the Plymouth Congregational Church led by the Rev. Graylan Hagler have been providing material support, such as food drives, for the strikers. They made sure all 56 families enjoyed turkey dinners this year.



Ann Arbor, Mich. PHOTO: BORDERS.TEXTAMERICA.COM

Unions, community, anti-war forces An alliance grocery bosses find hard to break



'ANSWER held a Nov. 26 media conference and food distribution to strikers in which community and labor activists, clergy and union representatives participated. ANSWER activist Maggie Vascassenno announces holiday toy drive for strikers' families.'

WW PHOTO: JULIA LA RIVA

By John Parker
Los Angeles

The big three grocery chains that forced a strike and lockout in Southern California of over 71,000 grocery workers must be teary-eyed. After seven weeks, the union hasn't blinked.

Nor is it likely to do so. Close to 10,000 drivers and warehouse workers in the Teamsters union are now fully honoring the picket lines of the United Food and Commercial Workers at grocery distribution centers. This means the drivers won't take goods to the stores and the warehouse workers won't pack them into trucks for distribution.

The Teamsters made their decision at the beginning of the "Thanksgiving" holiday week, one of the busiest shopping weeks of the year. Jim Santangelo, president of Teamsters Joint Council 42, said the action would last for the duration of the strike. "We either end this thing together or we die together," said Santangelo.

Burt Flickinger, an industry analyst from the Strategic Resource Group in New York, said, "It is an absolute crippler for the supermarket chains. It raises the stakes and ensures that between the three chains, they'll lose over half a billion dollars collectively between October and November from the strike."

"This is a real shot in the arm," said Rick Icaza, president of UFCW Local 770. Regarding the grocery chains, he said, "I think it's going to force them to rethink their stand on negotiations. The question in my mind is, do they want to give up Christmas, and can they afford to?"

Bosses' strategy backfires

The companies that forced the strike and lockout are Vons, owned by Safeway; Ralphs, owned by Kroger; and Albertson's. Together these big three control over 60 percent of the Southern California grocery market.

Safeway CEO Steven Burd is the leader of the pack, and has said he won't compromise on demands to take back over 50 percent of the workers' health care benefits, create a two-tier wage system and reduce funding for retirement pensions.

Wall Street had high hopes for this strategy. It cited as a shining example Wal-Mart's poverty-level wages with sub-minimum benefits. That giant company's profits have been buoyed by forced unpaid overtime and illegal firings to keep the union out.

But the hopes of the grocery chains are now fading fast. Sales at the picketed

stores are estimated to have dropped to one quarter the pre-strike level. In addition, most Wall Street analysts have significantly devalued the stock of Albertson's and Safeway to a near-sell status.

Even before this solidarity move by the Teamsters, the UFCW was on the offensive. It expanded its picketing outside the strike area, sending striking and locked-out workers to Safeway stores in Northern California, Washington, Baltimore and Denver as "informational pickets." This tactic did further financial damage to Safeway, while remaining within the confines of legality.

Alliance of anti-war, community and union forces

Added to this solidarity has been the unprecedented community support given the grocery workers. Stores that are still picketed remain relatively empty compared to seven weeks ago. In addition, some community groups are now walking the picket line and organizing food assistance to the strikers, who've endured over four weeks without a paycheck.

The first public show of support for the grocery workers was organized by Act Now to Stop War and End Racism, when its Community Action Project to Support Labor provided solidarity picketers.

In consultation with Local 770 union officials, ANSWER then held a press conference and food distribution to strikers in which community and labor activists, clergy and union representatives participated. This was aired on four major networks. At the next food distribution, the day before "Thanksgiving," the food donations doubled. Three new food drop-off sites, in addition to the ANSWER office, were established, one being a church in South Central.

Solidarity among the anti-war forces, community activists and union workers is strong. In fact, at the food distributions the loudest cheers from the striking workers came when speakers voiced their opposition to the war in Iraq. "Bring the troops home now" is a popular demand with the workers, especially since many have relatives who joined the armed services expecting job training and education. Some have come back in coffins. Others who were forced to massacre Iraqi people, including children, retain deep psychological scars.

Why the increased community support for this strike? Why the increased willingness of the unions to work with an anti-war group?

An important qualitative change has

been taking place in the makeup of the working class, and it is reflected in the current union struggles. As industries employ more high-tech equipment, they also need fewer workers. Many higher skilled and relatively more privileged workers have been pushed into unemployment or lower-paying jobs. At the same time, there has been an increase in lower-paid service industry jobs like food distribution and transportation.

Unions like the Service Employees International and UFCW more and more resemble, in appearance and condition, this new majority of the working class that comes from socially oppressed groupings, including women, Latina/o, Black, Asian, Native, lesbian, gay, bi, transgender and disabled workers. Their demands speak to the conditions common to all workers, union and non-union alike, and therefore receive even more empathy from other workers.

The grocery workers' fight to defend health care resonates well with the over 82 million people in this country who have inadequate or no health care, as well as with those who struggle daily to hold on to the coverage they've got. This issue becomes more urgent as basic social services are eroded to pay for more costly U.S. wars.

All lower-paid and lower-skilled workers are disproportionately victimized by war and oppression. The grocery workers are in a strong position to strengthen and broaden not only the anti-war movement but all progressive movements—not simply because of the resolve and determination they have developed in fighting oppression, but because their conditions are similar to those of so many others.

In Southern California alone, the strike covers 859 stores and over 71,000 workers. How many people visit those 859 stores in a day, a week, a year? How many valuable lessons about class are those consumers learning from this? Is it just a coincidence that this unprecedented Teamster solidarity action occurred during such a strike?

The class battles waged by this ever-growing sector of the workforce are of prime importance, even as these workers prove to be the most capable and important allies of the anti-war, anti-racist movement.

An analysis of the changing character of the working class can be found in "High Tech, Low Pay," written in 1984 by Workers World Party founder Sam Marcy. The entire book is online at www.workers.org. □



Nationalities and class struggle

By Larry Holmes

There is no place on the planet that revolutionaries and communists are not challenged by the politics of nationalities and by what they must do to overcome obstacles to unity.

Lenin made monumental contributions on this that actually turned the communist movement around. And so did Sam Marcy, the founder of Workers World Party. The Party's political program is imbued with his education on the national question.

Our understanding of the national question, national oppression, self-determination and racism—which is a by-product of national oppression—has everything to do with understanding what we as revolutionaries have to do to maximize solidarity within the working class and minimize divisions. This is essential for the political development of the working class and for our progress as revolutionaries and the success of our struggle for socialist revolution.

When we talk about working-class internationalism, this is what we are talking about: Workers of the world unite, as Marx put it.

Actually Lenin made a very important modification to this—workers and oppressed of the world unite—as the prescription for working-class internationalism. Lenin did his revolutionary political work at a time when imperialism was advancing rapidly, sending out capitalists and missionaries and armies to colonize as much of the world as it could, particularly Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and the Caribbean.

This process gave rise to national liberation movements for people to free themselves from colonialism. And the question was posed very starkly: What is the communist view of this? Is this part of the class struggle?

It was controversial because in some instances the national liberation movements were not purely class struggles. Some of the participants were bourgeois elements whose hope upon winning nominal independence was to become the bourgeoisie in their country and oppress the workers and the peasants. If there was any basis of unity with them it was very limited because in a larger inevitable

sense they were our class enemy.

After much debate, the movement concluded under Lenin's leadership that, yes, there were bourgeois elements in the national liberation movements. And we should wherever possible wage a class struggle against them within the national liberation movements. But that should not limit unconditional support for national liberation movements to free the colonies.

Not only should we as communists support the liberation movements, we have to become the champions of the liberation of oppressed people. We are not talking about conditions or boundaries—there are colonies that are identifiable because they have distinct boundaries and they are hundreds or thousands of miles away, like Puerto Rico, Hawaii and the Philippines. But there are also people who are colonized within the boundaries of this country—Native, Latino and African American people.

We need to become the force in the struggle that everyone who is interested in the liberation of oppressed people looks to. This is the foundation of our attitude toward the struggle against racism and all inequality in society, especially in the working class—the oppression of women and of lesbian, gay, bi and trans people.

If solidarity is going to be effective and successful, then it is not for the oppressed people to find a way to appeal to the workers of the oppressor nation. It is not for them to find some compromise or some basis upon which they can explain their plight and their struggle to Europeans or whites in this country. It is up to the workers in the oppressor nation to take the first big and decisive step and support the struggle of the oppressed—especially the vanguard.

Some backward white workers will never be won over. But if you have been involved in a strike or a significant struggle where workers of both oppressed and oppressor nations work together, you have witnessed how the workers of the oppressor nation understand more after awhile about the situation of oppressed workers. The struggle itself educates workers in a way there is really no substitute for.

It takes courage to do what is necessary

to effect solidarity—it means you have to take on the capitalist class and bourgeois public opinion.

If you look back on the work of Workers World Party, it sent its cadres South to participate in the self-defense of Black people in Louisiana, Alabama, North Carolina; we met with the Panthers—“What can we do to help you struggle against the state?”—and we met with all the other forces: the Puerto Rican, Chicano and other movements.

It became clear in retrospect that when I was coming into the Party in the early 1970s as a young GI radicalized by the war, WWP had subordinated many aspects of its own development to supporting the Black struggle. But what we gained as a result is that it steered the Party on the question of supporting the national liberation struggle, of fighting national oppression, of fighting racism.

History will make our job of merging the class struggle and the struggle against national oppression easier.

We can see this by looking at the character of the working class in this country and around the world. What has the development of imperialism over the last generation done? The desperate search for cheaper sources of labor, fueled by technology, has brought tens of millions of oppressed people, who in another time were isolated, either geographically or based on other circumstances, into the working class and the world market.

It is true here and it is true everywhere. Imperialism has tended to level the wages of the entire working class, impoverishing those workers—white workers here or in Europe—who at some point were more privileged but are finding that they are less privileged. And as they look around they see their standard of living moving in the direction of that of their class sisters and brothers in Asia, in Africa, etc.

This is an uneven process and there is still tremendous inequality. But at a certain point these struggles tend to merge naturally.

The growth of imperialism also means the deepening of racism and inequality. As you can see, racism remains rampant—almost out of control. And now, just like at the turn of the 20th century in Lenin's time, imperialism still colonizes most of

the people on the planet and is trying to re-colonize people—that is what the war drive is all about.

It shows that the struggle for self-determination is not something relegated to history. It is as relevant and alive today everywhere as it has ever been.

When we fight the imperialist war on Iraq, we are fighting for the Iraqi people's right to determine their own destiny.

The same thing is true about Cuba. Doesn't Cuba have a right to self-determination? It's an oasis fighting for socialism.

We have extra challenges as a result of some historical setbacks. Before the defeat of the Soviet Union it was a bulwark of support, with all its problems, for the national liberation movement. At the very least it made the world struggle easier for oppressed people. They had someone to lean on a little bit—politically, for resources and military aid. Also the very existence of a socialist camp of hundreds of millions of people was somewhat of a brake on imperialism. That brake no longer exists and this is a big problem.

Another consequence of that setback is that the idea of socialism and what is closely associated with socialism—solidarity and unity itself—are on the defensive.

We are now plagued with reactionary bourgeois ideas: The strongest survive. To hell with the poor. It is noble and right to be rich. This is the stench that has been like a gray cloud over the world for too long. There is a strong wind of struggle that is going to blow it away; it is beginning now.

One can see that as revolutionaries who understand the national question and the relationship between the class struggle and the struggle against national oppression, we have to revive solidarity and unity just as we have to revive the goal of socialism.

It is more important that we understand this in this country than anywhere else. Why? Because the U.S. has become what they used to call czarist Russia: the prison house of nations.

It is time for workers in the big imperialist countries, especially in this country, to shoulder their burden of the world struggle.

We have our work cut out for us. □

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Solidarity and unity—

YOU CAN'T WIN SOCIALISM WITHOUT THEM

By Monica Moorehead

A classic labor song states, “Solidarity forever—for the union makes us strong.” The unity of Teamsters honoring the 70,000 striking/locked-out grocery workers’ picket lines throughout California is just such an act of solidarity. And it will certainly not be lost on other sectors of the labor movement struggling against layoffs and a decline in wages and benefits.

Solidarity among workers is also indispensable in making the worldwide movement for socialism strong.

Vladimir Lenin, the leader of the Bolshevik Revolution, stated in his groundbreaking book, “Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism,” “Workers and oppressed of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but your chains.”

Lenin was updating Karl Marx’s original formulation—workers of the world unite—based on the rise of imperialist plunder and oppression.

Socialists, communists and other revolutionaries have held this banner aloft.

Capitalists create their own gravediggers

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist camp, many in the movement feared that the solidarity of workers and oppressed peoples might not return.

There is, however, more and more concrete evidence to show that broader sectors of society are opening up to the prospect of building class unity. The avaricious character of finance capital is objectively laying the basis for this revival of unity worldwide.

The intensity of capitalist production is driven by the insatiable quest for profits like never before due to the technological revolution. This economic trend in turn has brought about the changed character of the working class worldwide.

For instance, in the United States, service workers have for the most part replaced industrial workers as the motor force of the economy. As a result, workers on the whole face a deepening trend of lower wages for more hours of work, loss of benefits and increased poverty. Corporations have laid off millions of workers in their fierce competition with their rivals.

This process has deeply affected poorer, developing countries as well as the richer, imperialist centers.

The bosses’ devastating onslaught has also resulted in a socialization of labor that has brought millions of workers closer together in the global production process, despite being thousands of miles apart physically.

Millions of workers from the developing countries have also been forced to migrate to the imperialist countries to escape grinding poverty. These immigrants have subsequently energized the union movements.

The intermingling of once privileged workers with poorer workers—especially those from other countries—is making clearer the common reality that labor power is being exploited to one degree or another by many of the same corporate conglomerates.

State repression forges the chains

This commonality among workers is something that the ruling class knows all too well. It is why this tiny clique of multimillionaires and billionaires who claim to privately own all the means of producing everything in society rely on a highly sophisticated repressive state apparatus. They have to try to keep the vast majority of humanity divided and diverted from throwing off their oppressive rule together.

The main obstacle that stands in the

way of the inevitable transformation of society from capitalism to socialism is the network of the state—that is the police, the military, the courts, the prisons, the mainstream media and other institutions that work in concert with each other to keep “order” in society. This “order” in essence means protecting the private property of the super-rich at all costs, with both repression and backward ideas.

Is it any wonder that so many television shows on prime time attempt to arouse sympathy and empathy for police officers, lawyers and judges?

While the state’s ultimate goal is to pacify and subjugate the vast majority of the people, this goal cannot be achieved without creating artificial divisions within the working class and other social strata.

No one is born thinking that people of color are less than human, that women are the private property of men, or that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are “deviant.” They must be conditioned to think and feel this way—and it’s for a reason. That reason is to keep the ruling class in power and the working class and oppressed peoples powerless.

How else can anyone begin to comprehend that there are over 2 million people in U.S. prisons and jails, a hugely disproportionate number of them Black, Latino and Native? Or that women, young and old, are sexually assaulted at least every 30 seconds in the United States? Or that a same-sex couple is not afforded the same democratic right to marry as heterosexual couples?

Class-consciousness on the rise

Two other great Marxists, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, stated in “The

Communist Manifesto,” published in 1848, that capitalism is creating its own grave diggers: the working class.

This means that the workers as a whole face the historic task of uprooting the archaic capitalist economic system because as the laboring class they produce all value in society.

This task, no matter how long the process takes, will come about through political and mass struggle in many revolutionary forms.

Right now millions of people around the world, including those in the United States and other imperialist countries, are moving toward an anti-imperialist position because of the deepening Iraqi resistance against the Pentagon’s colonial occupation there.

Many young people who were attracted to the anti-globalization movement’s view of a “kinder, gentler” free-enterprise system are moving in a more anti-capitalist direction.

Better-paid workers like the Teamsters are organizing important solidarity with lower-paid grocery workers, many of them immigrants, because they are realizing that they have more in common with these workers than with the bosses.

Worker consciousness can make big leaps, sometimes overnight, when engaged in the class struggle.

This growing class consciousness sows the seeds of class unity and solidarity here and throughout the world. That in turn can lead toward a total transformation of society from one based on the private ownership of production to the socialized ownership of production—and that will promote real equality, cooperation and harmony for all humanity. □

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A shift in Pentagon tactics?

U.S. accused of inflating Samarra 'body count'

By Leslie Feinberg

The U.S. government minimized the Iraqi loss of life during its "shock and awe" assault on Baghdad and during the decade of sanctions that preceded the invasion. Could it now be inflating the number of Iraqis killed by U.S. troops in order to offset news about how badly the occupation is going for the Pentagon?

On Nov. 30, after the smoke cleared in Samarra, a city 60 miles north of Baghdad, the U.S. top military command rushed to claim that 46 Iraqis were dead and scores wounded after a fierce fire fight. Within hours, the number of Iraqi dead given was upped to 54. Early accounts said the guerrillas wore the distinctive uniforms of the Fedayeen militia.

The headlined battle reportedly took place after one of two simultaneous and coordinated attacks on U.S. military convoys in different parts of the city. The convoys were carrying a large amount of the new paper currency created by the imperialist occupation.

But where were the uniformed bodies of the dead fighters?

Samarra residents offered a very differ-

ent account. They said some eight Iraqi civilians were gunned down by occupation forces. Officials from the local hospital confirmed that the morgue had received the bodies of eight civilians, including a child. More than 60 people, reportedly wounded by gunfire and shrapnel from U.S. rounds fired in the bustling city center, had also poured into the health care facility for treatment. (AlJazeera.net, Dec. 1)

Al-Jazeera related that "local residents said U.S. troops killed innocent bystanders when they opened fire on anything that moved around midday." Workers at a nearby pharmaceutical factory said at least two of their co-workers were killed and many wounded as they left the plant when their shift ended. A U.S. tank was shooting randomly in all directions, they said.

The British newspaper The Guardian described the scene: "Six destroyed vehicles sat in front of the hospital, where witnesses said U.S. tanks shelled people dropping off the injured. A kindergarten was damaged, apparently by tank shells."

Ibrahim Jassim, who works at the kindergarten, said no children were hurt:

"Luckily we evacuated the children five minutes before we came under attack. Why did they attack randomly? Why did they shoot a kindergarten with tank shells?"

And why the discrepancy in the number of casualties?

In its coverage of the disputed number of Iraqi deaths, the Dec. 2 New York Times reiterated that the Pentagon typically does not publicize the toll of dead or wounded Iraqis, but after weeks of coalition force casualties, "American military officials seemed to relish the opportunity on Monday to claim credit for dealing the fighters a punishing blow."

Lyndon Johnson's administration used inflated "body counts" for public relations clout after battles with Vietnamese liberation fighters.

Battling the Empire

The Pentagon began an escalated campaign of sheer terror on Nov. 12, dropping mega-bombs on and around Iraqi cities, breaking into homes in the night and dragging off residents.

However, November was also a punishing month for U.S. imperialist forces

and all who have joined them in the occupation of Iraq.

At least 104 "coalition" troops were killed, including 79 GIs—the highest number of troop deaths since the U.S. invasion began. Some days during that month of Ramadan, U.S. soldiers officially faced as many as 50 attacks a day.

Iraqi collaborators who have been appointed to posts by the occupying forces were also targeted in November. These titular officials faced 74 attacks; Iraqi police were hit 82 times.

The weekend of Nov. 29-30, Iraqi insurgents killed seven Spanish intelligence agents, two Japanese diplomats, two South Korean contractors and a Colombian contractor in scattered ambushes. "The attacks demonstrated once again," the Nov. 30 New York Times admitted, "how Iraqi guerrillas, believed to be small in number, have managed to sustain an initiative against American forces and their allies. Despite extraordinary security precautions for most foreigners here, the guerrillas managed once again to find vulnerable spots."

These attacks came just days after

Continued on page 15

Evolution of the Bush Doctrine

Oil and U.S. Empire

By Richard Becker

That control of the Middle East is a key strategic objective of U.S. foreign policy almost goes without saying. What has made the region, and particularly the Persian/Arabian Gulf area, such a focus of attention and struggle among the "great powers" over the past century is the fact that it holds two-thirds of the world's known oil resources.

Petroleum is a fabulously profitable industry, and it would be hard to overestimate the influence of the oil monopolies in Washington. The importance of oil to U.S. international policy, however, has never been limited to its profitability alone.

Oil is a critical element in the National Security Strategy of the U.S.A., officially adopted by the Bush administration as its foreign policy doctrine in September 2002. But while the title of the policy is new, the aim of achieving global hegemony is not; it goes back to World War II.

The central theme of the NSS-U.S.A. is that there must be one and only one superpower in the world—the United States. The U.S., the authors of the policy assert, should prevent any other country from even contemplating a challenge to U.S. pre-eminence, by maintaining U.S. economic, financial, diplomatic, political and military supremacy.

In the last two years of World War II, the top strategists of the Franklin Roosevelt administration, like Henry Stimson, Cordell Hull, Henry Morgenthau and others, channeled the energy of the national security apparatus into achieving that same objective.

The elements of their strategy included: 1) Turning back the rising tide of revolution in fascist-occupied Asia and Europe; 2) Reorganization of the world's finances

under U.S. control through the establishment of the Washington-based International Monetary Fund and World Bank; 3) Capture of world markets for U.S. capital and goods; 4) Maintenance of an enormous "peacetime" military establishment with bases around the world, as the only nuclear power; and 5) Control of global resources, particularly the one most important in modern industrial society—oil.

Establishment of a U.S.-dominated United Nations was another element in the strategic plan of the time.

U.S. policy makers at the time saw their wartime allies—the Soviet Union and Britain—as their main post-war rivals: the Soviet Union because of its socialist system and presumed support for the rising revolutionary movements, and Britain because of its far-flung empire. The U.S. planners were particularly interested in the oil-rich areas.

In 1944, Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill had a none-too-diplomatic exchange over U.S. designs on Iran and Iraq, both of which were then British neo-colonies.

Middle East oil was one of the great prizes of World War II that all the imperialist powers sought. After the war, the U.S. supplanted Britain as the dominant power and exploiter in the region. Eventually and after much resistance, the British ruling class swallowed its pride and reconciled itself to its new status as Washington's junior partner.

For nearly six decades U.S. administrations, be they Democrat or Republican, have sought to conceal the real motives behind their innumerable interventions, wars and covert actions in the Middle East. They have cynically invoked "human rights," "weapons of mass destruction," "the war on terrorism,"

etc., to cover their tracks.

Today U.S. leaders pretend that they must intervene to contain "Islamic Fundamentalism." But from the 1950s to the 1970s, U.S. policy mercilessly sought to destroy all progressive secular nationalist and socialist governments and movements in the region, which, in fact, helped open the way for the rise of political fundamentalism. Often the CIA used fundamentalist organizations to attack progressive secular groups and governments.

The Truman, Eisenhower, Nixon, Carter, Reagan, Bush I, Clinton and Bush II Doctrines—spanning more than half a century—can all really be boiled down to one sentence: "The Middle East is ours, and it will stay ours."

USSR an obstacle to U.S. hegemony

For more than 40 years after World War II, the U.S. imperialist drive for global domination was blocked by the existence of the Soviet Union and the socialist camp. The USSR, though devastated by the war—it suffered 27 million dead, 100 times the U.S. toll, and the destruction of two-thirds of its productive capacity—constituted a formidable counterweight to U.S. power, especially after the Soviet Union broke the U.S. nuclear weapons monopoly in 1949.

With the counter-revolutions in the socialist countries of Eastern Europe and then the USSR itself in 1989-1991, elements in the U.S. establishment saw an opening to achieve their longstanding objective of global hegemony.

What was to become the NSS-U.S.A. first appeared as a story in the New York Times on March 8, 1992, and was taken note of by the late chairperson of Workers World Party, Sam Marcy. The Times arti-

cle concerned a report issued just three months after the collapse of the USSR by two then-little-known Defense Department staffers. The two, Paul Wolfowitz and Lewis Libby, are today the deputy secretary of defense and chief of staff to Vice President Dick Cheney, respectively.

The elements of the Wolfowitz-Libby strategy for global domination were familiar ones: trade supremacy through agreements like what have become known as NAFTA, WTO and FTAA; military supremacy through a Pentagon budget which next year will exceed the combined military spending of all other countries on Earth; and control of global resources, especially oil.

Today, through a vast buildup of U.S. military bases and forces all over the Gulf region and into oil-rich Central Asia as well, the U.S. has militarily taken control of most of the world's petroleum at the point of origin.

With the invasion of Iraq, the U.S. military's stranglehold on the world's oil supply has been greatly tightened. The biggest losers are of course the Iraqi people, whose main economic resource has been stolen from them.

But the global rivals, or potential rivals of U.S. imperialism, are also targets of the U.S. occupation of the Gulf. Those rivals are today the European Union and Japan, and perhaps tomorrow China. All have growing "energy deficits" and are increasingly dependent on oil from the Gulf. This fact explains much about French and German imperialist opposition to the Iraq war. The Japanese imperialist government is trying to overcome the problem by following the British "junior partner" model.

Military domination of Middle East oil is an enormous factor in the global geopolitical struggle. □

What makes Leninism right for today

Socialism is the only way to end imperialism

By Fred Goldstein

The setbacks to Washington's imperial ventures in Iraq and Afghanistan together with growing economic and social hardships in the U.S. are leading to a revival of struggle and resistance. As the struggle progresses it is essential for the anti-war movement to clarify its goals and its politics. Inasmuch as the capitalist system is at the heart of all the problems that beset the world, it is high time to bring the question of the struggle for revolutionary socialism and communism to the forefront.

V.I. Lenin was the founder and architect of the first successful socialist revolution in history in 1917. Lenin's great achievement was that he applied revolutionary Marxism to the class struggle in the age of imperialism. It is incumbent on this generation of revolutionaries to go back to his fundamental teachings—not out of revolutionary nostalgia, dogmatic devotion, or academic historical interest—but because his teachings are as relevant and applicable to the struggle today as they were in the period of the Russian Revolution.

For example, the anti-globalization movement of today is struggling against the transnational corporations and financiers headed by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, which take over the economies of oppressed countries and leave them destitute and dependent under the banner of neoliberalism and the spread of so-called “free market” capitalism.

The anti-sweatshop movement is fighting against the spread of exploitation as manufacturing facilities are moved around the world. This development has been made possible by the high-tech revolution and rapid communications that enable the integration of global production.

The anti-war movement is fighting the occupation of Iraq, the intervention in Afghanistan, U.S. support for the Israeli occupation of Palestine, the threats by the U.S. military to Syria, Iran, North Korea and Cuba, as well as the spread of intervention into Colombia, the Philippines and numerous other countries.

All of these struggles can be put in the framework of the struggle against imperialism.

Lenin on ‘globalization’

In his book, “Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism,” written in 1916, Lenin analyzed the development of railroads, which were both a measure of the economic development of the day and instruments of economic penetration and enslavement.

“The building of railways seems to be a simple, natural, democratic, cultural and civilizing enterprise. ... But as a matter of fact the capitalist threads which in a thousand different intercrossings bind these enterprises with private property in the means of production in general, have converted this railway construction into an instrument for oppressing a *thousand million* people (in the colonies and semi-colonies), that is, more than half the population of the globe ... as well as the wage slaves of capitalism in the lands of ‘civilization.’

“Private property,” continued Lenin, “based on the labor of the small proprietor, free competition, democracy, i.e., all the catchwords with which the capitalists

and their press deceive the workers and the peasants—are things of the past. Capitalism has grown into a world system of colonial oppression and of the financial strangulation of the overwhelming majority of the population by a handful of ‘advanced’ countries. And this ‘booty’ is shared between two or three of the most powerful world marauders armed to the teeth (America, Great Britain, Japan) who are drawing the whole world into *their* war over the division of *their* booty.”

Lenin was writing while World War I, the first global inter-imperialist war, was raging. But aside from the fact that today's world is dominated by U.S. imperialism in a way that was not yet true in 1916, and that neo-colonialism has now replaced outright colonialism as the dominant form of imperialist rule, Lenin's description has a fresh and remarkably contemporary ring.

Today the Pentagon is “armed to the teeth” for world domination. Washington is trying to re-colonize Iraq, cut in its junior partner Great Britain, and shut out its most direct rivals, Germany and France. The IMF and the great financial corporations are using “financial strangulation” to privatize and swallow up public facilities, open up so-called “free trade zones” for transnational corporations to super-exploit the workers in dependent countries.

The main difference today is that fewer billionaires exploit more people than in Lenin's day.

The richest one-sixth of the world's population receives 78 percent of the world's income; the poorest three-fifths of the world's population receives 6 percent of the world's income. (worldbank.org)

Of the world's 100 largest economies, 51 are corporations and 49 are countries, with ExxonMobil and General Motors at the top (Institute for Policy Studies on the Top 200, www.ipc-dec.org/reports). And the three richest people in the world have assets more than the combined annual product of the 68 poorest countries (UN Human Development Report, 1999).

Lenin's writings stressed that the fundamental contradiction of capitalist society, the contradiction between the private ownership of the means of production and the socialization of the production process—as laid out in the writings of Karl Marx, beginning with “The Communist Manifesto”—was brought to its highest point under imperialism and that it laid the material basis for world socialism.

Imperialism and the socialist revolution

“When a big enterprise,” Lenin explained, “assumes gigantic proportions, and, on the basis of exact computation of mass data, organizes according to plan the supply of primary raw materials to the extent of two-thirds, or three-fourths of all that is necessary for tens of millions of people; when the raw materials are transported to the most suitable place of production, sometimes hundreds or thousands of miles away, in a systematic and organized manner; when a single center directs all the successive stages of work right up to the manufacture of numerous varieties of finished articles; when these products are distributed according to a single plan among tens and hundreds of millions of consumers (as in the case of the distribution of oil in America and Germany by the American ‘oil trust’)—then it becomes evi-

dent that we have socialization of production ... that private economic relations and private property relations constitute a shell which is no longer suitable for its contents, a shell which ... will inevitably be removed.”

The descriptions of the world economy as being ripe for socialism and strangled by capitalism are a description of the present-day globalized apparatus run by the modern-day transnational corporate exploiters.

Computerization, internet technology, satellites, fiber optic cable, jumbo jets, modern shipping lines, etc., have brought about integrated production, i.e., the socialization of world production with an extraordinary extension and refinement. Yet, as he wrote of the railroads, these technological marvels are implemented for the sole purpose of expanding profits and increasing the intensity of wage slavery. Yet they have expanded the world working class and strengthened the material basis for socialism many times over since Lenin wrote.

The phrases “shell which no longer fits the content” and “be removed” were euphemisms to get around the tsarist censors. They meant that the socialist revolution would destroy this “shell” which was constricting and strangling humanity with economic crisis, exploitation, oppression and war.

The capitalist class has tried to bury Lenin's teachings, just as they have tried to write socialism off the historical agenda by claiming that the collapse of the Soviet Union proved that socialism was a failure.

But the collapse of the Soviet Union did not represent the historic failure of socialism. The very opposite is the case. The achievements were enormous. The planned economy lifted a semi-feudal country to world-class scientific industrial heights, raised the standard of living and general conditions for the workers and peasants, eliminated the boom and bust economic crises endemic to capitalism, established solidarity with the oppressed people of the world as a guiding principle of foreign policy, and made many more accomplishments in a world dominated by developed imperialism.

Moving away from socialist principles and practices over time by the leadership resulted in the alienation of the workers and the buildup of pro-capitalist elements internally. Regressive political measures such as promoting social and economic privilege eroded the fundamental social support so necessary to the vital functioning of a socialist state and vastly assisted the efforts of imperialism to destroy the USSR. But it was over 70 years of war—that began with imperialist intervention after 1917 and included 35 years of the Cold War in which the entire imperialist world combined to bring military, political and economic pressure on the USSR—that was the primary historic cause behind the collapse.

Studying what was accomplished shows what a potential socialism and the planned economy have for the world if they are built on a strong economic foundation, free of imperialist war and sabotage. As the first revolution of the working class set out to build socialism, it held great hope for the future. By the same token, Lenin's



teachings can form a firm ideological and political base for reviving the struggle for socialism.

Lenin's teachings on so many other subjects are germane to every struggle in capitalist society: against the Patriot Act, police brutality, the racist use of the death penalty, the prison-industrial complex, the English-only laws, the persecution of undocumented workers and people of Middle Eastern descent, to the defense of affirmative action. His writings on “The National Question” show that it is the obligation of socialists in an oppressor nation to fight racism and chauvinism in all forms and to defend the democratic rights of nationally oppressed peoples, including self-determination.

His writings in “State and Revolution” show that the state is an organ of class oppression by the ruling class directed against the workers and oppressed. The cops and the courts and the military are instruments of violence against the people that can never be used to foster the interests of struggle and, on the contrary, must ultimately be destroyed by the workers and oppressed as an act of self-defense in the revolutionary process.

He wrote on working-class internationalism and the necessity of communists to support the struggles of oppressed peoples against imperialism; the role of the trade union struggle in capitalist society; women's oppression and the basis for liberation; the need to keep the movement from falling into the hands of capitalist politicians and on the building of a revolutionary party. Above all, he wrote about the role of the working class—the class that makes everything, that creates all wealth and makes everything move—as the strategic class in society whose revolutionary intervention is indispensable to the establishment of socialism.

Iraqi resistance raises new hope

The seemingly unstoppable post-Cold War ascendancy of the U.S. imperialist colossus on the road toward complete world domination has come to a surprising and unexpected—that is, to Washington—stall under the growing counter-pressure of an anti-colonial guerrilla war of resistance in Iraq. This makes the question of reviving the struggle for socialism and the study of Lenin more timely than ever.

The post-Sept. 11 triumphalism has been replaced by an anxious thrashing about for strategies that will allow U.S. forces to somehow stabilize their control. The so-called volunteer U.S. military—whose foot soldiers “volunteer” to escape poverty, lack of education and no future—is stretched to the breaking point and more troops are on the way.

The U.S. high command is increasingly resorting to the methods used by its hated client, Ariel Sharon, in Palestine: collec-

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The ongoing attempts to isolate Zimbabwe

By Monica Moorehead

President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe is reportedly being disinvited to the 2003 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting beginning Dec. 5 in Abuja, Nigeria. In response, Mugabe has stated that he plans to boycott and wants other members of the CHOGM to do the same. So far, other countries have not pulled out of the meeting.

The Commonwealth is the successor to the British Empire, and is made up of Britain and most of its former colonies and "dominions." The first CHOGM was held in 1931, with Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the once-apartheid South Africa participating.

The first four, but not liberated South Africa, have said they would not attend the Commonwealth meeting if Mugabe

was in attendance.

Today there are 54 member countries in the Commonwealth, 50 of whom are poorer, developing countries. A substantial number of them are located in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific Islands. In about a third of these countries, Queen Elizabeth II is still officially the ruling monarch.

Commonwealth members are "independent" countries representing 1.7 billion people, or 30 percent of the world's population. The CHOGM website claims its "key areas of achievement" are in "initiatives promoting democracy, racial equality, conflict resolution, cultural diversity, education and economic development." These are all prettified words, but in truth, the Commonwealth is but another imperialist-dominated organization that holds the purse strings in terms

of putting the brake on true economic development and political sovereignty for the formerly colonized world.

If this wasn't so, the vast majority of the 1.7 billion people would not be drowning in unbelievable poverty, hunger and wars, all rooted in imperialist plunder. Zimbabwe is facing many of the same crises as the other developing countries, including triple-digit inflation, famine-induced hunger, the AIDS crisis and much more.

The difference is that Mugabe is standing up to the threats of U.S. and British imperialism which have been working overtime since the late 1990s to remove him from office. The straw that broke the camel's back was when Mugabe supported a radical land reform plan to return arable lands in Zimbabwe to Black African farmers. Millions of acres had been confiscated by white farmers ever since colonial rule

was brutally instituted in what was called Rhodesia during the late 19th century.

Under the 1979 Lancaster agreement, signed by an indigenous guerrilla movement and the British government, white farmers were to be financially compensated for the land and Black farmers were to become the rightful owners. When Britain did not adhere to the agreement, displaced Black farmers led a revolt against the white farmers, prompting Mugabe to support their efforts.

This support enraged both U.S. President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who led a racist worldwide campaign trying to demonize and criminalize Mugabe. The U.S. government passed the Zimbabwe Democracy Act in 2000. "Democracy" was just a cover for imperialist support for the white colonial farmers. This act, which cut off U.S. assistance to Zimbabwe and also refused any leniency in debt forgiveness, was a slap in the face to Mugabe and the Zimbabwean masses.

The capitalist press gives the impression that Mugabe is being disinvited by Olusegun Obasanjo, president of Nigeria. But that's not the essence of the matter. The real pressure is coming from the imperialist leaders who want to send a message to the entire CHOGM membership as to which class holds the reins of power and what may be in store for them if they dare try to break from imperialist domination, even nominally so, as Mugabe is attempting to do. This is why the progressive movement, especially inside the U.S. and Britain, must stand in solidarity with Mugabe and Zimbabwe against any imperialist intervention. □

War criminal Wesley Clark to testify against Milosevic

By John Catalinotto

News item: Gen. Wesley Clark, NATO commander during the 1999 war against Yugoslavia and current U.S. presidential candidate, will testify for the prosecution in closed hearings on Dec. 15-16 in The Hague, Netherlands, at the war-crimes trial of former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic.

This news is like a nightmare with ingredients that even the Czech writer Franz Kafka would have been incapable of inventing. A kangaroo court without fixed rules. A war criminal bearing secret witness. A head of state charged with war crimes for attempting to keep his once-socialist and independent country from becoming a colony.

But this absurd trial was manufactured to cover the crimes of the invaders of the Balkans and rewrite the history of that region's latest wars.

After World War II, the overturn of capitalist property relations in most of Eastern Europe came about through reliance on the Soviet Red Army, which had overthrown the Nazi-collaborator governments there. With the fall of the USSR more than four decades later, these countries quickly reverted to capitalism and were penetrated by Western investments and takeovers.

Not Yugoslavia. Yugoslav partisans had liberated the country from German imperialism in 1945. The Communist Partisans then succeeded in uniting the six republics that made up the new Yugoslavia and overthrew capitalism at the same time. The 1989-1991 Soviet collapse left Yugoslavia exposed and vulnerable, but still with an army and party loyal to independence and to what remained of socialist property relations.

This army and party resisted 10 years of subversion, intervention in Yugoslavia's internal affairs, economic sanctions, NATO military intervention in 1995 in Bosnia and a 78-day bombing campaign of civilian targets in 1999. Finally the United States and the Western European imperialist powers were able to tear apart Yugoslavia. Blatant financial subversion of the September 2000 elections combined with military threats overthrew Milosevic

and left what remained of Yugoslavia—Serbia and Montenegro—open to the current U.S.-German takeover.

German capital owns Serbia's newspapers and magazines. U.S. Steel recently bought the state-of-the-art Sartid steel complex in Smederevo, Serbia, for a mere \$23 million, paying its 9,000 skilled workers the equivalent of 50 cents an hour.

Meanwhile, Yugoslav workers are trying to resist the ongoing privatization of industry in their occupied country. And

President Milosevic, much different from a confused Kafka character, is defending himself before the so-called International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. Through his determined self-defense, he has become a symbol of Yugoslav resistance to U.S.-NATO rule.

Kangaroo court rewrites history

After overthrowing him, the imperialist powers wanted to punish Milosevic and all

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Socialism is the only way to end imperialism

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of acting as a restraint upon the adventurous, militaristic outrages of U.S. imperialism and the Pentagon in their quest for absolute domination over the globe.

With the collapse, a mood of despair and resignation spread throughout the world on the supposition that nothing could now impede the imperial ambitions of Washington. One of the most important political results of the Iraqi resistance, despite its deep political divisions, its lack of a visible unified national leadership, and limited though it may be at the present, is that it has given the world a demonstration that imperialism can be held at bay.

In the meantime, soldiers are dying while billionaire oil magnates and military contractors are growing richer. Stock market speculators are hailing the "recovery" as they rake in speculative profits while joblessness and poverty continue to grow. The health care crisis has become monumental. And although political reaction is still dominant and passivity still prevails among the workers, both of these conditions are being eroded by a smoldering resentment at the growing inequality and hardships.

All the evils of capitalist society—like war and military occupation, racism and repression, the oppression of women and of lesbian, gay, bi and trans people, environmental destruction—are deeply connected by one common thread. They each serve the profit interests of an insatiable capitalist ruling class, which is trying to keep everybody off balance and divided.

These injustices do not arise from temporary policies of this or that government. They are part and parcel of the system of imperialism. They arise because the global apparatus of production involving hundreds of millions of workers is owned and operated as private property to provide maximum profits for a handful of monopolists. The only real-life resolution of this extreme contradiction is the seizure of this global apparatus of production by those workers on behalf of all of society and the reorganization of production for human need and not for profit—that's socialism.

The breakup of social peace in the U.S. is inevitable. The strike by 70,000 grocery workers and the support it is gaining, together with the demonstration of 100,000 undocumented workers for their rights and the outrage at the latest giveaway to the insurance companies by Bush's so-called Medicare reform are all straws in the wind. Capitalism does its work at steadily grinding down the people until rebellion is inevitable.

This will be the basis for the renewal of the struggle for socialism.

In no other imperialist country has it been so difficult to raise the banner of socialism and communism. And in no other country has it become so urgently necessary to do so. For the U.S. is the center of world capitalism and imperialism. Washington, Wall Street and the Pentagon are the pillars, the ultimate defenders of the global system of oppression and exploitation that is plaguing the planet. □

The dual character of China's development

By Deirdre Griswold

The U.S. media today call China capitalist when they report on its growth and communist when they attack its policies.

Even as U.S. corporations have "engaged" the People's Republic of China in trade and investment, they have not succeeded in opening it up to the same degree of imperialist penetration and control that is so rampant elsewhere in the developing world. At present, the Bush administration is even considering imposing tariffs on Chinese goods as a lever in its dealings with the government.

What role does the Chinese Revolution continue to play in the lives of 1.3 billion Chinese today?

The world has changed enormously since 1949, when the Chinese Red Army swept out the landlord and pro-imperialist forces of Chiang Kai-shek after years of civil war and resistance to foreign domination.

In the reconstruction period that followed, the leaders of the Communist Party tried to overcome China's extreme poverty and underdevelopment by organizing the masses and exhorting them to greater efforts. Great projects like dams and flood control were accomplished that way. The vast majority of Chinese were peasants, who had lived on the edge of starvation. Soon after the revolution, they were organized into communes that guaranteed a minimal subsistence, known as the "iron rice bowl."

But without outside assistance it would take China a very long time to industrialize. China did get technical and material assistance from the Soviet Union at first, and many large joint projects were begun. But under the Cold War pressures of the 1950s, when the U.S. was particularly determined to drive a wedge between the USSR and China, Premier Nikita Khrushchev began to pull back. When Soviet technical advisers were suddenly withdrawn from China at the end of the decade, it precipitated a crisis for the Chinese leaders.

Not only did they have to find a new way to spur development, but soon they were facing the threat of a second U.S. war on their borders. The first had been in Korea from 1950 to 1953. Now it was Vietnam.

Move to right under Deng

What followed was more than a decade of internal struggle, which included the Cultural Revolution—an attempt by the left to bring the masses directly into the struggle. But at the end, the left forces around Mao Zedong lost out to those in the Party they had called "capitalist roaders," led by Deng Xiaoping.

This new pragmatic leadership decided to use methods employed in capitalist countries to stimulate the economy. In order to accumulate the means for development, they let the pressures of the market force workers and farmers to work harder. The "iron rice bowl" was broken when the communes were dismantled and competition for jobs and wealth was reintroduced under Deng. They also invited in foreign capital.

At first, this capital was confined to joint ventures with the Chinese state. But as time went on, investment laws were liberalized and it became easier for foreign capital to use China's vast population as a source of cheap labor, sometimes under conditions akin to the sweatshops workers in the imperialist countries have been

fighting for years.

With much of its growth dependent on a large foreign market for its inexpensive goods, China is now going through a major overhaul. New industries are everywhere, especially in the coastal areas. A new class of Chinese capitalists not only exists but is allowed to join the Party.

At the same time, even though many older state-owned industries have been closed down, the working class has grown numerically. While unemployment and the loss of state-supplied services affects many millions, daily life for millions more has improved with a higher technological level and more consumer goods.

China is building up its infrastructure, with new dams, roads, ports, communications, universities, energy sources. Its scientific-technological advance has been so great that it was able recently to send an astronaut into space, thus joining a handful of countries capable of such a deed. This event, shrugged off by the imperialist media, was seen by Chinese everywhere as a remarkable achievement.

Was it an achievement for capitalism—or was it an achievement for the Chinese Revolution, led by Communists, which broke China away from dependence on and control by imperialism?

How much of that great revolution remains? What is the class character of the Chinese state?

Lenin on dual character of a workers' state

Based on the very early experiences of the Russian Revolution, Lenin wrote a remarkable book in 1918 called "State and Revolution." In it he reviewed what Marx and Engels had written about the state, about the need of the workers to smash the old state of the bourgeoisie and create a new state that would expropriate the expropriators, suppress the suppressors. It would be a special state, he wrote, consisting of the armed people, and would wither away—but only as the conditions of inequality inherited from capitalism were overcome.

Meanwhile, wrote Lenin, "Of course, bourgeois law in regard to the distribution of consumer goods inevitably presupposes the existence of the bourgeois state, for law is nothing without an apparatus capable of enforcing the observance of the rules of law. It follows that under communism there remains for a time not only bourgeois law, but even the bourgeois state, without the bourgeoisie!"

Did he really mean that every workers' state is in a certain sense a bourgeois state? Yes, he did. But let us not forget that the state he is describing has a dual character. To the extent that it upholds the rule of law in a society that still has distinctions between higher paid and lower paid, it is bourgeois. But to the extent that it has taken ownership and control of the land, the natural resources, manufacturing, banking and other means of production out of the hands of the bourgeoisie, and administers them for the whole people rather than for the profit of a small owning class, it is a workers' state.

The objective of communists is to dissolve the class differences that persist—and, in the process, dissolve the reason for the state's existence.

We should keep this in mind as we think about China today, or the Soviet Union as it was before its fall, or even Cuba or the DPRK or Vietnam.

China, like the others, came into existence through a great revolutionary strug-

gle. Hundreds of millions of Chinese were liberated from landlordism and colonial oppression. The leaders then tried to implement heroic communist measures, and succeeded in establishing the basis for much greater equality. But dragging on them at all times were the conditions of extreme underdevelopment of China—made more onerous by the rapid scientific-technological changes taking place in the capitalist world.

No workers' state, no socialist country, can be looked at in isolation. So far, they all have existed in a world still dominated by imperialism—the ultimate stage of capitalism, in which the finance capitalists from a handful of countries exploit the whole world and threaten those who stand in their way with economic sanctions and military aggression.

The internal political struggles, and moves to the right, that have taken place in China and the USSR are a reflection of this harsh reality. Even Cuba and North Korea, where revolutionary leadership has remained at the helm, must take all this into consideration in figuring out how to preserve the socialist gains of the revolution while dealing with imperialist threats and underdevelopment.

Capitalism is not a done deal

It has been a common tendency in the socialist movements of the West, going all the way back to the Utopians, to become impatient and dismissive of any struggle of the oppressed that does not produce an ideal society. Marx and Lenin scorned this approach, and examined real life instead, with all its warts.

During the lifetime of the Soviet Union, many in the socialist movement worldwide not only became disillusioned with the policies of the leaders there but equated the leaders with the state. From the 1930s on, many theses were written denying that the Soviet Union was a workers' state.

The same thing happened once the Deng grouping took over in China. Many former admirers of the Chinese Revolution declared it dead.

But we have the advantage of hindsight. We have an example before our very eyes of what happens when a workers' state, even if imperfect, is torn down. Look at the part of the world today that used to be the Soviet Union. The destruction of the Soviet state has been a monumental disaster for all but the new bourgeoisie. Not only did the union of many nationalities fall apart in bloody struggles, but the economy imploded. The life of the masses took a severe nosedive that is recorded in every objective social index—life expectancy, infant mortality, prostitution, homelessness, drug abuse, you name it. But should it take the destruction of a workers' state for there to be an understanding and appreciation of its class character?

That's what a counter-revolution means—the working class loses its grip on the state, and the bourgeoisie, both homegrown and from the imperialist world, tears up all the institutions arising from the revolution.

This is not what has happened in China so far. The state that developed during the revolutionary period has neither been overthrown nor broken up. The Chinese economy has not imploded. On the contrary, China's rate of economic develop-

A counter-revolution means the working class loses its grip on the state, and the bourgeoisie, both homegrown and from the imperialist world, tears up all the institutions arising from the revolution.

This is not what has happened in China so far. The state that developed during the revolutionary period has neither been overthrown nor broken up. The Chinese economy has not imploded.

ment is number one in the world.

The U.S. bourgeoisie hoped the Chinese state might fracture at the time of the Tiananmen Square struggle. Their press wrote many articles instigating a split in the Chinese Red Army, or between the army and the party, but that did not happen. Mikhail Gorbachev, the great "democrat" who gave away the Soviet Union, visited the students in the square, giving encouragement to the pro-imperialist counter-revolution waiting in the wings.

At that time the Soviet Union was still intact and many in the movement saw in Gorbachev's presence merely encouragement for democratic reforms. The grave danger facing the USSR and China from imperialism was not understood.

Now there is no USSR and Gorbachev makes commercials for U.S. fast-food chains. But China, which suppressed what turned into an armed uprising—in which as many Chinese soldiers were killed as civilians—remains intact.

However, the Chinese government, instead of starting to roll back the economic policies that had stimulated so much anger and disruption in Chinese society, has tried to avert another crisis by making even more concessions to the bourgeoisie since Tiananmen, so much so that today the state-owned part of the economy has seriously declined and the capitalist market is very advanced in production, distribution and finance.

The growth of capitalist relations is a grave threat to the Chinese workers' state. It leads on the one hand to a growing class of entrepreneurs who can never be satisfied and whose tendency is to become agents for world imperialism, and on the other to demoralization of the working class and the poorer farmers, the pillars of the revolution. But is there a specific point at which the growth of capitalism automatically leads to the destruction of the workers' state?

No. That would be a crude, mechanical application of Marxism, which sees all social phenomena in terms of the class struggle, a struggle that today is truly worldwide.

Many Chinese know that letting the bourgeoisie take over would mean surrendering to world imperialism, with all that implies in terms of loss of national sovereignty and being forced back into the position of an oppressed nation. That lesson has been confirmed by what happened to the USSR, which was the second-greatest power in the world.

China's trajectory in the direction of capitalism has paralleled a period of tremendous growth in the capitalist world market. That growth is in question, especially since its fragility was exposed in what was known as the "Asian economic crisis." A new worldwide capitalist crisis would undoubtedly impact China and the direction it takes.

Socialists in the imperialist countries should neither scorn China's development nor see in it a model for "market socialism." The problem for the whole world is how to get rid of capitalism, and that is a task for the workers in the imperialist countries most of all. □

The FTAA, the working class and U.S. imperialism

By Teresa Gutierrez

Two important demonstrations took place in the southern part of the United States the week of Nov. 17.

The first was the protest against a meeting in Miami to establish a Free Trade Area of the Americas. The second was a demonstration against the School of the Americas at Fort Benning, Ga. Graduates of the SOA have been responsible for decades of bloody repression in Latin America.

The racist arrest of Michael Jackson dominated the capitalist media's news coverage that week, allowing them to ignore the Florida and Georgia protests that were important for the class struggle.

The issues raised at the FTAA and SOA demonstrations are related to Latin America, where mass struggles have been acute recently. Inevitably, the U.S. movement will be greatly influenced by the tide of rebellion sweeping the hemisphere.

While the FTAA and SOA demonstrations were not huge in numbers, they are harbingers of what may be on the horizon for this country: a revival of class struggle of the workers and oppressed against the capitalist bosses. The struggle to end the U.S. occupation of Iraq has the potential to draw in the masses here in greater numbers as the struggle against the war abroad becomes a struggle against the war at home.

All this is inextricably tied to the struggles against imperialist domination of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Which way for the anti-globalization movement

Despite heavy repression by the police and Miami government, students, youths and thousands of union workers came out to protest the FTAA.

As a result of a call by the AFL-CIO, Black, Latino, Asian, Arab and white workers joined the protests to say no to the

FTAA. Many had one concern: jobs.

Many unionists found themselves discussing issues never discussed before. What does the FTAA have to do with events in Venezuela? What does Coca-Cola killing labor unionists in Colombia have to do with the FTAA?

Willingly or not, by marching against the FTAA in Miami, these workers were brought into a political arena affected by the class struggle abroad. This is an important development, because in Latin America and the Caribbean the masses are showing who the real agents of social change are.

President after president on the continent has been recently brought down by the mass struggle. On the other hand, in Venezuela, the masses wrested their president from the clutches of pro-U.S. reactionaries and kept him in office when the coup-makers tried to oust him.

The struggles from Ecuador to Bolivia, from Puerto Rico to Brazil, reveal that the ruling elite can make all the agreements behind closed doors it wants. But in a click of the mouse, these agreements can be thrown into the dustbin of history when the workers and oppressed take center stage.

In 1992 the unions in the United States vehemently opposed the North American Free Trade Agreement that gave U.S. corporations greater access to the markets in Mexico and Canada. But as soon as Bill Clinton took office in 1993, his administration showed who the capitalist government really represents. Though labor had given millions of dollars to the Democratic Party coffers, the Clinton administration completely snubbed the unions and enacted NAFTA on behalf of the banks and corporations.

This is one reason why the rank and file in the labor and social-justice movements here in the United States must take heed of the movements in Latin America, where workers are taking to the streets in mas-

sive numbers and fighting for their own independent class interests.

Fighting the FTAA must go hand in hand with fighting Plan Colombia. In Colombia, labor unionists, the armed rebel groups and others stress that Plan Colombia is the military wing of the FTAA. Over \$2 billion stolen from social programs for poor people in the United States was allocated to Plan Colombia for one reason—not to stop drugs that ravage our communities, but to stop the struggle for sovereignty and against privatization in Colombia. Plan Colombia also threatens socialist Cuba and Venezuela.

Globalization equals imperialism

Imperialism is nothing new, although it has expanded tremendously in recent decades. But back in 1916, during World War I, V.I. Lenin wrote "Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism." This groundbreaking work is as important for today's activists as it was decades ago.

In the book, Lenin explained that imperialism is the final stage of capitalism, the economic system that exploits and robs the labor of workers and oppressed solely for profits. Objectively, the demonstrations in Florida and Georgia were directed against this phase of capitalism.

By protesting trade agreements of the banks and the bosses, workers flexed their muscles—even if in a limited way—on behalf of their own interests.

And by protesting the School of the Americas, demonstrators were in essence opposing the military wing of the trade agreements. Corporations need well-trained murderers to uphold their blood-sucking agreements by force.

Lenin explained that finance capital is the merging of bank capital with industrial capital. He stated that the "export of capital," as distinguished from the export of commodities, is a major characteristic of imperialism.

All those born in the era of the Internet should recognize this, even if they have never read Lenin. Finance capital roams the world freely, recognizing no borders whatsoever, imposing economic and social policies that wreak havoc on billions of people and devastate the environment.

The "globalization" of corporations and banks means that capital is exported to every corner of the globe for imperialist domination.

A few years ago, when students and youths battled the police in Seattle protesting a meeting of the corporate looters, they heroically brought the anti-globalization movement to the shores of the United States. They joined with millions of oppressed people around the world who for decades had been fighting these same corporate looters.

The Battle of Seattle showed the world that not only in Mexico or the Philippines but right here in the United States there is an anti-globalization movement.

Cuba shows the way

The movement in the United States can learn a great deal from revolutionary Cuba. The only country excluded from the FTAA, Cuba was the first nation in the Western Hemisphere to hold a major action against it in 2001. That is real solidarity.

No soldiers from the School of the Americas can enter Cuba and massacre people. Why? Because Cuba—not U.S. imperialism—controls its own destiny. Cuban workers, not U.S. banks, own the means of production.

Controlling the means of production is exactly what the movement in the United States must aim for. Revolutionary Marxists-Leninists firmly believe this can happen. In the meantime, the task is to build a movement that brings the struggles against imperialist domination like those in Latin America to the shores of the U.S. □

Cuban Five appeal verdict

By Gloria La Riva

Three years ago, in November 2000, the frame-up trial of five Cuban revolutionaries defending Cuba from U.S.-sponsored terrorism began in Miami. After their 1998 arrests by the FBI, the federal government charged the five with espionage conspiracy on the United States and related charges.

In fact, the FBI knew full well the Cuban Five were monitoring anti-Cuba terrorist groups that operate out of Miami in order to protect Cuba from attack. The five were also keeping watch for the possibility of military action against Cuba.

Their actions were not illegal. Their mission was defending Cuba's right to exist.

But a trial with secret "evidence," deliberately fabricated charges and a Miami jury heavily influenced by the virulent anti-Cuba sentiments of that city made a fair trial impossible.

In December 2001 the Cuban Five were convicted of all 26 charges and sentenced to extremely long prison terms.

Now their case is before the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals. Defense attorneys are awaiting a court date in the coming months to present oral arguments.

More than 130 solidarity committees have sprung up around the world to demand freedom for the five. In Cuba, the five—Gerardo Hernández, Ramón



Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, René González and Fernando González—are universally known and loved as heroes who sacrificed their well-being for their revolution.

For information on how to get involved, contact: freethethefive@actionsf.org

Antonio Guerrero recently wrote to their many supporters from Florence federal prison in Colorado:



Dear friends,

Coincidentally in the month of November our "trial" started and now we have submitted to Atlanta's Court of

Appeal the last documents of our appeal.

Three years have passed from one event to the other. Now we should wait for the decision of that Court. There is not a date that limits their verdict.

I can tell you that the appeal presented is very solid, capable of destroying the fabricated charges, created by the U.S. government based on the manipulation of the evidence for a jury of the City of Miami.

And I could express to you that each day of unjust incarceration is a day of denunciation of the double standard of the politic of the Empire in the war against terrorism.

Each day we add new brothers and sisters to our cause and for it we consider each day a day of victory.

Many letters have continued arriving to us and their messages encourage us and fortify our conviction in the final triumph of the truth and solidarity.

Thank you for your support!

Stay united, struggling for a better world of justice and peace.

Antonio Guerrero, Nov. 15

Milosevic

Continued from page 10

Serbs for the resistance they put up for 10 years. Their instrument was the NATO-created court, the ICTY, operating under United Nations auspices. By putting Milosevic and hundreds of others from the Balkans, mostly Serbs, on trial in The Hague, NATO leaders placed blame on the Serbs for the Balkans tragedy they themselves caused.

But the tribunal is inherently illegal. The UN has no authority to create international tribunals. The ICTY is by definition unjust and unequal because it is a one-time, one-issue court and only Yugoslavs can be brought before it.

In Milosevic's case, the ICTY brought charges against him in May 1999—during the 78-day NATO bombing campaign—with the express purpose of pressuring him to concede.

It is a star-chamber court.

Over 200 prosecution witnesses have testified since Feb. 12, 2002, when the trial opened. The ICTY's star-chamber character is most apparent with the appearance of Gen. Clark. The Bush administration allowed him to testify only under strict limitations.

According to a Nov. 19 ICTY announcement, the public gallery of the ICTY will be closed during the course of Clark's testi-

Latin American left advances

Mass struggles stimulate unity and debate

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Latin America and the Caribbean are bubbling with political debate and discussion.

There has been a qualitative change in the movements south of the border. From awareness of oppression by the U.S. and its corporations, they have moved to denouncing them and now are organizing to change that reality.

The movement now is clearly anti-capitalist, and mostly pro-socialist. The masses are pushing their own governments to take stands against Washington's neoliberal policies of privatization, "free trade" and cutbacks. This was shown in the failure of the recent World Trade Organization meeting in Cancun, Mexico, where no agreement was reached on agricultural subsidies, and also in the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) meeting in Trinidad held later in October.

There is not yet uniformity in the movement, but it is massive and popular. The actors are those who have been voiceless for too long—the Indigenous communities, the landless, all those excluded for decades. The acknowledgment and awareness of this lack of uniformity among many leaders and Marxist intellectuals has led to debate at many levels.

One example of this process, which received practically no media coverage in the U.S., was the gathering of many Latin American struggle groups in Caracas, Venezuela, on Nov. 25-27 for the Bolivarian Congress of the Peoples (CBP). These organizations no longer represent just dissent and protest, but fierce and relentless denunciation of the status quo. What is more menacing to the ruling classes, their coming together can represent in embryonic form the development

of viable processes toward the formation of a different America, an anti-capitalist model that challenges neoliberalism and its sacred institutions.

The aim of the CBP, which has national chapters in 20 countries, is to become "a movement of unity, coordination and cooperation of the political and social popular forces of Latin America and the Caribbean" and to build a project of liberation with a solid foundation encompassing political, economic, social and cultural bases. The groups represented on its provisional Secretariat look like a Who's Who of the Latin American struggle today: Venezuela's Bolivarian Circles, Brazil's Landless Movement (MST), the Cuban Communist Party, Ecuador's Indigenous Pachakutik Movement, Bolivia's Movement Toward Socialism (MAS), Argentina's Piquetero Movement and El Salvador's Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN).

This Congress illustrates the effervescence of the progressive developments south of the Rio Grande.

U.S.-imposed misery pushes masses left

Since the Monroe Doctrine, the southern part of the Americas has been viewed by the U.S. ruling class as their backyard. Its natural resources, raw material and cheap labor went to enrich their coffers and those of their imperialist allies.

After a century of countless U.S. invasions, political and economic interventions and domination—including the bloody deposing of democratically elected heads of state, as in Chile and Guatemala, and the imposition of violent and criminal

dictators like Pinochet, Somoza and Trujillo, to name just a few—the misery and devastation that the U.S. economic model has imposed in the region has created its own gravediggers.

The FTAA and other "free trade" agreements that the U.S. wants to complete promise to further deepen the destitution of the people.

There is no place in Latin America or the Caribbean without some progressive development. Whether it's been the election of popular, left or left-leaning presidents in Brazil, Ecuador and Argentina, the ousting of the U.S. Navy from Vieques, Puerto Rico, the massive mobilizations that toppled President Sánchez de Lozada in Bolivia, or the latest general strike in the Dominican Republic, the common denominator has been the immense participation of the masses. Where the elected officials have failed to carry out their promises, as in Ecuador, the struggle of the masses continues.

In Colombia, where the people live under constant threats and violence from both the state and paramilitaries, but where there is also a long-established Marxist guerrilla movement, the majority responded to a call by the progressive sector to boycott a repressive referendum that President Uribe Vélez wanted to impose. This dealt a blow of instability to the Uribe regime. As a consequence, at least three Cabinet ministers plus the head of the armed forces have resigned. On the same weekend, a progressive former unionist, running against the policies of Uribe, won the mayoralty of Bogotá, the second most important post in Colombia. It is not an accident that the most mas-

sive internationally attended forums—the World Social Forum and the Sao Paulo Forum—both originated in South America, in Brazil. Everything is being debated. There are regional Social Forums, FTAA forums, forums about Plan Colombia and about issues concerning the Indigenous, Afrodescendants, women, youth and so on.

Cuba recently hosted a major international conference on Karl Marx and the 21st Century. The movement in the region was debated and analyzed, with considerable participation by Latin American Marxists.

The Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela is also facilitating consciousness raising and the consolidation of ideas. In fact, the new Venezuelan Bolivarian Constitution says that "the Republic will promote and favor Latin American and Caribbean integration, to advance towards the creation of a Community of Nations, defending the economic, social, political and environmental interests of the region."

To this end Hugo Chávez has issued the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA), a combative progressive agenda to counter the Free Trade Area of the Americas (ALCA in Spanish).

There is also another venue, the Continental Bolivarian Coordination (CCB). This attempt by the Latin American left to reestablish republics on the basis of true democracy and the sharing of wealth calls for rebellion against U.S. imperialism.

As a popular Latin American slogan says: "Be on the alert, imperialists, that Bolívar's sword is running throughout Latin America." □

Colombia in Pentagon crosshairs

By Natalie Alsop

An article entitled "Anti-rebel role for U.S. increases in Colombia" appeared in the Nov. 17 San Francisco Chronicle. It described growing U.S. involvement in Colombia's 40-year civil war, including the recent training of a special operations battalion and plans for another. It calls this "a sharp departure from previous policy" for Washington.

In fact, the U.S. has been expanding its direct intervention since the 1998 approval of Plan Colombia, a \$1.8 billion package of primarily military aid. In July 2002 the Bush administration announced that all U.S. aid to Colombia, past, present and future, could be used in the counterinsurgency effort. Previously, the aid had been nominally restricted to the "war on drugs."

The continued expansion of U.S. intervention is a response to the inability of the Colombian ruling class to destroy the progressive guerrilla insurgencies and implement neo-liberal social and economic policies that benefit the U.S. bosses.

Plan Colombia was an attempt to shore up the decrepit Colombian military, which had relied almost completely on its paramilitary death-squad allies for intelligence. Bush's announcement of direct support for counterinsurgency and continued economic and political support for the regime in Bogotá was calculated to open the door to wider U.S. intervention.

The latest reports of direct U.S. intervention and training come at a time of political setbacks for the Colombian ruling class, including the results of the Oct. 25-26 elections.

President Alvaro Uribe hoped a referendum on Oct. 25 would give him a popular mandate for increased privatization and expansion of the war. It included provisions to freeze the wages of public sector workers for two years and decrease the size of Congress.

An alliance of labor union leaders, activists, and the ruling-class Liberal Party opposed the referendum, encouraging voters to abstain. Every point of Uribe's referendum was either voted down or did not receive the required minimum of 6.25 million votes.

In the Oct. 26 municipal and departmental elections, Lucho Garzon was elected mayor of Bogotá, widely considered the second most important political office in the country. Garzon is a leader of the Polo Democrático Party and a former union leader. He has been outspoken in his criticism of Uribe's policies.

Leftists also won in other large cities and important departments.

Colombian and U.S. officials and the big-business media applauded this as proof that leftists can participate in the electoral process in Colombia and the revolutionary insurgency is obsolete. Historically, leftists have been assassinated for participating in Colombian elec-

tions. This was the case with the Patriotic Union (UP), which participated in elections in 1984 as part of peace negotiations between guerrillas and the government. Some 4,000 UP leaders and members were murdered during the following decade.

Lucho Garzon's election doesn't represent the vindication of Colombian democracy or the end of the necessity for armed resistance. It doesn't address the social and political conditions that are the basis of the revolutionary struggle of the Colombian people. But it does signify that the people of Colombia—even the middle class and parts of the ruling class—are not united behind Uribe's fascist program of total war and repression.

In the two weeks after the referendum and municipal elections, the interior, defense and environment ministers all resigned. The military chief resigned as well.

While the corporate media claim Uribe has a 70-percent approval rating for his "hard line" policies, the recent elections prove that the majority of people in Colombia don't support his agenda. And this is affecting even the ruling class, which was previously been united behind Uribe and his program of ending the civil war by destroying all resistance, armed or otherwise.

Despite the billions of dollars spent by the Colombian and U.S. governments to destroy it, the resistance continues. □

trial

mony. In addition, "the broadcast of the testimony [will] be delayed for a period of 48 hours to enable the U.S. government to review the transcript and make representations as to whether evidence given in open session should be redacted in order to protect the national interests of the U.S."

In other words, Clark's testimony and Milosevic's cross-examination will be censored.

But Clark already published his observations in his 2001 book, "Waging Modern War." The Kosovo war, he writes, "was coercive diplomacy, the use of armed forces to impose the political will of the NATO nations on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, or more specifically, on Serbia. The NATO nations voluntarily undertook this war."

Interviewed in the Nov. 29 Junge Welt, a Berlin daily newspaper, key Milosevic aide Vladimir Krsljanin said, "I consider these conditions the Bush regime set as a sign of fear."

Given his skills in cross-examination, the Yugoslav leader could easily expose Clark as a war criminal of the worst sort. Clark, along with Bill Clinton, Tony Blair, Gerhard Schröder and other Western leaders, committed a "crime against peace" by plotting the war and pillage of Yugoslavia. An open session with Clark would make this clear. □

workers world editorial

The workers' choice

The question of whether to give support to a capitalist party in the election is an old, old argument within the left. But it becomes acute when the administration of the capitalist government is in the hands of a right-wing faction of one of the ruling parties, or when it appears that such a faction could gain the executive office.

This issue is being hotly debated again now. There are those who say, "Anyone but Bush." In practice, this amounts to support for whoever the Democratic Party picks as its candidate.

The Republicans and Democrats are not identical. They're not Tweedledum and Tweedledee. However, both are parties of the imperialist bourgeoisie that is ready to drag the workers of this country into endless war to defend its strategic interests—that is, the unfettered right to exploit the peoples of the world. However, the Democrats use much more demagoguery, and some concessions on domestic issues, to win the votes of the workers and oppressed.

Those on the left who want to support a Democrat in the next election are likely to have a bleak view of the ability of the working class and oppressed to fight back against the right, and an exaggerated view of the danger presented by the Republicans—even characterizing them as "fascist."

It is our view that reaction is pushed

back through the independent struggles of the working class and all the oppressed, not by looking for salvation from a section of the ruling class. The candidate chosen by the Democrats is sure to be part of that party's well-groomed establishment of politicians who have learned over the years the art of how to please the moneybags while appealing to the masses. Unless it's Wesley Clark, who got his training as a military bureaucrat.

But whether it's Dean or Clark or Kerry or Clinton, the issue is the same. None of them stand for ending the colonial occupation of Iraq. They don't say, "Bring the troops home!" They just want to get more countries involved in the suppression of Iraqi self-determination.

None of them are for telling the pharmaceuticals and HMOs: People in this country are entitled to medical care as a right. Profits be damned!

None of them are saying that all workers should be guaranteed a living wage, or that the hundreds of billions now spent on Pentagon pork should be spent instead on housing, mass transit, health care and protecting the environment.

How could they? They're part of the capitalist political system. What we need is a truly independent political movement that fights in the interests of the working class and oppressed. That's how you push back the right wing. □

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MARKET ELECTIONS:

How democracy serves the rich

By Vince Copeland

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CALIFORNIA

LeiLani Dowell for Congress

By Workers World San Francisco bureau

Workers World Party member LeiLani Dowell is running for Congress on the Peace and Freedom Party ticket in the November 2004 elections. She is running against Democratic incumbent Nancy Pelosi in California's 8th Congressional District, which includes most of San Francisco.

Peace and Freedom, the only socialist party on the California ballot, regained its electoral status after losing it in 1998 for failing to meet the 2-percent threshold in that year's election. A statewide struggle by socialists, including WWP, put it back on the ballot this year.

Dowell is a young worker running on a socialist platform. She is a lesbian of African American and Hawaiian descent. A labor studies student at San Francisco State University, Dowell is a fighter for women's rights and a leader in the International ANSWER coalition.

Why would a 25-year-old activist like Dowell run against the multimillion-dollar campaign of a liberal congressperson?

Millions of workers will be paying attention to the 2004 elections. The big-business candidates try to draw the people into elections to reinforce the capitalist profit system. WWP will be doing just the opposite—revealing the sham of capitalist elections by projecting a struggle-oriented, working-class campaign.

"When capitalist candidates say they represent workers' interests, they are lying," Dowell told Workers World. "No capitalist candidate lacks health care, tries to survive earning minimum wage or has union membership that he or she has had to fight for. WWP's campaign will bring the concerns and struggles of working people—struggles our members have participated in—into elections oth-

erwise dominated by ruling-class propaganda."

Dowell said: "Being a worker and an activist, I know what it's like to scrape together the rent and work to pay tuition. That's why I believe free education should be a right. That is why I believe housing should be a right."

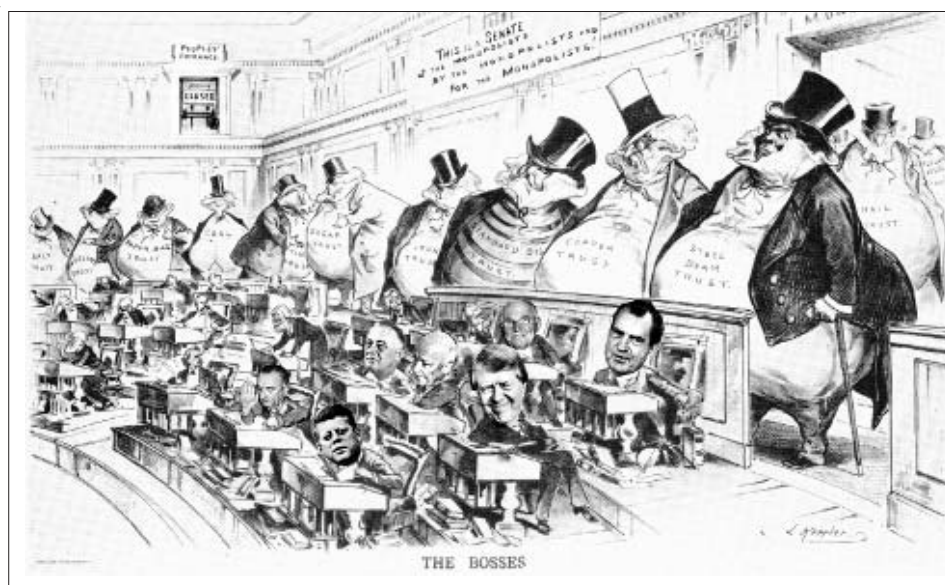
Many people are aware that capitalist candidates don't really represent them. But, Dowell said, the barrage of propaganda has convinced many that elections are the only avenue for change.

"The constant capitulation of the Democratic Party—which took no real stand against the war, which supports the occupation of Iraq, which has supported the ever-increasing war budget at the cost of social programs—has increased the disillusionment people feel with the elections," charged Dowell.

"Nancy Pelosi's record is evidence of this. Since 9/11 she has consistently supported Bush's 'war on terror.' She backs Israel's genocide against the Palestinian people. And she voted against easing the travel ban on Cuba. How could she possibly fight for jobs and the rights of working and oppressed people at home with such a pro-war imperialist policy abroad?"

"Because millions of workers are watching the elections, and many of them are disenchanted with the candidates, the election provides an opportunity to offer them an alternative, a genuine alternative, not only to the elections but to the whole system of exploitation and oppression," argues Dowell.

"Ideas raised by progressive and socialist candidates in elections often take hold in the struggle as well. The elections provide a forum for these ideas to be heard by workers. It is important that they are exposed to a socialist, working-class perspective that speaks to their needs and interests." □



Postura de Mundo Obrero sobre los países socialistas

Este artículo fue escrito en respuesta a un lector británico, quien preguntó sobre la posición del partido Workers World \ Mundo Obrero con respecto a los países socialistas.

Estimado Bertolt:

Acerca de su pregunta sobre si nuestro partido considera a la “ex Unión Soviética, los países de Europa Oriental antes de 1989, Corea del Norte, Cuba, etc. como países socialistas,” la respuesta es afirmativa. Pero déjeme elaborar.

Al comienzo del siglo 20, la implacable expansión del sistema capitalista generó guerras imperialistas, revoluciones socialistas y luchas de liberación nacional, como lo dijo Lenin. El período de transición del capitalismo al socialismo a escala mundial comenzó con la Revolución Rusa, pero ha tardado mucho más de lo que él y otros Marxistas esperaban, y ha visto graves retrocesos para el socialismo. Sin embargo, durante este período no ha aparecido un tercer sistema social ni tampoco una nueva clase propietaria en el mundo.

Nosotros ampliamente definimos como socialistas aquellos países donde el viejo estado explotador de clases fue destruido y los nuevos regímenes expropiaron los medios de producción y establecieron alguna forma de economía planificada. Libre de la necesidad de obtener ganancias, el desarrollo económico podría ser reorganizado para satisfacer las necesidades humanas básicas. Esto generalmente ocurrió por medio de la intervención revolucionaria de las masas (URSS, China, Cuba, Vietnam, Corea y otros.) Sin embargo, en gran parte de la Europa Oriental, la destrucción de las estructuras del viejo estado resultó no por revolución de las masas sino por medio de una derrota militar de los regímenes burgueses fascistas por el Ejército Rojo Soviético a finales de la Segunda Guerra Mundial.

Ha habido otras revoluciones de gran significado que nosotros no caracterizamos como socialistas. Estas se han mantenido dentro del marco de las relaciones de propiedad capitalista pero han logrado mucha independencia del control imperialista—como ejemplo están las rev-

oluciones nacionalistas de Irak y Libia.

Aquellos que argumentan que el crecimiento de la burocracia y la represión política en la URSS representaban una nueva forma de sociedad de clases no pueden explicar el porqué del colapso. La respuesta es que la burocracia no fue una nueva clase, sino un grupo privilegiado con dos caracteres. Por una parte fue un peso sobre el nuevo sistema socialista que luchaba por sobrevivir, pero por otra organizó su economía en una época que hubo muchos logros extraordinarios para los obreros y los campesinos.

Por su economía planificada, la Unión Soviética pudo progresar de una sociedad casi analfabeta y pseudo-feudal a una potencia industrial de la era espacial, en solo dos generaciones, y a pesar de haber sufrido una inmensa destrucción durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial. Pero no pudo sostener su desarrollo socialista frente a la hostilidad del mundo burgués tanto fascista como “democrático”.

El grupo gobernante antes de Yeltsin no tenía ningún derecho especial sobre la propiedad en el sistema Soviético—o sea, este no era en ninguna forma la clase gobernante desde el punto de vista Marxista. Pero sí tuvo privilegios tanto legales como ilegales, que les separaron de las masas populares y les abrió el apetito a obtener la propiedad de los medios de producción que manejaban a muchos en sus filas. Los imperialistas alternadamente amenazaban a los líderes soviéticos con extinción nuclear y trataban de seducirles con promesas grandiosas. Una vez que el estado obrero fue desmantelado, a muchos miembros de esta capa de la sociedad soviética les fue fácil la transición hacia el capitalismo. Pero fue sólo entonces que ellos pudieron tomar posesión de las riquezas del país y aún así lo hicieron con trucos y tácticas de gangster.

Ellos habían sido miembros de un grupo que gozaba de privilegios dentro del estado obrero. Algunos entonces se convirtieron en miembros de la clase capitalista propietaria que ha usurpado a los obreros y re introducido las formas más viles de explotación.

La desarticulación del estado soviético y el pillaje de lo que había sido la

propiedad social—mucho de esto hecho por los mismos imperialistas quienes habían enfocado toda su atención en su destrucción—le ha traído mucho sufrimiento a los trabajadores y ha resucitado los más terribles antagonismos nacionales, desmoronando asimismo a la unión. Todos los índices sociales comprueban cuán devastador ha sido este suceso.

También ha creado un gran sufrimiento para los países en vías de desarrollo que trataban de progresar económicamente y se beneficiaban de la existencia de un bloque socialista que mantenía a los ladrones imperialistas a distancia.

Nosotros nos sentimos totalmente reivindicados en haber sido partidarios consistentes de la URSS en contra de la intervención imperialista y la reacción interna, mientras hicimos advertencia tras advertencia sobre el peligro del crecimiento interno de elementos burgueses, y mantuvimos una línea independiente en relación a las políticas internacionales en muchos casos. Si revisa nuestro portal del Web: www.workers.org, va a encontrar un análisis comprehensivo de la URSS escrito por el fundador del Partido Mundo Obrero, Sam Marcy. En su libro “Pere-stroika: una crítica marxista”, por ejemplo, Marcy escribió:

“Desde el punto de vista administrativo, el estado soviético está en manos de una vasta burocracia. Pero la propiedad de los medios de producción, que significa la gran mayoría de la riqueza del país incluso sus recursos naturales, pertenece legal e inequívocamente al pueblo—a la clase trabajadora, que es la abrumadora mayoría de la población. Los que están en el grupo gobernante son meramente los administradores del estado y de la propiedad del estado. ... La propiedad de los medios de producción en manos de la clase trabajadora es verdaderamente el factor sociológico más importante en la evaluación de la URSS como un estado obrero, o un estado socialista como está llamado en deferencia a las aspiraciones del pueblo”.

Eso fue escrito en 1989, antes de que la disolución del estado soviético resultara en la venta de todas las riquezas del pueblo.

Cada revolución socialista ha sido for-

mada—y, en tal sentido, limitada—por las condiciones materiales y sociales heredadas del pasado y por la presencia de aliados a los que puede dirigirse o si está aislada en un mar lleno de estados capitalistas hostiles. Cualquier fallo subjetivo que uno pueda señalar fluye de estos hechos reales.

La caída de la Unión Soviética ha tenido un impacto profundo en los movimientos de la clase trabajadora y los movimientos de liberación nacional alrededor del mundo. Ha animado especialmente a los capitalistas monopolistas quienes ahora ostentan sus ambiciones imperialistas abiertamente. Pero no ha sido la negación en ninguna forma, de la relevancia de la lucha de clases. Y esta está aumentando de nuevo, impulsada por los requisitos insaciables de los capitalistas de extraer más plusvalía de los trabajadores, especialmente mientras la tecnología avanza y la competencia por los mercados se vuelve más viciosa.

Confiamos en que la lucha mundial por el socialismo tiene que resucitar, no solo en los países oprimidos sino especialmente en los centros imperialistas. Lo que necesitan los oprimidos alrededor del mundo para poder deshacerse de las cadenas, son movimientos fuertes de la clase trabajadora que puedan desafiar a los imperialistas en su propia casa—en las entrañas del monstruo, como dicen nuestros camaradas cubanos. Y eso va a pasar. La extensión de la globalización capitalista—el capital moviéndose a dónde los salarios son más bajos destruyendo a las economías locales, forzando a los campesinos y a los trabajadores de todo el Tercer Mundo a buscar empleos en los países imperialistas—hace más necesaria la solidaridad y la lucha de clase internacional para los trabajadores de todas las nacionalidades.

Vamos a luchar por el socialismo como queremos que sea, y como lo puede ser cuando el imperialismo sea derrotado, mientras, valoremos y aprendamos de las grandes luchas y sacrificios que se están dando alrededor del mundo.

Deirdre Griswold

Editora del Periódico Mundo Obrero (Workers World)

U.S. accused of inflating Samarra ‘body count’

Continued from page 8

President George W. Bush was stealthily whisked into Baghdad for a photo op on “Thanksgiving” Day—a holiday steeped in colonial and patriotic propaganda and a slow news day. The bombshell arrival of the Commander in Chief was aimed at bolstering domestic and international support for the seven-month-old occupation.

But even with the presence in Iraq of 130,000 troops, Bush could only briefly pose with a few of them and a turkey before he was hastily jetted away after only 150 minutes on the ground. The media were forbidden to speak to the GIs who were part of the “photo op.”

After the Nov. 29-30 attacks on Washington’s allies, the Bush administration scrambled to do damage control. Bush and Secretary of State Colin Powell began phone banking to stiffen the resolve of allied governments to hang tough. Bush rang up Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar. Powell called the Japanese and South Korean foreign ministers.

When asked if he thought the deaths led to second thoughts in those countries about taking part in the U.S.-led occupation of Iraq, State Department spokesperson Richard A. Boucher replied, “I would say none whatsoever.”

That’s not how others saw it. “But all was not so smooth on Monday after the attacks,” the Dec. 2 New York Times noted, “and officials said the United States was not especially pleased with the latest move by the United Nations secretary general, Kofi Annan, in setting up a meeting in New York on Iraq with Security Council and Arab diplomats.”

Annan has so far not yielded to diplomatic pressure by Powell to appoint a special personal representative whose job would be to return United Nations staff to Iraq.

The deaths of multinational forces allied with the U.S. imperial occupation of Iraq are deeply reverberating in the populations of those countries. The Japanese government has been forced to postpone

deployment of non-combat troops while debate rages at home. Television images showing civilian Iraqis celebrating the deaths of the Spanish intelligence agents rocked Spain. Italian officials are described as increasingly “nervous” about the outpouring of grief and anger in their country over rising Italian casualties.

Sovereignty armed with RPGs

The U.S. and its allies desperately want to fashion the appearance of self rule in Iraq as a cover for a continuing imperialist occupation. But after smashing the Iraqi state, all King George’s horses and all his men are finding it difficult to piece a shell of “sovereignty” back together again. They are anxious to carry out “reconstruction” of Iraq, by which they mean creating the pipelines to channel the wealth of Iraq into their own coffers.

The real battle to defend the sovereignty and right of self-determination of the Iraqi people is taking place on the ground.

According to Pentagon commanders,

the level of insurgent intelligence gathering and ability to carry out coordinated attacks is mounting. “Is this something larger than we have seen over the past couple of months? Yes. And are we concerned about it? Yeah,” said Army Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt.

While Bush was posing with the turkey, the Special Operations Command Central was being moved back to Qatar from Florida to coordinate an offensive against the insurgency.

But the use of massive firepower to terrorize the Iraqi population is not dampening down anti-colonial resistance—it’s inflaming it.

Some of the residents of Samarra had reportedly grabbed their guns and fought back against the U.S. tanks, cannons and Bradley fighting vehicles. (guardian.co.uk, Dec. 1)

“If I had a gun. I would have attacked the Americans myself,” vowed Satar Nasiaf, a shopkeeper who said he had watched two Iraqi civilians cut down. □

¡PROLETARIOS Y OPRIMIDOS DE TODOS LOS PAÍSES, UNÍOS!

MUNDO★OBRERO

Hay que revivir la lucha por el Socialismo

Por Larry Holmes

La siguiente escritura es un extracto de una charla pronunciada por Holmes, miembro del Secretariado de nuestro partido, durante una reunión en la ciudad de Nueva York, el 20 de septiembre del año en curso.

¿Cuáles son nuestros más grandes problemas como activistas, militantes, socialistas y revolucionarios, tanto en los Estados Unidos como en el resto del mundo? Bueno, para empezar tenemos al imperialismo estadounidense, el cual anda suelto y sin freno. Tenemos a Bush. Está la creciente crisis capitalista, la cual intensifica cada día más la explotación y la opresión. Hay peligros sin precedentes para el mundo por una nueva y destructiva fase del imperialismo.

Pero esto es solo una parte del problema.

El otro aspecto del problema está en el lado de nuestra clase. Aquellos en el movimiento socialista con una perspectiva antiimperialista y revolucionaria—cualquiera que sean las diferencias políticas entre los partidos y organizaciones que han podido mantenerse con una perspectiva generalmente revolucionaria y jugar un papel importante en la organización de una resistencia sorprendentemente fuerte entre las masas populares contra la interminable guerra del imperialismo estadounidense—tales organizaciones, y nos contamos entre ellas, están llevando a cabo una batalla difícil para lograr una influencia política real dentro de la amplitud de la clase obrera, los sindicatos y el movimiento de las masas.

La seriedad de la crisis mundial nos ha dejado saber claramente que debemos buscar la forma de fortalecer nuestra posición entre los trabajadores, especialmente aquellos que se están radicalizando y que están en movimiento. Esto es para poder arremeter una lucha de clase mucho más efectiva y firme para responder a la guerra que se comete contra nosotros por un sistema capitalista inestable que está mucho más dispuesto a recurrir a una guerra económica y militar contra los pueblos del planeta.

La realidad es que nuestra clase mundialmente, pero en especial aquí en el centro del imperialismo estadounidense, necesita liderazgo y organizaciones fuertes. Si este problema se evade o se niega, sólo va a dejar a la clase obrera más y más desorientada, desorganizada, inmobilizada y en manos de la ideología de la burguesía.

Nueva ira que aumenta

Hoy en los Estados Unidos, aún después de lo que ha parecido una ola interminable de actitud defensiva y pasividad por parte de los sectores importantes de la clase obrera, un coraje nuevo está naciendo desde abajo. Está allí, desde las decenas de miles de trabajadores en huelga en las tiendas de abastecimientos, hasta las legiones de nuevos obreros inmigrantes que han traído consigo un

alto nivel de conciencia de clase a muchas de las industrias en las cuales se han convertido en la fuerza predominante.

Y está atemorizando al establecimiento capitalista que por mucho tiempo ha estado convencido que tiene a los obreros bajo su control.

Se debe hacer la pregunta: ¿Pueden las organizaciones de vanguardia ayudar a esta nueva ola de lucha, influenciarla, ayudar a sostenerla y brindarle una fuerte solidaridad? La respuesta es clara. Sólo si nos reforzamos a nosotros mismos al punto que podamos entrar en la ofensiva políticamente—o más al punto, avanzar la lucha por el Socialismo.

Muchos de nosotros que pensamos seriamente sobre el socialismo nos hemos sentido como si estuviéramos a la defensiva. Pero el evento que ha acentuado este problema y lo ha empujado a un nivel más alto y la llevó a una crisis más profunda, fue el colapso de la Unión Soviética. Si recordamos 1991, podríamos decir que este evento significó el comienzo de un nuevo obstáculo para la lucha por el socialismo. Verdaderamente, hemos estado esperando por la oportunidad de abrir un nuevo capítulo en la lucha por el socialismo mundial.

Ahora hay razón por la cual creer que este es el momento.

Hay un movimiento político relativamente grande que se ha estado radicalizando y movilizándose por la guerra. Ha habido grandes manifestaciones como las que sucedieron en la primavera. Este movimiento necesita una perspectiva revolucionaria socialista mundial. Armados con tal perspectiva, el movimiento estará mucho mejor preparado para sostener el internacionalismo real en la lucha.

Lo que esto significa es la habilidad de ver la lucha contra la guerra no sólo como un deseo por la paz, o como algo importante sólo por las pérdidas de vida que han sufrido los soldados estadounidenses o por la enorme cantidad de dinero que se ha malgastado en eso.

No hay nada malo con estas razones para oponerse a la guerra y ocupación. Pero el movimiento no puede sostenerse, comprender los eventos y mantenerse independiente, a menos que vea claramente su papel como parte de un movimiento mundial para derrotar al imperialismo y apoyar la lucha de liberación de todos los que se encuentran bajo la bota del imperialismo. Finalmente es imposible continuar con tal posición a menos que se vea la lucha como un medio para reemplazar el imperialismo con un orden social fundamentalmente diferente que actúe para los intereses de la humanidad.

Si no hay un movimiento socialista amplio con organizaciones fuertes que de una forma u otra influyen la lucha en esa dirección, entonces no debería sorprendernos que algunos oponentes de la guerra concluyan: ¿Por qué no dejar que las Naciones Unidas entren y ocupe a Irak? Es cierto que la ONU está dominada por las potencias imperialistas, pero, ¿cuál es la alternativa? Por lo menos el papel de

los Estados Unidos estaría disminuido.”

Los imperialistas actúan por sus propios intereses. Pero si no hay una alternativa de lucha mundial por el socialismo con gran influencia en el movimiento de las masas, ¿por qué no concluir que la vía mejor para el pueblo de Liberia es que los imperialistas entren, les lleven comida y establezcan la situación para así reducir la cifra de muertos y heridos?

Y por supuesto es igual con la lucha electoral. Si no hay una alternativa de lucha por el socialismo, entonces ¿por qué no apoyar al candidato presidencial del Partido Demócrata como la única solución pragmática para la problemática de Bush? Hasta los activistas más militantes y revolucionarios de buen corazón y que aman la lucha, están afectados por esto.

De anticapitalista a socialista

Con frecuencia reviso el libro “Alta Tecnología, Salarios Bajos” por el fundador del Partido Mundo Obrero, Sam Marcy. Escribió que la nueva crisis en los sindicatos, que viene como resultado de una fase completamente nueva de la economía capitalista—la reestructuración producto de la intervención de la tecnología—está haciendo que bajen los salarios y permanentemente eliminando puestos de trabajo a un nivel mundial.

Y destacó que este suceso lleva el potencial de radicalizar al movimiento de la clase trabajadora. Y a la vez produce una nueva composición del trabajo y de la clase obrera.

Para defendernos contra estos cambios en la economía, es necesario salirse de los límites que conlleva el sindicalismo, para ir hacia un camino político táctica y programáticamente más audaz y revolucionario. En otras palabras, un camino más consistente con una perspectiva anticapitalista y pro socialista.

De muchas formas, la crítica cuestión de cómo promover el movimiento mundial a favor del socialismo, afecta la postura y el tono de la lucha y de la política, en el movimiento laboral a todos los niveles. Afecta a los movimientos contra la guerra y el imperialismo, la lucha de los pueblos y países colonizados—de hecho afecta la lucha de clases mundial entre las masas de los explotados y oprimidos, y la clase súper poderosa pero infinitamente más pequeña de explotadores y opresores.

¿Qué podemos hacer para iniciar un nuevo capítulo en la lucha para reactivar la lucha mundial por el socialismo?

Esta es una responsabilidad vital para las organizaciones revolucionarias y para el movimiento amplio en los Estados Unidos. Porque, como el destacamento del movimiento ubicado en el corazón del imperialismo estadounidense, tenemos la obligación adicional de ser fuertes, implacables internacionalistas, hacer todo lo posible en la lucha de clases aquí en este país, en la lucha antiguerra aquí en casa, pero a la vez abrazar y manifestar solidaridad en acciones concretas con nuestros hermanos y hermanas alrededor del mundo que luchan en contra del imperio.

Verdaderamente no es una obligación, sino un privilegio que abrazamos plenamente.

¿Y cómo hacemos para avanzar esta tarea hacia el próximo nivel? Fortaleciendo nuestro trabajo en el movimiento antiimperialista es sin duda una gran parte de ello. Y también es el buscar nuevas y audaces maneras para participar en el proceso de radicalizar el movimiento amplio de los trabajadores.

Un problema grande con el cual el movimiento tendrá que bregar en los próximos 12 meses son las presiones de silenciarse, evitar manifestaciones y enfocarse solamente en el esfuerzo por derrotar al Presidente Bush en las elecciones del 2004. El problema general con la aceptación del argumento desesperado del “mal menor” es que no son solamente Bush o Rumsfeld o cualquier otro de los neoconservadores aterradores manejando la guerra.

Es el imperialismo. Y es la crisis que se profundiza la que impulsa a este sistema maligno hacia actos catastróficos, no importa quien ocupe la Casa Blanca.

El problema más crítico es el peligro de que el movimiento abandone su lucha contra la ocupación de Irak y Afganistán, o contra el presupuesto inmenso que el Congreso acaba de aprobar para la guerra, y virtualmente se congele hasta que terminen las elecciones. Es una equivocación que van a hacer con más probabilidad quienes en el movimiento han concluido que la única alternativa es la de escoger entre políticos imperialistas, porque les falta otra alternativa—una alternativa mundial, una alternativa socialista.

De hecho, el Consejo de Seguridad de la ONU que ratificó la ocupación de Irak por los EE.UU. y el Congreso de los EE.UU. que ratificó la solicitud de Bush para una fortuna en fondos para pagar los gastos de bombas y balas y más destrucción y muerte, han demostrado otra vez que no pueden frenar la guerra.

¿Hay otra alternativa con la cual podemos contar para poner un alto a las guerras sin fin y las ocupaciones?

Tuvimos un vistazo del movimiento de la clase trabajadora a nivel mundial durante las movilizaciones de la pasada primavera. ¿Recuerdan las marchas increíblemente masivas para prevenir la guerra?

El escritor Patrick Tyler del periódico New York Times escribió un artículo en la portada sobre esas manifestaciones donde comparó las decenas de millones de manifestantes en las calles con una “segunda superpotencia”. Tyler se ganó su salario advirtiendo al establecimiento que ese movimiento popular podía volverse en una fuerza más poderosa que la ONU o cualquier alianza de líderes gobernantes. Y esa fuerza eran las masas populares alrededor del mundo poniéndose en pie en una forma que nadie había visto antes.

Tal fuerza puede tumbar el orden prevaiente y forjar un nuevo orden, un orden socialista. Esta es la dirección por la cual tenemos que avanzar. □