



Lurching Toward Police State U.S.A.

Hands Off Edward Snowden Who Revealed Spy Agency's Dirty Secrets!

"Big Brother" on Steroids

JUNE 25 – We all knew it, or suspected it, but no one could prove it. Now there is proof: the United States government's gargantuan intelligence apparatus is spying on *everyone*. On June 6, the U.S. online edition of the British *Guardian* newspaper published a blockbuster revelation, a ruling by the secret Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court to turn over to the National Security Agency (NSA) records of *all* phone calls carried by Verizon Business Network. In short order, it was confirmed that this had been routinely authorized for the last seven years, and similar orders were issued to AT&T, Sprint, Bell South

and other telephone companies. Altogether, records ("metadata") for some 99% of U.S. phone traffic end up in the vaults of the NSA.

The next day the *Guardian* published slides showing that the NSA had obtained direct access to private electronic data from U.S. Internet giants Microsoft (Hotmail), Yahoo, Google, Facebook, YouTube, Skype, AOL, Apple and others in a secret program codenamed PRISM. This includes e-mail,

chats, videos, photos, stored data, Internet phone, video conferencing, file transfers, logins as well as all sorts of social networking details. Under 2008 amendments to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) and the USA PATRIOT Act, the NSA no longer would have to get a warrant to spy on anyone as long as analysts had a "reasonable belief" that one of the parties was out of the U.S. In reality, they vacuum up all electronic communications.

Following that the *Guardian* (11 June) released documents about an NSA data mining tool, Boundless Informant, showing the vast scope of its collecting of e-mails and instant messages: over 3 billion items from U.S. computers in the month of March 2013, and 97 billion items from computer networks worldwide in the same period. These revelations, and more to come, were all thanks to Edward Snowden, a former computer systems administrator for the NSA, CIA and defense contractors. Snowden had the notion that the public should know what

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No to Islamist Rightists and Coup-Plotting Liberals!

Egypt: Down with Military Rule – Fight for Workers Revolution!

JULY 9 – On July 3, after three days of millions-strong mass demonstrations against the Islamist government of President Mohamed Morsi, the Egyptian armed forces seized power. As crowds in Cairo cheered the removal of the ruler who was intent on consolidating the power of the Muslim Brotherhood, the military staged a choreographed spectacular with a huge display of fireworks. Secular bourgeois liberals and leftist youth spoke of a new wave of the "revolution" that began with the toppling of former Egyptian strongman Hosni Mubarak in February 2011, or of a "second revolution." Liberal leaders maneuvered for a spot at the top. Some denied there had been a coup, others called it a people's coup, saying the army acted to carry out the will of the masses. General Abdul Fattah al-Sisi declared that the armed forces "will remain away from politics" and spoke of national unity. But this was just sucker-bait, a lure for the gullible.

The Egyptian army is not championing the interests of "the people," it is defending the army. More specifically, it is protecting the officer corps which has enriched itself from its privileged position in the state. Sisi, the swaggering head of the armed forces who had been appointed defense minister by Morsi, quickly made it clear who was in charge by ordering the arrest of 300 leaders of the Brotherhood (Ikhwan). When Brotherhood supporters marched on the Republican Guard officers' club where Morsi is being held, soldiers fired into the crowd, killing

five and injuring 100. But as the Islamists' rallies continued, on July 8 military sharpshooters on rooftops carried out a massacre, raining bullets on protesters encamped at a mosque during early morning prayers, leaving at least 51 dead and more than 400 wounded. Anyone who thought "democracy" was dawning on the Nile was quickly disabused of this notion, or should be by now.

The civilian forces who collaborated with the military takeover were soon revealed as puppets, to be used or discarded as convenient. Sitting behind Gen. Sisi as he announced army rule were bourgeois liberal Mohamed El-Baradei, the former United Nations atomic energy chief and presidential hopeful, and Younis Makhyoun of the al Nour party, the more extreme Islamist (Salafist) rival of the Brotherhood. ElBaradei, who lobbied Washington to get U.S. support for ousting Morsi, was first touted as prime minister, then as vice president and then dropped. Makhyoun and al Nour were deeply discredited among



Egyptian workers march in Cairo on May Day 2013 against Morsi's anti-worker policies.

their base when the army massacred Islamist protesters. Some leftist would-be revolutionaries acted as auxiliaries, going along with the army's seizure of power (while claiming to be independent) and calling to continue anti-Morsi demonstrations as the high command was consolidating its hold.

All the talk of a victorious revolution in Egypt, both in 2011 and today, is a cover for the fact that the military officialdom has been the core of the state apparatus for more than half a century, was so under Morsi and his Islamist government, and still is. The security apparatus controls the courts, key ministries and important industrial enter-

prises. Moreover, one-third of the annual budget of the Egyptian armed forces comes from the \$1.5 billion annual military aid from the United States. So even if President Obama and the U.S. ambassador at first supposedly tried to discourage the overthrow of Morsi, then after the fact reportedly tried to get the Brotherhood to accept it, managing to anger both secular and Islamist political forces, U.S. imperialism still has control where it counts. Sisi & Co. are no nationalist rebels, and a U.S.-funded, Pentagon-trained and CIA-vetted military is not about to act as an instrument of the people's will.

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Egypt...

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That the Morsi government was an enemy of Egypt's poor and working people there is no doubt. After decades in opposition (and sometimes in jail) under Gamal Abdel Nasser, Anwar Sadat and Mubarak, all of them military officers, the Brotherhood in power spent its efforts on inserting Ikhwan loyalists in the government apparatus, ramming through an Islamist constitution enshrining sharia law, and prosecuting dissidents for blasphemy. Meanwhile, the president issued a decree last November granting himself dictatorial powers. Morsi used the military and police forces to repress any discontent, notably during the protests against his notorious decree. And workers saw no improvement in their poverty wages while the government continued the "free-market" privatization policies dictated by the imperialist financial agencies. On top of this, economic crises were mounting with shortages of food and other basics as well as blackouts.

The Brotherhood has retained its hard core of disciplined supporters, about a quarter of the electorate, making it by far the largest political force in Egypt. But by early 2013 the regime had lost the support of broader layers who voted for its Peace and Justice Party in 2011 parliamentary elections and then gave Morsi a narrow majority for president a year ago thinking they would be an improvement over Mubarak. The discontent was then galvanized by a group of youth who adopted the name Tamarod (Rebel) and circulated a petition calling for Morsi's ouster. The petition reportedly was signed by 22 million people, eclipsing the numbers who voted for him in June 2012. When the organizers called an anti-Morsi mobilization for June 30, the anniversary of his election, it was by far the largest in Egypt's history, far larger than those against Mubarak in early 2011, and this time included industrial towns and heavily rural provinces in addition to the capital, Cairo.

The stage was set to overthrow the Ikhwan regime. But who would bring it down? The masses of secular liberals, youth, women, and even some Salafist Islamists in Tahrir Square? They certainly represent-

ed large numbers, but lacked a common political program or organization to accomplish anything. Ostensibly socialist groups remain small, and the "progressive" secular bourgeois parties are purely electoral. The liberals, with ElBaradei in the forefront, were well aware of this and focused their efforts on getting the military to move. Thus it is entirely false to say, as some leftists claim, that the mass mobilizations were "hijacked" or "betrayed" by the army high command. Even as the liberals spouted rhetoric about rectifying the "revolution," it was their intention all along that the generals take power. It's no surprise, then, that the moment Morsi was gone all the *feloul* or rotten remnants of the old regime were back.

Although there has not yet been a revolution in Egypt – not even a political revolution limited to changing the state apparatus while leaving the capitalist economic structure intact – many of the conditions for a far-reaching social revolution are ripe, if not overripe. What's missing in Egypt today is a *revolutionary leadership* to prepare the masses for a struggle for power, organize it and then establish a new state power based on class organizations of the workers. What is necessary, and has been over the last two years, is unrelenting propaganda and agitation against all wings of the bourgeoisie, both Islamist and secular, and their military guard dogs with the perspective of fighting for a workers and peasants government that would begin the tasks of *socialist revolution*. Sugary phrases about "inclusive democracy" and even a "democratic revolution" are a hoax, for so long as capitalism holds sway, the Egyptian population is condemned to dire poverty.

Neither the Islamists, the secular liberals nor the military have "betrayed the revolution," for they are defending their class interests. The betrayal was by leftists who in building the Tamarod movement and organizing the protests made a political bloc with the coup-plotting liberals. The largest ostensibly revolutionary organization in Egypt today is the Revolutionary Socialists (RS), linked to the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in Britain and the International Socialist Organization (ISO) in the U.S. RS spokesman Sameh Naguib has written several articles recently glowingly recounting Egypt's "second revolution," a "new wave



Tanks patrolling in Cairo, July 3, as army takes power. This is not what a revolution looks like.

of revolution," and "four days that shook the world" (see *Socialist Worker* [U.K.], 5 July). He waxes poetic about the "legendary" day of June 30, when an estimated 17 million demonstrated against the Brotherhood regime, "an unprecedented occurrence in history" which "surpasses in significance any participation by old regime remnants or the apparent support of the army and police."

Even if, according to Naguib, "the liberal bourgeois elite wanted to use this mass impetus to overthrow the rule of the Islamic elite" to "reach power with the endorsement and support of the military institution"; even if "the masses were temporarily affected by the slogans of that elite, just as they were affected before by the slogans and promises of the Islamist elite," never mind because "there is a special logic to popular revolutions." And what is that "special logic"? It is evidently that "the masses have proven anew that their revolutionary energy is endless, that their revolution is truly a permanent revolution" and will lead to "the third Egyptian revolution inevitably to come."

This starry-eyed *objectivism* is a parody of Leon Trotsky's perspective of permanent revolution. The co-leader together with Lenin of the Russian October 1917 Revolution and founder of the Fourth International stressed that even to achieve basic democratic demands required a communist vanguard leading the struggle for workers revolution and its extension to the imperialist centers.

The RS leader assures us that the masses will "pass anew through the illusion that 'the army and the people are one hand' in the weeks and months to come." But already in February 2011, this treacherous slogan influenced hundreds of thousands of protesters in Tahrir Square. The fact that it appears again now – despite the 17 months of brutal direct rule by the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces before Morsi took office which were filled with mass arrests, vicious police attacks, trials by closed-door military tribunals, etc. – shows the opposite: that such illusions keep reappearing until genuine socialist revolutionaries dispel them by waging a sharp struggle to *mobilize workers power to oppose military rule*. The RS' policy, in contrast, is to whisper "no trust" in the generals while calling for a "constituent assembly" (which Islamists could well dominate) and protesting in bloc with bourgeois forces who call for the military's intervention.

Twenty-two million signed a petition, 17

million demonstrated, millions voted – but vast numbers alone do not make a revolution, which is a question of power. The military has its power in tanks and guns, the capitalists in their ownership of the productive apparatus backed up by their state apparatus. The workers' power lies in the fact that the machinery of exploitation cannot function unless the toilers make the wheels of industry turn, and the machinery of repression collapses when the soldier conscripts turn their weapons and their ire on their bourgeois officers instead of against the masses. But that will not happen spontaneously.

"The Egyptian masses have managed to overthrow two presidents in thirty months," writes Naguib. Granted, but the Argentine masses overthrew five presidents in two weeks in 2001, yet that didn't put an end to the dictatorship of capital, or even of the international financial institutions. The idea of an inexorable drive to "inevitable" revolution is contrary to history and Marxism. A rotting regime can sometimes collapse of its own accord or with a push "from below," but to turn that into a genuine revolution of the working masses against their capitalist exploiters requires leadership and consciousness of the most advanced sectors.

The Egyptian Revolutionary Socialists and their advisors in the British SWP and U.S. ISO do not present such a leadership. When the RS talks of a "united revolutionary political alternative" they don't mean a Leninist party of the proletarian vanguard, they mean the activists and various currents in "the movement" getting together despite fundamental class differences. This is the policy of *tailism*, and these followers of the late anti-Trotskyist renegade Tony Cliff have developed it into a science, of sorts. So when the masses in Tahrir Square greeted the military in February 2011, the RS tailed along. Then last June when the Peace and Justice Party had the wind in its sails, *the RS called for a vote to Morsi in the second round of the presidential elections*.¹ And now that the masses have had their fill of the Ikhwan and many would prefer the army, the RS tails after them again, hoping that nobody remembers its policy of a year ago. The result is not two, three, many revolutions but defeat after defeat.

¹ See "Storm Over the Middle East: Egypt – Military and Islamists in Power in Alliance with Marauding Imperialism," *The Internationalist*, Summer 2012.

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For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

U.S./NATO Imperialists Get Your Bloody Claws Off Syria!

JULY 9 – For the past two years, Syria has been engulfed by an upheaval that began as protest demonstrations, quickly morphed into a sectarian insurgency and became a communal civil war that is now spilling over to neighboring Lebanon and Iraq. The authoritarian regime of Bashar Assad, based on the minority Alawite population with support from other religious minorities and much of the Sunni Muslim bourgeoisie, sought to quell the unrest with hard-fisted repression, but failed. Within weeks, Islamist forces launched armed attacks. From early on, the U.S. and its regional allies have been aiding and advising the insurgents, but particularly since the regime has regained ground, pressure is building for the imperialists to escalate.

We've seen all this before. As in the lead-up to the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq, there is a hullabaloo in Washington about Syria's chemical weapons. What hypocrisy, coming from the imperialist power that has, by far, the biggest stockpile of atomic, biological and chemical weapons in the world! And which has used them: nukes on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, napalm on North Korea and Vietnam. As in the build-up to the 1998 U.S./NATO war on Yugoslavia, the Syrian government is accused of massacres and torture. What about U.S. electro-shock torture and

waterboarding at Guantánamo, Abu Ghraib and Bagram AFB in Afghanistan?

For that matter, what about the CIA and Pentagon program of selective assassination by drones, in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen and elsewhere, which has murdered upwards of 5,000 people, including 200 children in Pakistan alone, all approved by Barack Obama? Meanwhile, U.S.-backed "rebels" behead Syrian soldiers, eat their internal organs on video, vow to slaughter Alawite "apostates" after driving tens of thousands of Alawite, Christian and Shiite Syrians from their homes, and the U.S., U.N., NATO justify their imperialist sanctions and threats of bombing with accusations of "ethnic cleansing"!

Two months ago, the United States and its European NATO imperialist allies were pushing for a "Geneva 2" conference together with Russia to negotiate a "political settlement" to the conflict. The Syrian government has agreed to attend, the fractious insurgents have not, and are mired in internecine squabbling with competing coalitions vying for leadership. Lately, as the Assad regime has steadily driven the Islamic insurgents out of Qusayr, Homs, Dara'a and Damascus suburbs, the West has cooled on a conference.

But what "political solution" is possible? Since the armed opposition rejected the call of the first Geneva Conference on Syria in June

RS spokesmen insist that the current struggle is not one of secularism versus Islamism. It's certainly true that the mass opposition to Morsi reflected broad social discontent with the capitalist policies of the Muslim Brotherhood in office. But this argument is partly to justify the RS' policy in recent years of seeking to make political blocs with the Islamists. In fact, those who would impose an Islamic caliphate and enact sharia law are mortal enemies of socialism. Marxists fight for absolute separation of church and state and oppose all religion-based states, from Zionist Israel to the Islamic Republic of Iran or the Christian states of Pétain's France or Franco's Spain. But Trotskyists also reject political alliances with bourgeois secular liberals such as ElBaradei, and of course with the military officer corps, all of whom would slaughter communists and workers with alacrity if necessary to protect capitalist class rule.

The fight for socialist revolution begins with a struggle for working-class independence from the bourgeoisie. The different varieties of pseudo-socialists on the other hand, as the Egyptian RS has shown, are constantly looking for class collaboration with a section of the bourgeois rulers. Now that Morsi has been ousted, leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood have called for an "uprising," keeping up agitation in the towns while mobilizing in their rural strongholds. As the generals were taking over, a Leninist-Trotskyist nucleus seeking to build a revolutionary workers party would have joined demonstrations against military rule with its own class slogans. But as a war of attrition has set in between Islamists and military-allied liberals, Bolsheviks would oppose both gangs of capitalist exploiters.

Some Western strategists are wringing their hands, worried that the ouster of Morsi and the Brotherhood will undercut the "moderate" Islamists with whom they sought to ally, notably in Syria. Already *jihadi* forces are active in the Sinai. But the imperialists are perfectly prepared to ally with extreme Islamists, as they did with the Afghan *mujahedin* against the Soviet-backed regime in Kabul, who were also hailed by the anti-Soviet Cliffites who labeled the USSR "state capitalist." Revolutionary Trotskyists, in contrast, defended the bureaucratically degenerated Stalinist-ruled Soviet Union against imperialism and counterrevolution, and proclaimed "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" Today when opportunist leftists hail a mythical "Syrian Revolution" while Islamist forces fighting the Assad regime are begging for Western arms, we say: "U.S./NATO Get Your Bloody Claws Off Syria!"

It is possible that an "Algerian scenario" could develop in Egypt. When the Algerian army canceled the 1992 elections out of fear of an Islamist victory, years of brutal civil war ensued, with tens of thousands dead. In that case, both the army and the Islamists terrorized the population, taking particular aim at communists, workers, ethnic minorities and women who refused to wear the Islamic veil. Many fled into exile, as Coptic Christians are already doing today in Egypt. But it is also possible that the Egyptian workers will find their class voice and finally sweep away all branches of the capitalist rulers and their military. For that to happen it is vital to begin building a Bolshevik proletarian vanguard fighting for workers to power, in this cradle of civilization and throughout the world. ■

2012 to end the violence and hold general elections, and since their demand (and that of the imperialists and their Gulf allies) is for the destruction of the Assad regime, which substantial sections of the Syrian population back, if only for self-preservation, the diplomatic horse-trading will be one more dead-end.

Then the issue will be posed starkly of whether Washington and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization imperialist allies will unleash their murder machine as they did in Libya. That would change the character of the conflict from inter-communal fighting to a battle against U.S./NATO intervention. The scale of the slaughter would mount sharply. Many Syrians who have so far sat the war out would side with the government, fearing the destruction of the country. And any genuinely revolutionary Marxist, while giving no political support to the Assad regime, would stand foursquare for the military *defense of Syria against imperialist aggression*.

The unrest in Syria was sparked by the January-February 2011 uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt which became known as the "Arab Spring." U.S. imperialism was caught off-guard as its leading regional "assets" were toppled, yet it quickly recovered and seized upon an armed uprising in Libya to eliminate the erratic Qaddafi with NATO firepower. U.S. president Barack Obama patted himself on the back for having achieved success without putting American "boots on the ground," while Libya was devastated, and is now beset by warring Islamist gangs.

But Libya was essentially a one-man dictatorship, while the Assad regime has substantial political and military backing of sectors that vow to fight to the end, fearing rightly that they would fall victim to victorious Islamist insurgents. A rebel "victory" due to imperialist arms in Syria, even if possible, would lead to indiscriminate slaughter of Alawite, Shiite, Christian and other ethnic-religious minority groups and likely unleash years of communal warfare like the Lebanese civil war of 1975-1990. More probable is the splintering of the country with the leaders of the more than 80 different insurgent militias becoming regional warlords. And in any case, it could set off a regional war involving Israel and Iran. Already the fighting has spilled into Lebanon, where Sunni Islamists have attacked Shiite areas. Zionist Israel has twice bombed Syrian government installations.

In mid-June after a White House review, the U.S. let it be known that it would directly supply arms to Syrian rebels, instead of indirectly as it now does through Qatar and Saudi Arabia via Jordan and Turkey, though only enough to keep the Islamic insurgency alive. But even heavier arms would have little military impact except for surface-to-air missiles which Washington is reluctant to supply as they would surely end up in the hands of hard-line Islamists linked to Al Qaeda.

The U.S. government has been split over how heavily to intervene, as it has been since the start of the fighting in mid-2011. Official Washington, Democrats and Republicans alike, would like to strike at Syria in order

to land a blow against its backers in Iran, the nemesis of U.S. ally Israel. While gung-ho Republicans like John McCain, who recently snuck into rebel territory in northern Syria where he hobnobbed with Al Qaeda-linked *ihadis*, and Democratic warhawks like Hillary Clinton want to go all the way, Barack Obama hesitates for fear that an insurgent victory could turn into a quagmire, or worse.

Meanwhile, the mass media have kept up a barrage of hysterical warmongering pro-rebel coverage of the civil war in Syria. Liberals and conservatives alike clamor for Western intervention in the name of protecting human rights. Sensationalist and outright lying articles simply repeat what the insurgents' Saudi-funded media operation feeds them via Skype. It reeks of the "yellow journalism" of the Hearst press hailing Cuban rebels while pushing for (and in 1898 getting) a U.S. invasion to "free Cuba" from Spanish colonialism. The *New York Times* on Syria today is as credible as Hitler's *Völkischer Beobachter* on alleged Polish massacres of ethnic Germans in 1939, preparing the way for the Wehrmacht to launch World War II.

Reflecting the imperialist propaganda is a host of leftist camp followers supporting the Islamist gangs in the name of a supposed "Syrian Revolution" that exists mainly in their heads and in the Internet blogosphere. The same social democrats¹ pulled the same deception in Libya, calling to support pro-imperialist rebels portrayed as the "Libyan Revolution" – a total invention – while claiming to oppose NATO intervention. In Syria, there were initial largely secular mass anti-government demonstrations, but they were soon eclipsed by and subordinated to the armed Islamists. With their sweet talk of (bourgeois) "democracy," *these reformist leftists are acting as cat's paws for Islamist butchers and imperialist intervention*.

The stark fact is, as the *New York Times* (27 April) reported in one of its few half-way objective articles, "Nowhere in rebel-controlled Syria is there a secular fighting force to speak of." This is confirmed by a number of detailed studies of the armed Syrian opposition by imperialist think tanks (see the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, *Syria's salafi insurgents: The rise of the Syrian Islamic Front* [March 2013]). Moreover, all of the insurgents have engaged in indiscriminate attacks, from car bombs in minority neighborhoods of Damascus to the mass expulsion of minority populations. The occasional protests by secular oppositionists at universities carry no military weight, and to the extent that they are linked to or support the Islamist opposition are reactionary politically.

The key to cutting through the Gordian knot of the Syrian civil war is the mobilization of the working class throughout the region, particularly the millions-strong Turkish

¹ In the U.S.: International Socialist Organization, Socialist Action, Socialist Alternative and others; in Britain, the Socialist Workers Party and Socialist Party; in France, the Nouveau Parti Anticapitaliste; in Brazil, the Partido Socialista dos Trabalhadores Unificado. And many others.

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We Don't Beg, We Demand: *Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!*

No to the Anti-Immigrant "Immigration Reform"

JULY 1 – On June 27, the United States Senate approved S. 744, the bipartisan bill touted as “comprehensive immigration reform” and a “path to citizenship” for the officially estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants living in the U.S., two-thirds of whom have lived here for more than a decade. Democratic president Barack Obama, “mainstream” media and politicians hailed this as a victory for immigrants. *This is a lie. The Senate bill is itself a vicious piece of anti-immigrant, police-state legislation which will not provide a means of achieving citizenship for the majority of undocumented immigrant working people.*

Instead S. 744 would turn the Mexican border into a militarized war zone, institute a “guest worker” program amounting to indentured servitude, throw immigrant workers out of jobs, impose employment requirements leading to a national identification card for everyone, and make possible many millions more deportations than Obama has already carried out. Any serious defender of immigrant rights, democratic rights or labor rights should *oppose the racist “Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act”* whose purpose is to defend capitalists’ “right” to exploit workers without rights.

Democrats and Republicans, representatives of capital, are enemies of immigrants and workers. They will not approve an immigration reform providing full and equal rights for the millions of workers who produce super-profits for the bosses, who harvest the food, staff the restaurants, build the buildings and do the hardest and dirtiest work for which they receive poverty pay, often below the minimum wage. The Internationalist Group demands: **Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!** Instead of begging the capitalist parties, immigrants must use their power as workers together with their U.S.-born sisters and brothers: without immigrant labor, the U.S. economy would grind to a halt.

Now attention turns to the House of Representatives where rabid right-wing Republicans are whipping up an anti-immigrant frenzy, declaring more than 11 million people criminals:

- HR 2778, the so-called SAFE Act, calls for jailing any undocumented immigrant, although being in the U.S. without stipulated papers is only a civil violation; would make local police immigration cops; and would imprison anyone suspected of being an “alien gang member.”
- HR 1773, the “Agricultural Guestworker Act,” would revive the infamous *bracero* program of the 1940s-’60s, driving down wages and throwing 1 million undocumented farm workers out of their jobs.
- HR 2217, already passed by the House, would put stop to Obama’s deportation deferral program for young immigrants; if enacted, the youths and their parents

The Big Swindle

who handed in documentation would be tops on the lists to be expelled from the U.S.

Cruel as the immigrant-bashing House Republicans are, the Senate “immigration reform” bill approved by all 51 Democratic Senators is just as horrendous. The Hoeven-Corker amendment, added at the last minute to attract additional Republican votes, would double the Border Patrol to almost 40,000 agents (ten times the number in 1993, before Democrat Clinton doubled it in size). Altogether, the “border security” and policing sections of the Senate bill would cost \$46 billion, when Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) already have a bigger budget than all other federal government police agencies (FBI, DEA, ATF, Secret Service, U.S. Marshals) combined.

We have repeatedly warned that the Democrats’ talk of immigration “reform” was a cruel hoax (see “Obama’s “Bipartisan” Immigration Reform Is A Fraud,” *The Internationalist*, March-April 2013). Obama has already deported over 2 million immigrants, far more than any other U.S. president (see “The Empty Election Promises of “Mr. Deportations” Obama,” *The Internationalist*, Summer 2012). Yet he was reelected with over 70 percent of the Latino vote, as many were hoping against hope that he would come through for immigrants in his second term. But the bi-partisan Senate bill Obama is supporting is a monster.

The 1198-page Senate bill 744 includes:

- building an additional 700 miles of fence (on top of the existing 650 miles) along the 2,000-mile Mexican border and spending \$3.6 billion for drones and other surveillance technology;
- hiring 20,000 more Border Patrol agents, who have shot and killed at least 15 immigrants and Mexicans on the other side of the border, without a single one being charged;
- speeding up criminal prosecution and expulsion of border crossers with mass hearings;
- requiring *all* workers in the U.S. (currently over 156 million) to have their employment eligibility checked by the error-ridden E-Verify system;
- bringing in up to 180,000 high-skilled workers and 200,000 low-skilled “guest workers” a year as indentured servants, beholden to their employer, to drive down U.S. wages;
- eliminating family-based visas and replacing them with 250,000 “merit” visas for immigrants with higher education, with preferences for entrepreneurs, nannies and Tibetan refugees;
- requiring immigrants seeking residency

to fill out applications with detailed personal data, submit to background checks and biometric screening, pay \$2,000 *per person* in fines and fees, all back taxes and an additional fee covering all costs of processing and checking;

- keeping them in limbo for *ten years* under “provisional” or probationary status, during which they may not be jobless for more than 60 days at a time and must have income at least 25% above the official poverty level in each year;
- requiring “90 percent effectiveness” of control of the Mexican border according to criteria from a Southern Border Security Commission including border state governors before any provisional immigrants are granted permanent resident status;
- then *if* they are granted permanent residency, which is not guaranteed, waiting another three years to become naturalized citizens. If turned down, they will be “removed.”

The whole procedure is so convoluted, drawn out and filled with traps that it is estimated that *between 4 million and 6 million out of 11 million undocumented immigrants will not be legalized at all.* Anyone whose name appears on the notoriously inaccurate police “gang databases” is out. Construction workers and others in seasonal occupations won’t make it. You’re a single mom with two kids who earned less than \$19,500 in 2013 (\$9.75/hr., 40 hours/wk., 50 weeks/yr)? You lose. Paid off the books? No way. Do the math – for most undocumented workers, particularly the millions who slave for long hours for sweatshop wages, it doesn’t add up.

Promoting Corporate Profits, Not Immigrant Rights

S. 744 is not a “comprehensive immigration reform” bill to grant equal rights to the millions of foreign-born working people who are subject to racist persecution even as they play a key role in the U.S. economy. It is *legislation for repression*, for “border security,” for making the U.S. “strong, economically, militarily,” giving the capitalists an increased, regulated, supply of cheap labor, and providing police with information about millions of residents for whom they have no records. *For millions of hard-working low-wage workers, it’s no “path to citizenship,” it’s a maze leading to accelerated deportation.* Because ICE will now know where to find you.

Meanwhile, defense contractors “are slaving over immigration reform as the best thing for their bottom lines since Iraq” (*New York Times*, 9 June). Raytheon, General Dynamics, and Lockheed Martin (cameras, radar), Northrup Grumman (tracking sensors), and General Atomics (drones) are eagerly lobbying for their slice of border security bucks. Senator Patrick Leahy (D., Vermont, noted that the border build-up “reads like a Christmas wish list for Halliburton,” whose KBR construction subsidiary built the Guantánamo prison complex. And let’s not forget the for-profit private prison industry which has profited greatly from immigrant concentration camps.

In spite of all this, the Spanish-language media cheered. For *La Opinión* in Los Angeles, immigration reform was “Past the First Hurdle.” For *El Diario-La Prensa* in New York, “The Senate Came Through.” Latino politicians cheered: Congressman Luis Gutierrez (D., Illinois) proclaimed it a victory, calling to step up pressure on the Republican-led House. Immigrant rights groups linked to the Democratic Party, such as the New York Immigration Coalition, claimed the bill “brings the country one step closer to a path to citizenship,” while expressing “concerns.” Hispanic political



Senate immigration “reform” calls for massive border militarization, doubling size of Border Patrol (above, near San Diego, March 2013) to 40,000 agents.

Mike Blake/Reuters

The Internationalist



Internationalist contingent in May Day 2013 march in New York City.

lobbies like LULAC and MAPA waved the American flag.

But for many immigrant rights groups, the Hoeven-Corker amendment doubling the size of the Border Patrol was the final straw. Presente.org said that the amendment “marks a definitive line in the sand” and “we will not take more ‘border first’ approach to immigration reform.” The Immigrant Solidarity Network reported widespread alarm. Catherine Tactaquin of the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights declared, “This is not the kind of legislation and deal-making that we can support.” NIRR board member Hamid Khan said the Senate bill served the “surveillance industrial complex” and amounted to “legitimization of the police state.”

In wooing Republicans, the Democrats risk losing immigrants. Monami Maulik of Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM) representing South Asian immigrants in New York said this is “using immigration as an excuse to further a national security state,” to “set the stage for a national ID system and database.” Gerald Lenoir of the Black Alliance for Just Immigration said it “attempts to codify repression on the border,” and “will disqualify millions of low income undocumented immigrants” from legalization. Longtime labor organizer Bill Chandler of the Mississippi Immigrants Rights Alliance said the bill was “a benefit for employers, not workers.”

Particularly affected are those in border communities who are already living under the boot of the militarized police of the Border Patrol. The *Coalición de Derechos Humanos* (Human Rights Coalition) and 14 other Tucson-area groups declared that 20 years of “enforcement first” immigration policy are “directly responsible for the more than 2,500 men, women and children who have died in the Arizona desert.” They asked pointedly:

“At what cost will we continue to make concessions? Thousands more border deaths? Our communities turned into a war zone or a police state?... This price is too high to pay and we ask our allies and supporters to join us in denouncing this ‘compromise’ and demanding that the Senate begin again on a genuine reform effort, one that doesn’t play politics with our lives.”

But however angry their rhetoric, their whole purpose is to pressure the Democrats. The reality is that, like liberals and labor bureaucrats, the immigrants rights lobbies have nowhere else to go so long they confine their struggle to the limits of capitalism.

Left Caught in Obama’s Immigration “Reform” Trap

The same is true of most of the supposedly socialist left, which habitually tails after the various non-profits, NGOs and churches that speak in the name of immigrants. The most “moderate” leftists outright support the bipartisan “immigration reform.” Thus the star-spangled Communist Party USA – which voted for Obama – quotes “the president” at length and hails union tops pushing the Senate bill, including their calls for “safe and secure borders” (*People’s World*, 22 June). To “defeat right-wing extremists,” CPUSA leader Sam Webb calls for an “expansive coalition” not only with Democrats but “even some moderate Republicans.”

For its part, the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) published an article headlined “The reform: some relief, while serving corporate interests” (*Liberation*, 8 May 2013). While throwing in a few criticism of the Democrats, it claims that, “The bill ... would, in its present form, provide considerable relief to immigrant communities that have been struggling for years for legalization.” In fact, the Senate reform” bill will *victimize* immigrant communities. While touting its own imaginary “Immigrant Justice Act of 2013,” the PSL argues that “the movement must grow stronger and make Congress shake to attain the reform that immigrants need.”

Of course, PSLers know perfectly well that Congress, representing the interests of capital, will not legislate “the reform that immigrants need.” But this is in line with their response to the 2008 election of Democrat Obama, when the PSL wrote: “What is needed is a clear program focused on what the new administration should do to meet the needs of the working people; to fulfill the expectations its campaign has created” (*Liberation*, 21 November 2008). The stock-in-trade of these Stalinist reformists is “militant” lobbying within the framework of capitalist electoral politics, cynically playing on the masses’ false expectations instead of telling the truth.

The PSL’s former comrades in the Workers World Party (WWP) take a somewhat more critical stance this time around, headlining “Immigration ‘reform’ exposed” (*Workers World*, 2 May 2013). The article rails against those who would criticize “sit-ins, occupations and strikes” as “far-fetched or ultra-left.” Rhetorical flourishes aside, the article only calls for a vague “legalization.” But slave-labor “guest worker” programs are “legalization,” too. And naturally, it does not call for a break with the Democratic Party. Since the days it was led by Sam Marcy, the

WWP’s trademark has been building “left” demonstrations for liberal Democrats.

Opportunism, not ultra-leftism (the pathology of radicals who abstain from intervention in working-class struggle), is Workers World’s hallmark. Far from leading militant class action for immigrant rights, WWP’s idea of labor action is hobnobbing with union bureaucrats as in the New York May 1 Coalition. And like its fellow Marcyites of the PSL, *Workers World* (13 November 2008) proclaimed, “Millions in streets seal Obama victory,” saying that “Such an outpouring of the masses, particularly oppressed people of color, warrants the full solidarity of the movement.” Yet once in office, Obama began deporting immigrants with a vengeance.

From the cynical to the delusional: on immigration, as elsewhere, the opportunist left’s appeals to mass illusions give the impression of a sort of senile naiveté. Endless imperialist war and the accompanying racist repression “at home” are making life hell for millions of undocumented immigrants in this country while shredding everyone’s rights. Yet on May Day 2013, *Workers Voice*, published by followers of the late pseudo-Trotskyist adventurer Nahuel Moreno, put out a leaflet headlined “Obama’s Immigration Reform: Is the ‘American Dream’ about to come True?” Hello?! What planet are they living on?

Meanwhile, the International Socialist Organization’s *Socialist Worker* (17 June 2013) promises to explain “what you need to know about immigration ‘reform.’” The article gives a lengthy list of what’s wrong with S. 744, saying it’s “not a genuine – or even partial – reform.” True enough. But its conclusion is to call to “re-activate immigrant rights mobilization” and for “an immigrant rights-based social movement to push the process forward, toward a more just and humane resolution.” Yet more marches are not going to sway immigrant-bashing reactionaries and a government intent on bolstering militarization and corporate profits.

Beyond that one has to ask what deactivated immigrant rights struggles in the first place. The answer is obvious: the false hopes awakened by Democrat Obama’s 2008 election campaign directed energy away from the streets to the ballot box. And for that, the ISO, like most of the pseudo-socialist left, has a lot to answer for, having plastered the front pages of its magazine with portraits of Obama and slogans “Yes we can! ¡Sí se puede!” Yet even when millions of immigrants and immigrant rights supporters were in the streets in 2006, their leaders were aiming at pressuring the capitalist politicians, not

exercising immigrant workers’ power.

Finally there is a centrist group, the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP), which with a large dose of historical amnesia falsely tries to pass itself off as Trotskyist. The LRP rightly criticizes the mainstream reformists for their vague slogans like “legalization.” But what is the LRP’s alternative? It pointedly does *not* call for full citizenship rights for all immigrants, and instead calls for “Amnesty for All Immigrants” (*LRP Bulletin*, Summer 2013). Yet *amnesty* is a call for pardon for having committed a crime – and *undocumented immigrants are not criminals*. As a young immigrant wrote the LRP:

“Amnesty is to grant forgiveness, a political pardon. If I were to demand Amnesty then I would have accepted the same line of thought that the racists who claim I am a criminal. I am no criminal and therefore I do not need to demand forgiveness or amnesty from the racist capitalists, but rather *I demand full citizenship rights*.”

With its demand of “amnesty,” the LRP is not only adopting the terminology of the right-wing immigrant bashers, it places itself to the right of the U.S. Supreme Court, which recognizes that living or working in the U.S. without requisite papers is *not a crime*, and at most a civil violation. But one has to ask why on earth a left-wing self-proclaimed socialist group would raise such a demeaning slogan in the first place. The answer is that the LRP took it up back in 2006 along with all the other opportunists because this was the line being put forward by the bourgeois immigrant rights groups they were all chasing after, who in turn were tailing the Democrats.

While the opportunists traffic in *class collaboration*, fostering vain hopes of reforming capitalism, Marxists put forward a program of *class struggle* leading to socialist revolution. On marches, Internationalist contingents chant “We don’t beg, we demand: **full citizenship rights for all immigrants!**” In addition, the Internationalist Group puts forward and seeks to implement a program of class struggle by immigrant and U.S.-born workers, calling for **labor/immigrant mobilizations against racist attacks and raids; to unionize immigrant workers; to defeat U.S. imperialism** in its wars, to break with the Democrats and **forge a revolutionary workers party**.

In recent years, millions of immigrant working people marched in the streets, walked off the job and brought May Day back to the United States demanding equal rights. Immigrants have been in the forefront of union struggles against poverty wages and mass firings. Yet the present immigration *anti-reform* is not a response to their demands, but rather a continuation of the assault on immigrants by the capitalists who super-exploit their labor and the capitalist politicians who promote xenophobic reaction. Instead of pandering to the racist “safe borders” hysteria, *there should be mass protests against the anti-immigrant “immigration reform.”*

Whether S. 744 or any other immigration legislation passes Congress (which is far from certain), it will be bad for immigrants *and it won’t stop “illegal” immigration*, which is driven by people fleeing desperate poverty and the insatiable appetite of capital for cheap labor. Nor is this problem limited to the United States. Across the globe, huge migrations of labor are underway. For the tens of millions immigrant workers and their families to achieve equal rights and genuine social equality will require nothing less than the expropriation of capital and smashing the imperialist system by **international socialist revolution**. ■

Mobilize Portland/Vancouver Labor – Stop the Lockout, Scabs Out! For International Labor Solidarity – Defend the ILWU, Defeat the Grain Cartel

PORTLAND, Oregon, May 20 – The international grain traders are on a union-busting tear. At the end of February, United Grain in Vancouver, Washington locked out Local 4 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU). The bosses are now operating the terminal with scab labor and armed guards supplied by J.R. Gettier Associates, a Delaware-based professional strikebreaking outfit. Then on May 4, Columbia Grain in Portland, Oregon locked out ILWU Local 8, using the same scabherders. They must be stopped, and labor solidarity action is key.

This is make-or-break time for the West Coast longshore union. The grain monopolists want more than givebacks – they're out for blood, and if they can, to destroy the ILWU. This is no time to "go it alone." Patriotic appeals to support American bosses against "foreign" – and more specifically Japanese-owned – companies are poison. They are directly counterposed to what's urgently needed: international labor action *together with Japanese unions*. It is necessary to mobilize labor's *power to defeat* the profit-crazed grain monopoly.

The assault on the ILWU in the Pacific Northwest began with the construction of the Export Grain Terminal in Longview, Washington by industry giant Bunge together with Japanese and Korean shippers, which the consortium sought to staff with non-ILWU and non-union labor. There was a year of protests, including the "storming" of the EGT facility by hundreds of longshore workers and supporters. But in February 2012 union leaders signed a concessionary contract, with 12-hour days and a company hire list effectively bypassing the union hiring hall.

From the outset, we warned that the "significant concessions" by the union leadership "could set the stage for future battles as other shippers demand similar terms" ("Longview: EGT Union-Busting Beaten Back, At a Cost," *The Internationalist*, February 2012). When the contract terms became known, ILWU militants called it "the worst concessionary contract ever" warning, "The effects ... will be seen in the upcoming September Grainhandlers' negotiations" ("Longview: Snatching Defeat from the Jaws of Victory," *Maritime Worker Monitor*, 14 March 2012).

Although the union tops, reformist leftists and Occupy activists trumpeted the "victory" at Longview, the leadership never let the ILWU Local 21 membership in Longview vote on the contract. And sure enough, when Northwest Grain negotiations came up, the bosses demanded EGT-like concessions, in the name of "avoiding extreme competitive disparities among Northwest grain shippers" (*The Oregonian*, 10 September 2012). When the ILWU balked, the bosses imposed their terms. And at the least resistance, they locked the union workers out.

In justifying the lockout, Columbia Grain accused the ILWU workers of "slowdowns, work-to-rule" and inspections of equipment that is supposed to be frequently checked to ensure worker safety. The Northwest Grainhandlers Association



Longshore Local 8 members in Portland, Oregon picket against lockout by Columbia Grain, May 8.

Flag-Waving Is Ticket for Defeat – Join with Japanese Unions

(NWGA) demanded "concessions to match employer-friendly working conditions at competing terminals in Longview and Kalamazoo, Wash.," and complained of "union perks" and "featherbedding" which were supposedly "threatening the survival of their terminals" in this "low-margin business" (*The Oregonian*, 5 May).

Naturally, the business press repeats these lies, railing against greedy, lazy, overpaid union workers endangering the "struggling" grain companies. Poor babies. In fact, the shippers are fabulously profitable international conglomerates which exert monopoly control to jack up grain prices globally. They have been repeatedly cited, fined and prosecuted for rampant safety violations, price-fixing and tax evasion. And this "corporate concentration" has been noted by Oxfam and other establishment famine relief groups as "a root cause of hunger and poverty."

In the face of the concerted union-busting drive, dock unions should have undertaken strike action beginning last September, when the grain handlers presented their list of non-negotiable giveback demands. The ILWU on the West Coast could have hooked up with the International Longshoremen's Association on the East and Gulf Coasts (whose contracts were also up for negotiation) to threaten, and if necessary carry out, a nationwide dock strike. But they sat on their hands, in part because they didn't want to jeopardize the reelection of Democrat Obama.

Then, when the NWGA imposed its terms in December (after their "offer" was voted down by 94 percent of ILWU members in the affected ports), pickets should have gone up all along the West Coast. With the ILA contract due on January 1, the pressure on the maritime employers and the bosses' government would have been immense. But once again, the ILWU

leadership did nothing, telling the ranks to take no action and work as ordered under the imposed terms, which included 12-hour days and the elimination of clerk jobs.

The policy of the ILWU leadership was to negotiate a contract with Temco (terminals in Tacoma, Washington and Portland) and then get the other companies in the NWGA to agree to it. But when the Temco agreement was unveiled in late February it was almost as bad as the imposed terms (and the EGT contract), giving up a host of union gains won through hard struggle in the past. While the leadership got the other locals to approve it, Local 8 in Portland, the largest grain port on the West Coast, voted "no."

The day after the Temco agreement was ratified, United Grain in Vancouver locked out its ILWU workforce, with the transparent pretext of alleged "sabotage" by union officials that supposedly occurred two months earlier. The response of the union leadership boiled down to filing a raft of grievances with the National Labor Relations Board. It abided by a court injunction limiting the number of pickets, under heavy police presence, while rejecting offers by other ILWU locals to picket. And it unleashed a stream of Japan-bashing propaganda.

In response to the lockout, the Internationalist Group in Portland put out a leaflet saying:

"From the moment the union-busting contract was imposed, there should have been *mass pickets shutting down all the terminals of the grain monopolies*, with the threat to *close every port on the West Coast* – as well as East and Gulf Coast ports – if there was any attempt to operate with scabs. Now that this has happened, a call should go out from the union for *dock workers everywhere to refuse to unload the scab cargo*. All Mitsui cargo ships must be treated as strikebreakers

and union-busters!"

–see *The Internationalist* No. 34, March-April 2013

We stressed that "flag-waving has no place in the workers movement, and will get the union nowhere." But the response of the ILWU bureaucracy has been precisely to wrap itself in the Stars and Stripes and attack "Japanese corporations," while hailing "Mitsui's American competitor, TEMCO." This was the theme of a March 8 ILWU rally in Vancouver, which instead of heading to the docks instead took a copy of the Temco contract to United Grain HQ.

A bulletin put out by the ILWU leadership following the United Grain/Mitsui lockout was headlined "Japanese Grain Lockouts Hurt NW Economy." This has now been updated to include "Marubeni, owner of Columbia Grain in Portland." The flyer complained that "Mitsui and Marubeni demanded *hundreds* of changes" in the contract in force since 1934, and accused them of "aggressive attempt to undermine American jobs." It concluded by praising the "win-win agreement" and "safe and fair contract" with "American-based TEMCO."

This outrageous support for "American" bosses goes against decades of ILWU support for *international* labor solidarity. It is also self-defeating for a union engaged almost exclusively in international trade. How would the ILWU tops like it if Korean and Japanese unions attacked "American beef" (as some misguidedly have) which is loaded by ILWU longshore workers? Locked-out workers at United Grain and Columbia Grain need support action by Japanese unions and waterfront/maritime unions everywhere.

And, in fact, on March 15, Tokyo-area rail workers of the Doro-Chiba union demonstrated in solidarity with the ILWU outside the Mitsui headquarters. They held a banner declaring, "Mitsui, United Grain: Stop Union-Busting! Stop TPP!" (the Trans-Pacific Partnership to create a giant imperialist "free-trade" area). Doro-Chiba has previously shown internationalist solidarity,

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supporting the ILWU's May Day 2008 strike against the Iraq and Afghanistan wars and inviting Local 21 president Dan Coffman to speak at a November 2011 Tokyo rally during the EGT fight.

The longshore workers of Local 4 (Vancouver) and Local 8 (Portland) have their backs to the wall. They want to fight against the union-busting. They're out there picketing, managers and scabs drive right into the picket line, and the cops arrest the picketers! What's needed is to build picket lines so big and militant that no one dares cross. What's needed is to hit the shipping bosses up and down the coast. What's needed is for Japanese and American workers to join in struggle against their bosses. The Japan-bashing promoted by the leadership hurts that fight.

Not only does the ILWU leaders' nationalist appeal undercut international labor solidarity, its praise for American capitalists is 100% wrong. In the first place, the Temco contract is hardly "win-win," it is a win for the bosses and a huge loss for the workers, ripping up decades of union gains. Secondly, it wasn't just Mitsui and Marubeni that demanded hundreds of givebacks, it was the entire Northwest Grainhandlers Association. And third, the main owner of Temco, Cargill, is one of the *worst* U.S. corporations for safety and labor relations.

Back in 1972 Cargill tried to get out of hiring ILWU ship clerks in the ports of San Francisco and Sacramento. ILWU Local 34, representing clerks in the S.F. Bay Area, set up a picket line which other ILWUers refused to cross, and forced Cargill to respect its contractual obligation. Now, the current ILWU leadership is giving Cargill/Temco everything they wanted in '72, and a whole lot more. Cargill is also notorious for dangerous working conditions. Some recent cases:

- In November 2012, OSHA (the Occupational Safety and Health Administration) slapped a fine on Cargill for repeated safety violations at a Beardstown, Illinois pork processing plant.
- In August 2012, a worker was killed in a fall at a Cargill soybean processing plant in Bloomington, Illinois.

This is the company that is being held up as the example of "good" bosses. No way.

Port workers in Portland, Vancouver and throughout the Pacific Northwest are facing a powerful and ruthless enemy in the *international* grain trade cartel. The so-called "ABCD" companies (Archer Daniels Midland, Bunge, Cargill and Dreyfus) control "between 75% and 90% of the global grain trade" (London *Guardian*, 2 June 2011). They have deep pockets (ADM revenues, \$89 billion in 2012; Bunge, \$58 billion in 2011; Cargill, \$134 billion in 2012; Dreyfus, \$46 billion in 2010). Cargill is the largest privately held company in the U.S.

The Japanese conglomerates Mitsui (United Grain), Marubeni (Columbia Grain) and Itochu (part of the EGT consortium) are latecomers to the grain cartel. They are no doubt seeking competitive advantage by lowering labor costs and busting unions, as well as increasing productivity with more modern facilities at EGT. But they are backed to the hilt by U.S.-owned Cargill, which in 2011 loaded grain that would have gone to the scab EGT facility. The Temco "deal" is only an interim contract, to be replaced by whatever the other shippers agree to.

And, of course, the armed and dangerous scabherders of J.R. Gettier – modern-

day Pinkertons – are very American-owned.

Judging by its statements, the ILWU bureaucracy had a plan of sorts, but one doomed to fail. The idea was to give the grain shippers most of what they wanted in terms of givebacks, in return for ILWU jurisdiction. When the concessionary EGT contract was announced, Coast Committeeman Leal Sundet was quoted in the ILWU *Dispatcher* (January 2012) saying:

"The ILWU contract with EGT is key to standardization of the grain export industry on the West Coast, particularly with respect to labor costs. This standardization brings stability for everyone from the farmer to the overseas importer, and it guarantees profit throughout the market chain."

Profit for the bosses, for sure. Because what Sundet was advocating is giving up hard-won gains in the Northwest grain contract in the name of "standardization of labor costs." Meaning what?

Let's see: the EGT contract includes 12-hour and even 13-hour shifts; exempts EGT from the port requirement to hire from the ILWU; gives up ILWU presence in the control room; gives up ship clerks' jobs; permits managers, subcontractors or any kind of scabs to replace ILWU workers during any work stoppage, authorized or not; lets EGT establish its own list of "pre-approved employees" who can be removed at any time, at its "sole discretion," by-passing the hiring hall; and promises to rewrite any clause to conform to the anti-labor Taft-Hartley Law.

The supposedly "win-win" Temco "interim agreement" permits 12-hour shifts; lets the company select all steady employees and temporary replacements except utility men; and sacrifices ship clerks' jobs. Workers at the Kalama Temco facility would now be included in the contract, but at the cost of making these huge concessions on fundamental union gains. We noted before that ILWU leaders like Sundet (who used to work for the shipping bosses' Pacific Maritime Association) "think like labor contractors rather than union defenders."

But it turns out the grain bosses aren't so hot on having the ILWU act as a labor contractor. With continuing mass unemployment, they figure they can hire "replacement workers" who are desperate for a job much cheaper on the Internet (they already have ads on Craig's List). Gun thugs from Gettier Associates can keep the workers in line and the union at bay. The NGWA isn't aiming for a concessionary contract but *no contract at all*. And if they get away with it in Northwest grain, you can bet your bottom dollar that the PMA will be going for that in 2014.

The name of the game for the present ILWU leadership is *class collaboration*. Sundet is the very embodiment of the modern class collaborator: even though he's now on the union side of the table, he's still looking out for the companies' interests, touting profitability and keeping down labor costs. And International president Bob McEilrath in 2009 received an award from the Containerization and Intermodal Institute along with the president of the PMA, James McKenna, for negotiating a six-year labor pact without a strike (*Journal of Commerce*, 9 October 2009).

Far from being "win-win," class collaboration is a losing proposition for workers. The 2008 Pacific Coast Longshore Contract Document gave a green light to the massive introduction of robotics, without a bit of compensation. The PCLCD, "recognized that the introduction of new technologies,

including fully mechanized and robotic-operated marine terminals, necessarily displaces traditional longshore work and workers," only stipulating that mechanics would remain ILWU. But already ILWUers are being displaced on these jobs in Los Angeles-Long Beach.

Another example: last year a dispute erupted at the port of Portland when the ILWU went after a handful of jobs involving connecting and disconnecting reefers, work that for years had been performed by IBEW electricians. There were various ways this could have been worked out amicably by the unions, including by setting up a port workers council including all the unions (and the terribly exploited, non-unionized and largely immigrant port truckers). But instead, the ILWU tops *along with the PMA* filed suit in the bosses' courts to take the jobs from the IBEW.

Behind the present showdown over Northwest grain shipping is the fact that, as a report by Oxfam, the liberal famine relief organization, *Cereal Secrets: The world's largest grain traders and global agriculture* (August 2012) noted, "a number of the established Japanese trading companies – the *sogo shosha* such as Mitsui and Marubeni – are proposing to expand their grain trading and production operations, and ... the ABCDs may well find their dominant position being eroded."

So the union tops are targeting Japanese companies while bidding for support from its "American competitors," in defense of "America's tax dollars" and "American jobs." Rather than fighting to defend and extend existing union gains to the whole of the grain shipping industry, they are supporting the established cartel against the newbies. But the star-spangled labor bureaucracy will discover soon enough that any residual toleration by the ABCDs will quickly evaporate if the lockouts are successful. Capitalist competition will require it.

The Internationalist stands for the opposite, for sharp *class struggle* against the capitalists and their state, which has hamstringed the unions with a web of anti-labor laws. As we have said: *Playing by the bosses rules is a losing game – labor's gotta play hardball to win!* The misleaders of labor often try to scare the union ranks by claiming that any protest would violate the Taft-Hartley Act, a/k/a the "slave labor law." For years, the ILWU defied the anti-communist law that tried to ban the union hiring hall. But now the union tops hide behind it as an excuse for inaction.

Another argument that's raised against protesting the lockout is "now is not the time." But even if the showdown comes next fall, as the harvest comes in, it must be prepared by a show of force and concerted action *now*, to make clear the to grain monopolists that the union means business and *it will fight*. Longshore workers cannot take a lockout lying down: look at the fate of Liverpool dockers in England, where the union was destroyed. Backed by waterfront and maritime unions worldwide, the ILWU and all labor and supporters of workers' rights in the Lower Columbia River area should make crystal clear: *Portland is a union town, scabs must go!*

The idea of supporting "good" American bosses against "bad" Japanese bosses is nationalist garbage, and it won't work. All the members of the grain shippers monopoly are price gougers, famine-mongers and union-busters. Anyone who tells you

different is lying. The only way they can be stopped is by bringing out the concerted power of the labor movement – locally, in the Pacific Northwest, up and down the coast, nationally and internationally. Labor solidarity *action* with broad support from working people can *defeat the capitalist war on workers*.

It comes down to a question of leadership. To wage this war successfully it is necessary, throughout the labor movement, to *oust the pro-capitalist bureaucracy, break with the Democrats and build a class-struggle workers party*.

It can start in Portland. We can start it. **AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL!**

Already, seven union locals in the Portland/Vancouver area have passed resolutions pledging to "aid our sisters and brothers of ILWU Local 8 in building mass pickets at Columbia Grain at the Port of Portland, as well as rallies and other solidarity actions." This includes: ILWU Local 5; Laborers International Union Local 43; IUPAT (Painters) Local 10; UBC (Carpenters) Local 156; IATSE Local 28; SEIU Local 503 stewards council; Pipefitters Local 290. But to realize this potential solidarity, the ILWU or sections of it must take the lead. ■

Syria...

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proletariat, under revolutionary communist leadership. The recent upheaval against the repressive Islamist government of Tayyip Erdogan indicates that the potential exists. A workers mobilization would bring down the NATO Islamist Erdogan and the authoritarian Assad regime and obliterate the Islamic terrorist gangs. By uniting the toilers across arbitrary national borders, it would also overcome the divisions imposed by the imperialists in the Sykes-Picot protocol at the end of World War I. Among other things this would open the way for a united socialist Kurdistan. In the meantime, revolutionaries recognize the right of self-defense by minority communities threatened by the Sunni Islamist gangs.

The dire situation in Syria today, and throughout North Africa and the Middle East, emerged from the collapse of Stalinism and Arab nationalism, which opened the way for religious fundamentalism and sectarian/communal conflicts, often exploited by imperialism. Many leftists gave up hope of socialist revolution so long ago that they habitually tail after whatever current is popular, from Khomeini to Hezbollah to the Muslim Brotherhood. In doing so they not only betray the working masses, they prepare their own demise. Should the Syrian insurgents prevail, it would mean hideous persecution of religious minorities and women while the left would at best be marginalized and repressed, as in Egypt today, or exterminated, as in the mullahs' Iran.

To replace bonapartist "secular" regimes like Assad's and to bar the way to Islamic reaction and communal slaughter, authentic communists who adhere to the program of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks fight for workers revolution throughout the Levant, from the Mediterranean to Central Asia. The only framework in which the conflicting claims of the myriad nations, nationalities, peoples and religious minorities, from Kurds and Alawites to the Hebrew-speaking population in Palestine can be equitably resolved is a *socialist federation of the Middle East*. This is what the League for the Fourth International fights for. ■

Police State...

continued from page 1

the government was doing in its name, and how it was trampling on their rights using secret powers. For defending civil liberties and exposing their dirty tricks, U.S. rulers labeled Snowden a “traitor.”

The fact is that over the last decade, the U.S. government has put the entire country – and indeed the entire world – on a “terrorism watch list,” granting itself the right to pry into every aspect of *your* life. To be sure, this is only a further development of the longstanding drive by the rulers of the dominant imperialist power to nail down its global hegemony. And it is only one component of the capitalists’ agenda, ranging from perpetual war (the “Global War on Terror”) abroad to racist repression (“Stop and Frisk”), deportations, privatization and union-busting “at home.” But Snowden’s revelations have caused an uproar because they expose the *lies* told by the government, from the Obama White House on down, and because they affect *everyone*.

The information on the massive government snooping is so incontrovertible that even the mainstream press has begun nervously referring to the “surveillance state.” And no wonder: reporters are among its first targets. Forget about “invasion of privacy,” the secret government has eliminated it with a few keystrokes. The more liberal media talk of an “architecture of oppression.” What the recent revelations show is not only the architecture of a police state, but that the capabilities for all-pervading control by an oppressive state apparatus obeying the dictates of capital are present and fully operational. And once the capabilities exist, you can be sure that they will be used, no matter what supposed legal “safeguards” are said to exist.

So now that the existence of this massive domestic and international spying on the general population has been confirmed, the question is what will be done about it. The partner parties of American capitalism, Democrats and Republicans, have made it clear that they support the secret police apparatus to the hilt. Snowden blew the whistle on the surreptitious surveillance machine hoping to provoke a public debate, but after the initial shock over the revelations, all there has been in official Washington is howls of indignation against the whistleblower. Congressional hearings are cover-ups – like the June 18 one on “How Disclosed N.S.A. Programs Protect Americans, and Why Disclosure Aids Our Adversaries.” It’s doubtful that there will even be cosmetic reforms like there were after the Church Committee investigated the CIA in the 1970s.

The bottom line on the NSA surveillance regime is that this is not about some foam-flecked neoconservatives running amok, a Dick Cheney illegally ordering wiretaps or a Richard Nixon unleashing hit teams of “plumbers” to break into offices. It’s about U.S. imperialism making up for its declining economic and military strength by using its dominance of cyber communications to shore up its world domination. And as the marauding U.S./NATO imperialists keep provoking wars – Afghanistan, Iraq, yesterday Libya, today Syria – the ruling classes see the need to build up an apparatus for internal war. *The stark reality is, it will take nothing less than international socialist revolution to stop the global capitalist drive*



Former NSA contractor Edward Snowden released documents to the London Guardian exposing blanket U.S. government surveillance of phone calls and Internet usage. Now U.S. is charging him with espionage. Hands Off Ed Snowden! toward police state rule.

Only then will the Edward Snowdens and Bradley Mannings receive the honor and recognition they deserve for their courageous actions against the “surveillance state,” which is intent on “disappearing” them forever. Meanwhile, Manning, after being held in inhuman conditions amounting to torture, faces life imprisonment (and potentially execution) on grotesque charges of “aiding the enemy.” Snowden, too, has now been charged with violating the 1917 Espionage Act, making the seventh such prosecution of a leaker by the Obama regime. So after being holed up in Hong Kong for several weeks as he released one blockbuster revelation after another, Snowden has flown to Moscow presumably on his way to points south or west.

“Big Brother” NSA Is Watching You

After delivering the first two installments revealing the extent of U.S. government spying on the general population, Edward Snowden announced that he was the “leaker,” in full knowledge that in doing so he was putting his life in danger. He gave up a comfortable existence because “I can’t in good conscience allow the U.S. government to destroy privacy, Internet freedom and basic liberties for people around the world with this massive surveillance machine they’re secretly building.” Of the NSA’s aims he said, “they are intent on making every conversation and every form of behaviour in the world known to them” (London *Guardian*, 8 June). The description recalled George Orwell’s portrayal of a totalitarian state in his novel *1984*.

During the anti-Soviet Cold War, 1984 – with its enforced adulation of the Party and Leader, “Big Brother,” the Ministry of Truth where photos are doctored, etc. – was a staple of anti-Communist indoctrination in U.S. high schools. Yet these days the NSA-U.S.A. and its UK ally are looking more and more Orwellian. Closed-circuit TV cameras everywhere (10,000 in central London alone), ubiquitous police pens for demonstrations, police lockdown of rebellious ghettos and entire cities (Boston), and total surveillance of Internet and phones. “They quite literally can watch your ideas form as you type,” Snowden told the *Washington Post* (7 June). One pundit questioned

this, but had to admit that Google Search already does that, keystroke by keystroke.

Can the NSA read your correspondence before it is received? Under PRISM, or its official name US-984XN, you bet. Gmail and other e-mail programs do that, looking for clues to place “content-linked” advertisements. On social media, people are providing the government with all sorts of intimate details about their lives. And for all the talk by Google et al. of concern for your privacy, they’re in bed with the government. Thus the chief security officer of Yahoo recently resigned to go to work for the NSA, and Skype voluntarily set up a channel for the government to view its communications several years ago. On the other side, this “private-public partnership” has got some spy agency defenders nervous about all this outsourcing of *their* info.

On the FISA court orders to turn over phone records, NSA defenders say “it’s only metadata, not the actual content of the call.” But with data about the phone numbers, Internet addresses and other details, the government can build up quite a profile on you. “Nobody is listening to your phone calls,” Obama keeps repeating. Not unless they want to. On top of PRISM, the NSA has other programs tracking communications. In addition to MAINWAY and MARINA, which pick up phone and Internet metadata respectively, NUCLEON intercepts the content of the calls (*Washington Post*, 15 June). According to former NSA top analyst William Binney, *the agency records between 500,000 and 1 million people on their target list* (Daily Caller, 10 June).

But the phone and Internet surveillance

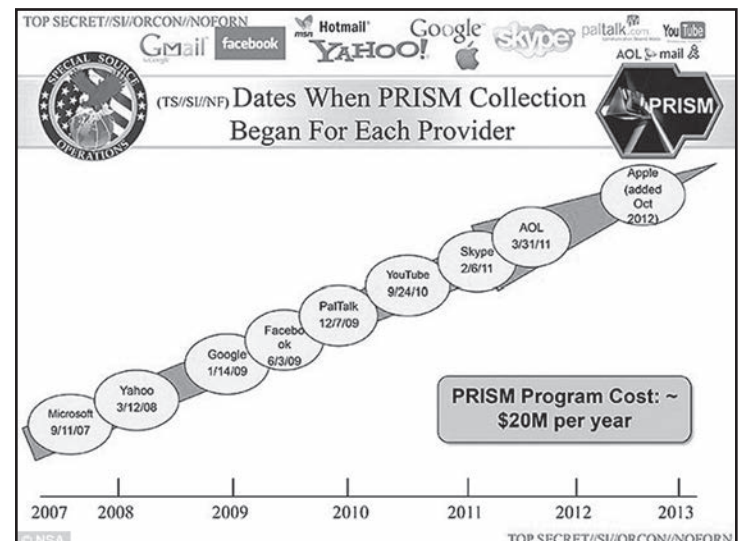
is only in order to “prevent terrorist attacks,” says Obama. Actually, not so. The latest documents released by Snowden (*Guardian*, 21 June) – of NSA “procedures” for “targeting non-United States persons” and on “acquisition” of “non-publicly available information concerning unconsenting United States persons” – show that the analysts decide what category the people they are surveiling fall into, and that they and the agency can use and disseminate such communications if they have any intelligence value, relevance to criminal activity or possibility of violence, are encrypted or have to do with cybersecurity. In other words, if it isn’t totally worthless they can keep it and use it.

Obama says the NSA’s electronic eavesdropping is governed by safeguards. Nonsense. Last year, the FISA court approved 1,856 applications from the NSA and denied none. For that matter, from 1993 to 2011, FBI internally investigated 150 shootings by its agents, including killing 70 “subjects,” and its supposedly “effective, time-tested process” found every one of them to be justified (*New York Times*, 19 June). “Self-policing” by the police is always a fraud, and in the case of spy agencies, “oversight” by Congressional panels and supervision by secret courts, following secret rules and issuing secret decisions is no different. Even if they were inclined to contest the agencies, which they aren’t, they only know the “facts” they are fed.

Moreover, as circumstances change, so can the policies. Note that the NSA procedures don’t mention “terrorism.” Nor does the FISA court order authorizing phone record dumps. The NSA data sweeps pick up absolutely everything – the reference to terrorist attacks is just the excuse for doing it. And it can be used for whatever purpose. Suppose an NSA analyst or FBI agent decided to use “metadata” to track e-mail messages from someone bothering a friend? The information is there waiting to be accessed. Can’t happen? This is exactly how a nosy FBI agent dug up evidence that Gen. David Petraeus was having an affair with his enamored biographer, leading to his resignation as head of the CIA (*Wall Street Journal*, 15 June).

So even the high and mighty can run afoul of the surveillance state. But more importantly, these gigantic databases – “the largest program of suspicionless surveillance in human history,” Snowden termed it – can be used to go after anyone on the rulers’ “enemies list.” In his videotaped interview with journalists from the *Guardian* and *Washington Post*, the former NSA systems manager worried: “a new leader will be elected, they’ll flip the switch, say that because of the crisis, because of the

PowerPoint slide showing when different Internet providers joined PRISM program enabling NSA Special Source Operations unit to gather complete user data on you.



BOSTON UNDER MARTIAL LAW

Chitose Suzuki/AP



Electronic surveillance of the general population is part of broader drive toward police-state repression. Above: SWAT team patrolling in Watertown, Massachusetts. April 15 Boston Marathon bombing gave the government the opportunity to place an entire metropolitan area under martial law.

dangers that we face in the world, you know, some new and unpredicted threat, we need more authority, we need more power, and there will be nothing the people can do at that point to oppose it" (Democracy Now, 10 June).

Various commentators have speculated about what a Vice President Dick Cheney would do with this material at their fingertips. That is certainly scary, but only reveals continuing illusions about the present Democratic Obama administration. The MAINWAY phone record dumps and PRISM Internet surveillance merely continue what the Republican Bush administration was doing in blatant violation of the law. Since the 2008 law which legalized this generalized surveillance, Obama (who voted against it) has implemented it with a vengeance, going after more whistleblowers than all previous U.S. governments combined.

To hide its stealth attack on civil liberties, Big Brother NSA, its bosses in the White House and Pentagon, and its corporate "intercept partners" have spewed out so many putrid lies that, like Big Daddy said in Tennessee Williams' *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, you can smell the mendacity. The Internet companies, who pretend to protect users' privacy while making billions by selling their information to marketers and the government alike, all claimed to know nothing about PRISM. "The U.S. government does not have direct access or a 'back door' to the information stored in our data centers," declared a Google executive. More like a front door in reality, as Google just handed over the data.

Under "Tricky Dick" Nixon, government officials perfected the art of the "non-denial denial," but these days they just lie. Last year, NSA chief General Keith Alexander testified in Congress that the NSA did not have the "technical insights" or "equipment in the United States" to capture people's e-mails. In March, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper was asked

by Senator Ron Wyden in a Congressional hearing, "Does the N.S.A. collect any type of data at all on millions or hundreds of millions of Americans?" To which the DNI replied, "No, sir." An incredulous Wyden insisted, "It does not?" Clapper responded, "Not wittingly." Lying to Congress is supposedly a felony, but not, it seems, when the secrets of the realm are involved.

In fact it has been known for some time that U.S. spy agencies have been eavesdropping on the population at large. The story was broken in December 2005 by the *New York Times* (after sitting on it for a year at the request of the Bush administration). Hard evidence was provided in April 2006 when a courageous former AT&T technician, Mark Klein, provided documents showing how the entire data stream from the company's cables in San Francisco were fed to the NSA. James Bamford, who first exposed the NSA's sinister operations in *Puzzle Palace* (1983), detailed the dragnet in another book, *The Shadow Factory: The NSA from 9/11 to the Eavesdropping on America* (2009), and an article, "Inside the Matrix," in *Wired* (April 2012).

Moreover, the latest programs to be exposed are hardly the only ways in which U.S. spy agencies engage in warrantless surveillance. The FBI used *CARNIVORE* and *NARUS* programs to track domestic Internet and phone traffic. Since the 1980s the NSA and the GCHQ in Britain had their *ECHELON* program sweeping signals intelligence with satellite dishes around the world. *STELLAR WIND*, set up after 9/11, was Bush's "rogue" predecessor to Obama's "legal" *PRISM*. The Defense Department's *TIA* (Total Information Awareness) project monitoring e-mails, phone calls, social networks, credit card and medial records was defunded by Congress after an outcry, but various of its projects continued under different names (*The Atlantic*, 6 June). Several *RAGTIME* programs analyze the data provided to the NSA by 50 or so companies.

Up to now, Republican and Democratic administrations alike have sought

to brush off the accusations and Congress dutifully played deaf and dumb about this massive assault on civil liberties and the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (against unreasonable search and seizure). But now by providing comprehensive and detailed documentary evidence Edward Snowden has blown the lid off this can of worms and provoked a "discussion" of sorts. The response of the government, of course, has been to try to shut up the truth teller. And for all the talk of extradition and asylum, the blood-drenched imperialist warmongers are bent on retribution and revenge and will not let legal niceties stand in their way.

Edward Snowden knew from the start what he was up against. He could be "rendered by the CIA," which bundles its targets off to secret prisons to be tortured and killed, which is "a concern I will live with for the rest of my life, however long that happens to be." Exaggeration? Not hardly. An editor of *The Atlantic* tweeted that he overheard intelligence officials at Dulles airport saying "leaker & reporter [Glenn Greenwald] on #NSA stuff should be disappeared" (*Daily Mail* [London], 10 June). And three NSA whistleblowers – Thomas Drake, William Binney and J. Kirk Wiebe – in a roundtable held by *USA Today* (16 June) said they "salute" him and "thank him for taking such a huge personal risk" and "possibly facing the loss of his life."

In an interview with the London *Guardian* (8 June), asked what he thought would happen to him next, Snowden frankly replied: "Nothing good." Still, in an online Q&A chat hosted by Greenwald, the former NSA systems manager added: "All I can say right now is the U.S. Government is not going to be able to cover this up by jailing or murdering me. Truth is coming, and it cannot be stopped" (*Guardian.co.uk*, 17 June). But that won't stop the U.S. government (with Democratic senator Diane Feinstein, a k a the wicked witch of the west, as chief witch-hunter) from trying to silence Snowden, just as it continues to relentlessly go after Wikileaks' Julian Assange.

Bipartisan Imperialist War and Racist Repression

Coming out of a secret, sanitized NSA briefing for members of Congress, Representative Loretta Sanchez (D., California) said that the revelations so far about the clandestine national surveillance programs are only "the tip of the iceberg." That is certainly true. In addition to downloading everyone's phone and Internet records and subjecting them to automated packet analysis to detect certain words, subjects, addresses, etc., there are more directly repressive measures such as the "terrorism watch list," which as of 2011 reportedly had 400,000 names, or the FBI's "no-fly" list of between 10,000 and 20,000 names tagged for extra inspection or refused boarding. Interestingly, Loretta Sanchez herself has been subjected to this screening.

The hysteria against "terrorism" following the 11 September 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon is typical of how the imperialist warmongers whip up public opinion and step up repression to support their wanton slaughter. In World War I you had mass arrests of pacifists and syndicalists, followed by the postwar anti-communist "red scare." During World War II there was the jailing of Japanese Americans in concentration camps, and then the postwar McCarthyite witchhunting accompanying the anti-Soviet Cold War. And

while that was named after the rabid right-wing Republican senator from Wisconsin, liberal Democrats played a key part, eagerly or reluctantly "naming names" and avidly purging "reds" from the unions.

Today, and for the last dozen years, it's the anti-terrorist hysteria. To justify the blanket surveillance and wholesale theft of personal data picked up in the government dragnet, NSA chief Alexander told Congress that the domestic spying helped stop "at least ten 'homeland-based' threats" (*New York Times*, 19 June). Like hell. For the most part what those "threats" were is classified. In the few known cases, they were largely imaginary or were not discovered by the NSA's Internet and phone surveillance.

In contrast to the cynical scaremongering by the advocates of government surveillance of the entire U.S. population and much of the world, Snowden pointed out, in the *Guardian* online chat, "Bathtub falls and police officers kill more Americans than terrorism, yet we've been asked to sacrifice our most sacred rights for fear of falling victim to it." Challenging the rationale for this secret operation affecting millions of innocent people, he asks: "And for what? So we can have secret access to a computer in a country we're not even fighting? So we can potentially reveal a potential terrorist with the potential to kill fewer Americans than our own police?" No doubt contemplating what the NSA-USA has in store for him helps Snowden pose the issues clearly.

So what's actually going on here? The claim that this is all for "fighting terrorism" is a patent pretext. Why would the largest U.S. intelligence agency spend millions of dollars and build multi-billion-dollar data storage and analysis sites on a program that it claims only "helped" derail less than a dozen "'homeland-based' threats" of dubious scope and relevance. If we don't assume U.S. rulers are stupid, or that PRISM and the other blanket surveillance programs are a giant boondoggle, there are two main explanations. One is they serve the U.S.' cyberwarfare plans, and its constant drive for imperialist world domination. And two, that the supposed "incidental" and "unintentional" collection of data on "U.S. persons" will serve domestic repression.

The cyberwarfare, already used against Iran (including unleashing the Stuxnet malware) and also aimed at Russia and China in particular, is a big deal. NSA chronicler James Bamford notes ("The Secret War," *Wired*, July 2013) that General Keith Alexander not only commands the National Security Agency, with an estimated 60,000+ employees and a big chunk of the almost 500,000 contract employees with top secret security clearance; he is also head of the U.S. Cyber Command which includes 14,000 troops in a secret armed force consisting of the Navy's Tenth Fleet, the Second Army and the 24th Air Force. To effectively wage defensive and offensive cyberwar, a seamless control of all electronic communications content is vital.

As for its internal usefulness, the NSA's daily tracking of everyone's telephone calls and Internet data is intentional. NSA whistleblower William Binney, who largely designed the NSA's worldwide eavesdropping program, noted that it could have tapped cable landing sites at U.S. borders, which would mean that they would get international traffic. Instead it set up intercept stations at junction points throughout

Washington Arrogantly Orders Hijacking of Evo Morales' Plane

Stand with Bolivia Against U.S. Imperialist Piracy!

As we go to press, on July 2 the plane of Bolivian president Evo Morales was refused permission to enter the airspace of France, Spain, Italy and Portugal, forcing it to land in Vienna, Austria to refuel. There it was held on the ground for 14 hours as officials demanded to inspect the plane. The Spanish ambassador even showed up at the airport to carry out an inspection, which was refused. These servile governments were clearly doing the dirty work for U.S. imperialism, which has been desperately trying to lay hands on NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden ever since he exposed Washington's massive surveillance of the U.S. population and espionage against its imperialist "allies."

The U.S./NATO imperialists' attack on the plane of the Bolivian president is a blatant act of piracy, in violation of the Vienna Convention of 1961 on diplomatic relations. It is a colonialist attack on Bolivia by U.S. president Barack Obama, who like his predecessors treats Latin America as the U.S.' "backyard." The mass murderer in the White House clearly believes that the Monroe Doctrine lets him humiliate and dictate to the entire hemisphere. ***The international working class must stand with Bolivia against this aggression and insufferable imperialist arrogance and defend any measures by the Bolivian government against U.S. and European imperialism in response to this outrage.***

the country. Senator Frank Church noted in the mid-1970s, "The NSA's capability at any time could be turned around on the American people, and no American would have any privacy left." We are now there. As Binney put it (*Wired*, April 2012), and Snowden echoed, the U.S. is on the verge of being "a turnkey totalitarian state."

Far-fetched? Not at all. The U.S. has been gearing up for internal war for some time. That is what the U.S.A. PATRIOT Act (passed in October 2001) is all about, beefing up police powers across the board. And this is the primary mission of the Pentagon's Northern Command (set up in April 2002), which since last December now includes a Special Operations Command-North. And they're itching to try out their plans. During the 2009 swine flu outbreak in Mexico, the Obama administration seriously debated closing the Mexican border. A Homeland Security "National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza" (2007) envisages "layered border measures," as well as using the National Guard and federal troops to put down "rioting" and "civil disturbances."

This past April 15, the U.S. police and internal security authorities got a chance to do a dry run in response to the Boston Marathon bombing. Supposedly to search for a single wounded suspect, federal forces flooded into the area, the streets were patrolled by humvees and armored vehicles, people were rousted out of their homes at gunpoint, and the entire metropolitan area was placed under martial law with the population of over 1 million confined to their houses. The extreme measure was useless: Dzhokar Tsarnaev was found, after the order was lifted, hiding near where he was last seen in the town of Watertown. But it let the feds practice a large-scale lockdown. Moreover, the prisoner was not read his Miranda rights (to remain silent during interrogation) until a week later, something proponents of intensified police repression had long advocated. And the population applauded.

In order to justify waging war abroad, the capitalist rulers always need to have an "enemy within." House committee chair-

man Mike Rogers (R., Michigan) said at the June 18 hearing, "It is at times like these where our enemies within become almost as damaging as our enemies on the outside" (*New York Times*, 19 June). And who are those supposed "enemies within"? Since 11 September 2001, the government and media have targeted immigrants and Muslims. After the Boston bombing, in which three died there was a wave of accusations against Muslims. But when a white supremacist killed six Sikhs at their place of worship in Milwaukee in August 2012, the government did not consider it a terrorist attack, and the incident was soon forgotten.

The United States is already a police state for undocumented immigrants. Barack Obama has deported more than one million people, tens of thousands of parents have been forcibly separated from their U.S.-born children. Now the House of Representatives is debating an immigration "reform" that would make being in the U.S. without required papers a crime (it is presently only a civil infraction). The bipartisan immigration "reform" bill is being sold as a police measure, requiring those seeking documents to turn in detailed personal data to Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) police. And it will require that all employers check all employees against the notoriously flawed E-Verify work authorization data base. This is one step away from a *national ID card for everyone*.

Likewise, African American ghettos and Latino barrios are already subject to police-state repression. Cops patrol in convoys like in Israeli-occupied Palestine. Poor black and Hispanic youth are stopped and searched solely on the basis of what some police officer "reasonably believes" to be suspicious behavior. Huge numbers of young men are arrested for minor offenses or no reason at all, thus giving them a police record and placing them under the control of the "justice" system. And with PRISM, MAINWAY, MARINA and NUCLEON and other programs of electronic surveillance of the general population, anyone could be targeted by an NSA analyst on the same

Don't Let Her Die in Prison!

Free Lynne Stewart Now!

We print here a May 27 statement by the Internationalist Group in support of the campaign to secure "compassionate release" for the courageous lawyer Lynne Stewart, who is suffering from advanced cancer. Although thousands joined in the effort, on June 25 Lynne was notified that her request had been rejected by the U.S. Bureau of Prisons. Another proof of the bloodthirsty nature of the capitalist "justice" system. The outrageous decision is being appealed.

For decades, Lynne Stewart defended the downtrodden and oppressed, the victims of a government that tortures and murders with abandon and has locked up a higher proportion of its population than any other on the face of the earth. Lynne was jailed in 2009 for defending her client and refusing to let the government silence him. Already battling breast cancer when she was imprisoned, after being forced to wait 18 months for scheduled surgery she discovered that the cancer had returned. It is now diagnosed as Stage 4, having metastasized to her lymph nodes and lungs. Lynne must not die in prison – we demand she be freed now!

More than 16,000 people have signed a petition calling on prison authorities to order Lynne's immediate release in the care of her family, so that she can receive urgent medical treatment at Sloan Kettering Hospital. One month ago, the warden at Carswell Federal Prison in Texas signed off on a "compassionate release" for Lynne. The clock is ticking and those papers are still sitting on a desk in Washington, D.C.

Far from having committed any "crime," Lynne Stewart is a hero who has devoted her life to upholding the rights that the government tramples on. A crusading radical civil rights attorney, her imprisonment and the government vendetta against her stem from her fearless defense of a jailed client in the post-9/11 climate of repression symbolized by the U.S.A. PATRIOT Act. Her conviction was part of the sharp move of U.S. society in the direction of a police state. The purpose of her jailing is to intimidate lawyers from vigorously representing defendants in the imperialist "war on terror."

In 2005, Lynne was originally sentenced to 28 months for the "crime" of violating an administrative memo, the "Special Administrative Measures (SAMs)" imposed

on her client, the blind Islamic cleric Sheik Abdel Rahman. The conviction itself was an abomination and frontal assault on democratic rights, upholding the government's "right" to hold prisoners it doesn't like incommunicado by administrative fiat, and then to enforce the gag order by jailing their lawyers for "violating" the ban (see "Lynne Stewart Conviction is Legal Terror," *The Internationalist* No. 21, Summer 2005).

But that was not enough for a government that under Republicans and Democrats alike has ridden roughshod over the rights supposedly guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution. Freedom of speech and association, bans on cruel and unusual punishment, prohibition of unreasonable search – the government has taken aim at all of these. And so in 2010, a panel of federal judges, in a virtually unprecedented action, forced the trial court to impose a ten-year sentence. If the original sentence had not been punitively increased, she would be home by now.

From the outset, the Internationalist Group has stood with Lynne Stewart, in the courtroom and at demonstrations calling to "Free Lynne Stewart" and to defend her translator Mohammed Yousry and paralegal Ahmed Abdel Sattar who were convicted along with her in the frame-up trial. We owe a particular debt to Lynne, for her defense, even while she was facing trial herself, of Miguel Malo, a student who was framed up by college police at Hostos Community College for his defense of the rights of immigrant students.

The so-called "war on terror" whose purpose is to terrorize the people of the world (and the American population) into submission, is a bipartisan enterprise of the imperialist rulers. In fact the mass roundups and deportations of hundreds of thousands of immigrants every year, as well as the continued jailing of black radical journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal, are carried out by Democrats right up to the Obama White House and the so-called "Justice Department." The case of Lynne Stewart proves once again that there is "No Justice in the Capitalist Courts."

We honor Lynne Stewart for her courageous battle to uphold democratic rights. The fight against her frame-up and conviction is part of the struggle to mobilize the power of the international working class against imperialist war and domestic repression "at home."

Free Lynne now!

arbitrary "reasonable belief" standard as the racist "stop and frisk" searches.

Meanwhile, in the Democratic Obama administration, federal authorities have gone after leftist and even liberal-populist protests with sledgehammer tactics. It is notorious how the FBI targeted the Occupy movement with infiltration and heavy-handed repression. Grand juries have been impaneled in Chicago and on the West Coast going after socialists and anarchists with their secretive star chamber "investigations." Courageous lawyers like Lynne Stewart are given effective death sentences for defending unpopular clients. Mumia Abu-Jamal still sits in prison. And now the FBI has stepped up its persecution of Assata Shakur on trumped up charges of "terrorism," frustrated that the former Black Panther is walking free in Cuba.

For a Revolutionary Internationalist Fight Against Police-State Repression

Obama and most of official Washington hope that by going after Bradley Manning and Ed Snowden with everything they've got, they will intimidate future "leakers" and pave the way for an American police state. Yet a lot of people are wary of the government gaining total control over their personal lives, and quite a few youth see Manning and Snowden as heroes and role models. Interestingly, both of the whistleblowers started out believing in their mission. Pfc Manning volunteered for the army hoping to bring freedom to the Iraqi people. Snowden thought the Internet was "the most important invention in all of human history." Yet once inside the system they discovered

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that it was being used as a monstrous machine of oppression.

There have been protests against the “national security state” going back to the 1970s. Much of the current liberal opposition to the “surveillance state” is couched in nationalist terms of the “rights of Americans.” But the drive toward a repressive police state is common to all the main capitalist-imperialist countries, particularly during the current economic depression with no end in sight. With its wall-to-wall surveillance, the NSA has effectively erased the distinction between “foreign targets” of espionage and “U.S. persons,” who were supposedly off-limits. To his credit, Edward Snowden wrote that:

“Suspicionless surveillance does not become okay simply because it’s only victimizing 95% of the world instead of 100%. Our founders did not write that ‘We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all U.S. Persons are created equal’.”

A real opposition to this ruling-class tyranny must be international in scope and revolutionary internationalist in its politics. As Obama has largely neutralized liberal opposition, there is not likely to be a groundswell of demands to protect individual privacy. In any case, even when in the wake of the mid-’70s Church committee hearings certain limitations were proclaimed, the government soon got around them. Killing foreign political leaders was outsourced to outfits like Operation Condor in South America, subverting leftist governments was left to U.S.-funded death squads and contra armies, a National Endowment for Democracy took up where the CIA left off in funding front groups.

But even those timid measures were not fundamentally due to an outcry over the violation of civil liberties. Instead they were the product of the defeat of U.S. imperialism on the battlefield in Vietnam, the upheavals against racist police brutality in the Northern cities, a wave of strike action by militant workers and other mass struggles. The burgeoning social upheaval frightened the capitalist rulers and led to a moratorium on the death penalty, judicial recognition of women’s right to abortion and other gains. But all of these temporary gains, as well as the basic democratic rights for African Americans from the civil rights movement are being rolled back, and will continue to be until a new social upheaval threatens capitalist rule.

Thus in fighting the “surveillance state” and the drive to police-state rule, as in virtually every other area of social, economic and political life, the key to achieving a lasting victory is forging the nucleus of a revolutionary workers party, standing at the head of all the oppressed, to lead the struggle to overthrow the capitalist system which constantly reproduces war, poverty and racism. As Edward Snowden underlined, once the government has the capability, mere policies will not hold them back from using that power. Since the technology can’t be rolled back, the answer is a socialist revolution to bring down a ruling class whose very existence depends on denying the most fundamental rights of those it exploits.

In the meantime we demand: Free Bradley Manning! Free Lynne Stewart! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal and all class-war prisoners! Hands off Assata Shakur! Hands off Julian Assange! And hands off Edward Snowden! To Verax, the courageous truth teller, the fervent hopes and best wishes of all opponents of imperialism go with you. ■

Bradley Manning is a Hero – Free Him Now!

World’s Bloodiest War Criminals Stage Kangaroo Court-Martial

We reprint below an Internationalist Group leaflet that was distributed, along with the article “Defend PFC Bradley Manning,” from The Internationalist (No. 31, Summer 2010), at the 1 June 2013 protest in support of Bradley Manning outside the gates of Ft. Meade, Maryland. Two days later he would go before a military tribunal on charges of aiding the enemy and violating the 1917 Espionage Act, which was enacted in order to jail socialist and revolutionary syndicalist opponents of the first imperialist world war.

In his statement to the court-martial, Bradley Manning explained his horror (later shared by millions) at viewing the “Collateral Murder” video in which a Reuters photographer and driver were gunned down from an Apache helicopter in Baghdad while the bloodthirsty crew fired on a van with two children in it. The U.S. Central Command, then headed by General David Petraeus, refused to turn the video over to Reuters on a Freedom of Information Act request (claiming not to know if it existed). Manning’s action in releasing that video over to the WikiLeaks site was a courageous act and civic service to all humankind.

Manning’s statement laid out how and why he provided damning evidence of U.S. war crimes in Iraq and diplomatic cables exposing U.S. skullduggery around the world to the WikiLeaks site which has earned the government’s enmity for publishing online information that the imperialists would like to keep hidden. Since the fact of Manning’s laudable action is not contested, the military prosecution instead mainly spent the first week of the trial fishing for anything it could use against WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange (see “Free Julian Assange! Drop All Charges!” The Internationalist No. 32, January-February 2011).

No charges were ever brought against the cold-blooded killers in the Apache helicopter or the military brass who covered up their heinous crime. Meanwhile, U.S. commander-in-chief Barack Obama keeps on slaughtering innocent civilians from the air as he orders drone strikes against individuals on his “kill list” or others in “signature strikes” who happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Yet Pfc Bradley Manning is being prosecuted for his heroic actions in a rigged military procedure with secret evidence and no right of appeal to civilian courts. The “guilty” verdict in the Bradley Manning trial is preordained.

Bradley Manning has become a symbol of honor, rectitude and humanity against a criminal government. Many who have demonstrated for his freedom

voted for Democrat Obama in 2008 only to be bitterly disappointed by his actions in office, continuing and even expanding the despotic policies of the Republican Bush II regime. Appealing to such disappointed liberals, a banner of the International Socialist Organization at the Ft. Meade demonstration proclaimed, “Prosecute War Criminals – Not Bradley Manning!” The idea of this state prosecuting its war criminals is beyond delusion. It will take a revolution to bring the mass murderers to justice.

The purpose of the Bradley Manning “trial” is to intimidate other would-be whistle-blowers. But instead, his actions have inspired others. As the kangaroo court-martial got underway, U.S. rulers were dismayed by the stunning revelations of Edward Snowden, a former employee of the NSA, CIA and private “security” contractors, revealing how the government’s mammoth surveillance apparatus is spying on everyone (see “Lurching Toward Police State U.S.A.” in this issue). As former vice president Dick Cheney sputters about “traitors,” Snowden replied: “Being called a traitor by Dick Cheney is the highest honor you can give an American.”

As revolutionary proletarian internationalists, we say: Free Bradley Manning! Hands Off Edward Snowden and Julian Assange! A workers America will give them the honor they deserve.

Following is the text of the June 1 Internationalist Group leaflet:

A court-martial is scheduled to begin on Monday, June 3 at the Ft. Meade Army base outside Baltimore, Maryland. In the dock is 25-year-old Private First Class Bradley Manning, an Army intelligence analyst who courageously provided the WikiLeaks organization with military reports, U.S. diplomatic cables and video documenting the wanton killing of civilians, children and journalists in Iraq by a U.S. helicopter Air Weapons Team. For us, and for all opponents of imperialism, Bradley Manning is a hero, while the criminals are the Pentagon chiefs who intend to convict him and their commander-in-chief in the White House.

Manning has already been in prison for over three years since his 29 May 2010 arrest. For 258 days, from July 2010 to April 2011 when he was transferred to an Army prison at Ft. Leavenworth, he was held in solitary confinement at the Marine Corps brig in Quantico, Virginia. Pfc Manning was forced to remain awake from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. in a cell where the lights were never turned out. During that time he was not allowed to lie down or to lean against the wall.

He was forced to strip to his under-



Pfc Bradley Manning

wear and sleep under a blanket so coarse that it gave him rashes. Allowed only 20 minutes of “sunshine call” outside his cell per day, shackled hands and feet in a small concrete courtyard, Manning was not allowed to speak to any other inmates, while guards would question him and require him to respond, every five minutes of every day. This is torture.

Manning is accused of “knowingly [giving] intelligence to the enemy, through indirect means.” The “indirect means” is WikiLeaks, a journalistic enterprise that exposed some of the crimes of U.S. imperialism to the eyes of the whole world. As he states in his 29 January 2013 statement, Manning sought to give the reports he collected from Iraq to the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*. He wanted to give “the general public, especially the American public,” access to how “we [the military] became obsessed with capturing and killing human targets on lists.”

Bradley Manning hoped that “a detailed analysis of the data” – including reams of field reports with “records of over 120,000 civilian killings in Iraq and in Afghanistan,” as Wikileaks founder Julian Assange pointed out to the United Nations – “could spark a domestic debate on the role of the military and our foreign policy in general.” When the press showed little interest, he contacted WikiLeaks.

The prosecution is expected to have a member of the Navy SEAL assassination team that killed Osama Bin Laden testify that the Al Qaida head, who waged an anti-Communist “holy war” on behalf of the United States against the modernizing Soviet-allied government of Afghanistan in the 1980s, had requested and obtained information from the WikiLeaks website. So? We have it on good authority that one Barack Obama, a k a POTUS, sought material from WikiLeaks.

The implication is that any journalists and their sources, if they probe too closely into the machinations of Washington’s generals and spies, could be accused of “treason.” And that “the enemy” of the U.S. military/state apparatus is the people. ■

Millions in the Streets Against Bourgeois Governments of the Popular Front and the Right

Hot Winter in Brazil: Mobilize Workers Power! Organize a General Strike!

Transform the protests into a working-class revolt pointing to a struggle for power

Form self-defense committees based on the power of the workers movement

Push for councils of workers and working-class neighborhoods!

Forge a revolutionary workers party! The goal: international socialist revolution!

The following article is translated from a supplement of Vanguarda Operária (June 2013), the newspaper of the Liga Quarta-Internacionalista do Brasil.

RIO DE JANEIRO, June 25 – For nearly three weeks, huge, explosive mobilizations against the policies of capitalist governments have shaken Brazil. Beginning with protests against a 20-cent increase on bus fares in São Paulo, the movement broadened rapidly to include issues of corruption, the preparations for the World Cup and the Olympics, and the sharp increase in the cost of living. Above all, the main common denominator was popular rage against police violence. For decades, the police and militarized firemen¹ have imposed a racist state of siege on the black and poor population of the *favelas* (slums) and working-class neighborhoods. But this time, instead of retreating before the deadly violence of the uniformed thugs of the bourgeoisie, the protesters did not give in! Quite the contrary.

Outrage over the brutal attacks on the initial protests, and the fact that the masses resisted and even counter-attacked the killer cops gave even greater impetus to the protests, which rapidly grew massive. Thus, although they arose over various different points of conflict, the militant protests converged to constitute a grave political crisis of the capitalist state in Brazil. President Dilma Rousseff was booed in the stadium at the opening of the FIFA Confederations Cup. The protesters also turned their fire on state governors like Geraldo Alckmin (São Paulo) and Sérgio Cabral (Rio de Janeiro), and the mayors of the state capitals (Fernando Haddad and Eduardo Paes, respectively). In Rio, where the number of demonstrators on June 17 reached 100,000, when the Military Police attacked, the crowd chased the cops all the way to the state legislature and briefly occupied the building. In the national capital of Brasília, hundreds danced on the roof of the Congress.

Hatred of the police is growing

¹ In Brazil, the militarized firemen (*bombeiros militares*) are a police organization. See “Brazil: Reformists Tail After ‘Strike’ By Military Firemen in Rio de Janeiro” at <http://www.internationalist.org/brazilfiremen1107.html>



Police strike at protesters at the doors of São Paulo City Hall, June 18.

increasingly intense, even among the depoliticized population watching the cops' cowardly aggression on TV. We in the Liga Quarta-Internacionalista have insisted, against the great majority of the left (PSTU, PSOL² and others) that “police of any sort are not part of the working class, but are the armed fist of capitalism.” Today we see the flames of revolt encircle the seats of government as the youth stream into the streets from all sides, and anything at hand is used as a weapon against the mounted police, armored cars (*caverões*), dogs and weapons of the killer military police. Trained in the massacre of Carandiru (in 1992 when police killed over 100 prisoners

² PSTU: Unified Socialist Workers Party, a reformist party, one of the largest on the Brazilian “far left,” with significant presence in the labor movement, which follows the political line of the late pseudo-Trotskyist Nahuel Moreno. PSOL: Party for Socialism and Liberty, a reformist parliamentary alliance, including followers of Moreno, the late Ernest Mandel, Peter Taaffe and other purportedly Trotskyist currents, which usually (but not always) positions itself slightly to the left of the ruling Workers Party (PT).

in the state of São Paulo), they impose racist terror on the black population. As we demanded in the leaflet of the Comitê de Luta Clasista (Class Struggle Caucus) distributed at the June 17 protest in Rio, “Drive the invading [Brazilian] troops out of Haiti, military police out of the slums and away from the demonstrations of the oppressed and exploited!”

From the Palácio do Planalto in Brasília, where President Dilma Rousseff heads the popular-front government of the Workers Party and its reformist and bourgeois allies, to the Palácio dos Bandeirantes, seat of the state government of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, to the state houses from Rio Grande do Sul in the south to Bahia in the northeast, to Curitiba, Fortaleza and other states, all these government palaces have come under intense, white-hot siege by the masses of enraged youth, who began by demanding lower bus fares and received overwhelming support from the population, which brought its solidarity and its own demands. But despite their magnitude and

militancy, these mobilizations suffer from a great weakness: the organized working class has not yet taken the stage and lacks a revolutionary working-class leadership, that is up to the tasks before it.

Eventually, the bourgeoisie came to realize that it would have to retreat. On June 19, the governments of Rio, São Paulo and other states and cities simultaneously withdrew the public transit fare increases. The organizers of the initial protests, the Movimento Passe Livre (MPL, Free Fare Movement) declared victory. But the masses were not satisfied. On the evening of June 20, in almost all of Brazil's main cities, up to 1.5 million people took to the streets to demonstrate their outrage. At the same time, the bourgeois right-wing intervened, trying to capitalize on the protests. It seeks to divert the goal of the struggle towards fighting corruption, a favorite banner of corrupt reactionaries. Groups of fascists burned red flags and attacked leftist contingents, which responded by ceding ground to the provocateurs and finally (in Rio) leaving the streets.

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The Internationalist

“Andean Capitalism” Against the Working Class

Brutal Repression by Evo Morales Against Bolivian General Strike



Police attack striking workers in La Paz, May 18.

JUNE 9 – In a Latin American capital, thousands of impoverished workers wage a general strike, facing off against riot police, as the streets are enveloped in tear gas. As the government carries out mass arrests, strikers denounce it as an instrument of capital and enemy of the working class. From the presidential palace, a witch hunt is launched denouncing the strike as a sinister leftist conspiracy and government supporters mobilize to “defend democracy” against the workers. The scenario is not a new one, but in this case the regime in question has been lionized by the “anti-neoliberal left” worldwide.

The country is Bolivia and the government that of President Evo Morales and Vice President Álvaro García Linera, leaders of the Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS—Movement Towards Socialism), who claim to be leading a “cultural and democratic revolution.” On May 6, the Central Obrera Boliviana (COB) labor federation launched the most important workers’ mobilization since Morales’ 2005 election as the first indigenous president of South America’s poorest nation. One of the sharpest class conflicts of recent years, the confrontation highlights the stark fact that the “Indianist” capitalist regime is counterposed to the basic needs and hard-won rights of the country’s indigenous worker and peasant majority.

Militant miners spearheaded the general strike together with factory, health, education and other workers, demanding “retirement with dignity” in a country where miners have long been more likely to die by the age of 40 than to have any chance of a decent retirement. As the miners’ traditional dynamite blasts punctuated union slogans in the streets of La Paz, Oruro and Potosí, strikers denounced Morales for maintaining the basic features of the anti-worker pension scheme inherited from despised former president “Goni,” Washington’s rightist

favorite Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada who was overthrown in the “Gas War” that swept the *altiplano* a decade ago. Miners’ wives played a prominent role in building road blockades, as the workers’ protest cut traffic at 40 key roads and highways.

A Class Mobilization Against Hunger and Repression

Desperate to break the strike, the Morales government launched a barrage of repressive measures, arresting 400 unionists (in some cases demanding prison terms of up to six years), decreeing house arrest against leaders of the Oruro regional labor federation and mobilizing a media campaign to smear unionists as tools of the right. On May 17, Morales declared the strike “illegal.” Faced with violent repression from the same police and armed forces that have stained the *altiplano* with miners’ blood time and again for a century, the workers of Huanuni – Bolivia’s largest mine – reportedly seized three policemen, holding them inside a mineshaft to exchange them for arrested unionists.

During a particularly savage police attack on May 8, against Huanuni miners on the highway between Oruro and Cochabamba, Oruro labor federation leader Juan Carlos Guarachi told the Cadena A television network in a phone interview: “All of us miners are here in the hills still facing off against the police, while with the fury and rage of the workers the bridge from Caihuasi towards Caracollo has been blown up.” He continued: “Yet again the government is acting like neoliberal governments do, yet again with disdain and the incapacity of all of its ministers, who refuse to meet the workers’ demands.”

For his part, Huanuni union leader Ronald Colque denounced the MAS for carrying out “repression in the purest style of neoliberal governments” (AFN, 17

May). This accurate observation is a bitter one for large numbers of workers and poor peasants who had placed their hopes in the MAS, which came to power with torrents of rhetoric against neoliberal economics, which (like the rest of the populist and nationalist “left”) it denounced while upholding the *system* of capitalist exploitation. Not only miners were attacked. Photos appeared in the Bolivian press showing factory workers injured when the police fired shots against them as they were carrying out a roadblock at the town of

Pacotani, in the Department of La Paz.

In a particularly cynical operation, the MAS called a May 23 anti-strike rally “in defense of democracy,” bringing out government-aligned peasant and neighborhood associations to denounce the workers. In his speech there, Morales declaimed: “If there is no unity of the Bolivian people, then it’s not possible to consolidate the efforts of [government] authorities and leaders in order to guarantee this democratic cultural revolution.” He went on to stress his regime’s links to the “revolutionary processes in...Ecuador, Argentina, Brazil,” where other presidents of Latin America’s “pink tide” combine capitalist economics with populist/nationalist rhetoric (YouTube video, 23 May).

In Bolivia, a country where decades of convulsive class struggles produced a particularly strong historical consciousness, the parallel to Morales’ populist/nationalist predecessors was clear. Using sectors of the peasantry beholden to the ruling party as a

battering ram against the miners and other proletarian sectors was a hallmark of the MNR, the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement brought to power in the 1952 revolution. When the army rebuilt by the MNR overthrew it in the Washington-backed coup of 1964, junta head René Barrientos forged a “Military/Peasant Bloc” aimed explicitly against mine unionists, student and teacher radicals, and other “subversive elements.”

Grim Realities of Morales’ “Andean Capitalism”

During the “lost decade” of the 1990s, governments across Latin America following the free market policies dictated by Washington and Wall Street devastated workers’ living standards. Since the turn of the century, a series of populist bourgeois governments have come into office spouting leftist rhetoric while still repressing workers. Hugo Chávez (and his successor Nicolás Maduro) in Venezuela claimed to be building “21st century socialism,” but Bolivia’s leaders were more forthright. Campaigning for the 2005 election, García Linera called for “a kind of Andean capitalism” (Econoticias Bolivia, 1 September 2005). And in an article in *Le Monde Diplomatique* (January 2006), the vice president declared a “new economic model” which he dubbed “Andean-Amazonian capitalism.” The May 2013 general strike shows what this means.

“The COB Strike Highlights Political Polarization in Bolivia,” headlined the liberal Otramérica site (17 May). The strike is far from the first time the Morales government has faced off against organized labor or sectors of its base among peasants, the urban poor and middle class (see “Bolivia: Evo Morales Against the Workers and Oppressed,” *The Internationalist*, September 2007). Despite his origins as leader of coca-growing farmers, Morales has used the army to repress peasants in coca regions as well as Amazonian peoples who accused him of pandering to multinational companies with his plan to build the TIPNIS highway through an indigenous rainforest reserve.

Repeatedly clashing with the teachers



They’re back. March of Huanuni miners arrives at the capital, La Paz, May 20.

“Left” Forum for Andean Capitalism

Andean capitalism and its military guarantor. From left: Bolivian vice president Álvaro García Linera, president Evo Morales and armed forces chief Tito Gandarillas, 8 August 2012. (Photo: Reuters)



Meeting yearly in downtown Manhattan, the Left Forum (formerly Socialist Scholars Conference, before it dropped the inconvenient “s-word”) is the premier meet-and-greet venue for social democrats who want to stay *au courant* with the latest fads and fashions in what passes for left-wing (but not *too* left-wing) “discourse.” In 1998, the pro-imperialist social democrats and liberal “progressives” were all for Democrat Clinton’s “human rights” war on Yugoslavia.

A decade later, they were gaga for Democrat Obama, while of course wanting to push him ever so slightly to the left. That got them the U.S. war on Libya, serial murder by drones from Afghanistan to Somali, support for Islamist “rebels” in Syria (the “moderates,” of course) and ever more intrusive police-state surveillance and racist repression “at home.” Workers’ wages continue to drop while hedge fund billionaires make out like bandits.

In recent years, conference organizers looked to Latin America’s populist and popular-frontist “pink tide.” At a 2008 round table on “new participatory movements” and “left governments” in Latin America, an Internationalist Group supporter met exasperation and incredulity when he pointed out that Bolivia’s Morales government was not in fact the path to indigenous liberation: for the oppressed indigenous majority to wield power, a socialist revolution led by the working class was required, a far cry from refurbishing the neocolonial bourgeois order with “Indianist” symbols and rhetoric.

and other dissident union sectors from the first years of his administration, Morales faced factory workers’ strikes and marches in 2010 when he capped wage raises at 5 percent and maintained a poverty-level minimum wage. At the end of that year he slashed fuel subsidies desperately needed by the urban and rural poor. Angry protests forced reversal of this move, whose similarity to austerity measures typically demanded by the International Monetary Fund was noted even by sympathetic observers. Yet as some of Morales’ North American enthusiasts noted earlier this year: “Exports are up, and Bolivia’s international monetary reserves reached a new \$14 billion high” (*People’s World*, 14 January).

The May 2013 general strike brought class confrontation to its *sharpest point so far under the MAS regime*, in a struggle where miners and other working-class sectors indisputably played the central, leading role.

When it comes to continuities between the “Andean capitalism” of Morales and García Linera and the “Washington consensus” embraced by their right-wing predecessors, the question of workers’ pen-

After he remarked that Bolivian miners’ battle cry “Volveremos” (We will return) was key to this revolutionary perspective, one superannuated social-democrat began to scream: “Don’t you get it? The Bolivian miners are gone, *gone!*” This was what such purported leftists hoped, but as last May’s general strike dramatically shows, the heroic miners of Bolivia are once again on the front lines of Latin America’s class struggle – and it was the capitalist government of Evo Morales that tried to break their strike.

So now we come to the Left Forum of 2013, where the closing session’s featured speaker is none other than the ideologue of “Andean capitalism,” Morales’ vice president Álvaro García Linera. Just weeks ago he played a leading role in unleashing repression against the general strike of miners, factory workers, teachers and other labor sectors. Will García Linera repeat at the Left Forum his denouncing the workers as manipulated by “a small gang of Trotskyites...a handful of traitors to the people...seeking to repeat their reactionary rightist deeds” (*El Deber*, Santa Cruz [Bolivia], 20 May)?

When the occasion demands it, Left Forum habitués can mouth the words to the American miners’ song, “Which Side Are You On?” When it comes to South American miners in the forefront of actual class struggle today, forum organizers have given a very clear answer: on the side of Andean capitalism against the workers.

sions is both illustrative and deeply felt by the country’s working class. The privatization mania that swept Latin America put “defined benefit” pensions under the gun as early as 1980. In Chile, dictator Augusto Pinochet – advised by Milton Friedman’s free-market Chicago Boys – turned pension plans over to private investment funds seeking new troughs for financial speculation. Mexico followed suit in the late ’90s, when Yale grad President Ernesto Zedillo imposed the AFORE system of privatized pensions.

In Bolivia, during his first term in the Palacio Quemado, Harvard Boy “Goni” Sánchez de Lozada privatized pensions in 1996, establishing a new system “based on individual capitalization accounts” in line with the “capitalization” (privatization) of virtually all nationalized enterprises (World Bank, *The Bolivian Pension Reform*, July 1997). Three years ago, Evo Morales carried out a new pension reform, lowering the retirement age but maintaining a situation in which making it to retirement age with even a minimal chance of escaping destitution remains an impossible dream for the vast majority.

As noted at the time by Bolivia’s Center

During Speech by García Linera in New York

Activists Demand: Stop Repression Against Bolivian Miners!



Internationalist photo

NEW YORK, June 9 – “Free Bolivian Miners, Drop the Charges” (against miners from Huanuni and other trade-unionists detained during last month’s general strike) was one of the slogans raised today during the speech by Bolivian vice president Álvaro García Linera at the “Left Forum” held here.

While the vice president presented “Nine Theses” on philosophical and political questions, left and labor activists – including several Latin American immigrants – held an attention-getting protest. They held up signs calling for freeing Vladimir Rodríguez, general secretary of the COB union federation in the department of Oruro, as well as other miners.

The protesters presented an open letter signed by 250 conference participants calling for an end to the repression against the strikers. (By the end of the day, the open letter was signed by an additional 70 attendees.) The Bolivian vice president did not respond. At the end of his speech, many

in the audience called out asking that the issue be discussed, but they were told that there would be no discussion and the session abruptly ended.

Many commented later that they used to think that the government of Evo Morales was left-wing, but they were astounded by the repression against strikers.

Among the slogans on the signs were “International Solidarity with Bolivian Workers,” “U.S. Imperialism, Hands Off Bolivia,” “Drop House Arrest and Charges Against Huanuni Miners and Other Trade-Unionists,” as well as expressions of solidarity with the indigenous peoples of the Tinpis area, and a call for “Bolivian Troops Out of Haiti!”

A young immigrant worker in the protest commented at the end of the event: “We wanted to show our solidarity with the heroic Bolivian miners, the peasants and the indigenous peoples against the repressive measures. Their struggle is that of the workers of the world.”

for the Study of Labor and Agrarian Development, Morales’ pension law represented “the continuity of neoliberal policy,” not only “maintaining the individual capitalization system that neoliberalism imposed” (employers make little or no contribution) but deepening “reliance on the efforts of the wage workers themselves, whom it treats as a privileged sector.” Morales’ law promised the military and police retirement at a 100 percent pay rate, while workers were told years of contributions would (supposedly) bring them retirement at 70 percent of normal pay (CEDLA, *Nueva Ley de Pensiones*, December 2010).

During last month’s general strike, CEDLA released a new study demonstrating that “the present pension system does not ensure a decent retirement income that would allow workers to cover their basic necessities when they go into retirement, and when their physical strength and labor market conditions do not allow them to go on working.” Morales’ 2010 “reform” had the effect of “leveling pensions downwards” so that even a worker who somehow managed to maintain steady contributions for 30 years would still live in dire poverty. This in a country where the monthly minimum

wage is US\$116, male life expectancy is 65 years, and miners have long faced the prospect of dying from silicosis before they could ever retire.

Strikers denounced “the government’s lies about Huanuni,” refuting with facts and figures the demagogic accusation that the Huanuni mine – which is part of the COMIBOL government mining company – is supposedly a drain on the national economy and that its 4,800 workers are some kind of privileged sector. The miners stressed that under Morales’ pension law, a miner would need to make steady contributions for 35 years in order to get a pension equivalent to US\$535 a month. Meanwhile, mineshafts lack basic “ventilation conditions...causing continual deaths of young workers,” so that an estimated 20 percent are already “suffering from silicosis and [other] lung diseases” (Huanuni Miners Radio communiqué, 14 May).

With the grim prospect of dying in poverty facing millions of Bolivian workers and peasants, as well as impoverished sectors of the middle class, the COB’s demand for “retirement with dignity” struck a real chord. The national miners union (FSTMB) began the strike with the demand

The Internationalist

Wide Press Coverage in Bolivia for NYC Protest Defending Miners



for a pension equal to the average wage of a working miner (100% pension). Faced with the government's intransigence and repressive onslaught – and in the absence of elected strike committees able to debate and decide such fundamental questions – the union leadership cut the demand back to 70 percent. On May 22, the COB “suspended” the strike, tentatively accepting a deal to reduce the number of years miners have to work to qualify for retirement, with other details unclear.

While leaders said the labor federation would remain on “emergency footing” during a 30-day period in order to evaluate the proposed accord, a number of union sectors expressed strong opposition to the decision to demobilize the workers and halt the strike.

Evo Morales and the Left

Dazzled by the “Evo phenomenon,” many purported leftists have pretended that a specifically *proletarian* perspective for Bolivia – a country historically known for some of the sharpest class struggles in the hemisphere – was effectively superseded by

the election of an indigenous president, the “unity of the people,” “new communitarian forms of politics,” etc. Reflecting the same bourgeois impressionism while adding a dash of pseudo-Marxist verbiage, the Spartacist League as part of its descent into a U.S.-centric and idiosyncratic left centrism, went so far as to claim that the Bolivian working class *ceased to exist* (see “Spartacist League Disappears the Bolivian Proletariat,” *The Internationalist* No. 24, Summer 2006).

These claims echoed the self-justifications of a regime whose main success has been to put a new face on the old function of the bourgeois state apparatus: defending capitalist property relations against the workers, poor peasants and impoverished urban population. That the MAS runs a capitalist regime has never been a secret (except to those willfully blinded by their own illusions): Morales and Garc3a L3nera have ruled for almost eight years now under the banner of what they call “Andean capitalism.”

As we wrote immediately after the December 2005 vote that brought the MAS to power, “Morales’ election certainly

reflects the urgent hope of fundamental social change among the oppressed majority,” as the election of the continent’s first indigenous president “has generated great expectations among the masses excluded from power by the *k’ara* (‘white’) elite.” All the more so was it the responsibility of Marxists to tell the fundamental truth that the Morales government would use this prestige to refurbish the capitalist state for more effective use *against* the indigenous toilers that voted it into office. As we noted:

“MAS theoretician Garc3a L3nera stresses that the MAS will build a ‘center-left’ government. Underlining his slogan of ‘Andean capitalism,’ he says it will be ‘linked to global markets’ and ‘entrepreneurial sectors, which could last 40, 60 or even 100 years. The slogan is utopian/reactionary in its appeal to an imaginary ‘national’ form of class exploitation. However, its actual content is to give a more ‘Andean’ face to semi-colonial Bolivia’s subordination to real, international capitalism (imperialism)... The bourgeois Morales regime does not

merit the slightest confidence from the workers and peasants.”

–“Bolivian Elections: Evo Morales Tries to Straddle an Abyss” (December 2005), reprinted in *The Internationalist* No. 23, April-May 2006

Vindicated anew by last month’s general strike, the perspective of revolutionary proletarian struggle in Bolivia calls out for a leadership forged on Leon Trotsky’s program of permanent revolution, in which the working class at the head of the poor peasantry and other oppressed sectors resolves democratic tasks by taking power and passing over to socialist measures. The country has a long tradition of struggle by militants identified with Trotskyism, many of them characterized by exemplary courage and dedication. The tragedy of Bolivia’s revolutionary movement is its decades-old adaptation to the labor bureaucracy and bourgeois nationalism, going back even before the 1952 revolution (see S. S3ndor John, *Bolivia’s Radical Tradition: Permanent Revolution in the Andes* [University of Arizona Press, 2009]).



(Left) Miners from Huanuni, the largest mine in Bolivia, respond to police attack by dynamiting bridge at Caihuasi, May 8. (Right) Pursuing strikers into the hills, Evo Morales’ police arrested 337. We demand: Free all Bolivian strikers, drop the charges!

The main organization identified with Trotskyism in Bolivia is the Partido Obrero Revolucionario (POR – Revolutionary Workers Party). Led by Guillermo Lora until his death in 2009, the POR heads the La Paz teachers union. In the mass upheavals preceding Morales' election, the POR played a thoroughly centrist role, helping provide a left cover to the labor bureaucracy and neighborhood association leaders who derailed the Gas War uprisings of 2003 and 2005, paving the way for the “Andean capitalist” regime. Seconding them in this task was the smaller LORCI (Revolutionary Workers League), which is part of the Trotskyist Faction led by the Argentine Partido de Trabajadores por el Socialismo.

During the May 2013, general strike, the POR's weekly *Masas* repeatedly combined vivid reports of police repression with fervid calls on the very same police to “join the people's struggle.” Thus *Masas* (17 May) reported that a planned mass protest at the international airport in Santa Cruz was met by the “caveman-reactionary assault of the riot police.” The police association had warned it would organize actions unless its demands (including overtime pay, presumably for occasions when beating and gassing elderly teachers goes beyond the usual workday) were met within a month's time. A POR appeal reprinted in the same issue called: “POLICE: Don't wait for the month-long period to end. Start now!”

Demagogically, the MAS seized on such appeals to escalate its McCarthyite smears against the left, accusing the POR of seeking a “coup” against the government. The real danger of pretending that police are “workers in uniform” is to the working class and oppressed. “Uniting” with the repressive forces of the bourgeois state means setting the masses up for one bloody defeat after another. The POR's policy goes back decades, from its call for “Bolivianization of the armed forces” and the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Front (FRA) it formed with deposed president General Juan José Torres in 1971.

To this day, the POR upholds the FRA as a model for class struggle in Latin America, together with the Asamblea Popular (People's Assembly) that preceded it – an impotent conclave in which the POR and pro-Moscow Communist Party provided left cover to Torres's labor lieutenants in the COB bureaucracy as they disarmed the working class politically and militarily in the face of General Hugo Banzer's bloody military takeover.

In 2005, during the mass upsurge that overthrew Sánchez de Lozada's successor as president, Carlos Meza, the POR and the LORCI were both instrumental in cobbling together an attempted reedition of the People's Assembly in El Alto, the sprawling plebeian city in the altiplano above La Paz, where bureaucrats and populist leaders talked revolution only to demobilize mass protest at the decisive moment (see “El Alto and the ‘People's Assembly’,” *The Internationalist* No. 21, Summer 2005). A certain symbiosis may be detected in the relation between the two avowed Trotskyist groups. The LORCI helps perpetuate the POR's mythology about the 1971 Asamblea Popular but criticizes the FRA as well as the POR's support to police “strikes” (while seeking to whitewash away its own capitulation to the February 2003 mutiny by the police).

For its part, the POR scores the LORCI because it echoed Evo Morales's calls for a constituent assembly, and for tailing the COB bureaucracy in discussions about

setting up a purported labor party (PT–Partido de los Trabajadores), while baiting the LORCI in chauvinist vocabulary as “reformist good-for-nothings who came from abroad and claim to be Trotskyists” (*Masas*, 31 May). A first congress of the PT was held last March in Huanuni, with 1,300 delegates. While this reflected growing disillusionment with Morales' MAS and anger at its anti-labor policies, the union bureaucracy headed by COB General Secretary Juan Carlos Trujillo has done its best to keep the PT safely within the limits of safe electoral reformism, intending no doubt to use it as a mere pressure group on the MAS.

For years now the LORCI has been calling for the formation of a “Political Instrument of the Workers,” or IPT, echoing COB leaders' similar call. To be sure, they say that an IPT should embody class independence. For any genuine Trotskyist this means fighting for a revolutionary program, but the LORCI's own agitation before, during and after the May strike has centered largely on classic reformist calls to “make the rich pay.” In an article on the looming strike over pensions, it wrote: “The solution is simple: the pension funds must be rescued through a big increase in contributions from the bosses who benefit from our exploitation, through higher taxes on the rich, the multinational companies, the bankers and finance capital” (*Palabra Obrera*, May 2013).

Against such tax-the-rich nostrums, genuine Trotskyists point out that capitalism's impoverishment of the workers and peasants can be overcome only through the expropriation of the capitalist class in a proletarian revolution. Some months ago, the LORCI asked whether the PT would be “an instrument of workers political organization or a ‘party of the bureaucrats’” (24 January article on LORCI website). As the LORCI itself admits, the COB leaders relegated the PT to silence during this year's May Day demonstrations, and the supposed political expression of the workers played no significant role during the recent general strike. But in any case, without a revolutionary political program it could only push a more “worker-friendly” populism.

When the MAS was agitating for a (bourgeois) “constituent assembly” during the proletarian upheavals of 2003 and 2005, the LORCI called for a constituent assembly, a “revolutionary” one of course. When COB leaders called for a “political instrument of the workers, so did the LORCI, always trying to appear as the left wing of whatever popular movement is in vogue. The inveterate tailism of the LORCI (a trademark of the Fracción Trotskista as a whole), and its constant adaptation to the “movement unity” outlook which labor and reformist left leaderships use to push class collaboration, can be seen in the following issue of its paper:

“We must prepare ourselves, given the perspective of great social convulsions fueled by the world capitalist crisis, organizing the conscious forces of the anticapitalist struggle, both in the unions and in the student movement, to create forces close to [*afines con*] the working class and convoking the unity of all the social movements of the oppressed, popular movements, ecologists, feminists, to join together in a common cause to end this decadent system together with the working class in all countries.”

–*Palabra Obrera*, June 2013

All get together in one big “popular movement” is their watchword.

What's needed instead to defeat the bourgeois populism of Morales and García

NYC Protest Against El Salvador Abortion Ban



On June 5, a demonstration (above) was held outside the consulate of El Salvador in New York City to denounce the total abortion ban in the Central American country. The call for the protest proclaimed “Let Beatriz Live!” referring to the cruel treatment of the 22-year-old woman by the Salvadoran state, which refused to grant permission for a therapeutic abortion even though, due to her delicate health (she suffers from lupus and kidney disease), her pregnancy was seriously life-threatening.

Initiated by the Internationalist Group, the New York protest was one in a number of actions internationally in Beatriz's case, along with the many mobilizations in El Salvador of advocates for decriminalizing abortion. Among the slogans chanted yesterday were “Beatriz Symbolizes Women's Rights” and “Beatriz sí, muerte no, abortion ban has got to go!” Demonstrators also chanted the demand of the IG for “free abortion on demand,” from Central America to the United States.

An Internationalist leaflet (available in Spanish and English at www.internationalist.org) was distributed at the protest which noted that in El Salvador, women who have abortions, as well as the medical teams which administer them, can be jailed for up to 30 years. Between 2000 and 2011, at least 129 women were accused and tried for abortion and for murder connected to abortion, of whom 22 are in jail today.

The leaflet noted that the oppression

of women will not be abolished by mere legislative reforms. A proletarian program for women's liberation would include demands for free, 24-hour day care centers; equal pay for equal work; separation of church and state; unrestricted right to divorce; full rights for homosexuals and against interference by the state in consensual sexual relations; socialization of household work, and free high-quality socialized medicine, all pointing to the need for socialist revolution.

Addressing the demonstrators, Marjorie Stenberg, speaking for the IG, noted that the international outcry over the ban on abortion in this case, even though the woman's life was endangered, finally enabled Beatriz to terminate her pregnancy with a Caesarean section. “However, the struggle for the right to abortion, and against the oppression of women continues, not only in El Salvador but also in the U.S.,” where in much of the country the right to abortion has been increasingly restricted.

Stenberg added, “It's also a class question, since the bans largely affect poor and working-class women” who “don't have the money to go to Los Angeles and have an abortion.” She emphasized that the total abortion ban in El Salvador and Nicaragua are being enforced by supposedly leftist governments, which however are not of the working class. “The conclusion that we must draw from this is the need to struggle for workers power,” she concluded. ■

Linera, to unite the workers and impoverished indigenous peasantry, is an intransigent struggle for a proletarian vanguard embodying Trotsky's permanent revolution. Creating the nucleus of such a party is key as hard-fought class struggles begin to break through illusions in the latest nationalist regime that has sought to tame the rebellions altiplano. This is the indispensable element needed to lead the struggle forward to socialist revolution, in Bolivia and beyond.

In an extensive analysis of Morales' first year and a half in power, we detailed how “in populist style, he used...symbolic gestures and rhetoric to dress up actions that serve the needs of the ruling class” – from bolstering “the institutionality of the armed forces” to conciliating the hard-line racist right in the country's eastern provinces, decreeing a fake “nationalization” of gas and oil, mobilizing pro-government “social movements” to attack labor sectors critical of his regime, and carrying out an “agrarian reform” that actually strengthened landowners' power. Underlining

the perspective of the League for the Fourth International, we wrote, and we repeat today:

“A worker-peasant-indigenous government is the only kind of regime in which the indigenous masses can actually seize and exercise power, undertaking their emancipation as part of an international socialist revolution....The raw material of revolutionary struggle is present in Latin America. That can be seen in many parts of the region, and it keeps cropping up in Bolivia....

“A revolutionary leadership is what's required, and the real lessons of the Bolivian experience can help build it on the program of permanent revolution, with the willingness and determination to swim against the stream and fight for genuine communism in Latin America, here in the United States and everywhere.”

– “‘Andean Capitalism’ vs. Permanent Revolution – Bolivia: Evo Morales Against the Workers and Oppressed,” *The Internationalist* leaflet, September 2007 ■

Brazil Winter...

continued from page 12

The rightists, along with police infiltrators, play on the political vagueness of the protests and the “anti-party” sentiment of the masses who, echoing the propaganda of the bourgeois media, identify all parties with the thieves who make the Congress, the presidency and state legislatures into bazaars for influence peddling. The surprised reaction and the capitulation of the reformist and centrist left are rooted in the fact that they accept the framework of bourgeois “democracy.” Upon hearing the chant “the people united need no parties,” these champions of the “people united” are at a loss for words, and even, in some cases, cowardly furled their banners when they were asked to, when the main task is to *massively mobilize the workers movement* which can easily sweep the fascist scum off the streets, and then turn its superior class force on the police.

Intervene With a Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution

The media is trying to turn public opinion against the rebellious protesters, labeling them “vandals” and “rioters.” The police are the truly truly violent ones, killing thousands of people every year in the cities and the countryside. Against them we defend the youths who fight their oppressors in the streets. The pacifism of the bulk of the left only feeds the aggression of the military police (PM), the Special Operations Battalions (BOPE), the Shock Battalions and the São Paulo ROTA elite military police. The real barbarians are to be found in the offices of big business and the government, at the stock exchange (Bovespa) and in the barracks. We demand *immediate release* of all those detained during the protests, and that *all charges against them be dropped*. And if on occasion the anger of the exploited and oppressed masses is expressed by breaking a few bank windows, we call on the youth and workers to direct their will to struggle against the capitalist *system* that oppresses them.

In this situation of massive, politically contradictory protests against the governments of the oppressors and exploiters, proletarian revolutionaries must intervene with a program of transitional demands, to transform the popular mobilization into a revolt of the working class pointing towards a struggle for power. First of all, it is urgently necessary to **ORGANIZE A GENERAL STRIKE** for a zero transit fare – *free public transit for all* – by means of occupations of the companies by the workers themselves to impose their expropriation under workers control. The fact that the leaderships of the main union federations (CUT, Força Sindical, UGT, CSP-Conlutas Intersindical, etc.) were forced to call a National Day of Struggle on June 27 indicates that the pressure exists to carry out such a strike.

At the same time, to prevent these bureaucrats from derailing the struggle in the interests of capital, it is necessary to **form elected strike committees**, chosen by the ranks and recallable at any time. This could provide the framework for creating **workers councils in the factories, industrial zones and working class neighborhoods**. Against police attacks, we fight to **expel the police from the unions**. Police of all kinds (including private security guards) are the armed



Comitê de Luta Classista

During recent strike by the teachers union (SEPE-RJ) and other municipal unions in the city of Volta Redonda, our comrades of the LQB and the Comitê de Luta Classista repeatedly confronted attempts by the police to break the strike. Above, Maria do Carmo blocks attempt by cops at municipal garage to cross picket line, March 1. Below: Cecilia speaks during stand-off with police at municipal waterworks. Both are LQB and CLC supporters and members of the Volta Redonda SEPE executive committee. Pseudo-Trotskyists of the PSTU and PSOL argued that strikebreaking police are just “workers in uniform.” LQB/CLC insisted cops are the armed fist of the bourgeoisie.

fist of capital. And for the protection of the movement against police assault and rightist provocateurs, we call for the formation of *self-defense committees based on the power of the workers movement*, linking the street with the factories and the slums. To counteract the ravages of inflation, we seek to impose a *sliding scale of wages* tied to inflation and to form *neighborhood price control committees*.

The primary fuel for the fires has been the empty wallets of the youth in precarious conditions, who when they find work at all receive temp job wages. They can't go to the Confederations Cup or the Olympics, and don't even think about the upcoming World Cup, whose extravagantly rebuilt stadiums are “for English eyes only,”³ or only for show, closed to the youth and the poor fans. And this in the country where for over a decade the bourgeois Popular Front (PT-PMDB-PCdoB)⁴ government has boasted of its social programs that offer the poor “stipends” of various sorts that hardly cover the ba-

³ The Brazilian expression “*só pra inglês ver*” referred to a law passed in 1831 supposedly freeing African slaves who arrived in Brazilian ports. But this law was only for showing to the British, who for their own commercial reasons had declared a ban on the slave trade. In fact slavery was not abolished in Brazil until 1888, the last country in the hemisphere to do so.

⁴ PMDB: Party of the Democratic Movement, a bourgeois party. PCdoB: Communist Party of Brazil, once pro-Albanian Stalinists, now social democrats.

sic necessities of millions of families left behind by the “boom” of the Lula-Dilma era. Thus, to combat unemployment and job insecurity we call for a **reduction in the working day without loss of pay**, to create full-time jobs for all.

To broaden the struggle to the countryside, rather than proposing one more agrarian reform, as does the MST and the great majority of the Brazilian left, we of the LQB fight for **agrarian revolution**, for the expropriation of the haciendas and the big agribusinesses by the agricultural workers and poor peasants themselves. All this necessarily points to a struggle for power. As the great internationalist Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky underlined, a real general strike (not one of those festive parades that the pro-capitalist bureaucrats organize to let workers blow off steam)

raises the question, who is the master of the country. Trotskyists fight for a **workers and peasants government**, which as the *Transitional Program* insists, can be nothing other than the dictatorship of the proletariat, to bring down the present dictatorship of capital.

Above all, the indispensable instrument for the realization of this task is a **revolutionary workers party**, forged on the Trotskyist program of **permanent revolution**, which insists that today democratic demands have no solution short of the working class seizing power and proceeding to an **international socialist revolution**.

The focus of the great majority of the left is far different. They aim to form another popular front, an alternative to that of the Lula-Dilma PT, and call for a series of slightly-more-leftist reforms that would be completely compatible with capitalist rule. Instead of struggling for a workers general strike against the government of capital, they dream of another *Fora Collor* movement from the early 1990s,⁵ a popular-frontist mobilization together with bourgeois political currents. With what result? The government of Itamar Franco, followed by Fernando Henrique Cardoso! At most, the opportunist socialists want a “government of the working people” within the frame-

⁵ “Collor Out,” mass protests in 1992 that forced the resignation of the corrupt, unpopular president Fernando Collor de Mello, who was then succeeded by two other bourgeois presidents carrying out the same anti-worker policies.

work of capitalism, through bourgeois elections. But we already have such a government, headed by the Workers Party of Lula and Dilma, which has brought us the present situation.

The bourgeois perspective of the reformist left is reflected in all of its demands. Thus the PSTU only called for repealing the fare hike, which after some hesitation, the capitalist governments accepted. Only now does the PSTU call for “free fares for all.” Instead of calling for workers mobilization in self-defense, the PSTU considers police to be “workers in uniform” and even organizes unions for these professional oppressors. (This dangerous perspective, contrary to the Marxist understanding of the class nature of the capitalist state, is shared by other pseudo-Trotskyist reformists, among them O Trabalho⁶ in the PT and various currents in the PSOL.) In place of a transitional program for a sliding scale of wages and hours, they called for an increase in the minimum wage.

While in Brazil the masses and the working class played a decisive role in bringing down the military dictatorship and the liberal governments of Collor de Mello and Fernando Henrique Cardoso, in the belief that the PT, its Popular Front and its “government of the working people” would improve their lives, there is a striking similarity between what is happening now in Brazil's major cities and the current revolt against the Islamist government in Istanbul, Turkey. There are also references to the populist Occupy Wall Street movement, the *Indignados* (Outraged) of Portugal, Spain and Greece, and the “Arab Spring.” But beyond the similarities, the great breadth and explosive outpouring of the mobilizations, we must ask, what has been the result of these movements? The undeniable fact is that in none of these places have the capitalist regimes, with their policies of starvation and exclusion, been brought down. In the Middle East and North Africa, the regimes of “secular” dictators based on the military have been replaced by authoritarian Islamist regimes also based on the military. In Europe the policies of capitalist austerity continue across the board.

The only force with the power and the class interest to sweep away the rot, violence and poverty of capitalism in its decay is the working class. Experience internationally teaches us that the key is revolutionary leadership. In France in 1968, a revolt of the student youth was transformed into a general strike in which ten million workers seized the factories and raised the red banner, because they wanted a head-on struggle against the bourgeois order. Nevertheless, lacking a revolutionary, genuinely Leninist-Trotskyist party with roots in the working masses, and without organs of proletarian power such as soviets (workers councils), the struggle was betrayed by the Stalinists who dominated the workers movement.

In Brazil's Hot Winter, the task of the LQB and the Comitê de Luta Classista is to contribute to the resolution of this crisis of revolutionary leadership, which as Trotsky emphasized, sums up the crisis of humanity. There is no time to lose. ■

⁶ “Labor,” part of the social-democratic phantom “Fourth International” of the late Pierre Lambert. Their U.S. co-thinkers are Socialist Organizer.

Smash the Capitalist Education Counter-Reform

Mexico: For a National Education Strike!

Forge a Revolutionary Workers Party!

Translated from *Revolución Permanente No. 2, May 2013, the newspaper of the Grupo Internacionalista/Mexico.*

Since February 25, teachers of the Guerrero State Coordinating Committee of Education Workers (CETEG) have been on strike against the educational *counter-reform* ordered by Mexico's president and implemented by the tripartite government of the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party), PAN (National Action Party) and PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution) via the "Pact for Mexico." This phony "reform" is in reality a capitalist attack on public education and teacher unionism. In fact, the combative Guerrero teachers are doing what the teachers of Mexico as a whole should be doing: waging an all-out battle to defend their rights and the welfare of their students. Guerrero is showing the way!

Enough of the lying talk of a supposed "dialogue"! This bosses' government, like its predecessors, carries out "dialogue" with riot clubs and bullets. Although it has made Elba Esther Gordillo, the now ex-president of the corporatist National Union of Education Workers (SNTE by its initials in Spanish), a scapegoat bureaucrat, its real goal is to destroy the independent teacher unionism that for the last quarter century has been a thorn in the side of the Mexican bourgeoisie. For that very reason, the Guerrero teachers must not be abandoned. A national education strike is necessary in order to defeat the repression and defend free public education.

The bourgeois media are endlessly vituperating against the strikers in Guerrero. They repeat the verdict of the federal secretary of government (interior minister) Miguel Ángel Osorio Chong that the protests "have gone too far." They demand that the state give the teachers "the treatment they deserve." In the face of their mobilizations, the press and TV are clamoring for blood. With a distinct taste of racism which they don't even bother to hide, they refer to the "vandals," to the barbarians who have come down out of the mountains to wipe out everything. (They are referring to the impoverished, largely indigenous population of Nahuatl, Tlapanec and Mixtec Indians of the La Montaña region of Guerrero from which many of the striking teachers come.)

The rebellious teachers are confronting a united ruling class. The main obstacle to win this struggle is *political*: it's necessary to break with all the capitalist parties and politicians. The Guerrero educators have already understood that they must wage the struggle not only against the PRI and PAN, but also against the PRD of Governor Ángel Aguirre. At the same time, it is necessary to break with the phony bourgeois "opposition" of Andrés Manuel López Obrador and his MORENA (Movement for National Regeneration), which seeks to channel the struggles "from below" into the dead-end of

parliamentary politics. He already did it with the electrical workers, and now he wants to do it with the teachers.

From Guerrero to Tijuana, From the Mountains to the Coast: For a National Strike in Defense of Public Education

Following the installation of a camp in Chilpancingo, the state capital of Guerrero, the CETEG aroused the ire of the bourgeoisie. After a few weeks, their struggle made the front pages of the national press when at the beginning of the spring (Holy Week) vacation they began blocking the Superhighway to the Sun, linking Mexico City to Acapulco. It's one thing to strike in the remote areas of the Costa Chica (in southeastern Guerrero), but it's something else again to impede access to toney resort areas like Punta Diamante and the Acapulco beaches. The PRD governor agreed to present a bill to reform the local law that would "take up" the concerns of the teachers. A hopeless illusion! The state legislature rejected the reform, and the teachers went back on the offensive.

Since the beginning of April, contingents of federal police arrived in Chilpancingo to carry out "training" maneuvers for "social containment." They formed up like Roman legions with their shields, marching in tight phalanxes. D-day came on April 5: with a force of over 1,000, the police pushed the teachers to the side of the highway, in the very place where on 12 December 2011 the Federal Police, backed up by state police, shot dead two students from the teacher training college at Aytzinapa. TV evening news programs praised the "clean and precise" repressive operation.

Nevertheless, the Guerrero teachers have continued with their mobilizations, blocking the superhighway at least once a week. On April 18, they marched on the local Congress to demand once again that the bill proposed by the CETEG be enacted in order to maintain the free, public character of education, to establish a state institute of teacher evaluation and to guarantee the teachers' labor rights. But the legislature fled to the Pacific port city, and on April 24 in a special session in the Acapulco convention center they approved a law to implement the federal "reform."

Like the Oaxaca teachers in Section 22 of the SNTE/CNTE with their Plan for the Transformation of Education in Oaxaca, the Guerrero teachers of CETEG sought to limit the reach of the anti-education law approved at the federal level by means of state laws that would recognize their rights. However, this road leads to a dead-end, given that it subordinates the struggle to what the political representatives of capital will vote for. As the Guerrero legislators have shown, this is a recipe for failure.



Noimex

Combative teachers of the CETEG march on capital of Guerrero, April 18. They must not be alone.

Meanwhile, in the states of Mexico [the state surrounding the Federal District of Mexico City], Morelos, Zacatecas, Durango, Tlaxcala and Coahuila, tens of thousands of teachers have begun mobilizations against the educational "reform" of the Pact for Mexico. In Michoacán, the students at the rural teachers colleges have again mobilized in defense of their schools, which the bourgeoisie wants to close (see "Defend the Rural Teacher Colleges," *El Internacionalista* supplement of November 2012). In the Federal District, the administration of the National University (UNAM) is seeking to impose a "reform" to the Colleges of Science and Humanities (junior colleges) with repressive police control on the campuses, sparking student opposition.

There are protests everywhere, as in past years, but only in Guerrero have they launched an unlimited strike. However, despite its great willingness to struggle, Guerrero alone cannot win in this war of capital against the teachers unions and public education. A national strike of *ALL* the educational sector is indispensable. This would aid in breaking the corporatist straitjacket which the SNTE imposes on the hundreds of thousands of educators that it regiments. And it could unleash a proletarian counteroffensive against the almost three decades of free fall in the living standards of Mexico's working people.

An "Educational Reform" Ordered by Imperialism

The counter-reform threatens the entire educational system. In primary and secondary schools, standardized tests (without any scientific or pedagogical value) will be used to carry out massive firings, above all of the dissident teachers. The schools themselves, financed according to the test scores, will have the "power" to seek alternative sources of funding. This opens the way for *de facto* privatization by imposing fees, and the closure of schools in the most impoverished areas which lose state funding and can't attract resources.

At the junior college (bachillerato) and

university level, the bourgeois assault intends to slash the number of available slots by sharply increasing tuition and fees and developing a model of bank loans to pay them (such as the Chilean students and workers have been fighting), which will saddle students with decades of debt. By turning education into a commodity rather than a democratic right, the access of the children of working people and poor families to higher education will be even more limited. And the reduction in the student body will provide a pretext for massively firing teaching personnel and administrative workers.

The Pact for Mexico, signed by PRI president Enrique Peña Nieto with the leaders of the two main "opposition" parties, the clerical reactionary PAN and the bourgeois nationalist PRD, was inaugurated with the education counter-reform. The bill approved by Congress in January was dictated by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. In 2010, President Felipe Calderón (of the PAN) signed an agreement with the OECD to "clearly define teaching standards" in order to "establish a national entrance exam and other evaluation tools" for hiring and firing teachers.¹ The was the beginning of the "reform" ordered by Peña Nieto.

Needless to say, the "agreement" with the OECD does not resolve any of the problems which beset education in this country. Not a word about the fact that public schools wage a daily battle to keep functioning with meager resources. That many schools in rural areas, as well as in marginalized urban areas, lack running water, lights, adequate ventilation, not to mention libraries, computers and other elementary teaching materials. That many students lack a sufficient diet of proteins and other nutrients, in a country in which, according to the government itself, 7.5 million people are suffering not just from hunger but from *famine conditions*.

¹ See the executive summary of the *Acuerdo de cooperación México-OCDE para mejorar la calidad de la educación de las escuelas mexicanas* at <http://www.oecd.org/edu/school/46216786.pdf>

Defend the Independent Teachers of Guerrero

Translated from *Revolución Permanente No. 2, May 2013.*

On April 23, the Guerrero state legislature approved in a fast-track procedure a state education “reform” in lockstep with that of PRI president Enrique Peña Nieto and the PRI-PAN-PRD federal government. The session was held in the Acapulco Convention Center where the legislators hid out in order to escape the siege of the state Congress in Chilpancingo by teachers of the State Coordinating Committee of Education Workers of Guerrero (CETEG). The next day there was an angry protest by the independent teachers against the headquarters of the parties and the government agencies responsible for the free-market counter-reform which aims at annihilating educators’ rights.

The enraged teachers went first to the offices of the National Action Party (PAN), near the zócalo (main square) of Chilpancingo, breaking the windows of the reception area and dragging out furniture. From there they proceeded to the offices of the Citizens Movement (MC, Movimiento Ciudadano, a minor bourgeois liberal party), where they also broke windows. They did the same in the offices of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), of Governor Ángel Aguirre Rivero, where in addition they set fire to some garbage piled up inside. They then attacked the state HQ complex of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) with shouts of “If we don’t get a solution, there will be a revolution!” and set off firecrackers, causing a fire. They ended up at a building of the state Education Department where once again they broke windows and set fire to some furniture that they hauled onto the street.

Among the organizations that were the object of the educators’ fury was the headquarters of the CTM (Confederation



Insurgent teachers in Chilpancingo, capital of the state of Guerrero, taking care of business at office of National Action Party (PAN), other ruling parties, government agencies and corporatist “unions” responsible for the capitalist counter-reform of education, April 25.

of Mexican Workers), the main corporatist “union” body in the country, which was located inside the PRI complex. And the next day a march of teacher college students from Ayotzinapa supported by the CETEG stoned the offices of Section 14 of the corporatist National Union of Education Workers (SNTE), which despite the arrest of its “president for life” Elba Esther Gordillo continues to act as a discipline agent of the state by supporting the “reform” that seeks to fire thousands of teachers. In the attacks on the offices of the governing parties and government agencies not one person was injured.

Immediately the storm of denunciations intensified from the bourgeois media and politicians against the independent teachers. The rulers of the capitalist state

denounced the “violence” and “acts of vandalism” in unison, demanding that the “State of Law” be implemented. This is the very same “State of Law” that slaughtered more than 90,000 people during the last six-year presidential term, and continues to murder with abandon under the presidency of Peña Nieto. Governor Aguirre Rivero, now with the PRD after a prior life in the PRI, ordered the arrest of two leaders of the CETEG, Minervino Morán and Gonzalo Juárez. For his part, Morán stressed that the teachers’ protests expressed the outrage and indignation caused by the actions of the state Congress.

The National Coordinating Committee of Education Workers (CNTE), to which the CETEG is affiliated and which brings

together teachers in rebellion against the murderous labor cops of the capitalist state of the SNTE (whose gunmen have killed more than 150 dissident teachers), referred to “acts of desperation.” On the other hand, Juan Díaz de la Torre, the new boss of the SNTE installed by the secretary of government Miguel Ángel Osorio Chong after agreeing to follow the instructions of President Peña Nieto, condemned the protests. In the face of this campaign of demonizing and repression, we call on all class-conscious workers to demand that the charges against the CETEG leaders be dropped.

The dissident teachers of Guerrero have shown incomparable courage during the two months of their strike. They are entirely right to aim their fury at the capitalist parties and corporatist labor bodies which serve the state – under PRD, PRI or PAN governments – as labor police. It would be interesting to know from the fake Trotskyist Grupo Espartaquista de México, which insists that the CTM and SNTE are workers unions, if it today defends the battle-hardened Guerrero teachers against capitalist repression, or if as the CTM “socialists” they are, they defend the hated SNTE against the fully justified rage of the Guerrero teachers.

For our part, while pointing out that the arrest of *La Maestra* (The Teacher) Gordillo serves Peña Nieto as the spearhead for imposing his capitalist educational counter-reform, the Grupo Internacionalista has called to “free the government agent Gordillo, so the teachers themselves can try her for murder.” Today, insisting on the need to break the straitjacket of corporatism and fighting for absolute independence from the bourgeois state, we add the call for *unconditional defense of the Guerrero teachers* against the onslaught of capital. ■

So what then does this “reform” base itself on? On the thesis that those responsible for the disastrous situation of education in Mexico are the teachers and their unions, especially those that are independent of control by the bourgeois state. Thus, according to the OECD, it is necessary to “open all teaching jobs to competition” and to “create periods of hiring and evaluation” by instituting temporary contracts which would facilitate firings. By means of “stimuli” for productivity (as if this was piecework production in a free trade zone maquiladora), they hope that teachers will stop fighting collectively in defense of their interests and thereby undercut the foundations of their unions.

The corporatist SNTE, which far from being a workers union is a government organization, signed together with Calderón the infamous Alliance for Educational Quality to implement the “agreement”/diktat of the OECD. This alliance is still intact, despite the jailing of the president-for-life of the SNTE. This was understood by the head of the OECD, José Ángel Gurría, a former finance minister under PRI president Ernesto Zedillo, who praised Peña Nieto for putting an end to “the practices and customs of the teachers union,” which he blamed for Mexico’s backwardness in educational matters, and for “eliminating union interference in the administration of resources dedicated to education” (*Excelsior*, 12 January).

The struggle to defend public education and the rights of education workers in

Mexico is at the forefront at the outset of the new six-year PRI presidency. Teachers and students want to fight. They admire the Guerrero teachers for resisting the onslaught of the Federal Police. Some wave red flags and make references to Marx and Lenin. But what they have so far not understood is that there is no (bourgeois) “democratic” solution to the assault on public education by capital, and that instead it is necessary to fight for *socialist revolution* in order to defeat it.

The government of Enrique Peña Nieto is directly attacking the constitutional right for free, secular public education. He is doing so as a subcontractor of Washington and Wall Street. Just as the Guerrero teachers cannot win alone against the PRI-PAN-PRD government, the OECD and other imperialist international organizations will not be defeated by a struggle limited to Mexico. It is necessary to extend the revolutionary struggle into the heartland of the imperialist beast, the United States, where teachers and students confront the same enemies as their Mexican comrades.

In order to wage this struggle, what’s needed is an internationalist party like Lenin’s Bolsheviks to place itself at the head of the exploited and oppressed in order to dispose of the capitalist system which today is systematically destroying the democratic gains of the past, even partial ones, such as those achieved in public education. This is the task to which the Grupo Internacionalista devotes its efforts. ■

Fake Trotskyists Can’t Tell the Difference Between a Workers Union and a Death Squad

SL on Corporatism in Mexico: Games Centrists Play

In implicit response to our articles printed here highlighting the struggle of the National Coordinating Committee of Education Workers (CNTE) in Mexico, *Workers Vanguard* (31 May), the newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S., published a lengthy screed titled “IG Chokes on Defense of Mexican Teachers Union.” We are accused of having a “union-busting line” for saying that the corporatist SNTE (National Education Workers Union) is an agency of state control of labor for preventing the establishment of genuine unions. Our one-sentence response is that the latter-day SL and WV can’t tell the difference between a workers union and a death squad, and are in fact alibiing the main union-busting agency of the capitalist state in Mexico.

We had asked if the SL group in Mexico, the GEM, defended the arrested teachers union leaders in Guerrero, since they were charged with instigating attacks not only on the ruling parties that enacted an anti-teacher education “reform,” but also on the CTM and SNTE pseudo-unions responsible for carrying out this attack on educators. The SL’s typically dishonest

reply never mentions the fact that the combative Guerrero teachers set fire to and stoned the offices of these corporatist labor outfits, or that there is mass opposition to these labor cops.

Contrary to the SL, the legacy of decades of corporatist state control of labor is still very much alive in Mexico. This past June 29, the SNTE national leadership ordered police in Chiapas to brutally break up the convention of its state affiliate because the dissident CNTE won control. Twenty-nine union members were arrested and over 200 bloodily beaten at the behest of what these centrists claim is a union.

A detailed response to the SL lies and slanders is available on our website, www.internationalist.org, where we show that the major struggles of Mexican labor have been to throw off the shackles of these corporatist labor agencies, and that the Grupo Internacionalista’s fight for union independence in Mexico is the same as the SL/GEM position before a series of expulsions in 1996 that led to the founding of the League for the Fourth International. ■

Why We Don't Support Unity, New Action or MORE

Build a Class-Struggle Opposition to the Sellout UFT Bureaucracy

By Class Struggle Education Workers/UFT

The following statement was issued in early April during union elections in the United Federation of Teachers. The CSEW is an opposition tendency politically supported by the Internationalist Group in New York City-area education unions.

Daniel De Leon called them “the labor lieutenants of the capitalist class.” He was referring to the bureaucrats who sit atop the unions, selling out the workers’ interests and bargaining away their rights in hopes of seeking favor with the bosses. If you want to see the labor bureaucracy at work today, just come on down to 52 Broadway to observe a Delegate Assembly of the United Federation of Teachers. (Sorry, you can’t be in the room, you’ll have to watch on CCTV from the 19th floor – so that no groans can be heard from the “peanut gallery” as the UFT tops pat themselves on the back while giving up another hard-won union gain.)

In the face of militant class battles – from the struggle for the eight-hour day by the anarchist Haymarket martyrs in 1886 to the 1912 Lawrence textile strike led by the syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World – the role of the labor bureaucracy of the American Federation of Labor was to undercut and sabotage the struggle. If the employers were trying to shove a toxic deal down the workers’ throats, the “labor fakers,” as the Wobblies derisively called them, were there to spoon feed the poison.

So it is today, only squared, because the stranglehold of the bureaucracy is so tight that there are few labor battles to sell out. Usually, the bigwigs of the AFL-CIO give in and give up without a fight. Occasionally they call a strike that they have no strategy to win, in order to let the ranks blow off steam. When things get really bad, at most they do some grandstanding, like in Wisconsin in 2011, then call it off at the crucial moment in favor of voting for the Democrats who, like the Republicans, are assaulting workers’ rights – they just want to preserve the unions themselves so they can get campaign donations and phone-banking at election time.

The name of the bureaucrats’ game is class collaboration, cutting deals with the bosses, supporting their political parties, joining their “blue ribbon” commissions, etc. But class collaboration didn’t build the unions, *class struggle* did. And it will take hard class struggle to save the unions from the bipartisan capitalist assault on labor and the working class that has been underway for over three decades. Facing the web of anti-labor laws that hamstring labor, the bureaucracy can only be fought by a *class-struggle opposition* that takes on the partner parties of capital and their state.

So here we are at election time in the United Federation of Teachers. The “Unity Caucus” is running Michael Mulgrew for

reelection as UFT president on a platform of more of the same. So is the me-too “New Action” caucus, which once upon a time, long, long ago, was a semi-opposition that has since been bought off with a few seats on the executive board. Meanwhile, the Movement of Rank-and-file Educators (MORE) is running Julie Cavanagh on a program calling for “more” union democracy, “less top-down bureaucracy” and a laundry list of reforms.

Let’s look more closely to see where they stand. First up is Unity, which is not really a political caucus inside the union standing on a series of principles – it’s a bureaucratic machine, the instrument of the leadership to keep the UFT ranks in line. And it is a formidable machine. It’s truly a sight to behold: 900 hands going up in unison at the D.A. to vote against whatever the opposition proposes, when most Unity delegates don’t even have a clue what the issue is. No matter, they’ve got their perks and they know their role: they’re cogs in the machine. Advice for would-be bureaucrats: if you’re looking to be a cog, Unity is the ticket for you.

Over the last three decades, the UFT and its parent, the American Federation of Teachers, have gone along with just about every attack on teaching and public education. AFT founder Albert Shanker signed on to the Reaganite “A Nation at Risk” report in 1983, allying with business leaders out to destroy teacher union power and milk public schools for profit. Faced with the onslaught of billionaire-financed charter schools, the AFT/UFT leaders announced charters were Shanker’s idea. Instead of fighting to defeat them, their response was DY0: they negotiated contracts eliminating key job protections with Green Dot charter schools and set up UFT charters.

The 2005 UFT contract was a huge sellout of teachers’ rights: in exchange for a raise, it agreed to scrap the seniority transfer system and create an “Open Market” for hiring. This notoriously discriminates against older and higher paid workers, teachers from city schools or anyone not meeting the Ivy League “Teach for America” profile. Soon black and Latino teachers were disappearing from the system.

The UFT tops also backed the now-discredited, Gates-financed “small schools movement” which broke up the comprehensive high schools, and the strong union structures within them. Instead they set up multiple resource-deprived “learning communities” competing for space, installed a whole new layer of highly paid principals, and deprived inner city kids of art, gym, sports and anything but low-level 3Rs rote learning.

The UFT leadership’s concept of “struggle” is going toe-to-toe with the DOE with a million-dollar ad buy on TV. Their idea of fighting the onslaught of

privatization, charter schools and gutting of public education is hobbing and nobbing with Democratic legislators (and the occasional Republican) in the state capitol. But now they have a huge problem facing an anti-union agenda being pushed by a unified capitalist class, from the Business Roundtable and billionaires like Bill Gates and NYC mayor Michael Bloomberg to Democratic president Barack Obama, his schools “czar” Arne Duncan and Democratic governor Andrew Cuomo.

Mulgrew, like his mentor Randi Weingarten (now at the AFT helm in D.C.), has a methodology: split the difference and go along with the rulers’ demands, trying to minimize the damage. They may be able to win the odd court suit and play off the differences between the parties in Albany. They may be the object of smear jobs by Fox Television and in the union-hating tabloids. But here we are facing a united ruling-class offensive with the Democrats leading the charge, and in that situation the Unity gang is incapable of putting up even a semblance of opposition. Foot-dragging and influence peddling only go so far.

So today Unity’s role is to ram the new teacher evaluations, the Danielson framework, the Common Core “standards” – all of which the AFT/UFT leadership helped develop – down the throats of teachers. These teacher evals linked to student test scores scapegoat educators for the increasing poverty and ingrained racism in this racist capitalist society, as well as for failures of public education which are directly linked to the capitalists’ attempts to destroy it, and to milk what’s left for profits. Bush’s No Child Left Behind has become “No Vendor Left Behind” and Obama’s Race to the Top has become a race to the bottom, with teachers and kids in last place.

Mulgrew & Co. claim they have built all sorts of safeguards into the teacher evals, and the new system will be more “objective” than in the past when everything was up to the whim of the school principal. Nonsense. The system is being set up to go after “bad teachers,” as if that were the problem facing education today. The new “standards” using the oh-so-scientific Danielson “rubric” are rigged to label 7% of all teachers, every year, as “needs improvement” (i.e., failing), which will mean firing thousands of experienced and dedicated teachers nationwide, destroying their careers and their lives. Look at the hundreds axed by Michelle Rhee in Washington, D.C.

As for the kids, the drop out rates will soar, and those who can stick it out will be fed a diet of rote learning and test prep where all knowledge is reduced to a multiple choice answer, fill in the bubble, and there will be no room to think and write creatively . . . or critically. Which is the point, as the aim of the so called “education reform”

movement is to bust the unions and train an obedient workforce to keep U.S. capitalism “competitive.”

Politically, the UFT leadership goes back to Al Shanker, a virulent anti-Communist and member of Max Shachtman’s Social Democrats U.S.A., which supplied a number of top officials for the Reagan administration. Shanker supported the bombing of Vietnam in the 1960s, the UFT was up to its neck in the AIFLD (American Institute for Free Labor Development) which aided the 1973 Pinochet coup that smashed unions in Chile, and it funneled CIA dollars to bankroll Polish Solidarność, spearheading counterrevolution in East Europe in the ’80s. Today the AFT goes after historian Howard Zinn for opposing the wanton atom-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (see *American Teacher*, Winter 2013).

And, of course, the UFT/AFT supported Democrat Barack Obama for president even as Obama publicly stressed that he had no differences on education with Republican candidates John McCain in 2008 and Mitt Romney in 2012. They are all teacher-bashers and would-be teacher union-busters, and *they must be fought politically*.

On New Action: not much to be said. The remnants of a caucus once strong in the high schools, NA was supported by the Communist Party, but after years on the outside it did a turnaround, chucked out the CP supporters, and hooked up with Unity. It supports Mulgrew for president in return for a seat at the UFT Executive Board table. (BTW, teachers may get crumbs from the bosses’ tables, but the e-board serves up a sumptuous spread.) NA’s election brochure says: “Vote New Action! Independent, Progressive, Influential.” That’s a laugh and a half. NA jumps when Unity tells it to, it hasn’t done anything progressive in years, and its “influence” is nil. Anyone who’s been at an e-board meeting knows Mulgrew treats New Action like a doormat.

That brings us to the Movement of Rank and File Educators. MORE is modeled on the Caucus of Rank-and-File Educators (CORE) which has led the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) since 2010. MORE has been put together from a series of opposition and activist groups in and around the UFT, including ICE (Independent Community of Educators), GEM (Grassroots Education Movement), NYCoRE (New York Collective of Radical Educators) and some remnants of TJC (Teachers for a Just Contract). MORE’s idea is to build an all-purpose opposition caucus that would unite everyone, and therefore it stands for nothing in particular.

The entire recent activity of MORE is to get elected. With supporters of just about every would-be socialist and even ostensible communist *reformist* group in NYC, it ties itself into knots out of fear of red-baiting. Actually, we were struck by how

Macaulay War College?

War Criminal Petraeus, Out of CUNY!

The following leaflet was issued by the CUNY Internationalist Clubs upon learning of the appointment of ex-general David Petraeus, a certified war criminal, to teach a course at an elite college of the City University of New York. A petition against this outrageous appointment is circulating.

On June 27, Petraeus was interviewed by TV host Charlie Rose at the 92nd Street Y. The Internationalist Group, CUNY Internationalist Clubs and Class Struggle Education Workers participated in a picket of this public adulation of a man responsible for torture and mass murder.

APRIL 25 – Yesterday, the news spread through the City University of New York like wildfire: CUNY's Macaulay Honors College has appointed former general David Petraeus – ex-commander of the Iraq/Afghanistan wars and former CIA chief – as visiting professor of public policy in the university's Macaulay Honors College. One faculty member said, "I did not realize Macaulay is a war college."

Some asked, is this a sick joke? No: it's serious – deadly serious. *David Petraeus is a war criminal.* What is he going to teach – seminars on "enhanced interrogation," drone strikes and massacre by helicopter gunship?

Iraq war commander: The images shocked the world: a video (www.collateral-murder.com) released by WikiLeaks showed Apache attack helicopters mowing down five unarmed civilians in Iraq, including the father of two children who were wounded while sitting in a van, as well as two Reuters journalists. Accused of releasing this and other materials on U.S. war crimes and dirty tricks, PFC Bradley Manning is rotting in the brig. Gen. Petraeus was commander of the "coalition" forces during the imperialist onslaught that produced this and innumerable other war crimes.

"Systematic campaign of torture and



Internationalist photo

Internationalist protesters at June 27 picket of former spy chief Petraeus.

atrocities": We've all seen the photos from Abu Ghraib. Now, an extensive report in the London *Guardian* (6 March) based on a 15-month investigation together with the BBC, on "Pentagon's Link to Iraqi Torture Centers," headlined: "Exclusive: General David Petraeus and 'dirty wars' veteran behind commando units implicated in detainee abuse." *The Week* (London, 7 March) summarized: "General David Petraeus, the former commander of US forces in Iraq, [was] directly involved in a systematic campaign of torture and atrocity" carried out by "paramilitary units connected to the

Iraqi Ministry of the Interior."

Afghanistan war commander: As commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan in 2010-11, Petraeus was in charge of numerous bombings in which hundreds of Afghan civilians – including whole families attending weddings – were slain...

CIA chief: As head of the CIA, Petraeus was responsible for Obama's program of "targeted killings" by drones, which in Pakistan alone has killed more than 200 children. From Vietnam to Chile and Central America, the infamous spy agency is synonymous with mass murder in the ser-

MORE put a red-white-and-blue "Your Vote Counts" button on their web page. For any real red, this flag-waving symbolism calls up the images of torture prisons from Abu Ghraib to Guantánamo, of CIA "rendition" of prisoners, of Obama's killer drones, of U.S. imperialism seeking to enforce world domination. Politically, MORE is straight liberal, as well as including the stray Republican. Radical it ain't.

MORE is essentially an election vehicle. In the biggest recent labor struggle in New York City involving education workers, the month-long school bus strike, MORE was essentially MIA (see the February 16 CSEW leaflet, "Who Knifed NYC School Bus Drivers in the Back"). (So, too, was the UFT leadership, to no one's surprise.) As noted, it has a grab-bag platform with planks about "more" of good things (art, music, solidarity, rank-and-file leadership), and "less" of bad things (overpaid union leaders, backroom deals, charters, high-stakes testing). It talks of "social

justice unionism," but it's mainly vague calls for "No inequity, discrimination and segregation."

MORE doesn't take hard positions. It talks of "no inequity," but how about *equality* and an *end to elite "gifted and talented" programs and schools*, and instead improving the quality of schools for all? It objects to criminalizing students but doesn't call for *cops out of the schools* (no accident, since some in MORE support cops in the schools). It says it wants "an explicit UFT policy against school closings, the proliferation of charter schools, and forced co-locations..." That's nice, but how does it propose to *stop* this? No answer. It calls for "restoring highly qualified veteran ATR teachers to permanent positions before hiring inexperienced lower-salaried teachers," rather than demanding *full-time positions for all ATRs*. And so on.

On charters, MORE and "Occupy the DOE" when it was around had a number of gimmicks at the mayor's puppet Panel on Educational Policy, with hand-puppets

and songs, mic checks and skits, Superman capes at the *Waiting for Superman* movie where they called themselves the "real reformers." But this kind of theater will not stop the union-busting assault on public education we are facing today. For that it is necessary to mobilize real power in class struggle, to confront capitalism, the capitalist parties and the capitalist state. MORE does not and will not do that.

There is not a mention in MORE platform of capitalism (only the current euphemism, "corporate"), nothing about the Democratic Party, nothing about the no-strike Taylor Law, much less about defying it. Of course not, because attacking the Democrats would scare off potential voters and striking would be "illegal." (In fact, there is no mention of the dreaded "s-word" in the MORE platform, nor did MORE supporters raise this when contract demands were discussed at the Delegate Assembly.) At MORE rallies there are chants against Republican Bloomberg, but nothing against

vice of counterrevolution. In line with the Democratic/Republican war party's endless colonial carnage abroad, "The Company" helps shred the most basic civil liberties "at home."

Widespread outrage at CUNY and beyond has greeted the announcement of Petraeus' Macaulay appointment. What's needed, now, is *mass protest*. The Internationalist Clubs call on students, faculty, staff and campus workers to: **Drive war criminal Petraeus out of CUNY with protest and exposure!**

Back in 2005, we initiated the campaign which spiked the sinister "Homeland Security" program at BMCC. At Bronx Community College we led protests that ousted military recruiters. Today, mass protest against Petraeus can also help root out CUNY's war contracts at CCNY (where a Colin Powell Center was established in "honor" of the commander of "Desert Slaughter" I).

The Petraeus appointment is the latest outrage committed by the CUNY administration and Board of Trustees, and comes on the heels of the truly obscene golden (more accurately, platinum) parachute for retiring Chancellor Goldstein, richly rewarded by the ruling class after getting a \$490,000/year salary and \$90,000 housing allowance – for presiding over the destruction of the last remnants of open admissions, a string of tuition hikes, poverty pay for adjuncts, and the notorious Pathways program.

Rather than plead for the Trustees to "consider" the opinion of those who work and study here, we say: Abolish the administration and Board of Trustees; CUNY should be run by democratically elected councils of students, teachers and workers. It's high time to make this happen – **before they turn the City University into one big "war college"!** ■

the Democrat Obama who is spearheading the war on public education.

MORE, CORE and groups like them may get some votes, and may even win here and there, but they cannot lead the class struggle that's needed. Moreover, once in office, such reform caucuses are no qualitative improvement over the business union bureaucrats who preceded them. Sometimes, as with the deeply corrupt regime of Marilyn Stewart in the Chicago Teachers Union, the reformers led by Karen Lewis can clean things up. But CORE in power has gone along with the anti-union policies of the Democrats just as Stewart did (and Weingarten does in the AFT and Mulgrew in the UFT).

Yes, the CTU led by CORE called a strike, which was heroic. But then when they were facing the threat of a court injunction, they called off the strike and rammed a contract down the throats of the CTU delegates who had earlier rejected it. Then they endorsed Obama. CORE in power in Chicago is as much part of the labor bureaucracy as

Unity is in New York. And neither have a program that can win lasting gains, or even defend existing ones, much less defeat the labor haters in power.

Class Struggle Education Workers stands for a very different program. The CSEW not only opposes corporate education “reform,” we say forthrightly that this entire program is not about reforming or improving education, it’s about union-busting (another word not to be found in the MORE platform). The CSEW denounces the *racist* school closings and the “educational colonialism” and apartheid of the charter schools. We call for union action and programs to recruit black, Latino and Asian teachers to stop the DOE’s deliberate “whitening” of the teaching force. But MORE doesn’t want to touch the question of race, for fear that it is “divisive.”

The CSEW has called to *occupy closing schools*, not symbolically like the liberal/populist Occupy Wall Street movement but literally, with the support of the entire city labor movement and oppressed populations, to stop the forces who would declare our schools, teachers and students to be failures in order to carry out their wrecking operation. Instead of calls to modify mayoral control (Unity’s position, after having been instrumental in bringing it about) or vague calls to replace it with more local control (MORE), the CSEW calls for *teacher-student-parent-worker control of the schools* to rip them out of the hands of the Department of Education and its capitalist masters.

Class Struggle Education Workers not only calls for an end to “Stop and Frisk,” we marched in Brooklyn in the face of the police occupation after the murder of Kimani Gray calling for “Cops Out of East Flatbush, Cops Out of the Schools!” During the recent school bus strike, the CSEW was repeatedly present on the picket lines from day one, while a CSEW supporter went to the UFT e-board and put forward a motion at the Delegate Assembly (defeated by Unity) to invite a speaker from striking ATU Local 1181 and to organize a solidarity mobilization of all NYC workers unions.

In the past when we put forward motions to occupy closing schools or to prepare for strike action, the Unity gang simply ruled this out of order. The CSEW calls to oust the bureaucrats and break with the Democrats, to build a workers party that fights for a workers government. Yet when a CSEW supporter rose in the UFT D.A. to oppose endorsement of any Democratic or Republican or capitalist candidate, not only did Mulgrew oppose this, *there was no support from MORE*. The bottom line is that such reform caucuses which don’t challenge capitalism cannot prepare the membership for the struggles we face.

We need to build a class-struggle opposition in the UFT and all unions. ■

Reforma...

sigue de la página 24

verano de 2012). No obstante, Obama fue reelegido con más del 70 por ciento del voto latino, siendo que muchos tenían la esperanza de que favorecería a los inmigrantes en su segundo mandato. Pero la iniciativa bipartidista del Senado que Obama apoya es un monstruo.

Las 1198 páginas de la iniciativa S. 744 del senado incluyen:

- la construcción de 1,120 kilómetros adicionales de muro en la frontera (además de los más de mil que ya ex-

isten) a lo largo de los 3,300 kilómetros de la frontera con México, junto con 3,600 millones de dólares para comprar *drones* y otros equipos de vigilancia;

- la contratación de más de 20 mil agentes para la Patrulla Fronteriza, que ha matado a al menos 15 inmigrantes y mexicanos al otro lado de la frontera, sin que uno solo de sus efectivos haya enfrentado cargos;
- el incremento y aceleración (mediante juicios masivos) de los procesos criminales y la expulsión de los que cruzan la frontera;
- la exigencia de que *todos* los trabajadores en EE.UU. (actualmente más de 156 millones) sean sometidos a un chequeo, mediante el sistema plagado de errores E-Verify, para averiguar si cumplen los requisitos para ser empleados;
- la traída de hasta 180 mil trabajadores altamente calificados y 200 mil “trabajadores huéspedes” no calificados al año sujetos a una situación de peonaje, obligados para con sus patrones, con el efecto de reducir los salarios en EE.UU.;
- la eliminación de las visas familiares y su remplazo con 250 mil visas “de mérito” para inmigrantes con alto nivel educativo, con preferencias para empresarios, niñeras y refugiados tibetanos;
- la exigencia a todos los inmigrantes que busquen la residencia de que llenen solicitudes con detallados datos personales, se sometan a revisiones de antecedentes y a un escaneo biométrico, que paguen 2 mil dólares *por persona* por concepto de multas y cargos, además de impuestos atrasados y de un cargo adicional para cubrir todos los costos del procesamiento y chequeo;
- el mantenerlos en un limbo durante *diez años* bajo estatus “provisional” o probatorio, durante el cual no pueden estar sin empleo por más de 60 días y deben tener ingresos anuales que estén por lo menos un 25 por ciento por encima del nivel oficial de pobreza.
- La exigencia de “90 por ciento de efectividad” en el control de la frontera con México, de acuerdo con los criterios de una Southern Border Security Commission (Comisión para la Seguridad de la Frontera Sur) que incluiría a gobernadores de los estados fronterizos, antes de que a se otorgue a ningún inmigrante provisional el estatus de residente permanente;
- Que entonces, *en caso* de que se les otorgue la residencia permanente, lo que no está garantizado, empleen otros tres años para volverse ciudadanos naturalizados. Si se los rechaza, entonces serán “removidos”.

El procedimiento en su totalidad es tan complejo, azaroso y lleno de trampas que se estima que entre 4 y 6 millones de los 11 millones de inmigrantes indocumentados *no conseguirán legalizarse*, ni siquiera “provisoriamente”. Quiquiera cuyo nombre aparezca en las notoriamente inexactas “bases de datos sobre las pandillas”, estará fuera. Los trabajadores de la construcción y otros que tengan trabajos estacionales tampoco lo lograrán. ¿Es usted una madre soltera con dos hijos que gane menos de \$19,500 dólares en 2013 (con un sueldo de \$9.75 la hora, 40 horas a la semana, 50 semanas al año)? Ya perdió. ¿Le pagan por debajo de la mesa?

No hay modo. Haga cuentas: para la mayor parte de los trabajadores indocumentados, particularmente los millones esclavizados durante largas jornadas con salarios de talleres del sudor, no salen.

Promoción de las ganancias patronales, no de los derechos de los inmigrantes

La S.744 no es una “reforma migratoria integral” para garantizar derechos iguales a los millones de trabajadores nacidos en el exterior que están sujetos a la persecución racista a pesar de que juegan un papel fundamental en la economía norteamericana. Se trata de una *ley para la represión*, para la “seguridad fronteriza”, para “fortalecer económica y militarmente” a EE.UU., proveyendo a los capitalistas de más trabajadores altamente regulados y con bajos sueldos, entregando a la policía información de millones de residentes de los cuales carecen de registros. *Para millones de empeñados trabajadores que ganan bajos sueldos, no se trata de una “vía hacia la ciudadanía”, sino de un laberinto que conduce hacia una deportación acelerada*. Esto porque la ICE ahora sabrá dónde encontrarte.

Entretanto, los contratistas militares “están salivando por la reforma migratoria, que es lo mejor que les ha pasado para sus negocios desde Irak” (*New York Times*, 9 de junio. Raytheon, General Dynamics y Lockheed Martin (cámaras, radares), Northrup Grumman (sensores de rastreo) y General Atomics (drones) están negociando ansiosamente su tajada de dólares en el negocio de la seguridad fronteriza. El senador demócrata por Vermont, Patrick Leahy, señaló que la construcción del muro fronterizo “se lee como si fuera una lista de deseos navideños para Haliburton”, cuya empresa subsidiaria para la construcción, la KBR, construyó el complejo carcelario de Guantánamo. Tampoco hay que olvidar a la industria carcelaria privada que ha obtenido ganancias enormes de los campos de concentración para inmigrantes.

A pesar de todo esto, los medios en español se congratularon. Para *La Opinión* de Los Ángeles, la reforma migratoria equivale a haber “Superado el primer escollo”. Para *El Diario-La Prensa* de Nueva York, “Senado cumple”.

Políticos latinos se felicitaban: el congresista demócrata por Illinois, Luis Gutiérrez, la proclamó como una victoria y llamó a incrementar la presión sobre la Cámara de Representantes controlada por los republicanos. Grupos de derechos de los inmigrantes vinculados al Partido demócrata, como la New York Immigration Coalition, dijeron que la iniciativa de ley “lleva el país un paso adelante en la vía hacia la ciudadanía”, expresando sin embargo algunas “preocupaciones”. Grupos de presión de políticos hispanos como LULAC y MAPA ondean la bandera norteamericana.

Pero para muchos defensores de los derechos de los inmigrantes, la enmienda Hoeven-Corker que duplica el tamaño

de la Patrulla Fronteriza fue la gota que derramó el vaso. Presente.org dijo que la enmienda “marca una línea definitiva en la arena” y que “ya no vamos a soportar más el enfocar a la reforma migratoria según el esquema ‘seguridad fronteriza primero’”. La Immigrant Solidarity Network reportó un sentimiento de alarma ampliamente difundida. Catherine Tactaquin de la National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights declaró: “Éste no es el tipo de legislación y de acuerdos que podemos apoyar”. Hamid Khan, miembro del consejo de la NIRR, dijo que la iniciativa del senado sirve al “la industria de vigilancia” y equivale a la “legitimación del estado policíaco”.

Al cortejar a los republicanos, los demócratas corren el riesgo de perder a los inmigrantes. Monami Maulic de Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM), organización que representa a los inmigrantes surasiáticos en Nueva York, dijo que esto es “usar a la inmigración como excusa para fortalecer un estado de seguridad nacional” para “preparar la implementación de un sistema y una base de datos de identidad nacional”. Gerald Lenoir de la Black Alliance for Just Immigration dijo que ésta “intenta codificar la represión en la frontera” y “hará que millones de inmigrantes indocumentados con bajos salarios no puedan acceder” a la legalización. Bill Chandler, veterano organizador sindical de la Mississippi Immigrants Rights Alliance, dijo que la iniciativa “beneficia a los patrones, no a los trabajadores”.

Particularmente afectados son aquellos que viven en las comunidades fronterizas que ya viven bajo la bota de la policía militarizada de la Patrulla Fronteriza. La Coalición de Derechos Humanos y otros 14 grupos del área de Tucson, declararon que los 20 años de política migratoria de “control fronterizo primero” son “directamente responsables de que más de 2,500 hombres, mujeres y niños hayan muerto en el desierto de Arizona”. La Coalición pregunta enfáticamente:

“¿A qué costo se seguirá haciendo concesiones? ¿Al de miles de muertes más en la frontera? ¿Al de que nuestras comunidades se conviertan en una zona de guerra o en un estado policíaco?...

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Este precio es demasiado alto y pedimos a nuestros partidarios y aliados que se nos sumen en la denuncia de este ‘consenso’ y exijan que el Senado comience nuevamente un genuino proyecto de reforma, uno que no haga que la política juegue con nuestras vidas”.

Pero por muy iracunda que sea su retórica, su propósito no consiste en más que presionar a los demócratas. La realidad es que, como los liberales y los burócratas sindicales, los grupos de presión a favor de los derechos de los migrantes no tienen a quién más apelar toda vez que confinan su lucha a los marcos del capitalismo.

La izquierda atrapada en la “reforma” migratoria de Obama

Lo mismo vale para la mayor parte de las organizaciones de la izquierda supuestamente socialista, que habitualmente se ponen a la cola de varias organizaciones sin fines de lucro, ONGs e iglesias para hablar en nombre de los inmigrantes. Los izquierdistas más “moderados” apoyan abiertamente la “reforma migratoria” bipartidista. Así, el patrioter Partido Comunista USA (CPUSA) —que llamó a votar por Obama— cita “al presidente” extensamente y felicita a los dirigentes sindicales que impulsaron la iniciativa senatorial, incluidos sus llamados a favor de “fronteras salvas y seguras” (*People’s World*, 22 de junio). Para “derrotar a los extremistas de derecha”, el dirigente del CPUSA Sam Webb llama por una “coalición expansiva” no sólo con los demócratas, sino “incluso con algunos republicanos moderados”.

Por su parte, el Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) publicó un artículo con el encabezado “La reforma: cierto alivio, aunque al servicio de los intereses empresariales” (*Liberation*, 8 de mayo de 2013). A pesar de lanzar unas pocas críticas a los demócratas, afirma que “La iniciativa... en su forma actual, podría ofrecer considerable alivio a las comunidades inmigrantes que han estado luchando durante años por la legalización”. En realidad, la iniciativa de ley del senado *victimizará* a las comunidades inmigrantes. Al mismo tiempo que anuncia su propia e imaginaria “Iniciativa Justicia Inmigrante 2013”, el PSL sostiene que “el movimiento debe fortalecerse y agitar al Congreso para conseguir la reforma que los inmigrantes necesitan”.

Por supuesto, los miembros del PSL saben perfectamente bien que el Congreso, representante de los intereses del capital, no legislará la “reforma que los inmigrantes necesitan”. Pero esto es consistente con su respuesta a la elección en 2008 del demócrata Obama, cuando el PSL escribió: “Lo que se necesita es un programa claro enfocado en lo que el nuevo gobierno debería hacer para resolver las necesidades de los trabajadores; para satisfacer las expectativas que su campaña ha creado” (*Liberation*, 21 de noviembre de 2008). La oferta de estos estalinistas reformistas se reduce a la política de presión “combativa” en el marco de la política electoral capitalista, que cínicamente refuerza las falsas expectativas de las masas en lugar de decirles la verdad.

Los ex camaradas del PSL en el Workers World Party (WWP) han adoptado en esta ocasión una posición ligeramente más crítica, al encabezar su periódico con el título de “‘Reforma’ migratoria desenmascarada” (*Workers World*, 2 de mayo de 2013). El artículo critica a los que calificarían a los “plantones, ocupaciones o huelgas” como “excesivos o ultraizquierdistas”. Más allá de las florituras retóricas, el artículo única-

mente llama por una vaga “legalización”. Pero los programas de trabajo esclavo de los “trabajadores huéspedes” constituyen también una forma de “legalización”. Naturalmente, no llaman a romper con el Partido Demócrata. Desde los días en que era dirigido por Sam Marcy, la marca registrada del WWP es ofrecer sus servicios para organizar manifestaciones “izquierdistas” a favor de los demócratas liberales.

Es el oportunismo, no el ultraizquierdismo (la patología de radicales que se abstienen de intervenir en la lucha de la clase obrera), la característica distintiva de Workers World. Lejos de dirigir acciones clasistas combativas en defensa de los derechos de los inmigrantes, la idea que tiene el WWP acerca de una acción obrera consiste en cederse con burócratas sindicales como en la Coalición Primero de Mayo de Nueva York. Y como sus compañeros marcyistas del PSL, *Workers World* (13 de noviembre de 2008) proclamó que “Millones en las calles sellaron la victoria de Obama” y sostuvo que “tal efusión de las masas, particularmente personas oprimidas de color, merece la plena solidaridad del movimiento”. Pero una vez en el gobierno, Obama comenzó a deportar a los inmigrantes con ganas.

Del cinismo al delirio: en lo concerniente a la inmigración, como en otros temas, la apelación que hace la izquierda oportunista a las ilusiones de las masas daría la impresión de que se trata de un tipo de inocencia senil. Una interminable guerra imperialista y la concomitante represión racista “en casa” han hecho de la vida un infierno para millones de inmigrantes indocumentados en este país, al mismo tiempo que se echan por la borda los derechos de todos. Sin embargo, el Primero de Mayo de 2013, *Workers Voice*, publicado por seguidores de difunto aventurero seudotrotskista Nahuel Moreno, sacaron un volante con el título de “La reforma migratoria de Obama: ¿está a punto de hacerse realidad el ‘sueño americano’?” ¡¿En serio?! La respuesta es “no”.

Entretanto, la International Socialist Organization promete explicar en *Socialist Worker* (17 de junio de 2013) todo “lo que hay que saber acerca de la ‘reforma’ migratoria”. El artículo ofrece una larga lista de lo que está mal con la S. 744 y sostiene que “no es una reforma genuina, ya no digamos parcial”. Es cierto. Sin embargo, su conclusión es que hay que llamar a “reactivar las movilizaciones a favor de los derechos de los inmigrantes” y a que “un movimiento social basado en la defensa de los derechos de los inmigrantes impulse hacia adelante el proceso, hacia una resolución más justa y humana”. Sin embargo, muchas marchas no van a detener a los esfuerzos de los reaccionarios visceralmente antiinmigrantes y del gobierno ávido de fortalecer la militarización y ampliar las ganancias empresariales.

Más allá de ello, es preciso preguntarse qué *desactivó* las luchas a favor de los derechos de los inmigrantes. La respuesta es obvia: las falsas esperanzas que despertó la campaña electoral del demócrata Obama en 2008 desviaron las energías de las calles hacia las casillas electorales. Y para eso, la ISO, como la mayor parte de la izquierda seudoesocialista, tiene una gran responsabilidad, tras haber ilustrado las primeras planas de su revista con retratos de Obama y la consigna de “Yes we can! ¡Sí se puede!” (la consigna electoral del candidato demócrata). Pero incluso cuando millones de inmigrantes y de defensores

de sus derechos estaban en las calles en 2006, sus dirigentes querían presionar a los políticos capitalistas, no desplegar el poder de los trabajadores inmigrantes.

Por último, está un grupo centrista, la League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP), que con una gran dosis de amnesia histórica intenta falsamente hacerse pasar como trotskista. La LRP critica correctamente al grueso de los reformistas por sus vagas consignas como la de “legalización”. Pero ¿cuál es la alternativa que propone la LRP? De manera enfática *no* llama por plenos derechos de ciudadanía para todos los inmigrantes y, en cambio, se pronuncia a favor de una “amnistía para todos los inmigrantes” (*LRP Bulletin*, verano de 2013). Pero la solicitud de *amnistía* es un llamado a que se perdone a alguien que ha cometido un crimen, y los *inmigrantes indocumentados no son criminales*. Como escribió un joven inmigrante a la LRP:

“La amnistía es dar una disculpa, un perdón político. Si fuéramos a pedir una amnistía, entonces tendría que aceptar la misma línea de pensamiento de los racistas que dicen que soy un criminal. Yo no soy un criminal y, por lo tanto, no necesito pedir que me disculpen o que me amnistíen los racistas capitalistas, sino que en cambio, *exijo plenos derechos de ciudadanía*.”

Con su solicitud de “amnistía”, la LRP no sólo adopta la terminología de los derechistas antiinmigrantes, sino que se pone a la derecha de la Suprema Corte de EE.UU. que reconoce que vivir o trabajar en Estados Unidos sin los papeles requeridos *no es un crimen*, sino cuando mucho una infracción civil. Pero uno tiene que preguntarse por qué demonios una organización de izquierda que dice ser socialista presentaría en primer lugar una consigna así de degradante. La respuesta es que la LRP la adoptó en 2006, junto con todos los demás grupos oportunistas, puesto que era la línea que defendía los grupos burgueses en defensa de los inmigrantes a cuya cola se querían poner, y que a su vez estaban a la cola del Partido Demócrata.

Mientras que los oportunistas trafiquen con la *colaboración de clases* y fortalezcan vanas esperanzas en la reforma del capitalismo, los marxistas defendemos un programa de *lucha de clases* que conduzca

a la revolución socialista. En las marchas los contingentes internacionalistas corean la consigna de “*No rogamus, exigimus, ¡plenos derechos de ciudadanía para todos los inmigrantes!*” Además, el Grupo Internacionalista presenta e intenta implementar un programa de lucha de clases para los trabajadores tanto inmigrantes como nacidos en EE.UU., al llamar por *movilizaciones sindicales y de trabajadores inmigrantes en contra de los ataques racistas y las redadas*; por la *sindicalización de los trabajadores inmigrantes*; por la *derrota del imperialismo norteamericano* en sus guerras; a romper con los demócratas y a *forjar un partido obrero revolucionario*.

En años recientes, millones de trabajadores inmigrantes han marchado en las calles, realizado paros laborales y traído de vuelta el Primero de Mayo a Estados Unidos para exigir igualdad de derechos. Los inmigrantes han estado en la primera línea de luchas sindicales en contra de los salarios de miseria y los despidos en masa. Sin embargo, la actual *contrarreforma* migratoria no es una respuesta a sus demandas, sino más bien la continuación del ataque contra los inmigrantes a manos de los capitalistas que súper explotan su trabajo y de los políticos capitalistas que promueven la reacción xenófoba. En lugar de doblegarse ante la histeria por “fronteras seguras”, *debe haber protestas masivas en contra de la “reforma migratoria” antiinmigrante*.

Si el Congreso apruebe la S. 744 o alguna otra legislación migratoria (lo que dista de estar decidido), sería mala noticia para los inmigrantes. Además, eso *no detendrá la inmigración “ilegal”*, que resulta de gente que huye de desesperadas condiciones de pobreza y de la sed insaciable que tienen los capitalistas de mano de obra barata. Tampoco se trata de un problema exclusivo de Estados Unidos. En todo el mundo, grandes migraciones de trabajadores están ocurriendo. Para decenas de millones de trabajadores inmigrantes y sus familias, la consecución de derechos iguales y de una genuina igualdad social requerirá de nada menos que la expropiación de los capitalistas y de la destrucción del sistema imperialista por medio de una *revolución socialista internacional*. ■

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No rogamos, exigimos: ¡Plenos derechos de ciudadanía para todos los inmigrantes!

¡Abajo la antiinmigrante “reforma migratoria”!

La gran estafa

1° de JULIO – El 27 de junio, el senado estadounidense aprobó la S. 744, la iniciativa “bipartidista” apoyada por el Partido Demócrata y algunos republicanos que se ha publicitado cínicamente como “una reforma migratoria integral” y como “una vía hacia la ciudadanía” para los 11 millones de inmigrantes indocumentados que oficialmente se estima viven en Estados Unidos, dos terceras partes de los cuales han vivido aquí durante más de una década. El presidente demócrata Barack Obama, los medios de comunicación y políticos de corte “mayoritario” la han celebrado como si fuera una victoria para los inmigrantes. *Esto es falso. La iniciativa senatorial es, en sí misma, un brutal engranaje de una legislación antiinmigrante y de estado policíaco que no ofrece ninguna vía hacia la ciudadanía para la mayoría de los trabajadores inmigrantes indocumentados.*

En cambio, la S. 744 convertirá a la frontera con México en una zona de guerra militarizada, establecerá un programa de “trabajadores huéspedes” que equivale a una forma de peonaje, echará de los empleos a los trabajadores inmigrantes, impondrá requisitos de empleo que llevará al establecimiento de un carnet de identidad nacional para todo mundo y hará posible que haya muchos millones más de deportaciones que las que Obama ya ha llevado a cabo. Todo defensor serio de los derechos de los inmigrantes, los derechos democráticos y laborales debe oponerse a la “Iniciativa para la Seguridad de la Frontera, las Oportunidades Económicas y la Modernización Migratoria” cuyo propósito es defender el “derecho” de los capitalistas a explotar a trabajadores sin derechos.

Demócratas y republicanos, repre-



Contingente del Grupo Internacionalista en la marcha del 1° de mayo de 2013 en Nueva York.

sentantes del capital, son enemigos de los inmigrantes y de los trabajadores. No aprobarán ninguna reforma migratoria que dote de iguales y plenos derechos a los millones de trabajadores que producen súperganancias para los patrones, que cosechan los alimentos, hacen funcionar los restaurantes, construyen los edificios y realizan las tareas más difíciles y sucias por las que reciben una paga miserable, con frecuencia por debajo del salario mínimo. El Grupo Internacionalista exige: **¡Plenos derechos de ciudadanía para todos los inmigrantes!** En lugar de rogar a los partidos capitalistas, los inmigrantes deben usar su poder como trabajadores junto con sus compañeras y compañeros nacidos en EE.UU.: sin trabajo migrante, la economía norteamericana se pararía en seco.

Ahora la atención se concentra en la Cámara de Representantes, en la que republicanos rabiosamente derechistas están azu-

zando un frenesí antinmigrante, al declarar criminales a más de 11 millones de personas:

- La iniciativa HR 2778, llamada “SAFE” (seguro), pide el encarcelamiento de todo inmigrante indocumentado, aunque estar en EE.UU. sin los papeles estipulados es tan sólo una infracción civil; pretende convertir a los policías locales en policías migratorios. Además, encarcelaría a quienquiera de quien se sospeche que es un “pandillero extranjero”.
- La iniciativa HR 1773, para los “Trabajadores agrícolas huéspedes”, reviviría el infame programa *bracero* de los años 1940-60, con el que se disminuirían los salarios y se echaría a un millón de trabajadores agrícolas de sus empleos.
- La iniciativa HR 2217, que ya ha sido aprobada por la cámara, pondría un alto al programa de Obama para aplazar la deportación de jóvenes inmigrantes. En

caso de que fuera promulgada como ley, los jóvenes que entregaran documentación para participar en el programa, junto con sus padres, encabezarían las listas para ser expulsados de EE.UU.

Cruel como son las iniciativas antinmigrantes de la Cámara de Representantes, la “reforma migratoria” del Senado, aprobada por la totalidad de los 51 votos de la fracción demócrata, es horripilante. La enmienda Hoeven-Corker, añadida a último minuto para atraer votos republicanos adicionales, se propone duplicar el número de elementos de la Patrulla Fronteriza hasta casi 40 mil agentes (diez veces más que los que había en 1993, antes de que el demócrata Clinton duplicara su tamaño). En conjunto, las secciones de la iniciativa senatorial relativas a la “seguridad fronteriza” y a la vigilancia policíaca tendrían un costo de 46 mil millones de dólares, cuando que la Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE – la *migra*) tiene ya un presupuesto mayor que el del resto de las agencias policíacas federales (FBI, DEA, ATF, Servicio Secreto, U.S. Marshals) juntas.

En repetidas ocasiones hemos alertado que el discurso de los demócratas acerca de una “reforma” migratoria es un engaño cruel (véase “La reforma migratoria ‘bipartidista’ de Obama es un fraude” en *The Internationalist*, marzo-abril de 2013) Ya Obama ha deportado a más de 2 millones de inmigrantes, muchos más que cualquier otro presidente norteamericano (véase “Las huecas promesas electorales de ‘Mr. Deportaciones’ Obama” en *The Internationalist*, sigue en la página 22



Marines estadounidenses (izquierda) y agente de la Patrulla Fronteriza se entrenan para el despliegue en la frontera con México. Militarización de la frontera significa más migrantes asesinados.