

May Day 2007 – Immigrant Workers Are Again on the Rise Against Deportations and Exploitation!

By Ray O. Light

On May 1 2006 millions of overwhelmingly immigrant workers across the country marched to celebrate International Workers Day and defeat the proposed Sensenbrenner bill which would have criminalized some 12 million undocumented immigrants.

In the last year, there have been repeated and mass raids against undocumented workers, and huge numbers have been deported.

This year, millions should be marching against these raids and deportations, for legalization of all immigrants, for all their rights as workers and against the proposed STRIVE bill. This bill, presented by Democrat Luis Gutiérrez and Republican Jeff Flake, would force all undocumented workers to leave the country and apply for entrance from their respective countries. This bill proposes that workers accepted into the US pay \$3,500 for three year work permits. The STRIVE Act would just satisfy the interests, greed and need of the capitalists and monopolies for temporary cheap labor of people who continue to be vulnerable and suffer super-exploitation but would not grant citizenship to immigrants. As occurred last year, workers must defeat this liberal trap.

The great Philippine revolutionary leader, José María Sison, has correctly pointed out that, “The enormous demonstrations...signify the awakening of a sleeping giant.”

The future holds many challenges and obstacles for this newly awakened giant.

1. Patriotism: National Liberation or Great Nation Chauvinism?

In many of last year's demonstrations there were more US flags than flags representing the countries of immigrants. This occurred when the US flag of the Bush regime represents the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan, the expulsion of Aristide from Haiti, troops in Colombia, the Philippines, and other countries and attempts to oust Chávez in Venezuela. Ironically, the US flag which so many immigrants waved represents the most repressive country in the world which is responsible for national oppression in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

True patriotism would lead workers to wave the flags of their respective countries and

join them in the struggle for national liberation, against the US flag and imperialism and in solidarity with the heroic Iraqi resistance and the people of Afghanistan.

2. Unity: Solidarity Among Workers or with US Imperialism?

The influx of immigrant workers has the greatest effect upon African American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, indigenous Americans, poor white and other less skilled workers. Immigrant workers serve as a source of available labor which has the result of keeping the price of labor low. A dramatic example is what is taking place in New Orleans where a quarter of a million African Americans are still far from their homes more than a year and a half after hurricane Katrina. It is said that over 14,000 new immigrant Latinos are doing the hard, dangerous, underpaid work of “reconstruction”. It is vital that these two forces not clash with each other but instead unite to fight big business and gentrification. In the same manner, poor white and Latino citizens should unite with immigrants and Black workers to fight US national chauvinism and domestic fascism and exploitation.

The struggle for immigrant workers' rights in the US must be an integral part of the struggle for social justice and socialism and the fight for national liberation to free the oppressed countries from US imperialism. The unity of the immigrant rights movement, the anti war movement, and the struggle for justice for Katrina victims would be a step towards socialism here and for national liberation in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Marxist-Leninists support the right of nations to self determination by whatever means necessary. As national revolutions against imperialism are victorious and move towards socialism in the oppressed and dependent countries and even in imperialist countries, free and voluntary migration will replace forced migration, including from the former USSR. The victory of socialism in the world is the condition for the free development of all countries, based on equality of nations and including the right of voluntary migration and living solidarity of the international working class.

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