

# RAY O' LIGHT NEWSLETTER

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## Trump's USA: No Country For Children

by RAY LIGHT

When Donald Trump was placed in the U.S. Presidency by the Electoral College vote in the 2016 Election, I observed that, at least in the short run, Trump, with his awkward connection to the Republican Party, would be a less dangerous foe than Hillary Clinton, with the slick Wall Street-backed Democratic Party machine, would have represented to the international working class and the oppressed peoples *outside* the borders of the USA. But I emphasized that, for the working class and the oppressed nationalities *within* the U.S. multinational state, the Trump Regime would be more repressive and cause us more difficulties here sooner.

I appealed to the revolutionary forces in the rest of the world to take advantage of this situation to advance the proletarian revolutionary cause externally. As part of this appeal, I also called upon them to give the revolutionaries and the U.S. working class and masses the assistance we would need to deal with the initial Trump-led onslaught upon us.

Certainly, these first seventeen or eighteen months of the Trump Regime have borne out this approach. Globally, Trump has had to be practically coerced by the Democrats to launch two annual isolated military attacks on Syria. And, *for reasons clearly having to do with the Trump Empire agenda rather than the U.S. Empire's agenda*, he has been moderate (if not rational) in dealing with China, Russia, and even North Korea. Indeed, he has bullied long time U.S. allies in

Western Europe and elsewhere as much as long time U.S. adversaries.

The home front has been another story entirely. The article that follows deals with some of the Trump Regime's most outrageous attacks on the working people, the oppressed nationalities and the 90% of the U.S. population who have already been hurting economically, socially and culturally for some time. As the working people of the USA have begun to wake up and fight back against the Trump Regime, I hope this article serves to encourage those of us in separate struggles to unite our forces for a successful struggle against the Trump tyranny. The outpouring of support across the USA on June 30 in defense of the immigrant children separated from their families is a good step forward for us all.

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—*Trump Attacks Latino Immigrant and Puerto Rican Children*—

In the past few months there have been unrelenting reactionary attacks by all three branches of the U.S.

(contd. on p. 3)

Also included in this issue:

Let's Say "NO" to Forced Conscription ..... page 2  
In Defense of Leninism(exchange of letters) .. pages 8-12  
New ROL, USA Publications ..... pages 13,15

### Do you know who said it??

"Few in Washington ever doubted Trump's run for president was a joyride to buff his brand and image. When he won, shocking everyone and himself, Trump must have seen his bloodline's branding future. Even he must have been surprised, however, at how easily his people accepted the oligarchy he was creating. As brands go, the United States of Trump wasn't bad. Not bad at all."

"President Trump's elder daughter, Ivanka, who happens to be his close advisor on economic empowerment and entrepreneurship, among other things, also has secured 13 new trademarks in China—right about the same time her father discovered a fresh passion for China's economic well-being ... . Whatever is going on, it doesn't look or smell good ... ."

*Hint:* This quote accords with our description of Trump's motivation for entering the U.S. Presidential Election of 2016. Moreover, in the lead article for the July-August 2017 *Ray O' Light Newsletter #103*, entitled, "The Trump Family Empire versus the United States Empire", and subtitled, "Wall Street's Dilemma," I concluded (arguably before anyone else) that "... *Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner, Trump's top aides, are trying to maintain and increase big deals with the Chinese government, while Tillerson and Ross are clearly working to do the same with the Russian government.*" Nevertheless, the mystery quote was *not* created by the Revolutionary Organization of Labor, USA (ROL-USA). Significantly, *this recent quote is from a syndicated columnist for one of the most important bourgeois daily newspapers of the USA.*

—*Still stumped?* See page 14 the mystery answer.

# Let's Say "NO" to Forced Military Conscription

by CINDY SHEEHAN



The U.S. Congress has commissioned a "bi-partisan" panel of 11 people to study the future of a forced military draft in the United States.

Since the beginning of forced conscription in the U.S. (Civil War), a military draft for that war and subsequent wars has been highly unfair and class biased. For example, in the Civil War, a wealthy conscript could purchase someone to take his place. Such "bonuses" were often taken by agents and rarely got to the conscriptee. Kind of like today, where those who enlist are promised high bonuses from the government but rarely fully materialize.

For every war during the 20th century, draft avoidance, resistance, or "dodging" has been practiced. During the U.S. war crime in Vietnam, 2.15 million U.S. troops were deployed there and at least three-quarters of them were from working-class or poor families. However, we all know the stories of "deferred" war hawks like Dick (Five-Deferment) Cheney, Bill Clinton, Ted Nugent, Rush Limbaugh, Trump, and Mitt Romney while other subpar humans like George W. Bush were allowed to join elite (safe) units to avoid the carnage. Every time an elitist avoided the military draft, a poor child took his place.

For over a century and a half, while the children of the wealthy and powerful ultimately reap the benefits of war profiteering, it's been the working poor and oppressed of the USA and the world who pay the ultimate price.

Since forced conscription is inherently unfair and pits workers of one country against another, it should be opposed as a tool used to lead our children to slaughter, and/or to become murderers of others. Additionally, the idea that a draft will radicalize people to oppose the U.S. Empire is of limited use: Although it can be understood, such opposition is shallow and temporary and based on self-interest, rather than international solidarity. Such radicalization during the Vietnam war was definitely short-lived and not very successful as we find ourselves buried even more deeply under the iron heel of the Military Industrial Complex.

IN MY OPINION, forced registration for the draft by men as well as women and gays and transsexuals must all be opposed. True equality is complete freedom from war and other oppression, not the right to die for profit, or be sexually abused by your fellow troops, or superiors.

Registering for the draft is also an attack on the working-class and poor as registration is required to apply for federal student loans or grants and in some cases required to receive a driver's license or state i.d.

Furthermore, as long as there is a so-called "volunteer" army, we need to organize to keep our young people as far away from military recruiter predators as possible!

As previously stated, working poor young people and/or people of color are the ones that are specifically targeted by the predatory war machine, so we as workers need to struggle together for the reforms of higher wage (dare we say, even meaningful) jobs and low/no tuition university educations while recognizing the need to also work for a collapse of imperialism and capitalism.

Our young people need to become determined to fight for a future free from war and the hopelessness of an uncaring society. With an infusion of optimistic new young leadership, we workers should oppose all politicians and institutions that promote this culture of endless war. Imperialist war is the highest expression of toxic capitalism.

**WOMEN'S MARCH ON THE PENTAGON**  
WASHINGTON, DC

SATURDAY + SUNDAY  
OCTOBER 20-21, 2018

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CINDYSHEEHAN@MARCHONPENTAGON.COM

**Confront the bipartisan war machine**

**October 20/21, 2018**  
in Washington D.C.

or at a solidarity action near you.

See you there!

**#WomenMarch4Peace**

In response to the continuing military aggression by the US and to put an antiwar agenda back on the table of activists, we are calling for a march on the Pentagon on the 51st anniversary of the 1967 action in Washington D.C.

**Our demands are simple:**

*The complete end to wars abroad*  
*Closure of foreign bases*

*Slashing of the Pentagon budget*  
*The funding of healthy social programs at home*  
*And end to violence - from beds to bombs*

(Trump's USA: No Country for Children continued)

federal government, spearheaded by Donald Trump, on the 90% of the U.S. population already suffering. Finally, on June 30, there was a ray of political sunshine, an expression of resistance and outrage. For this moment, at least, thousands of angry and upset demonstrators, reflecting the interests of the vast majority of the people of the USA, have drawn a line in the sand. *It is a line of defense of immigrant children and their families!* This is an encouraging development. In more than seven hundred cities and towns across the USA, from thirty thousand protesters in New York City and about the same number in Washington, DC to rural Marshalltown, Iowa where about 125 people gathered, the people protested the monstrous Trump Regime's new fascist Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) policy forcibly separating children from their parents as they cross the border into the USA.



By June 30, there had been so much international and even bipartisan uproar that Trump had already begun to back away from this initial "zero tolerance" policy providing for ICE/government kidnapping of the children. In just the first few months, this barbaric ICE policy had already led to well over two thousand children being seized from their parents and sent to all corners of the USA deprived of all family bonds and with no information provided on them to their families. The organizer of the Marshalltown, Iowa march, Steve Adelmund, had been inspired to get involved, when, on Father's Day, on the news, he had seen children separated from their families and held in cages. Adelmund asked, "If we can't come together under the idea that kids shouldn't be taken from their parents, where are we? *We have to speak out now while we can, before we can't.*" (ROL Emphasis) Clearly, Adelmund (and many other June 30 protesters) smelled the stench of open fascism in the U.S. government treatment of these children in Trump's USA.

Yet even this openly terrorist ICE policy against Latino children is *not enough for the Tea Party Republicans* in the Republican-led U.S. House of Representatives. The House decisively rejected, by a 301-121 vote, a



far-ranging immigration bill, after months of careful strategic planning, because it was **too soft** on the immigrants! This Wall Street ruling class compromise bill had something for Trump-\$25 Billion U.S. tax dollars for the wall with Mexico. But it also would have provided a shot at citizenship for hundreds of thousands of immigrants brought to the USA illegally as children. This, the tea party Republicans refused to vote for. *They revolted against Speaker Paul Ryan and the House Republican leadership as well as against Trump himself!!* Trump, the cowardly bully, still feels "inspired" by the "wild power" of the "tea party" House members, the Freedom Caucus Klansfolk, who sometimes show some independence from the Wall Street ruling class as they showed in this compromise bill.\* For, among these tea party, freedom caucus politicians and their current supporters, there is a mass base for a fascist demagogue. And the shrewd and unprincipled Trump cannot afford to pull away from their amorous embrace.

On June 30, it was immediately clear that Trump retains a "zero tolerance" policy against immigrants. It is telling that on that day Trump focused on keeping up the morale of the ICE (Gestapo) agents. His new "initiative" is to *imprison the children with their families indefinitely*. In that cause, Trump already has the support of Senate Republicans. They are attempting to drastically extend the current three week maximum that children of immigrants can be incarcerated in order to present to the white, Black and Latino *citizens* the entire new immigrant population as a "criminal caste" that must remain locked up until they are thrown out. This provides a cash bonanza for private security companies, no doubt providing "kickbacks" for Trump, Inc. Thus, in the days just before the pro-children, anti-Trump June 30 demonstrations around the USA, Trump was continuing to stir up great nation

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\*On the positive side, some Freedom Caucus House members also recently united with anti-war Democrats to block Trump from using his unilateral U.S. withdrawal from the Iran deal to proceed to a U.S. war against Iran, aided by his new war mongering Secretary of State Pompeo and national security adviser John Bolton.

(Trump's USA: No Country for Children continued)

chauvinism and white chauvinism against this mostly Latino immigrant sector of the U.S. working class.

In this regard, let's not forget Trump's arrogant and cruel *old-style colonial* treatment of the desperate men, women and children of the island nation of Puerto Rico last fall in the aftermath of the massive hurricane damage of Hurricane Maria. The Trump Regime's continued inhumane and dismissive treatment of Puerto Rico continues until today. This is another signal from the Trump Regime to the non-Latino population that they should treat the large Spanish-speaking and Latino section of the U.S. working class with great nation chauvinist superiority. This tragic situation can be turned into its opposite, if Puerto Rican members of the U.S. working class (who are free at least of most threats associated with being undocumented) begin to unite with immigrant workers in the USA from other Latino countries (who worry every day about ICE) in the class struggle for workers power and socialism and those much abused Latino workers begin to unite with the Puerto Rican workers in defense of Puerto Rican national self-determination; and if together they reach out to their June 30 allies.

There is no doubt that the Trump Regime is pursuing a German Nazi style scapegoating of various non-white peoples within the USA. And the vicious and fascist assault on immigrant children and families is a significant feature of this chauvinistic campaign.\*



The other sectors of the U.S. multinational working class and the 90% of us need to *build on our June 30*

\*Last year Trump pardoned the infamous brutal Arizona sheriff, Joe Arpaio, who had been convicted of continuing his department's harassment and discrimination against Latino immigrants and citizens alike even after being ordered by a judge to stop his illegal repression. Trump's "rescue" of his friend, Arpaio, was a significant act that most of the bankrupt U.S. "left" ignored. With this pardon, Trump gave the "green light" to the sheriff departments, to police forces — to all the armed representatives of the U.S. State — to terrorize Latino people across the USA!

*defense of the mostly Latino immigrant children and their families:* pressing the fascistic Trump government on immediate family reunification efforts, specifically opposing mass incarceration of the immigrant children and families, resisting "criminalization" of immigrant communities in the USA in general, and fighting for immediate relief and defending the right to national self-determination for the people of Puerto Rico. If we fail to follow through, June 30 becomes just a small bump on Trump's chauvinist-paved road to autocracy and fascism.

—*Trump Attacks Afro-American Children*—

With the aid of modern technology (e.g. the cell phone camera), the ongoing systemic murder of Afro-American children and youth by the armed representatives of the U.S. state, particularly the police forces around the country, has been well documented. However, the "Black Lives Matter" motion that showed promise of becoming a movement a few years ago has not done so. Perhaps the most important reason for its loss of momentum has been the tendency for most "Black Lives Matter" groups to project a narrow focus on Afro-Americans exclusively.\*

Meanwhile, direct experience of the U.S. war in Vietnam in the 1960's and seventies by the huge numbers of Afro-American front line troops, has receded into memory, and with it the deep respect they held for the ultimately victorious Vietnamese communist-led liberation movement over U.S. imperialism. It was the heroic Vietnamese people's struggle that had made so many Afro-American soldiers face the truth that it was the U.S. imperialist military that was the enemy of *both* the Vietnamese people and the Afro-American people. (As Muhammad Ali observed, "No Vietcong ever called me an N----") This year is the fiftieth anniversary of the Songmy Massacre (1968), when the world learned that murderous hordes of special U.S. military forces were systematically let loose on women, children and old men in village after village as a matter of U.S. military strategy.

With all kinds of political and cultural changes since then, including the virtual disappearance of

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\*It has been almost unheard of for a "Black Lives Matter" group to join protests defending oppressed peoples in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East against the U.S. imperialist wars that have been a constant feature in the Middle East since 9-11 with George W. Bush's so-called War on Terror. The unprovoked invasion of Libya by Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton and U.S. imperialism in coordination with French and Italian imperialism, two traditional European imperialist colonizers of African countries, more recently resulted in people all over North Africa plagued with war, chaos and deprivation.

(Trump's USA: No Country for Children continued)

an international communist movement uniting and leading the international working class, this level of clarity about the U.S. imperialist enemy has not been passed down to the Afro-American youth of today. Instead, with the focus on individual material well-being, for many the U.S. military has become the rare source of a “steady job.” And the criminal role played by the U.S. military everywhere else in the world has become “chickens that have come home to roost.”

One of the cultural changes in particular, “identity politics,” is a phenomenon that often provides Afro-Americans (and other peoples) with the consolation of psychological “reform” in lieu of the achievement of social justice, people power and revolution. As our comrades have participated in and with the “Black Lives Matter” motion around the USA, it has been exceedingly strange to see how often Black Lesbian women, backed by white Lesbians, have become the controlling forces in these various groups. In our experience, this Lesbian leadership has often driven away positive Afro-American men and women and other community forces that might have helped turn the moment into a movement. Meanwhile, it is Afro-American male youth who have continued to be the main domestic target of the U.S. armed state apparatus.

In this context, it is clear that the *Supreme Court's recent (5-4) decision upholding “voter purging”* in *Husted v. A Philip Randolph Institute* hearkens back to the pre-civil rights movement days of Jim Crow elections and legal racial segregation in the U.S. South. This Supreme Court decision validates concerted activity by the States (“States’ Rights”) taking the vote away from Afro-Americans and other oppressed and exploited sectors of U.S. society.

—*Trump Attacks Muslim and Arab Youth*—

In the mid 1930's, George Dimitrov, the great Bulgarian leader of the Communist International, led the successful preparation of the international working class and oppressed peoples for the victorious Soviet-led defeat of Nazi Germany and global fascism. Comrade Dimitrov taught: “German fascism is not only bourgeois nationalism, it is fiendish chauvinism. It is a government system of political gangsterism, ... It is medieval barbarity and bestiality, it is unbridled aggression in relation to other nations.” (Main Report at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, August 2, 1935) Dimitrov continued, “In foreign policy, fascism is jingoism in its most brutal form, fomenting bestial hatred of other nations.” (*ibid*)

“Let's Make America Great Again” was the central theme of Trump's 2016 Presidential campaign; it has been his main platform theme since his inauguration. From Day One, Trump wildly targeted one anti-Muslim

travel ban after the other—all shot down by one court after another. Recently, despite the overwhelming evidence of Trump's hostility toward Muslim countries and peoples and his track record on Muslim bans, **the U.S. Supreme Court upheld Trump's latest anti-Muslim travel ban.** Going back to his 2016 election campaign, Trump promised to keep Muslims out of the USA, a blatant violation of freedom of religion contained in the first amendment to the U.S. Constitution. And the Supreme Court's *unconstitutional* decision in this case qualifies the five judges who rendered this verdict fit to be tried at a new (U.S.) Judgment at Nuremberg. *May it happen soon!* For such an outrageous decision by the Supreme Court serves to marginalize Muslims and Arabs as well as many other Black and Brown



peoples in the USA. It fuels the fires of chauvinism among many white people and other U.S. citizens. It also serves to justify George W. Bush's round-up and detention of well over a thousand Muslim men who were held incommunicado for a lengthy period by the U.S. state apparatus immediately following 9-11. It is clearly an invitation to foment mob hysteria in the near future. Among his supporters this Supreme Court decision serves to bolster the credibility of the Tyrant; tragically, it provides him and his fascistic motion with momentum.

—*Trump Attacks U.S. Working Class Youth*—

Comrade Dimitrov taught that, “Fascism acts in the interests of the extreme imperialists, but it presents itself to the masses in the guise of champion of an ill-treated nation, and appeals to outraged national sentiments...” This is why Trump's theme during the campaign and during his presidential term thus far has been “*Make American Great Again.*” His consistent message to the white workers, in particular, has been that America was great when you were on top and Afro-American, Latino and other workers were deprived of most rights and opportunities. Moreover, Trump's notion is that the traditional Democrats and Republicans, the “Republicrats,” have given away the treasure of the USA to the oppressed nations around the world. This is exactly the opposite of the

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(Trump's USA: No Country for Children continued)

truth! The USA, especially during its sixty to seventy years of hegemony in the world capitalist camp under "Republicrat" Rule, has drawn tribute, booty, from the four corners of the earth. Having plundered most of the world, the U.S. Empire has forced millions of people from the most oppressed countries to migrate to the "Mother Country" to seek a decent job or at least eke out a living for their family.

As Dimitrov further observes, "Fascism aims at *the most unbridled exploitation of the masses*, but it approaches them with the most artful anti-capitalist demagogy, taking advantage of the deep hatred of the working people against the plundering bourgeoisie, the banks, trusts and financial magnates, and advancing those slogans which at the given moment are most alluring to the politically immature masses." (ROL Emphasis)

The plight of working class youth in the USA of all nationalities is a desperate one. Very few have had the opportunity to get jobs that pay enough to support a family, to buy a home. They are plagued with casual employment and under employment and no job security. The U.S. "recovery" from the financial crisis that erupted on Wall Street a decade ago has all gone to the coffers of the Wall Street financial oligarchs that created the crisis. (Goldman Sachs, the biggest beneficiary of federal government "support," provided the Trump Regime with virtually all of its financial team!) The future, despite Trump's promises to the white working class, still looks very bleak for all the working class youth.

Now, their obstacles are mounting. Trump's Supreme Court majority in the last few weeks of this session passed two far-reaching laws that weaken even further the position of the U.S. working class as it struggles for even the slightest steps toward a "level playing field" with U.S. monopoly capitalism and imperialism. In the first case, *the Supreme Court upheld the right of corporations to ban the use of class action lawsuits by their workers as a condition of employment*. In effect, this will compel individual workers to take on the immense financial and other burdens of fighting their corporate employers on issues that affect all the workers. It is an open invitation to even more corporate abuse, wage theft, etc.

The second recent Supreme Court decision openly attacking the U.S. working class, is *Janus v. AFSCME*. It bans "the agency shop" in public sector workplaces. This law breaks with a forty year old regulation that provided that non-union workers who received union representation in contract negotiations and other pursuits paid "an agency fee" for the services that they received from the union. Such workers were not required to pay full union dues and specifically they were not required to give financial support to

candidates in elections that they did not personally support. Now, after forty years of settled law, Trump's Supreme Court Five ruled that non-union members would *no longer be required to pay any fee to the union*, no matter how much benefit the non-member receives from the work of the union over the course of any given year. This decision will take millions and perhaps billions of dollars away from union coffers. And it could lead to the disappearance of some unions.

However, the "agency shop" over the past forty years produced a high level of complacency among the chieftains of many AFL-CIO unions. It encouraged labor bureaucrats to make sweetheart deals with corporate management at the expense of their membership. In Trump's USA, with his Supreme Court, deals with organized labor are mostly gone.

But the surprising *school workers strike in West Virginia* gives a glimpse of a possible rebirth of the U.S. labor movement as a militant and democratic rank and file fighting force unfettered by the entrenched conservative union bureaucracy and inspired by working class solidarity.



In an excellent analysis of the West Virginia strike ("Do-It-Yourself Class Struggle"), teacher union activist Kevin Prosen observed, "After the explosive struggles that built the CIO in the 1930's and the general strikes that followed the Second World War, there was an urgent need for capital to domesticate the nation's tumultuous labor relations and steer it into predictable channels. Institutionalized collective bargaining and wage gains traded for productivity increases were the price to be paid for labor peace in an expanding economy. So-called "agency fees" or automatic dues deductions collected from paychecks ensured a steady income stream for union officialdom, and shop-floor struggles over working conditions were redirected into a bureaucratic grievance procedure that empowered union bureaucracy and demobilized workers. The repressive corollary of these incentives were labor laws like the Taft-Hartley Act, which placed limits on strike activity, and the paranoid savagery of McCarthyism which drove the Left out of the labor movement. Without this militant minority of workers,

(contd. on p. 7)

(Trump's USA: No Country for Children continued)

the official union apparatus—reformist in outlook and closely tied to the Democratic Party—was left to preside over a much more docile labor force than that of the preceding period.”

Prosen continues: “Teachers looking with trepidation at *Janus* have much to learn from our colleagues in West Virginia. They didn’t passively wait for ‘the union’ to act on their behalf; the strike was not called from above, it was built from below ...”

In West Virginia the public school teachers, members of the two main teacher unions (AFT and NEA) joined in unity with each other and with the local *school workers* union. They organized solidarity with the school youth and their parents as well as locally in all fifty WVA counties. They fought and won an illegal strike against the West Virginia legislature. And, with workers solidarity, they won wage increases not only for all school employees but for all state public sector workers. Quite an answer to the Trump Supreme Court preparing to pass a new reactionary law!

—*Trump Attacks all the Children  
and Youth of the USA*—

Comrade Cindy Sheehan and I addressed a May Day 2018 Greeting and Salute to the High School Youth Protesting Violence in Public Schools and Communities Across the USA. Many high school youth took initiative to organize these protests in the aftermath of a Valentine’s Day Massacre at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL in which a 19 year old murdered 17 students and school personnel. Just the latest in the epidemic of mass school shooting in the USA in recent years, *it showed the real murderous heart of this country*. As we pointed out, “... after six decades of U.S. imperialist global hegemony and the creation of ‘an Evil Empire,’ it is only ‘natural’ that the USA would be the most violent country on earth.”

But, more than that, the Trump Regime, is obsessed with private capitalist profit (specifically for “Trump, Inc.”) and politically connected to the NRA, basically the gun manufacturer’s and gun stores’ lobby organization. The Parkland, FL students and many others around the country were able to see and feel this fact clearly. “They recognized that the powers that be in the USA do not care about them. Even more disturbing they recognized that their parents and adult family members and community leaders were too compromised to really fight the powers that be, even in defense of their own children.”

Finally, as Cindy and I pointed out in this same article, “... after President Trump bragged in his 2016 campaign that he could shoot someone down in cold

blood and still be elected, becoming a cheerleader for the epidemic of violence as well as stirring chauvinist ethnic enmity, he had indeed been elected by these adults.”



It is very encouraging that high school youth have begun to revolt against the status quo U.S. society in which the epidemic of school shootings is growing by leaps and bounds. But, until these youth connect the epidemic of violence among and against the youth within the USA in general to the imperialist wars of the U.S. Empire against the oppressed peoples of Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East, until these youth affirm in the streets that “Black Lives Matter,” until they stand up for the Puerto Rican people and the Latino immigrant children and their families and stand up against the anti-Muslim hysteria, imperialism, the main source that generates and regenerates violence in the USA, will not be snuffed out

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## CONCLUSION

*Trump’s USA is no country for children*. For our children to have a decent future in the USA, Trump, the Tyrant, must be exposed, isolated and defeated. The workers and the oppressed within the USA who are the victims of the Trump Regime discussed above will have to achieve genuine unity in the course of our battles for justice. Such unity and solidarity will be vital to our success. Just as vital will be the *international solidarity* of the workers and the oppressed peoples in the rest of the world with those of us “in the belly of the beast.” Only by uniting with them in their defense against the U.S. Empire we will earn their solidarity.

In the struggle to defeat the fascistic Trump Regime, the valuable guidance of George Dimitrov and the Communist International, and the heroic example of the Soviet youth, the Soviet people, the Soviet Red Army, and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, led by comrade Stalin will help us on our path to a brighter future.

# In Defense of Leninism: Response to A Criticism from ICOR Chief Monika Gartner-Engel

[In late May 2018, *the Revolutionary Organization of Labor-USA* (ROL-USA), received a brief critical letter addressed to our leader, comrade Ray Light, criticizing his assessment of the ICOR-sponsored October Revolution celebration in Germany in his lengthy article entitled, "Reflections on the Hundredth Anniversary Year of the Great October Socialist Revolution." (*Ray O' Light Newsletter* #105, November-December 2017) The brief letter purports to have been written individually by Monika Gartner-Engel, the Main Coordinator of ICOR. According to the letter, comrade Monika then "placed this letter before the ICC [ICOR's leading body] and it has been unanimously approved." The writer asks that the letter be published in *Ray O. Light Newsletter*, the organ of ROL-USA.

Our small leadership core has decided to publish the ICOR letter along with a response from comrade Ray Light in the interests of advancing proletarian revolutionary clarity on the legacy of the Great October Socialist Revolution as well as clarity on the tasks of the proletarian revolution today.]

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ICOR Letter(Monika Gartner-Engel)

April 2018

Dear Comrade Ray,

I have read the comments that you made about the international seminar to commemorate 100 years of the October Revolution, organised jointly by ICOR and the ILPS. You have attacked me, Com. Stefan (for his "immodesty"), the Presidium (for being hand-picked by Stefan), the leaders of the "most significant organisations" there (for being deficient in their defence of Leninism) the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and Mao Dze Dong and his thought itself. I find myself unable to agree with the premises upon which you base your criticisms.

Firstly, let me inform you that the seminar was organised in a democratic fashion. The ICC of the ICOR took the decision to give the responsibility to Com. Stefan Engel to design the seminar. Com. Stefan suggested some thematic blocks which were then approved by the ICC democratically. Com. Stefan suggested the procedure for a deadline for applications to hold the introductory contributions for the thematic blocks. All ICOR members were informed of this on time. From these applications (you were not among them) the main speakers for each thematic block were put before the ICC and approved. The composition of the Presidium was also approved by the ICC. It was the Presidium which decided the conduct of the seminar and decided about who should give the opening and closing speeches. But you already know all this since you also took part in some of the most important decisions in this regard in the ICC. You had also orally applied to give the main speech in the last thematic block "the October

Revolution lives", but among the six applicants, Com. Jose Maria Sison was approved for this task. No doubt, there may have been lapses in the proletarian culture of debate, but I am unable to find any such from your writing.

Far be it from me to try to defend leaders like Com. Jose Maria Sison or Com. Otto Vargas or Com. K. N. or Com. Stefan or others from "significant organisations" whom you find guilty of being deficient in their defence of Leninism. Most of these seem to me like leaders who have spent their whole lives in the defence of Leninism in the face of all forms of revisionism. I am also unable to subscribe to your criticism of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. I think that the point that William Hinton was trying to make is that one of the main dangers to any socialist society is from within – from "capitalist roaders" taking the "capitalist road". You will agree that this proved true even for Stalin-led Soviet Union which declined after 1950, not due to Mao and his thought but due to revisionism from within the party led by Stalin and Lenin.

I also looked forward, when reading your article, to being able to profit from your criticisms of my role. However, I find your criticism that I ranked the building of a "maternity clinic" (may I humbly point out that it is not a maternity clinic but a full fledged health centre cum social centre with an operating theatre etc that ICOR has built) above the "magnificent proletarian internationalist deeds of the Bolshevik-led October Revolution, the Stalin-led USSR and the Soviet-led world communist movement from 1917 to 1950" can only be understood as extreme hyperbole.

(Defense of Leninism continued)

Though I am acutely aware that Mao and his thoughts do not need ICOR in their defence, I have to point out that many parties in ICOR do uphold Mao and his thoughts. It would have been better if you had clarified that you consider all who uphold Mao and his thoughts as “opportunists” within ICOR before you had aired these views in a public forum. This is clearly mentioned in the statutes of ICOR that one should not publicly criticise any other member organisation and certainly not disrespectfully. Even otherwise such a course would be the only proper way with fraternal organisations.

I have placed this letter before the ICC and it has been unanimously approved. I hope that you will also publish this letter in your newsletter with equal prominence in keeping with the true traditions of the proletarian culture of debate.

Your comrade,

Monika, Main Coordinator

=====

ROL-USA Response(Ray Light)

July 1, 2018

Monika Gartner-Engel, Main Coordinator  
ICOR

Dear Comrade Monika,

We appreciate the fact that you have made the effort to answer our criticisms of the ICOR-sponsored October Revolution Celebration held in Germany in late October 2017. These criticisms and the discussion of the ICOR-led celebration are contained in “Reflections on the Hundredth Anniversary Year of the Great October Socialist Revolution” (*Commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution*, by Ray O. Light, pp.1-15) and form a small part of this lengthy article written by me. It was the final one in the series that ROL-USA committed to write and publish over the course of the Centennial Year 2017 as our contribution to ICOR’s commemoration. And it appeared as the introduction to the special pamphlet entitled, “Commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution,” in which the series of articles that had appeared in our 2017 *Ray O’ Light* Newsletters were collected.

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In your very first paragraph you (Monika) state you are “unable to agree with the premises upon which you base your criticisms.” Unfortunately, it turns

out you are actually unable to even *identify* these “premises.”

What then are “the premises upon which we base our criticisms?”

1. Our first premise is that the “remarkable record of accomplishments of the Great October Socialist Revolution (GOSR) and the USSR to which it gave birth” makes it clear that *proletarian socialism “is the social system whose time has come. It is up to us to continue this forward march of history in our own time.”* (*Commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution*, by Ray O. Light, p.1)

2. Our second premise is that, *with the “historical distance” of one hundred years since 1917, especially given the defeat and destruction of Leninism in the USSR more than fifty years ago and by the fact that Leninism was “dismissed and abandoned by most of the rest of the world’s revolutionary forces in the same period,”* (*Commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution*, by Ray O. Light, pp.1-2) most proletarians and oppressed peoples within the USA and around the world in the hundredth anniversary year of the GOSR had barely taken note of the anniversary.

3. A third premise. *The imperialist bourgeoisie, and the U.S. ruling class in particular, has carried out a sinister campaign of lies, slanders and distortions directed against the magnificent accomplishments of the October Revolution and of the Bolshevik Party-led Soviet proletariat and against the victorious Lenin-Stalin leadership and line.*

4. Fourth premise: *the immortal leadership of comrade Stalin.* Among the greatest fruits of the GOSR was the Stalin and Soviet-led defeat of global fascism and especially its Nazi German spearhead. One of the systemic falsifications of twentieth century history required to bury the accomplishments of Great October has been the promotion of Winston Churchill in place of comrade Joseph Stalin as the leader of the anti-fascist coalition that defeated Hitlerite Germany and the other anti-Comintern Axis powers. Thus, multiple Best Film Actor Awards for 2017 (including the Oscar) went to Gary Oldman for his portrayal of “the hero,” Winston Churchill, in the film “Darkest Hour.”

5. Fifth premise: *The U.S. petty-bourgeois intelligentsia is an especially philistine class force, in light of seventy years of U.S. imperialist hegemony and at least several decades of a full-fledged U.S. Empire.* In my “Reflections,” (*Commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary* (contd. on p. 10)

(Defense of Leninism continued)

*of the Great October Socialist Revolution*, by Ray O. Light, pp. 1-15)

I polemicized against a few typical articles published in the left-liberal *Nation* magazine of 2017: *one*, exhibiting “left-wing melancholia,” was spreading “gloom and doom” “about any current or future prospect for the proletarian revolutionary overthrow of the bankrupt, moribund system of monopoly capitalism and imperialism, *as the Russian working class so successfully and heroically accomplished one hundred years ago*”(!); and *a second* by a professor Gessen, apologizing for his and the *Nation’s* support for Gorbachev who he admits betrayed the Russian people. But Gessen then rationalizes his own petty bourgeois betrayal by concluding, “a poor and backward country was always going to be a terrible place to test out socialism.” Thus Gessen continues his betrayal of the Soviet Russian people and the world’s peoples in 2017 by *covering up the immortal accomplishments of the Great October Socialist Revolution*. Finally, even the usually anti-imperialist *Counterpunch* published an article, “Revisiting October—The Meaning of the Revolution” that underscores the depth of political cowardice of the U.S. petty-bourgeois intelligentsia today. Author John Wight sets a tone and mood throughout that sounds exactly like all his anti-Stalin, anti-communist U.S. colleagues in the “academy.” Yet, in an astonishing turn, Wight *grudgingly and ever so reluctantly* concludes that “... in the last analysis, the fundamental metric of the October Revolution 1917 is the Battle of Stalingrad in 1942. And for that, whether it cares to acknowledge it or not, the world will forever be in its debt.” Incredible! How cowardly Wight is! What a betrayal of the masses of humanity! For such “friends” will scare anyone away!

6. Sixth premise: “The defeat of socialism in the USSR many decades ago means that any recognition of the October Revolution Centennial during 2017 would be *more meaningful the more commemorative and less celebratory it is*.” (*Commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution*, by Ray O. Light, p.6)

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These are some of the main premises upon which I based my criticisms of the ICOR-sponsored event in Germany. From these premises we can draw the following conclusion: A fierce and uncompromising struggle against opportunism on the significance of the Victorious October Revolution and the decades of proletarian victories in the USSR and globally that followed is our only chance to break through to

link the international working class of today with *Leninism, key to our victories*.

#### WEAKNESSES IN THE ICOR-SPONSORED OCTOBER REVOLUTION CELEBRATION AND YOUR LETTER

While the October ICOR event in Germany was more serious and sober than the ILPS-USA and PRISM-sponsored event in New York City, only a few forces there had what I saw as sufficient respect for *an effective commemoration*, for “a **profound rediscovery** of the priceless treasures of the Great October Socialist Revolution.”

In June 2017 the Ecuador-based International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations (ICMLPO), with which ROL-USA is *not* affiliated, issued a 220 page book (*Unity and Struggle* No. 34) with contributions from seventeen affiliated groups. To me, it is a model for modestly and honestly sharing the experience of the working class movement in all countries under the impact of the GOSR.

Few ICOR organizations (of which ROL-USA is one) seem to have made such a respectful effort. Our one hundred page pamphlet is entitled “Commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the GOSR.” In “Reflections” (*Commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution*, by Ray O. Light, pp.1-15) I supported one other ICOR organization which did make such an effort for a commemoration rather than a celebration, the Communist Party of Turkey/Marxist-Leninist (TKP-ML). The TKP-ML pamphlet is entitled, “On the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the GOSR—The teachings, importance and heritage of the October Revolution as a beginning of a new era in the history of the world.”

As you are well aware, Monika, the TKP-ML is a Maoist organization. And I clearly supported this organization—one indication that *you tried in your brief letter to put words in my mouth that I have never put there*. You give me the following advice: “It would have been better if you clarified that you consider all who uphold Mao and his thoughts as ‘opportunists’ ...” Yet you surely know that, in my writings over the past twenty-five years, there is no contemporary revolutionary thinker who I have favorably quoted more often than comrade Jose Maria Sison, arguably the pre-eminent Maoist in the world. Indeed, more than half of the conclusion of our first major article on the GOSR Centennial was a lengthy quote I cited from comrade Sison.

(Defense of Leninism continued)

Perhaps you are unaware of my history as a defender of the Revolutionary Teachings of Mao Tse-tung. In 1968, on behalf of Youth for Stalin, I wrote "The Role of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in the International Marxist-Leninist Movement: The October Revolution vs. the Cultural Revolution." At that time, despite the fact that the "Mao's Thought" concept was being used to bury Leninism, and Mao's persona was being used to cover for what I already saw was the counter revolutionary GPCR, I presented a balanced and supportive assessment of Mao, this great Chinese revolutionary leader, including his ideological contributions to the treasure-house of Marxism-Leninism, as evidenced in the first four volumes of Mao's "Selected Works." Indeed, I have continued to favorably quote Mao extensively over the fifty years since.

Going back even further, in the early and mid 1960's, I had the privilege of being associated with the very small but very effective anti-revisionist group called "Hammer and Steel" ("Molotov and Stalin"). This U.S. group was praised on more than one occasion by both comrade Mao and comrade Hoxha. Perhaps more tellingly, Nikita Khrushchev and his revisionist ilk attacked *Hammer and Steel* by name in their "Open Letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU to all Party Organizations to All Communists of the Soviet Union." (July 14, 1963) This was the Russian revisionists' response to the Communist Party of China's most comprehensive anti-revisionist polemic, "A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement" (June 14, 1963).

Monika, I guess you could say that I was defending Mao when it cost something to do so, when it counted, at a time when the anti-revisionist struggle led by the CPC and the Albanian Party of Labor represented *the strongest attempt to revive the international communist movement* in the entire period that has transpired since the death of Stalin in 1953. So it is no surprise that in our Germany-based ICMLPO, through my role in the JCG leadership and in the International Conference, along with the Greek comrades, we laid the basis for the fine Stephan Engel/MLPD proposal to establish ICOR. I played the pivotal role in defending the *positive* history of the Third International and in fighting for recognition that a similar international proletarian organization is sorely needed today.

Moreover, you surely remember that, some years ago, when MLPD relations with the Filipino comrades led by comrade Sison were frayed and fragile, Stefan Engel and other MLPD leaders became extremely

friendly to me and our little organization (and correctly so) precisely because of our close comradely relations with JMS in particular. When you position yourself as a "defender" of comrade Sison and other revolutionary leaders "against" my alleged "attacks," this seems to be merely a cynical maneuver.

#### IDEOLOGICAL WEAKNESSES AT THE ICOR-SPONSORED EVENT AND IN YOUR LETTER

Just as with previous MLPD-sponsored events I have participated in, this ICOR event had many positive speakers. Since it was held in Germany and was conducted with German as the primary language and with the relatively large number of MLPD members, there were many German and MLPD speakers some of whom, including Rebell youth and industrial workers had very positive comments.

However, there were a disproportionate number of MLPD members who nitpicked *early* Soviet alleged "mistakes" as the main cause of defeats *many decades later* in the USSR and around the globe. I particularly recall a German professor who approached the Soviet Union as if it had to pass one of *his* tests even though it had "passed" the tests of the October Revolution, the Civil War and Imperialist Intervention that followed, the collectivization of agriculture and the massive Nazi invasion and barbaric occupation, with brutally hard-won and glorious victories! Meanwhile, *over the decades that most of us have been active*, the two-thirds of the world's peoples living in the socialist camp or in a so-called non-aligned country have been reduced to practically zero! According to Herr Professor, must all this too be laid at the feet of the heroic Soviet peoples!!!

Even more egregious was the German "comrade" who had the audacity to claim that the Soviet communists were *wrong* about the main threat to Soviet survival being *external!* This German chauvinist tried to bury the crucial role of German fascism in the defeat of Soviet socialism! In this regard, it's instructive to remember comrade Molotov's observation that the vicious renegade Khrushchev "was no fool ... he reflected the spirit of the overwhelming majority. He keenly sensed the disparity [between policy and the state of opinion]." (p. 366, *Molotov Remembers*) No people, no matter how revolutionary can continue to struggle and sacrifice without rest indefinitely. Khrushchev's revisionist promotion of peaceful co-existence and peaceful transition to socialism, according to Molotov, was attractive to the war-weary soviet people who had heroically beaten back and defeated the most powerful military invasion in human history, the Nazi German invasion.

(contd. on p. 12)

(Defense of Leninism continued)

Even you, comrade Monika, display German chauvinism in your letter when you assert that the Soviet Union "... declined after 1950, not due to Mao and his thought but due to revisionism from within the party led by Lenin and Stalin." You attempt to link yourself with William Hinton and the Chinese Cultural Revolution in emphasizing the danger to any socialist society from within—from "capitalist roaders" taking the "capitalist road." But do you, comrade, really believe that the scars from the monstrous and murderous German fascist military machine in the USSR from 1941 to 1945 with the loss of almost thirty million Soviet people had no impact on Soviet life and communist policy in the 1950's?!

The primary emphasis on the internal at the expense of the external is a manifestation of bourgeois nationalism and was a hallmark of the so-called Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution which immediately in 1966 turned China *inward*.

Already in 1924, comrade Stalin, upholding Lenin and Leninism with his classic text, *Foundations of Leninism*, addressed the question of Theory as follows: "Formerly the proletarian revolution was regarded exclusively as the result of the internal development of a given country. Now, this point of view is no longer adequate. Now the proletarian revolution must be regarded primarily as the result of the development of the contradictions within the world system of imperialism, as the result of the breaking of the chain of the world imperialist front in one country or another..The front of capital will be pierced where the chain of imperialism is weakest, for the proletarian revolution is the result of the breaking of the chain of the world imperialist front at its weakest link..." (*Foundations of Leninism*, Stalin, 1924) The abandonment of the Leninist theory of the revolution has been so costly for the international working class and the oppressed peoples over the past six decades and more.

However, with regard to William Hinton, my point is that his own statement contained in the 1993 book published after the Mao Seminar exposed the bankruptcy contained in the following assertion in the "General Declaration on Mao Zedong Thought," published at the end of that very book. "This theory [of continuing revolution under proletarian class dictatorship] is of great historic significance for having inaugurated a new and higher stage in the development of the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism. This is the stage of Mao Zedong Thought or Maoism." Admitted Hinton, "it wasn't until the reform had dismantled one sector after another of the socialist economic base in China ... that I began

to understand what Mao meant by 'capitalist road' and 'capitalist roader' in China. Thus, the unfolding practice of reform **since 1979** educated me ..." Mao and Mao's Thought had not convinced or even enlightened Hinton during the so-called GPCR. Further, Hinton concedes that, "Few people, even among Mao's strongest supporters, really understood it." Marx taught: "Our theory is not a dogma but a guide to action." So how good was this "new and higher theory" if no revolutionaries could understand and act on it?!

What objective role was played by those who raised Mao and Maoism above Leninism in China? Certainly, their "apparent" opposition to Russian Revisionism was actually *a coordinated attack on Leninism* in combination with those Soviet revisionists who had shamefully betrayed the oppressed peoples and the international working class. The leadership in China, following the Khrushchevite path, put its narrow nationalist interest ahead of the interests of the international proletariat and the oppressed peoples of the world. This resulted in U.S. imperialism, which had been almost isolated globally thanks largely to the heroic struggle of the Vietnamese people, becoming once again the hegemonic power on the basis of its rapprochement with both Russia and China.

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As I concluded the "Reflections" article: "***With Leninism***, from 1917 until 1950 or so, despite an objectively unfavorable situation, ***mostly victories!*** ***Without Leninism***, from 1957 onward, despite an objectively favorable situation (at least initially), ***mostly defeats!***" (*Commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution*, by Ray O. Light, p.15)

**Long Live Leninism—Key to Our Victories!**

In struggle,

*Ray Light*

To read the complete text of the “Reflections” article on the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution which is cited in the ROL response letter you can order the following pamphlet which also includes articles on the historic accomplishments of the Russian working class and peasantry who built socialism under Marxist-Leninist leadership.

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**Still stumped?! See answer below  
to front page mystery quotation.**

**Kathleen Parker** is a syndicated columnist for the *Washington Post*. In a 5-29-18 column entitled, "Ivanka Trump's China trademarks don't look or smell good," Ms. Parker, for one of the first times in the Trump Presidency, focused serious mass media attention on the Trump Regime's blatantly corrupt and illegal *economic* agenda.



Indeed, the only mainstream bourgeois media that had previously exposed the long term *economic* goals of the Trump Empire had been the *Atlantic Magazine*. Its cover story back in the March 2017 issue, contained a surprisingly sharp analysis of the Trump-led drive of the U.S. Government to autocracy, to one man dictatorship, in service to Trump's ultimate goal of becoming the richest person in the world.

The progress of the Trump Dictatorship thus far is reflected in the widespread fear of the monopoly capitalist media to seriously challenge Trump about anything. Even Ms. Parker's *Washington Post* column, as it appeared in print in many other bourgeois newspapers in the following days, was given a new title: "I-Vanka be Daddy's Girl." The rare use of Ebonics and white chauvinist "humor" was evidently employed in defense of the U.S. Wall Street Empire by cautious newspaper editors to take the edge off of Ms. Parker's serious charges that threaten to interfere with the business of the Trump Empire.

—the Editor

**LONG LIVE LENINISM  
—TOWARD A NEW  
COMMUNIST  
INTERNATIONAL  
(1971)**

*By Stalinist Workers Group for Afro-American National  
Liberation and a New Communist International*

The lengthy article, entitled “Long Live Leninism—Toward A New Communist International” by *Stalinist Workers Group* was published in early 1971. It provides detailed insights into the treacherous political role of Soviet and Chinese revisionism, in particular, in their collaboration with the hegemonic imperialist power, U.S. Imperialism at the expense of the international proletariat and the oppressed peoples of the world.

**THE ROLE OF THE DICTATORSHIP  
OF THE PROLETARIAT  
IN THE INTERNATIONAL  
MARXIST-LENINIST MOVEMENT**

**THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION Vs.  
THE “CULTURAL REVOLUTION”**

*By YOUTH for STALIN*

\* \* \* \* \*

**WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY:  
IN SUPPORT  
OF THE STRUGGLE OF THE  
PARTY OF LABOR OF ALBANIA  
AGAINST REVISIONISM**

*By RAY O. LIGHT*

The main article on “The Role of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in the International Marxist-Leninist Movement” by *Youth for Stalin* was first published in April 1968. It upheld the proletarian revolutionary and internationalist legacy of the October Revolution. On that basis, it provided a timely critical assessment of the so-called Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China begun less than two years earlier and still appearing to be led by Chairman Mao.

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*“The great appear great to us  
Only because we are on our knees:  
Let us rise.”*

— Camille Desmoulins

**Revolutionary Organization of Labor (ROL), USA** is a revolutionary working class organization that fights for working class power and the elimination of all human exploitation. ***Ray O’ Light Newsletter*** is the regular publication of ROL, USA. We believe, with comrade Lenin, that the working class “... needs the truth and there is nothing so harmful to its cause as plausible, respectable petty bourgeois lies.” In the spirit of Karl Marx who taught that “our theory is not a dogma but a guide to action,” we welcome your comments.

Comradely the Newsletter Staff,

*Ray Light*, Editor

*Pat Kelly*

*Carl Pappos*, Production Coordinator

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