

# RAY O' LIGHT NEWSLETTER

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*The Sanders Campaign Exposes*

## WALL STREET HAS RIGGED THE SYSTEM!

Dear Friends,

There is only one best place for U.S. social justice activists to be protesting in July 2016 —

**in Philadelphia at the Democratic National Convention.** Here's why.

1. The outstanding feature of the 2016 Presidential Primary has been the voters' angry rejection of Wall Street's Republican and Democratic candidates, "**the Republicrats.**" Remember the odds-on favorites at the beginning? Jeb Bush amassed a fortune in early big money yet was swatted away by the wrath of the Republican voters. **Hillary Clinton**, too, would have been dispatched by the Bernie Sanders Campaign, with its outstanding domestic program addressing the needs of the 99 percent of us. But, of the two wings of the Republicrats who rule politically on behalf of Wall Street, it is the Democratic Party that is the main brake on social justice movements fighting against Wall Street, against monopoly capitalism and imperialism. The Democratic Party is the main political gatekeeper for the System.

2. Our Wall Street rulers will not allow the U.S. citizens to vote them out of power and wipe out their obscene and criminal private profit through the ballot box!

Indeed, as unrest and dissatisfaction increases among the U.S. population, the line between **the military and the police** has become increasingly blurred. Wall Street controls the increasingly militarized domestic police apparatus as well as the U.S. military itself, armed with the most powerful weapons of mass destruction in world history and produced by the U.S. military-industrial complex, which has its own impact on U.S. domestic politics.

¿ DEMOPUBLICAN?



¿ REPUBLICRAT?

(contd. on p. 2)

## MUMIA ABU-JAMAL SPEAKS ON THE U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

*The following are excerpts from an interview conducted by former New York Times reporter and journalist Chris Hedges with Afro-American political prisoner, Mumia Abu-Jamal, one of the most important revolutionary political thinkers in the USA. Hedges visited brother Mumia in prison in Frackville, Pennsylvania during this past July Fourth weekend. [http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/mumia\\_abu-jamals\\_fourth\\_of\\_july\\_20160703/](http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/mumia_abu-jamals_fourth_of_july_20160703/).*

"Donald Trump is the real face of the ugly American empire. Yes, he ain't pretty. He ain't black. He ain't a woman. He has a fake tan and orange hair. His rhetoric is cruder. But his ideas are the same. The two major political parties are the abject servants of Wall Street and American empire über alles. They each support militarism, at home and abroad. They each support the indiscriminant murder of civilians from drones. They each support the worldwide archipelago of secret prisons. They each support mass incarceration of poor people, the suspension of habeas corpus and torture. It is only their talk that is different. What is the difference between being beaten up by a black cop

(contd. on p. 3)

### Do you know who said it??

"...Ordinary citizens have virtually no influence over what their government does in the United States."

Special Note: Because this is the middle of the U.S. Presidential Election Season, we think this quote is important for our readers to ponder. But because its source may be difficult to identify we are making this a multiple choice question.

Hint: Is it (a) Noam Chomsky; (b) Howard Zinn; or (c) a mainstream political scientist?

—Still stumped? See page 6 for the mystery answer.

Also included in this issue:

ILPS Chairman on Brexit .....pages 4-6  
The Abraham Lincoln Brigade & McCain's  
Astonishing Tribute by Ray Light ..pages 7-10  
Equality is NOT Liberation by Cindy Sheehan ..pages 11-12

(Rigged by Wall Street continued)

**3.** The Democratic Party apparatus headed by DNC chair **Debbie Wasserman Schultz** conspired to deliver the Presidential nomination to Wall Street's candidate, Hillary Clinton. Rather than maximize the opportunity of tens of millions of dollars worth of free exposure of their candidates and message like the Republican Party did, the DNC sponsored the minimum number of TV debates and held them at times when there would be low viewer turnout. Moreover, they used their even more anti-democratic rules than those of the Republican Party, especially the so-called "super delegates," to mobilize for Clinton. Throughout the Presidential primary campaign, they counted "committed" super delegate votes as if they had already been cast to give the public the false impression that Clinton was beating Sanders badly. These official votes appeared in newspapers, on TV and throughout the media every time there was a state primary vote. The DNC miscounted ballots and manipulated state caucuses. They got the Congressional Black Caucus *Political Action Committee*, i.e. staffers, lobbyists and a small percentage of the actual Black Congress members, to endorse Clinton before the South Carolina primary, highlighted by John Lewis' lies about Clinton's role during the Civil Rights era when she supported Barry Goldwater during the very period when Goldwater opposed the Voting Rights Act! And in conjunction with the monopoly capitalist-controlled media, CNN et al., they concocted out of nothing a "news story" that Clinton had achieved "an historic victory," the night *before* the California primary. Were the California votes ever counted at all?!

**4. President Barack Obama**, one of Wall Street's most valuable presidents ever, has now openly declared his loyalty to Wall Street's chief remaining candidate by endorsing Hillary Clinton as "the best prepared candidate for president in U.S. history." Her preparation includes the following: Clinton has taken huge bribes/ "speaking fees" from the likes of Goldman Sachs, the biggest Wall Street winner in the current economic crisis thanks to the George W. Bush *and* Obama Regimes. As Secretary of State, Clinton helped to oust President Zelaya of Honduras and then helped Obama to prevent the elected President's return. She helped lead Obama's colonialist war on Libya, under the Qaddafi Regime, the most successful country on the African continent and now a ruined nation-state. And, with blood on her hands, in true white supremacist fashion, she infamously declared, regarding the cold-blooded murder of Qaddafi: "We came, we saw, he died!" Indeed, Clinton is well prepared to take the helm of the U.S. Empire.

**5.** What about the Trump menace? In style and substance, **Donald Trump** is a fascist politician in the classic Adolph Hitler and "National Socialist" (Nazi) sense. This billionaire's angry campaign combines demagogic populist rhetoric proclaiming that the

system is rigged against the majority of us, on the one hand, with chauvinistic hatred toward Latino immigrants, Muslim religious believers, Afro-American citizens and many other "non-white American" ethnic groups here and around the world, on the other. He argues further that because of his immense personal wealth, he is "independent" of the Wall Street rulers. Regarding the U.S. Empire in decline, he promises to "make America great again."

Georgi Dimitrov, the leader of the Communist International heroically and successfully defied and exposed Hitlerite Fascism, and then helped the Soviet Union lead in the defeat of world fascism in World War II. He taught: "It is in the interests of the most reactionary circles of the bourgeoisie that fascism intercepts the disappointed masses who desert the old bourgeois parties. But it impresses these masses by the vehemence of its attacks on the bourgeois governments and its irreconcilable attitude to the old bourgeois parties." Indeed, as the masses began to rally to Bernie Sanders' social-democratic domestic program against Wall Street, the monopoly capitalist-dominated mass media gave unprecedented coverage to every grunt and rant of Trump, magnifying his "anger against the system." And Trump's rants were already angrier than Sanders, who had committed from the outset to support the successful Democratic candidate. The fact is, however, that the Sanders' campaign was only minimally covered, especially given the huge crowds Sanders was gathering throughout the primaries.

But Trump's similarities to Hitler and German fascism of the 1930's does not automatically make him the *main* political target who must be stopped at all costs at this particular historical moment. Fascism comes to power through different paths as shown, for example, in the experience of Fascist Italy as compared to Nazi Germany. Dimitrov observed that, "Bourgeois governments usually pass through a number of preliminary stages and adopt a number of reactionary measures which directly facilitate the accession to power of fascism. Whoever does not fight the reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie and the growth of fascism at these preparatory stages is not in a position to prevent the victory of fascism, but, on the contrary, facilitates that victory."

**6. Clinton, the Democrat, is the absolute worst candidate to support "against Trump."** As a loyal tool of Wall Street, Clinton will not educate the voters against the financial oligarchy but will apologize and cover up for Wall Street. Coupled with her Democratic Party rhetoric, this will only enrage the voters all the more, moving them further into the Trump camp. It was precisely Sanders' focus on the rigged Wall Street economy and politics that allowed his candidacy to thrive against all odds. With Sanders out of the race the same old "Republicrat" rhetoric will provide new fuel to the Trump fire.

(contd. on p. 3)

(Rigged by Wall Street continued)

7. Moreover, a Clinton/Wall Street victory, while temporarily slowing down the accelerating process of advancing fascism immediately following the election, over the longer run will both fuel its development and drive it into underground independent fascist political formations. As Paul Craig Roberts, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in President Reagan's first term and an Associate Editor of *the Wall Street Journal*, observed, "The president can do whatever he wants as long as he justifies it as 'national security.' The president's part of the government, the unaccountable executive branch, is supreme. This is the legacy of the Bush/Cheney regime, and this criminal regime continues under Obama. America's 'war on terror,' a fabrication, has resurrected the unaccountable dungeon of the Middle Ages and the raw tyranny that prevailed prior to the Magna Carta." (VDARE.COM, 9-2-10) Indeed, **U.S. Fascism has significantly advanced on the shoulders of every U.S. president at least from Reagan to Bush I to Clinton to Bush II to Obama.**

### WHAT WE CAN DO NOW

- We need to organize to oppose the drive toward fascism in the USA—including defense of the Afro-American people against police brutality and Latino immigrants against ICE raids and against increased militarization of the domestic police and U.S. society.

(Mumia Speaks continued)

or a white cop? The only solution is to rise up to stop the cops from beatin' our asses and shootin' us in the streets, our homes and our cars. I can assure you voting for Hillary Clinton won't make a damn bit of difference. The Ku Klux Klan, after all, once served as the unofficial armed wing of the Democratic Party. You can't invest hope in an organization with a history like that.

"The black political elites, including Barack Obama, are powerless. They are emblems. They are not the voice of black America. They are like a ventriloquist's dummy. They mouth the same words the white corporate masters mouth. They do not make white America uncomfortable. They do not name unpleasant truths. They never lifted their voices to denounce Bill Clinton's decision to massively expand our system of mass incarceration. And they do not lift their voices now. They go right along with the repression. And they are well paid for it."

"Black people will probably vote for Clinton, but this symbolizes the emptiness of hope. They fear Trump. They should look closely at the pictures from Trump's third wedding. Hillary Clinton is in the front pew of



the church. Hillary, Bill, Trump and Melania are shown embracing at Trump's estate afterwards during the reception. These people are part of the same elite circle. They represent the same financial interests. They work for the same empire. They have grown rich from the system. The words they shout back and forth during political campaigns are meaningless. Trump or Clinton will

deliver the same political result. They will serve, like Obama, corporate and military power. And if they were not willing to serve these centers of power they would not be allowed to run. Their job is to manufacture hope during election campaigns that ultimately end in betrayal. This is why they spend billions on elections. They need to feed the illusion that our voices matter, that we are participants in their closed systems of power.

"The liberals and the Democrats are in many ways more dangerous than the right wing. Repression and neoliberalism are more effectively instituted by Democrats such as Bill and Hillary Clinton or Barack Obama. They sound reasonable. But because what they do is hidden it is more insidious and often more deadly."

- We need to stay in the streets and continue to fight for the Sanders Campaign platform demands. And, *unlike Sanders*, we need to be there to protest the Obama-led U.S. imperialist wars, including the current wars throughout the Middle East.

- We need to involve our newly organized political groupings in Referenda campaigns on Sanders Campaign-type issues like single-payer universal healthcare, defense of the environment and breaking up the big banks, and run independent candidates in local elections around the country.

- We need to expose and isolate the Democratic Party and work to build an anti-fascist labor/oppressed nationalities Third Party. A Sanders run for President, *independent of the Democratic Party*, would help lay a basis for such a mass-based party now.

- We need to make "a political revolution." If you are serious about a political revolution leading to socialism, we would love to hear from you.

In Solidarity,

*Ray Light*

**Revolutionary Organization of Labor (USA)**

# BREXIT VOTE TAKES BRITISH AND US IMPERIALISM BY SURPRISE!

## Editor's Introduction

The June 23<sup>rd</sup> referendum in the United Kingdom resulted in a victory for "Brexit." The majority popular vote to leave the European Union sent shock waves through the British ruling class and all of international finance capital. The U.S. pundits had failed to make a correct estimate of the surprisingly strong Trump and Sanders candidacies in the U.S. Presidential primaries during the first six months of 2016, fueled by growing economic hardship among the U.S. population, while Wall Street was richer than ever. Similarly, the British pundits were unable to grasp the level of mass revulsion among the people of the UK for the establishment politicians of all major parties who had brought them imperialist globalization and oppression without the "comforting" national "patriotic" chauvinism of several centuries of conditioning.

Thus, the majority vote for Brexit represents both a mass protest against intensifying globalized

austerity and exploitation and a chauvinistic move in the direction of nativism and fascism. There is no question that this significant beginning of the unraveling of the European Union portends the developing enmity among countries and peoples, the realignment of major power alliances and blocs and a move toward a major world war.

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Below we print most of a July 4th statement by Jose Maria Sison, Chairperson of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS). Comrade Sison clearly explains how Brexit is an inevitable outgrowth of the exploitation and oppression of the political-economic system of monopoly capitalism and imperialism. He makes a compelling argument for all oppressed and exploited peoples and nations to embark on the road of struggle against imperialism, still led by United States imperialism.

—the Editor

## ON THE IMPLICATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE BREXIT

by Professor JOSE MARIA SISON, Chairperson, International League of Peoples' Struggle(ILPS)

The result of the June 23 referendum in the United Kingdom, in which the majority of voters chose to take their country out of the European Union, is a rejection of austerity measures, economic stagnation, and widening social inequalities in British society.



austerity measures have been generated by the EU's persistent push for neoliberal policies and its overprivileged bureaucracy. In a sense, the Brexit is a spontaneous rebellion against the EU and its main UK partners.

The strongest Brexit bulwarks have been the UK's blighted industrial areas, which are the worst-hit by the economic crisis. The neoliberal regime under EU has reduced big sections of the British working people into low-paid, precariously employed, and outright unemployed workers competing among themselves for reduced social benefits.

These comprise both the proletariat and what is more widely labeled as the precariat (unemployed and underemployed, including more and more white collars from the so-called middle class). They are increasingly unable to enjoy the supposed benefits of continued EU membership such as a wider range of cheap consumer goods, unrestricted movement within Europe, and so on.

The Brexit also reflects to a secondary degree the growing influence of rightwing nationalists, populists and xenophobes, whose mass agitation

Brexit implies a repudiation of the laws of motion of monopoly capitalism, the aggravation of these by neoliberal economic policy and the political arrogance and economic greed of the monopoly bourgeoisie, especially the finance oligarchies of both the UK and EU.

### Implications of Brexit

The stunning 52-48 vote in favor of "Brexit," as the Leave-EU option has come to be known, is mainly based on the widespread nationwide sentiment that the stagnation, unemployment and

(Brexit Vote continued)

campaigns have spread hatred and anger against refugees and immigrants in the wake of the inflow of millions of refugees to the EU. Ultra-nationalist and racist sentiments have been generated by the monopoly bourgeoisie to obscure the capitalist roots of the crisis, inflame a section of the masses against others and cause senseless brutal incidents against refugees and immigrants.

But even on this point, the Brexit arguments for national sovereignty and self-determination resonated widely among the British people who feel all the more dissatisfied by the growing and overprivileged EU bureaucracy. To many pro-Brexit voters, exit from EU meant better chances to gain more control over national policy-making and improve the economy.

Such current of thinking is buttressed by the fact that the UK has all along maintained fiscal and financial sovereignty and takes into account the better living conditions of several countries like Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. The British financial oligarchy also harbors such thinking as it contraposes London as the financial center of a wider scale to Frankfurt as the financial center of the EU.

While the voting seems not to have strictly followed class alignments, the polarization once again showed the great class divide between the affluent monopoly bourgeoisie and the impoverished working people. It is this underlying clash of class interests that is expressed outwardly as voting patterns in terms of economic status, educational level, age, residence and ethnicity.

The American and British mainstream media, which reflect the interests of monopoly capitalism, especially of the financial oligarchy, have concentrated only on the pros and cons for British monopoly capitalism during the debate before June 23. Since the resounding Brexit vote, they have focused mainly on the most immediate impacts of Brexit, such as steep drops in the pound and euro, other aftershocks in the financial markets, unexpected complications for the EU labor market, and the seemingly widened floodgates of racist tensions.

What is often obscured are the root causes of the worsening economic and financial crisis. In fact, the proletariat and the rest of the people in the UK are suffering class oppression and exploitation, whether there is Brexit or not. The US has openly expressed for the UK to remain in the EU for

the sake of sustaining the US-NATO expansion and pressures on Russia. But the UK has its own distinct internal dynamics despite the intimate Anglo-American links.

On one hand, the UK has always been a hesitant or reluctant member of the EU even during the latter's peak years. The pound sterling has long stood outside the eurozone, symbolic of the long-standing fiscal and financial sovereignty of the British financial oligarchy. This oligarchy has zealously done everything to keep London as a major financial center of global capitalism and pivot point of Anglo-American collaboration.

On the other hand, the factors favoring Brexit have been generated by the ever worsening crisis both of British monopoly capitalism as well as of EU-wide monopoly capitalism, under the auspices of the neoliberal economic policy propagated in Europe and worldwide by the US and UK since Reagan and Thatcher.

... the worsening economic and financial crisis is rooted in the basic laws of capitalism and aggravated at an accelerated rate by neoliberal economic policy, which has been promoted by the US and UK. Racist backlash and the myopic bourgeois media have overwhelmed the obvious fact that the massive inflow of refugees into the EU has been the result of US and NATO wars of aggression, whipped up mainly by the US and UK, in the Middle East and Africa.

The US and UK have been the most vile and violent in unleashing wars of aggression together with their NATO allies and have been mainly responsible for the phenomenon of refugees in tens of millions since the repeated wars against Iraq. They have been actively involved in the long running war in Afghanistan and the wars in the Balkans, Africa, in Libya and Syria. They are most culpable for the 65 million refugees that have resulted from the wars.

### **Consequences of Brexit**

....

In the still relatively more prosperous countries of Europe, such as Germany, France and the Netherlands, more nationalist and anti-immigrant parties and groups will press for exit from the EU. In countries hard pressed by higher rates of unemployment, stagnation, austerity measures and foreign debt obligations, like Greece, Portugal, Spain and Italy, the people can be led by the Left parties and movements against impositions by their local rulers, monopolies and foreign creditors.

**(contd. on p. 6)**

(Brexit Vote continued)

From a proletarian revolutionary viewpoint, it can be said that the tendency of the EU to decompose will result in the eventual weakening of EU and its national components as bulwarks of counterrevolution and aggression. However, proletarian revolutionary parties have yet to effectively lead the education, organization and mass mobilization of the people on the road of revolution.

In many EU countries at the moment, rightwing parties and groups have stood out far more than the Left in responding to the crisis. There are however Left formations which can strive to assert leadership in the face of the crisis conditions that continue to worsen and incite the people to rebel. The working class, youth and people in France, Spain, Greece and Portugal have been among the most determined and militant in fighting austerity measures and other neoliberal impositions by the EU and by their respective oligarchies.

In the underdeveloped Third World, the outflow of labor migration and return flow of remittances will begin to constrict as refugees from the Middle East, Africa and South Asia and migrant

workers from Eastern Europe and elsewhere compete for shrinking labor markets in EU and UK. More financial bubbles are threatening to burst, aggravating slowdowns, recessions, and unemployment in all parts of the world....

The worsening crisis of global capitalism and the unraveling of the neoliberal economic policy drives the ILPS to call for all anti-imperialist and democratic forces to move to the front lines and bring the people's struggle forward to greater freedom, democracy, social justice, all-round development and international solidarity against the forces of exploitation, oppression and aggression.

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

The answer is **(c) Mainstream political scientist Martin Gilens of Princeton University**. He made this statement to liberal online journal *Talking Points Memo*, sharing conclusions arrived at on the basis of the research he had done with his colleague, Benjamin Page of Northwestern University. According to Paul Street (*Counterpunch online*, 3-11-16), "Over the past three plus decades, the leading mainstream political scientists... [Gilens and Page] reported in the fall of 2014, the U.S. political system had functioned as an 'oligarchy,' where wealthy elites and their corporations 'rule.' Examining data from more than 1,800 different policy initiatives in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, Gilens and Page had found that *wealthy and well-connected elites consistently steer the direction of the country, regardless of and against the will of the U.S. majority and irrespective of which major party holds the White House and/or Congress.*" (Paul Street, "The Donald Can Happen Here," my emphasis-the Editor)

—the Editor

Some Valuable Lessons

## On the Passing of the last surviving Veteran of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and John McCain's Astonishing Tribute

by RAY LIGHT

*"A policy based on principle is the only correct policy, -this was the formula by means of which Lenin took new 'impregnable' positions by assault and won over the best elements of the proletariat to revolutionary Marxism."*

—Stalin, Selected Works, Vol. 6, p. 61

On Sunday, February 28, 2016, Delmer Berg died at his home in Columbia, CA at the age of 100. As a youth, he had worked as a union dishwasher in a hotel and at odd jobs. After World War II, he worked as a farm laborer and a landscaper. Then he started a cement and stonemasonry business with one of his sons. Despite being an ordinary man, a "common man," Delmer Berg was accorded an obituary feature written by Sam Roberts for the *New York Times*. (See 3-2-16 NYT) This was clearly because he had been the last known living veteran of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.

As Roberts explains, the Lincoln Brigade included about three thousand U.S. people, mostly men but also some women (mostly nurses) who volunteered to fight on behalf of the legally elected democratic government of Spain under attack from a fascist Spanish military revolt led by General Francisco Franco. Roberts admits that "the war was an audition by proxies for World War II." He continues, "Through the Communist Party, the Soviet Union was supporting the Republicans, or Loyalists. Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy fortified Franco. Franco won the war in 1939 and installed a dictatorship that endured until his death in 1975." Having set the stage, Roberts **and** *the Times* further admit, "The United States was officially neutral during the war." This is a real condemnation of the role of U.S. imperialism in Spain given the huge stakes involved in that struggle, i.e. that the fascist victory in Spain, as they admit, led directly to World War II.

As a loyal defender of the U.S. Empire, even after providing the historical context, Roberts still insists on referring to the members of the Lincoln Brigade (the Brigadistas) as "quixotic," "starry-eyed" etc., as if anyone in their right mind would never have put themselves into harm's way for another person, never mind for the people of another country. Yet, in spite of Robert's obvious reactionary, liberal, pro-imperialist bias, the obituary clearly reveals the heroic character of Delmer Berg's life and legacy.

***-Delmer Berg, a genuine people's hero-***

When asked why he went to Spain to fight, brother Berg explained: "I was a worker. I was a farmer. I was in support of the Spanish working people, and I wanted to go to Spain to help them."



Delmer Berg, 2nd from right

For most of the past seventy-five years since then, U.S. imperialism has been the hegemonic imperialist power and it has constructed an Empire oppressing the peoples of the whole world. The U.S. Empire has taught its citizens that they are better, smarter and more entitled to a decent life than the rest of humanity. This widespread chauvinism has not only thoroughly permeated what has been a massive, privileged white middle class but has ultimately infected the poor white people of Appalachia, the workers in the rust belt, etc. and even the Afro-American people and the Latino peoples living within the U.S. multinational state. Tragically, it would be difficult to find three thousand souls in the USA today who have enough respect for peoples of other countries to care deeply enough about their plight to risk their own lives. This great nation chauvinism has allowed Presidents Obama and Bush and their "Republicrat" predecessors to invade, bomb, starve, occupy and pillage the peoples of the Middle East, Latin America, Africa and elsewhere with little or no resistance from the people of the USA. Certainly we need to get back to a point, such as in the 1930's, when large numbers of U.S. people consider other peoples just as worthwhile as they are.

(contd. on p. 8)

(Abraham Lincoln Brigade continued)

Back then, in the USA, there was a Young Communist League, connected to a working class-based Communist Party, through which young Delmer, attracted by a billboard for the brigade, enlisted. He then cobbled together enough money to get himself from California to New York City where he boarded a ship bound for France. From there he slipped across the border into Spain and into the middle of the Spanish Civil War. He fought in some of the major battles in the war and was injured by an Italian fascist bomb, leaving shrapnel in his liver for the rest of his long life.

The NYT obituary makes the point that Mr. Berg never became demoralized by subsequent events, joining the Communist Party in 1943 and remaining “an unreconstructed communist” for the rest of his days. In fact, though Democratic Spain was crushed by the Franco fascists, Mr. Berg, even with his war wound, like many other heroic Abraham Lincoln Brigade veterans, joined the U.S. military to fight fascism *again* with the outbreak of World War II. Indeed, members of the U.S. Communist Party were some of the most decorated U.S. soldiers in World War II.

The obituary points to Delmer Berg’s continuous activism: including as Vice President of his local NAACP chapter, organizing farm workers, and protesting the Vietnam War and nuclear weapons. To get the measure of this man, *NYT*’s Roberts astutely shares comrade Berg’s 2013 response to the question of his “proudest moments since Spain”: “When I was elected vice president of the local NAACP and when one of my grandsons was valedictorian at his Oregon high school graduation and said in a newspaper interview, ‘My grandfather is my inspiration. He’s a Communist!’”



Volunteers of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade

Comrade Berg, a man of Western European ethnic background, was proud that Afro-American people trusted him enough to elect him a local leader.\* And he was happy that he had been successful in transmitting his values to at least one of his grandsons, another contribution to humanity’s future. For, as he had told *The New York Times Magazine* in 2015, “It bothers me a little that at 99 you’re going to die any minute because I have a lot of other things I want to do.” Delmer Berg was a genuine communist, a people’s hero to the very end.

### ***-Senator John McCain’s astonishing tribute-***

Three weeks after the *New York Times*’ obituary, a clear and powerful salute to the “unreconstructed communist,” Delmer Berg, appeared in the 3/24/16 issue of the *Times*. It was authored by one of the most reactionary politicians in the USA, Arizona Republican Senator John McCain! Many so-called “leftists” erroneously believe that revolutionaries are simply to the “left” of liberals and Democrats, on a continuous spectrum that extends from the “extreme left” to right wing Republicans at the other end. And their task, as they see it, is to convince liberals and Democrats to move just a little further left. To these opportunists, proletarian revolutionaries should never even attempt to tactically unite with (and struggle against) conservatives and reactionaries, including working class and oppressed nationality forces who are temporarily in that camp.

For any honest “leftists” carrying this political baggage, Senator McCain’s salute to a communist can teach important lessons.

First of all, Senator McCain argues against those (like the *Times*’ Roberts) who consider the Brigadistas “romantics, fighting in a doomed cause for something greater than their self-interest.” While knocking Communism in general, McCain unequivocally states: “I have always harbored admiration for their [the Communists]’ courage and sacrifice in Spain.” Would we ever hear such an endorsement for Communists from McCain’s Democratic opponent in the 2008 U.S. Presidential election, Barack Obama?! From Hillary Clinton?! Or from the social-democrat Bernie Sanders?! No. For these liberals and Democrats are the primary political gate-keepers for U.S. monopoly capitalism and imperialism, for the U.S. Empire.

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\*It should be no surprise that the first Afro-American in U.S. military history to command white U.S. troops in battle was Oliver Law, a commander in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.

(Abraham Lincoln Brigade continued)

Moreover, it was not only the *absence* of U.S. imperialist hegemony and Empire that explains the Abraham Lincoln Brigade; there was the *organized presence* of the Communist International, the Comintern. The three thousand U.S. volunteers were joined by almost forty thousand volunteers from at least a few dozen other countries.

Roberts and *the Times* are completely silent on this issue, pointing to the Communist Party and the Soviet Union as the agencies through which the Abraham Lincoln Brigade was organized to support the legally elected democratic government of Spain and chauvinistically painting the U.S. volunteers as unique, merely another example of alleged “U.S. superiority.”

McCain is more accurate, exposing the scope of the proletarian internationalism involved. Says McCain, “The Lincoln Brigade was originally called a battalion, one of several volunteer units that were part of the International Brigades, the name given the tens of thousands of foreign volunteers who came from dozens of countries and were *organized and largely led by the Comintern*, the international Communist organization controlled by the Soviets.” (ROL emphasis) \*

Senator McCain is thus not only more advanced, more progressive on the question of the Spanish Civil War than Obama, Clinton and Sanders and the entire Democratic Party and any other liberal and/or social-democratic parties in the USA, but he is also more advanced than all the anarchist, Trotskyite and other so-called socialist and communist parties and organizations in the USA!! For decades, such opportunists have viciously lied about the role of the Soviet Union and suppressed the role of the Comintern in relation to the Spanish Civil War. In fact, they have used “Spain” as a prime example where allegedly “Stalin and the USSR betrayed Spain.” But such opportunists are “the extreme

left-wing of the imperialist bourgeoisie” as Lenin expressed it. They are the ultimate gate-keepers for the world capitalist system.

As McCain lays out, the Stalin-led USSR, despite its own desperate condition, was actually the only country in the world that gave Republican Spain significant support, and the Soviet-led Comintern organized the International Brigades, including the Abraham Lincoln Brigade!

Despite the tragic fact that Franco Fascism conquered Spain in 1939 and continued its dictatorship over the Spanish people until 1975, it was the Soviet-led, communist-led alliance that defeated fascism on *the global stage* in World War II itself. This magnificent and decisive victory over world fascism ushered in a period of unprecedented advances for the international working class and oppressed peoples around the world.

Thus, given the fact that the Spanish Civil War was the “dress rehearsal for World War II,” an important aspect of the legacy of the Spanish Civil War, of the heroic anti-fascist Spanish people and the International Brigades, including the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, and of the Comintern itself includes their important role in helping to lay the basis for the *magnificent victory over global fascism in World War II*.

***-Our Communist cause has proletarian internationalism as its very foundation-***

Moni Guha, an outstanding Bengali anti-revisionist observed: “Our internationalism is not for ‘mutual benefit’ but the very pre-condition of our movement – communism is a world-historical goal.” The number of people living in the Socialist Camp sixty years ago, in the aftermath of the communist-led global victory over fascism was comparable to the number living under total capitalist/imperialist domination with hundreds of millions more in the so-called “non-aligned” camp.

Without proletarian internationalism as its core, *without Leninism over the past fifty years*, our international movement has gone from one defeat to the next. Today there is no socialist camp and most of the world’s peoples live under direct capitalist/imperialist domination. And there is no significant international communist movement. This terrible defeat was inflicted on the international working class as bourgeois nationalism based in the Communist parties in power in the Socialist camp supplanted proletarian internationalism as the

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\*The power of proletarian principle and militant struggle, of its ability to penetrate the armor of even the most reactionary forces, can be seen in the example of John McCain, the son and grandson of U.S. Navy Admirals. McCain was a U.S. war criminal as a U.S. bomber pilot in Vietnam until his plane was shot down and he became a prisoner of war of the heroic Vietnamese people. Their decades-long ultimately successful war of national liberation (against French, Japanese and U.S. Imperialism) was led for most of the period by Ho Chi-Minh and the Vietnamese Communist Party, originally the Indochinese Communist Party, formed as an affiliate of the Comintern in 1930!

(Abraham Lincoln Brigade continued)

guiding principle in the International Communist Movement

As I observed in 1968, “Since the death of Stalin, the two main characteristics of the international situation have been (1) the intensification of the contradiction between the oppressed nations and U.S. imperialism; and (2) the development of a policy in most socialist countries of betrayal of the oppressed nations based on the ascendancy of the national bourgeois class in the socialist countries.” (“The Role of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in the International Marxist-Leninist Movement: The October Revolution Vs. The ‘Cultural Revolution,’” Youth for Stalin, April 1968)

Indeed, under these circumstances, the Cuban Revolution, crowned with victory in 1959, has had incredible durability, ninety miles from the hegemonic imperialist power. Much of Cuba’s staying power has been due to the exemplary internationalism demonstrated especially in Cuban revolutionary solidarity over the years with the peoples of Central and South America and the peoples of Southern Africa in the struggle against U.S.-led imperialism.

In the mid 1960’s, as national democratic revolutionary struggles against U.S.-led imperialism were being waged throughout Asia, Africa, Latin America and Afro-America, with the heroic Vietnamese struggle against U.S. Imperialism as its cutting edge, there seemed to be a new, emerging, rejuvenated international communist movement led by the large Chinese Communist Party and the small Albanian Party in opposition to Soviet-led revisionist capitulation to U.S. Imperialism. In that period, there was a small group in the USA that contributed significantly to the anti-revisionist cause internationally. That group was “Hammer & Steel” (“Stalin and Molotov” in Russian) and it was led by a fearless working class fighter against international capital named Homer Chase.

Comrade Chase, like Delmer Berg, had been a member of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade in Spain. And, like comrade Berg, he went back to Europe with the outbreak of World War II to fight fascism again, this time as a U.S. military paratrooper over Germany. Upon his return to the USA, comrade Chase became the Communist Party organizer in the deep Southern state of Georgia. Later, he came back to his native New England, where he was the CP organizer before breaking with the revisionist CPUSA, along with most of the small New England party leadership in the beginning of the 1960’s.\*

Throughout most of the 1960’s, comrade Chase and the small group were so effective ideologically that the arch revisionist Nikita Khrushchev attacked the U.S. group by name in one of the major polemics against the Chinese and Albanian parties in that period. Like Delmer Berg, Homer Chase, too, was an outstanding proletarian hero.

Senator McCain concluded his tribute to comrade Berg: “He didn’t need to know for whom the bell tolls. He knew it tolled for him. And I salute him. Rest in peace.”

*The Revolutionary Organization of Labor (USA)* stands on the strong proletarian internationalist shoulders of comrade Homer Chase. With the entire international working class, and *unlike Senator McCain*, we have a stake in the revival of the legacy of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, the International Brigades *and* of Leninism.

—*In the tradition of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and the International Brigades in Spain and In the tradition of the Communist International—*

**Long Live Proletarian Internationalism!  
Long Live Leninism!  
Toward a New Communist International!**



Oliver Law, 1st Afro-Am. to command white troops

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\*Their principled break with the revisionist CPUSA followed CP liquidation of the Afro-American national question and CP support for JFK in the 1960 Presidential election.

# Equality is NOT Liberation

by CINDY SHEEHAN



*“There are only three things the guys let you be if you’re a girl in the military - a bitch, a ho, or a dyke.”*  
*Anonymous Female US Soldier*

If there is any institution in the world today that embodies the “ideals” of violence and male supremacy, it’s the US military.

Not only is the US military engaged in murder and mayhem all over the world against civilians and insurgents, it holds its troops in very little regard, and female troops even lower.

Recently, the US Senate passed a bill (included in the war funding bill—sorry, “Defense Authorization Act”) that would require women over the age of 18 to register for “Selective Service.”

This excerpt is from an article in the *New York Times* (June 4, 2016):

*Under the Senate bill passed on Tuesday, women turning 18 on or after Jan. 1, 2018, would be forced to register for Selective Service, as men must do now. Failure to register could result in the loss of various forms of federal aid, including Pell grants, a penalty that men already face. Because the policy would not apply to women who turned 18 before 2018, it would not affect current aid arrangements.*

I found the word “forced” to be very telling in the above. Liberal feminists and many female politicians are celebrating the move as a step for equality, but in my opinion, no one should be “forced” to be conscripted to be a soldier for the profit and power of the oligarchy.

As of this writing Hillary Rodham Clinton is the presumptive nominee for one wing of the capitalist War Party and not surprisingly, she supports the bill which would force women to register for the draft, but after telling the liberal *Huffington Post* that she supports a draft, she uses poli-speak weasel words to say:

*“I am on record as supporting the all-volunteer military, which I think at this time does serve our country well.”*

“All-volunteer” does serve the interests of the ruling-class “well,” because, I am still told all the time, “Your son volunteered to join the Army,” as if this bellicose

rationale gives The Empire the perfect right to send troops to violate the sovereignty, peace, and security of other countries and murder those “volunteers.”

Even though the US already has Selective Service for men, I believe that there is little danger of forced conscription because the draft radicalizes young people and their families. The draft radicalizes the young members of the WORKING-class, however. No 1%ers like Clinton’s granddaughter have any chance of going into the military, although their families profit off of the Military Industrial Complex. Resistance to forced conscription was intense during the Vietnam War and there’s nothing the ruling-class fears more than uprisings of the working-class.

Even though there are slim, to no chance that the US will reinstitute forced conscription, I believe ... that NO ONE: gay-straight, male-female, should register to be cannon fodder for Uncle Sam—but note in the excerpt from the NYT, that young people who do not put their name in the draw for Murder, Inc, cannot have access to Pell Grants or other Federal help for astronomically priced college or university. The dichotomy is that education is considered a human right in countries where Empire building and maintenance don’t suck economies dry, but our young people have to balance potential human rights violations as members of Murder, Inc with an education.

Besides the simple fact the women are being “gifted” with this chance to be “equal” to men in our opportunity to be cannon fodder, women still do not have equal pay or equality under the law here in the land of male supremacy. Women’s suffrage came at a great cost to activists, yet women still do not make up 50% of political offices—yet many of the women who are in office (like HRC) are absorbed by and beholden to the tenets of male supremacy.

One of the best reasons for me as a women revolutionary-activist-mother-grandmother to oppose forced conscription for women is that 1/3 of all females are raped by their fellow soldiers and superiors in the military and if we think it’s hard to get justice for rape in the civilian world, it’s nearly impossible in the US military.

I have heard horrifying tales of women being raped, or sexually assaulted, or harassed and retaliated against if she had the gall to stick up for herself and report the abuse. One of the worst cases I heard of was the case of LaVena Johnson.

LaVena was murdered in Iraq on July 19, 2005.

(contd. on p. 12)

(Equality NOT Liberation continued)

Her parents were told that their daughter committed suicide and then her character was assassinated by insinuating that she was a “ho” and slept around quite a bit.

Through years of relentless quest for truth, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson discovered the real story that LaVena was (by fellow troops) brutally sexually assaulted, beaten, and then her body was burned to hide the evidence—while key parts of her anatomy were excised and removed postpartum to hide the crime!

It’s my opinion that the US military is a brutal institution and we must use whatever influence we have with young people to oppose Selective Service and military recruitment.

Most of the time being “equal” in the Empire means being co-opted into violence and patriarchy and that is certainly not liberation.

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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,

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