

# RAY O' LIGHT NEWSLETTER

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On the Deaths of Aretha Franklin and John McCain

## Two Funerals—Two Sets of Problems

by RAY LIGHT

Aretha Franklin, passed away on August 16, 2018. After a four day celebration of her life, including her involvement with the civil rights movement and her magnificent music career spanning more than six decades, the lengthy and star-studded funeral service for the “Queen of Soul” was held on Friday, August 31. The two most recent sitting presidents, Republican George W. Bush and Democrat Barack Obama, sent letters to be read at the great singer’s tribute. However, neither of them attended her funeral service.

Meanwhile, on August 25, 2018 Arizona Senator John McCain died. McCain’s funeral was scheduled for September 1, the day after Ms. Franklin’s funeral service. Tellingly, both Presidents Bush and Obama opted to attend McCain’s funeral rather than Franklin’s. There, McCain was eulogized by both these two former presidents of the USA.

On the surface there seems to be something wrong with this picture.

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## Of “Heroes” and “Communist Dictators”

by CINDY SHEEHAN

July 21, 2017 (with current update)



The first time I met Senator John McCain, I was still under the false impression that, even though he was a Republican, he was still slightly independent and not entirely reprehensible.

The occasion was the now infamous meeting our family had with then president George Bush in 2004, about six weeks after Casey was killed in Iraq.

Our family was invited for a “sit-down” with Bush at Ft. Lewis up near Seattle. The government was paying, so we agreed. We had some things we wanted to “chat” with him about, also.

### Do you know who said it??

“A man has no reason to be ashamed of having an ape for his grandfather. If there were an ancestor whom I should feel shame in recalling it would rather be a *man*—a man of restless and versatile intellect—who ... plunges into scientific questions with which he has no real acquaintance, only to obscure them by an aimless rhetoric, and distract the attention of his hearers from the real point at issue by eloquent digressions and skilled appeals to religious prejudice.”

*Hint:* A staunch defender of Darwin and evolution, this great nineteenth century scientist, was not thrown off by the “personal attack” on his own family heritage. To the contrary, he exposed the bankruptcy of the argument presented by the Bishop of Oxford, Samuel Wilberforce, in their noted 1860 debate on evolution at the Oxford University Museum. He became known as “Darwin’s Bulldog” for his energetic defense of the new scientific theory. (This was just one year after the publication of Darwin’s *Origin of the Species*.) In England and worldwide, he decisively affirmed the positive and liberating character of scientific knowledge.

—Still stumped? See page 10 for the mystery answer.

Along with about 16-17 other families in the same piteous situation, we cooled our jets for awhile in a waiting room at the base hospital. After a bit, we were ushered into a small curtained room to wait for 43. While we were waiting, the curtains parted and in walked McCain. I did mention to him that he had been a POW in another immoral war and I asked him why my son had to die. His response: “Well Cindy, if we don’t win in Iraq, then I am afraid for nothing.” After McCain left, we all wondered if he had been the “opening act” for Bush.

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(Two Funerals continued)

Aretha Franklin had been the featured singer at Obama's first presidential inauguration in 2009. And later, when he and Mrs. Obama had hosted the great singer at the Kennedy Center Honors during his administration, he was apparently moved to tears. Obama's association with Aretha Franklin (like his earlier close association with Chicago's Reverend Wright) had served to bolster his "street cred" with the Afro-American masses. Despite this, Obama opted to participate in McCain's funeral service instead.



Moreover, Obama had prevailed over Hillary Clinton in the 2008 Democratic primary fight in large measure because he had *not* voted for Republican George W. Bush's war in Iraq that had turned into a fiasco. Like most prominent Democratic Senators Clinton had voted *for* the war. (Obama had been in the Illinois state senate and not the U.S. Senate at the time.) McCain, to the contrary, never met a U.S. imperialist war he didn't support and promote.

Meanwhile, Republican George W. Bush had defeated McCain for the Republican presidential nomination in a bitter and dirty primary battle leading up to the 2000 election. And the Democrat Obama beat Republican McCain in the 2008 presidential election in the wake of Republican Bush's disastrous and continuing war in the Middle East and the severe economic crisis that had erupted on Wall Street (and Main Street) on the eve of the 2008 election.

Yet, in spite of this bitter history between and among these three men, McCain invited to eulogize him at his funeral, both these two past presidents, who had defeated him in the battle for the highest political office in the land.



What force had brought these three men together?! Why did Bush and Obama serve as McCain's "tag team?" And, who was their opponent in this wrestling match?

What united Bush, Obama and McCain is that they were all "Republicrats." For years, all three have been leading political spokesmen for Wall Street imperialism, for the U.S. Empire. It is the Wall Street ruling class of the USA that commanded McCain to invite Obama and Bush to his funeral; and it was Wall Street that commanded Obama and Bush to serve its interests there.

Their opponent was warned by McCain and Wall Street *not* to attend the funeral at Washington National

Cathedral. And Donald Trump, the sitting President, obeyed.

In the pages of the *Ray O' Light Newsletter*, we have pointed out consistently that Hillary Clinton was Wall Street's candidate in the 2016 election.\* Clinton was an effective representative of the U.S. ruling class, of Wall Street, *in general*; while Trump continues to be occupied and preoccupied with the Trump Empire, having little concern for the U.S. Empire. The fact that Trump was able to deliver tax cuts for the super-rich has allowed him to remain in office until now.

The growing tariff war that Trump continues to aggravate and escalate threatens to seriously disrupt the world capitalist system. And Trump's kleptocratic regime is collapsing from within. The McCain funeral offered Wall Street the opportunity to unite its "Republicrat" political stooges in defense of the U.S. imperialist state at the rotten core of the U.S. Empire.

Indeed, as comrade Cindy Sheehan presents in a compelling article in this issue, entitled, "*Of 'Heroes' and Communist Dictators*," (that includes a current update) those paying tribute to John McCain at his funeral represented a Parade of War Criminals.

Arguably the most infamous of these war criminals is former U.S. Secretary of State and National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger, whose bloody hands were all over the Violent Overthrow of the democratically elected Allende government in Chile in 1973. There are a number of countries to which Kissinger dares not enter for he will be immediately arrested and charged with war crimes.



Salvador Allende

But it will be good for the oppressed peoples and the international working class, especially the Vietnamese people and the Afro-American people, and those who try to function as part of the world proletarian vanguard to ponder *Obama's appearance* here shoulder to shoulder with Kissinger, Bush and the other war criminals — all in tribute to McCain, a classic war criminal of the huge WAR CRIME known as the U.S. war in Vietnam. Let's remember McCain's role as a privileged, elitist U.S. bomber pilot raining bombs down from the sky on the people of Hanoi who had committed no act of aggression against the people of the USA.\*\*

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\*Trump received the endorsement over Clinton from exactly one bourgeois newspaper of any size in the entire USA.

\*\*And let's remember, too, that McCain's father served for a time as the top leader of the U.S. military forces in Vietnam.

(contd. on p. 3)

(Two Funerals continued)

Let's be clear: Obama's eulogy, like that of George W. Bush, who launched the so-called U.S. War on Terror (actually the U.S. War of Terror on the Peoples of the World), served to remember McCain as "a man of ideals and convictions." Obama, the purported "Democratic peace-lover," speaking for himself and Bush, said of McCain: "He made us better presidents—just as he made the Senate better, just as he made the country better."

Perhaps this jarring testimony will help the reader to realize that Obama, who along with his Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, was responsible for the overthrow of the elected Zelaya government in Honduras and of the unprovoked war on Libya that continues to foment chaos in Northern Africa to this day, has earned his place in this Rogue's Gallery of U.S. War Criminals.



Manuel Zelaya

Thus, on the basis of the death and the funereal tributes to Senator John McCain the U.S. Empire's Wall Street ruling class has sought to strengthen its ability to keep the Trump Regime in check. At the same time, through these same vehicles, Wall Street has sought to strengthen its ability through the U.S. imperialist state to effectively counter the rising major capitalist and imperialist powers, including China in the first place.

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Meanwhile, the death and funereal tributes to Aretha Franklin have raised an entirely different set of problems. Ironically, many of the problems can be summed up in the core word of her most famous song — RESPECT!

Aretha Franklin blossomed into adulthood in the midst of the maturation of the Afro-American national liberation movement of the 1960's. Her marvelous singing voice was the highest cultural expression of that new and rising movement so pregnant with promise. The fact that it was aimed against the powers that be in the USA helped it to grow from strength to strength, from civil rights to "Black Power" and with growing connections to anti-imperialist forces around the world, throughout the decade.

In the previous issue of *Ray O' Light Newsletter* (#109) I wrote the following:

Since then, the 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 hazy memory. With it has faded 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 the U.S. imperialist military

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 throughout South Vietnam as a U.S. military strategy.

With all kinds of political and cultural changes since then, including the virtual disappearance of 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 [Afro-American youth] 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's USA: No Country for Children," *Ray Light*)

Aretha Franklin grew to maturity in the new and rising period of Afro-American national liberation struggle *against U.S. imperialism*. She was among the finest

(Two Funerals continued)

human expressions of what it meant then (in the words of Nina Simone) “To Be Young, Gifted and Black.”

Her death has occurred, however, at what is still a low point in the struggle for Afro-American freedom. And this was bound to be reflected in the character of the funeral service and tributes she received at the end of her life.

While McCain, the war criminal, was accorded great respect, Aretha Franklin, the transcendent songstress who at times also fought unselfishly and self-sacrificingly for civil and human rights, especially for the oppressed Afro-American people, was accorded a remarkable amount of *disrespect!*

In an “old school” Afro-American church environment, the direct role of Black women in the service was quite restricted.

Reverend Jasper Williams, Jr., of Salem Baptist Church in Atlanta, who preached the main sermon (for 50 minutes) declared that “Black America had lost its soul.” He criticized Black men for not being present in so many Black families and attacked Black women even more for not bringing them back in, all while declaring that Black women cannot raise Black boys. But he was silent on the prison industrial complex and the new Jim Crow of mass incarceration of Afro-American men and women which has caused havoc in the Black families all over the USA.

Reverend Williams also declared that Black lives *don't* matter as long as Black on Black crime is not addressed. In this way he excused white cop on unarmed Black men crime. Indeed, as “bold” as Reverend Williams’ criticism of the Black community was, he was virtually silent on the role of the white imperialist oppressor and the white police occupiers of the Afro-American communities across the USA and especially in the Black Belt South Afro-American homeland where Atlanta, Reverend Williams’ city, is objectively the capital.

With Reverend Williams setting the servile tone in relation to the white power structure, and promoting traditional male supremacy at a time of heightened awareness of sexual harassment, particularly of women by men, there were a number of insulting incidents impacting Afro-American women attending Ms. Franklin’s funeral service and even involving the deceased woman being eulogized!

Jesse Jackson, Sr. who is afflicted with a muscular degenerative disease, in his rambling speech gave at least equal thanks for her father, the Reverend C.L. Franklin as he did for the woman he was eulogizing, the Queen of Soul herself. During the ceremony, one Black pastor could be seen on the dais “taking liberties” with his arm around an uncomfortable-looking Arianne Grande after making a taco “joke” about her last name.

In light of the current resistance against sexual harassment (mostly by white women), former president Bill Clinton, was now evidently too politically “damaged” by his predatory sexual assaults on the young White House intern Monica Lewinsky during his presidency as well as his association with the now unpopular Hillary Clinton to be an A list speaker at McCain’s funeral. He was quite acceptable evidently in the blatantly male supremacist environment led by Reverend Williams at Ms. Franklin’s funeral. Catching the reactionary spirit, the former president referred to himself as a “groupie” of Aretha Franklin and expressed his happiness that he got to see her in her coffin so he could check out how she was dressed!!!

The Aretha Franklin church service shows how weak and backward the Afro-American peoples liberation struggle is today—especially on the question of the status of Afro-American women.

When Aretha Franklin was coming up in the late 1950’s and the decade of the 1960’s Black youth became increasingly clear that they had to fight the powers that be, the white power structure. With Bill Clinton, still “an honorary Afro-American” and Obama still a “hero” to most Afro-Americans, many Black people mistakenly view the leaders of the U.S. Empire, the leaders of the most violent and aggressive state on earth, the bitterest enemy of the oppressed peoples all over the globe, as their “friends.”

On every front, the Afro-American people need to re-launch their struggle today by fighting the powers that be. One lesson from the **Disrespect** shown to Aretha Franklin and the Afro-American women at her funeral service, is to fight the powers that be that are marginalizing Black men, isolating Black women and destroying the Black family through the New Jim Crow including mass incarceration and the prison-industrial complex.

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**Conclusion:** The star-studded funeral services for Aretha Franklin and John McCain on back to back days provides a stark lesson on the state of the struggle for social justice in the USA today.

Aretha Franklin was widely recognized as the Queen of Soul, the diva of popular music, in the period of the rising of the Afro-American people’s struggle for national and social liberation in the 1960’s. Her anthem became the demand of Black women for “RESPECT.” Yet, at the time of her death in August 2018, her own funeral service was characterized by much disrespect for the oppressed Afro-American nation as a whole and for Afro-American women, in particular.

By contrast, the arch War Criminal John McCain was accorded a funeral service fit for a great humanitarian!!

(contd. on p. 5)

(Two Funerals continued)

The Democratic Party wing of the “Republicrats,” the U.S. imperialist war party, more solidly expressed its admiration for this war criminal than did McCain’s Republican Party wing. The fact that the U.S. Empire still sits astride the nations and peoples of the earth based largely on the ability of its state apparatus to project massive military violence is reflected in the deep honor with which the Republicrats united to bury the monster McCain.

Indeed, the disrespect that the magnificent Aretha Franklin and her funeral service received is in direct

proportion to the successful uplift of the deceased McCain by Obama, George W. Bush, Hillary Clinton, Bernie Sanders, John Lewis, Keith Ellison, Senator Joe Lieberman, Lindsey Graham, Nancy Pelosi, and Henry Kissinger. For the moment, the bloody and bestial U.S. Empire won the battle of the two funeral services and the Afro-American people and the international working class lost.

*Comrades and friends—in memory of Aretha Franklin, let us “Lift Every Voice and Sing”— and pledge — “Let Us March On ‘Til Victory is Won.”*

(Heroes and Dictators continued from page 1)



Fast forward six months to inauguration day for 43’s second term.

By that time, I was now very active opposing Bush and the wars and had founded Gold Star Families for Peace. I was invited to appear on Good Morning America (from the Library of Congress) early on the morning of the inauguration. After the interview, I was leaving and John McCain walked in to be interviewed—I reminded him that we had met at Ft. Irwin and I told him what I was up to. His response (which he later denied in our 3rd meeting) was: “The country needs people like you, too.”

After I protested Bush and the wars at Camp Casey in Crawford in August of 2005, I went to Washington DC for a huge antiwar rally in September and I met with many reps and Senators and John McCain was one of them. I reminded him that he had encouraged me to protest the war back in January and he said, “Why would I do that, I support it?” On the way out, he said, “Good luck, Cindy.” I said, “Thank you, you are wishing me luck to end the wars.” He said, “I take it back, then.”

I have been in Phoenix at his office a few times opposing his bellicosity with my dear antiwar friends there.

Since my first meeting with McCain in 2004, I am under no illusion that he is “independent” or not too reprehensible. In a nation of reprehensibles, he is near

the top (or bottom) of the dung-heap. It’s normal that conservatives are praising him, but he is being lauded by liberals as an “American hero” also. That a war criminal who, with his own hands, murdered untold number of Vietnamese and with either incompetence or arrogance murdered 134 sailors on his aircraft carrier the USS Forrester in Vietnam is considered a “hero” doesn’t say very much about this country.

Among others, Senator Bernie Sanders (D-VT—yes, I know technically he is independent, but he’s about as independent from the Dems as McCain is from the GOP) has heaped praise upon the head of the slimy McCain since he was diagnosed with brain cancer. Now, I don’t expect Bernie Sanders to tweet, “Nice, a war criminal has cancer; isn’t karma a bitch?” But how can a person who protested the Vietnam War tweet this about McCain?

**“John McCain is a hero, one of the most respected senators and a friend. The hopes and prayers of the nation are with him and his family.”** (Bernie Sanders, U.S. Senate candidate, VT, July 19, 2017)

In the ill-fated campaign of Sanders for president, after he was “accused” of being a supporter of President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela (Citgo oil provides low-cost or free heating oil for poor people in the Northeast), Sanders campaign sent out a fundraising blast to his supporters trashing the beloved Chavez by calling the populist president of Venezuela who was democratically elected many times (and survived a coup attempt and recall effort) a “dead, communist dictator.” (Unfortunately, he got the “dead” part right).

I was very privileged to know Hugo Chavez, and in contrast to McCain who never met a war he didn’t like, or a pocket he didn’t want to pick in reverse Robin Hood style, Chavez was a warm person who had a big heart and used the power of his office to elevate the condition of the poorest—often at the expense of the parasitic wealthy.

When Chavez was a military officer, he noticed that the government that he was sworn to serve was horribly oppressing its own people and, with other officers, tried to overthrow it.

(contd. on p. 6)

(Heroes and Dictators continued)

On the other hand, McCain, who graduated 2nd to the bottom of his class at the Naval Academy used his military career to carouse and murder his way through Vietnam and with the help of his Admiral father, covered up his crimes to use his “heroic” “service” as a stepping-stone for greater political power.

If Obama and Sanders and many liberal talking blah-blah heads are praising the “American hero” McCain are they saying that the [U.S.] war in Vietnam was “heroic” and the millions of Vietnamese who died and continue to die from their poisoned country and landmines are just shit?

How can Obama tweet this about McCain?

**“John McCain is an American hero & one of the bravest fighters I’ve ever known. Cancer doesn’t know what it’s up against. Give it hell, John.”** (Barack Obama, former president U.S., July 19, 2017)



(In a clip from *The View* all five participants are praising McCain like he is the purest politician alive. He is: a rare breed, a role model, fearless, for the people, speaks truth to power, American hero, known fighter, has integrity, etc.) Liberals who thought McCain was the reincarnation of Adolf Hitler when he ran against Obama in 2008, are now gushing over how McCain corrected a woman on TV who was afraid of Obama because she thought he was an “Arab.”

“No,” McCain thoughtfully and with his “great” flair of being so gosh-darned “independent” corrected the woman and said that Obama was not an “Arab,” but a “good person.” Cogitate on that for a moment—liberals are praising a deeply bigoted statement. Like the Vietnamese, do liberals consider Arabs as shit?

John “Bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb Iran (and everywhere else, while we’re at it)” McCain has been one of the biggest devotees of this country’s imperial misadventures his entire life; however, the “Communist dictator” (i.e. Chavez) never once invaded or infested another country by his military. No, Chavez used Venezuelan oil and the force of his personality to not only improve the lives of Venezuelans, but to forge alliances and friendships throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Yes, even improving the lives of the poor in the United States.

Meeting McCain was like meeting a robot with insincere blue eyes: a male Hillary Clinton, if you will. With few exceptions, the humanoids that inhabit U.S. politics are cold, calculating and murderous liars.

Meeting Chavez was like coming home to your long lost brother who only wanted good things for everyone and was expansive and genuine in his hospitality and courageous in standing up to the Great Satan of the North.

I am not afraid to say that, although I am not thrilled that McCain has brain cancer, I am in no way sad about it, or conflicted about calling out the terrible crimes against humanity this man has committed in the name of American “heroism.” *Illness, near death, or death itself should not confer immediate sainthood on profoundly criminal lives.*

I would rather see him and his ilk rotting in Ft. Leavenworth.

Cancer claimed the lives of my sister Dede Miller and my comrade Hugo Chavez and millions of other good people, often after torturous struggles. Now, McCain.

The death of Chavez was a great loss to humanity; the death of McCain is not. We should have exactly the same sympathy and compassion for McCain that he showed to all his victims—at home and abroad—which is zero.

Cancer is the deadly and too prevalent equalizer: it takes the good and evil, alike.

**UPDATE:**

**John McCain passed away on 8/25/18—while we don’t celebrate his death we mourn for his scores and scores of victims. We certainly do not think it’s appropriate to elevate him to some great hero. In that light here is an update on the tweets from people whose devotion to U.S. Imperialism should no longer be denied:**

**FROM BERNIE SANDERS:**

“John McCain was an American hero, a man of decency and honor and a friend of mine. He will be missed not just in the U.S. Senate but by all Americans who respect integrity and independence. Jane and I send our deepest condolences to his family.” (August 25, 2018)



**REV. JESSE JACKSON (SR)**

“People like Senator John McCain do not come in bunches like grapes. They are rare like pearls. He represents the best in us. May God give him a special place in his bosom.” (August 25, 2018)



**JOHN LEWIS (D-GA)**

“Senator John McCain was a warrior for peace. He will be deeply missed by people all around the world.” (August 25, 2018)



(contd. on p. 7)

(Heroes and Dictators continued)

**ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ**

(U.S. House candidate, NY-14)

“John McCain’s legacy represents an unparalleled example of human decency and American service.



As an intern, I learned a lot about the power of humanity in government through his deep friendship with Sen. Kennedy.

He meant so much, to so many. My prayers are with his family.”

**NANCY PELOSI (D-CA)**

“Senator John McCain was a leader & public servant of deep patriotism, outstanding bravery & undaunted spirit. Throughout his career, we all saw his integrity, humility, courage & grace. May it be a comfort to his family to know that so many around the world mourn with them.” (August 25, 2018)



**OF COURSE, HILLARY CLINTON**

“Senator John McCain lived a life of service to his country, from his heroism in the Navy to 35 years in Congress. He was a tough politician, a trusted colleague, and there will simply never be another like him.” (August 25, 2018)



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**Confront the bipartisan war machine**

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

or at a solidarity action near you.



**#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:**

- Slashing of the Pentagon budget***
- The funding of healthy social programs at home***
- An end to violence - from beds to bombs***
- Closure of foreign bases***
- The complete end to [unjust] wars abroad***

# PABLO NERUDA'S BELOVED CHILE

**Introductory Note:** ROL, USA has printed excerpts of various sizes from Pablo Neruda's "Let the Railsplitter Awake." That poem, grand as it is, is itself only a small part of Neruda's magnum opus, *Canto General* (General Song.) While "Railsplitter" was devoted by Neruda to explaining to the U.S. people the changing role of the U.S. government in the post World War II period, the current excerpt from *Canto General* is chapter XXXIX

which focuses on Neruda's beloved Chile. We publish this marvelous contribution from Neruda, arguably the greatest poet of the twentieth century, to help our readers all over the world, and especially in the USA, to take a proletarian internationalist approach to the U.S. Empire and to War Criminal John McCain and other bloody stooges of this Empire.

— the Editor

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## Recabarren (1921)

His name was Recabarren.

Good-natured, stout, deliberate,  
open face, firm forehead,  
his broad bearing covered  
the deposits of strength  
like the numerous sand.  
On America's pampa, look  
(branch rivers, bright snow,  
iron chasms)  
at Chile's fractured  
biology, like a broken  
limb, like an arm  
whose phalanges were dispersed  
by the traffic of tempests.

On the muscular areas  
of metal and nitrate,  
on the athletic grandeur  
of recently excavated copper,  
the little inhabitant lives,  
heaped in disorder,  
with a forced contract,  
teeming with tattered children,  
scattered over the desert's  
salty surface.

It's the Chilean interrupted  
by unemployment or death.

It's the rugged Chilean,  
survivor of toil  
or shrouded by salt.

The captain of the people  
arrived there with his pamphlets.  
He took the solitary affronted man  
who wrapped his hungry  
children in tattered shawls,  
who accepted those cruel  
injustices, and told him:  
"Join your voice to another voice.  
Join your hand to another hand."  
He frequented the nitrate's  
ominous retreats, filled the pampa  
with his paternal investiture,  
and in the invisible den  
all the miners saw him.



Pablo Neruda

Every clobbered "stiff" arrived,  
each and every grievance came:  
they entered like phantoms  
with pale pulverized voices  
and left his hands with a new dignity.  
The word was spread throughout the  
pampa.  
And he traveled the entire country  
founding pueblo, raising  
broken spirits.  
His freshly printed newspapers  
entered the galleries  
of coal, rose up to the copper,  
and the people kissed the columns  
that for the first time carried  
the voice of the downtrodden.

He organized the wilderness.  
He took books and songs  
to the walls of terror,  
united grievance after grievance,  
and the slave without voice or mouth,  
the widespread suffering,  
assumed a name-it was called People,  
Proletariat, Union-  
it had person and presence.

And this transformed inhabitant  
formed in combat,  
this valiant organism,  
this implacable spirit,  
this unalterable metal,  
this unity of sorrows,  
this fortress of mankind,  
this road toward tomorrow,  
this infinite cordillera,  
this germinal springtime,  
this armament of the poor  
issued from that suffering,  
from the country's bowels,  
from everything harsh and hammered,  
from the loftiest and most eternal,  
and it was called Party.

*Communist*

*Party.*

(Recabarren continued)

That was its name.  
The struggle was fierce. The gold's  
owners fell like vultures.  
They countered with calumny.  
"This Communist Party  
is financed by Peru,  
by Bolivia, by foreigners."  
They fell on the presses  
acquired drop by drop  
with the combatants' sweat,  
and they attacked, breaking them,  
burning them, scattering  
the people's typography.  
They persecuted Recabarren,  
denied him entry and movement.  
But he congregated his seed  
in the abandoned tunnels  
and the bastion was defended.

Then North American  
and English entrepreneurs,  
their lawyers, senators,  
representatives, presidents,  
spilt blood in the arena—  
they corralled, bound,  
and assassinated our kin,  
the deep strength of Chile,  
left crosses of executed workers  
beside the pathways of the  
immense yellow pampa,  
bodies heaped  
in the sandy hollows.

Once they made the men  
who asked for school and bread  
come to Iquique, on the coast.  
There, corralled together in a patio,  
they were disposed  
for death.  
They fired  
with a hissing machine gun,  
with rifles tacitly  
disposed, upon the heaping  
pile of sleeping workers.  
The blood soaked Iquique's  
pale sand like a river,  
and there lies the fallen blood,  
still burning over the years  
like an implacable corolla.

But the resistance survived.  
The light organized by Recabarren's  
hands, the red flags,  
traveled from mines to towns,  
from cities to seedbeds,  
they rolled with the train wheels,  
assumed cement foundations,  
conquered streets, plazas, farms,  
factories choked with dust,

wounds opened by springtime:  
everything sang and struggled to overcome  
in the unity of the dawning time.

How much has happened since then,  
how much blood upon blood,  
how many struggles upon the earth.  
Hours of splendid conquest,  
triumphs won drop by drop,  
bitter streets, defeated,  
zones dark as tunnels,  
razor-edged betrayals  
that seemed to sever life,  
repressions armed with hatred,  
militarily crowned.

The earth seemed to give way.

But the struggle goes on.

**Envoi  
(1949)**

Recabarren, in these days  
of persecution, in the anguish  
of my exiled brothers,  
assailed by a traitor, and with  
the homeland enveloped in hatred,  
struck by tyranny,  
I remember the terrible struggle  
of your imprisonment, your first  
steps, your solitude  
of an unyielding turret,  
and when, leaving the wasteland,  
one man and another joined you  
to collect the dough  
of the humble bread defended  
by the unity of the august people.

**Father  
of Chile**

Recabarren, Chile's offspring,  
father of Chile, our father,  
in your construction, in your line  
forged in lands and tempests,  
the strength of the victorious  
days to come is born.

You're homeland, pampa and people,  
sand, clay, school, home,  
resurrection, fist, offensive,  
order, march, attack, wheat,  
struggle, greatness, resistance.

Recabarren, beneath your gaze  
we swear we'll cleanse the country's  
festering mutilations.

We swear that freedom  
will raise its naked flower  
over the dishonored sand.

We swear we'll follow in your footsteps  
to the victory of the people.

## In Defense of the Batasan 4!

To Whom It May Concern:

In response to the appeal of the Movement Against Tyranny (MAT), and its conveners, Dr. Carol Araullo and Sr. Mary John Mananzan, we are adding our voices condemning the issuance of bogus warrants of arrest by the Palayan, Nueva Ecija court for former Makabayan representatives Teddy Casino, Satur Ocampo and former Department of Agrarian Reform Secretary Rafael Mariano and current National Anti-Poverty Commission Convener Secretary Liza Maza.

The rehash of these old bankrupt charges, reissued on July 11, 2018 by Judge Evelyn A. Atienza-Turla, already withdrawn by her a decade ago, exposes the repressive state character of this current judiciary action. Because of the outstanding qualities of these four legal “targets,” the Duterte Regime stands exposed as merely the current running dog of United States imperialism. All four, Casino, Ocampo, Mariano and Maza, have proven their love and loyalty to the Filipino people over many decades of determined and self-sacrificing struggle for the emancipation of the Philippines from more than a century of bloody U.S. imperialist invasion, war and occupation and for the emancipation thereby of the Filipino people. All four have threatened the U.S. Empire’s stranglehold on the Filipino People’s Patrimony and they have threatened the flow of private profit of the U.S. financial oligarchy and the domestic ruling oligarchy. This is their real “crime.”

Moreover, the people have shown their appreciation for their leadership by electing them to office where the opportunity has been presented. Let the Duterte government show some respect for the Filipino masses and at least some independence from the rulers of the U.S. Empire by ending this political witch hunt now!

*Ray Light, General Secretary,  
Revolutionary Organization of Labor, USA,  
On behalf of the ROL-USA Secretariat (August 2018)*

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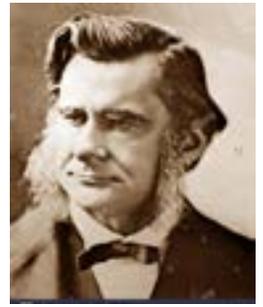
**Good News Update (September 2018):** In the face of popular Filipino mass protest, the Duterte Regime has released the Batasan 4. These four outstanding fighters for independence and national democracy in the Philippines, all previously popularly elected officials, are hopefully back at work helping to lead this just struggle that is an integral part of the fight for the world proletarian revolution in which we all have a stake. —the Editor

### CORRECTION

In the July-August issue of *Ray O’ Light Newsletter #109*, on page three, we published a photo erroneously claiming that it showed Latino children being held prisoner during

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

**Thomas Henry Huxley** was born in Ealing, London, England in 1825 and died in 1895. Born into a well-educated middle class family that had fallen upon hard times, Huxley attended school for only two years, leaving at the age of ten. Yet, self-taught with apprenticeships to several men of science, he rose to become a prominent biologist, specializing in comparative anatomy. Moreover, his defense of Darwin and the new evolutionary biological theory, was part of Huxley’s emergence as “the leading person among those who reformed the Royal Society, persuaded government about science, and established scientific education in British schools and universities. Before him, science was mostly a gentleman’s occupation; after him, science was a profession.” (wikipedia.org)



It is telling that Huxley’s powerful, positive defense of science coincided with *the rising British Empire*, with England at the height of its global power economically as well as politically and militarily.

Today, in the USA, in the age of Trump and his Republican and Democratic Party enablers, the always present “know-nothing” political strain in the U.S. culture has reached beyond the stage of denial of the value of facts, to the absurd assertion of “alternate facts” by official representatives of the Trump Regime and the denial of objective truth. No doubt this is *one significant sign of the precipitous decline and fall of the U.S. Empire.*

—the Editor

the recent fascistic Trump administration-ordered ICE attacks forcibly separating immigrant children from their families. The photo was actually taken in Burma in 2008. That photo has been removed; it has been replaced by this photo reflecting the horrific truth about the Trump Regime’s policy toward immigrant children in 2018.



Our error was not a deliberate deception and it was pointed out by one of our own leaders. Nevertheless, any mistake of this kind can serve to undermine trust between the reader and the Revolutionary Organization of Labor, USA. As a publication and organization guided by Marxism-Leninism, we stand with Lenin who taught: “For the proletariat needs the truth. And there is nothing so harmful to its cause as plausible, respectable petty bourgeois lies.”

—the Editor

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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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