

RAY O' LIGHT NEWSLETTER

September-October 2015 Number 92

Publication of the Revolutionary Organization of Labor, USA



To Enforce “Black Lives Matter” — What’s Next?

by RAY LIGHT

Within the USA today the most serious mass motion against the U.S. imperialist state apparatus is the Afro-American-based and led “Black Lives Matter Movement.” The aroused Afro-American community in Ferguson, Missouri, having been moved by the blatant murder of clearly innocent young Trayvon Martin and the exoneration of his community watch murderer in Florida, responded to a similarly cold-blooded police murder of unarmed teen-aged Michael Brown. The Ferguson community exploded both because of the long-standing criminal conspiracy in Ferguson of the cops and courts to steal from and criminalize the community and because of the lynching character of the murder, with Michael’s lifeless body left on the street for more than four hours as a source of terror and attempted intimidation against the community. Months later, with the Ferguson community still in the streets, killer cop Wilson was “cleared” by the Grand Jury. Ferguson has been the springboard for the Black Lives Matter motion around the USA that has spread and been sustained for the past year.

The current motion in Afro-American communities in cities and towns directly responding to the police murders there that have been exposed as clearly unjustified, have been largely spontaneous, local, defensive, and focused on the systemic police murders of innocent Afro-American young men in their respective communities. Especially where this movement has functioned as a “support” for other communities (such as for Ferguson, Cleveland, Charleston and Baltimore) the “Black Lives Matter”



Robert Williams

the “Black Lives Matter”

(contd. on p. 2)

Includes my view of the U.S.-Iran Nuclear Treaty

U.S. Imperialist War is a Bi-Partisan Problem

by CINDY SHEEHAN



“I do not hesitate one second to state clearly and unmistakably: I belong to the American resistance movement which fights against American imperialism, just as the resistance movement fought against Hitler.”

—Paul Robeson

I believe that just as important as it is to study the great thinkers, revolutionaries, and philosophers of the past, we should use that information to inform our lives as we draw from our own past and experiences.

It took me awhile to look at the world and my past through a revolutionary, anti-Imperialist lens. When my son Casey Sheehan was first killed in Iraq in 2004, my eyes were clouded by a red-hot hatred of George Bush and the Republican Party that I believed had murdered my son.

(contd. on p. 5)

Do you know who said it??

“For us, the PKK [Kurdish Workers Party] is the same as ISIL. It is wrong to consider them as different from each other.”

Hint: He is the head of state who in late July 2015 announced a breakthrough agreement allowing the U.S. government to use his country’s air bases and committing his air force to join U.S. air operations launching strikes against Islamic State forces in Syria.

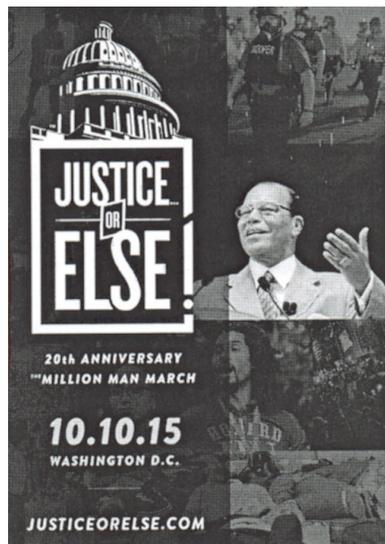
—Still stumped? See page 10 for the mystery answer.

Also included in this issue:

Black Lives Matter (Emmett Till, We Who Are Black, Robert Williams, Justice or Else March)	pages 1-4
Hurricane Katrina - 10 th Anniversary	pages 6-7
Clinton Joins Trump on Immigration	page 8
Bernie Sanders – 2016 Presidential Campaign ..	pages 9-10
31% of World’s Mass Shootings Here	page 11

local movements have been vulnerable to right opportunist leadership focused primarily on having dialogue with the police so as to educate and humanize them. This political direction has been led by paid middle class non-governmental organization (NGO) staffers and Black bourgeois politicians and police spokesmen. There has also been a secondary tendency to ultra-left anarchistic “heroics” as an individualist substitute for mass mobilization. As occurred with the significant Occupy Wall Street movement several years ago, this current movement, in most instances, has no coherent anti-imperialist political program. Indeed, the slogan “Black Lives Matter” is itself more a humanist and pacifist plea to the greatest source of violence in the world, bestial U.S. imperialism, than an inspiring, mobilizing, empowering one.

This October 10th, on the 20th Anniversary of the formidable Million Man March called by Nation of Islam Minister Louis Farrakhan, he has called for a new march on Washington on the National Mall. This year the timely theme is “Justice or Else.”



And, while the original march directly appealed to Afro-American men who provided a tremendous mass response back then, this time men and women of all ethnicities and backgrounds are being invited. As part of our involvement in the ongoing struggle against systemic police terror on the Afro-American community, in particular, the forces associated with the **Revolutionary Organization of Labor, USA** should actively participate and mobilize “Black Lives Matter” activists and others for the upcoming march called by Minister Farrakhan.

Finally, in the special section of our current Newsletter below, we offer three pieces (a poem, a letter to the editor and an article) seriously addressing, from different perspectives, the way forward for the Black Lives Matter movement. It's worth pointing out, in line with the letter to the editor, that Robert Williams, the outstanding Afro-American national liberation fighter of the 1950's and 1960's, with the successful implementation of armed self defense in his local Black community in Monroe, NC, was never defeated there. Before the U.S. government drove him out of the country, his projection of armed self defense was successfully vying with Martin Luther King's “non-violence and integration” for the leadership of the then emerging civil rights movement. In that light, a leading woman comrade suggested combining the upcoming march slogan with her new knowledge about Robert Williams and the Monroe, NC experience: “Justice or Else — Negroes With Guns.” *We welcome your feedback on all these matters.*

The Murder of Emmett Till: Black Lives Still Matter

by PEARL HAINES

On August 28, 1955, fourteen-year-old Emmett Till, an African-American boy from Chicago, was snatched away from the home of his great-uncle in Money, Mississippi by two white men and tortured for several hours before being shot in the back of the head and having his body dumped in the Tallahatchie River. What was his “crime”? He allegedly whistled at the wife of one of the two men. In 1955 in the Deep South, it was verboten for a black male, even a teenager, to speak to a white female. In the eyes of his murderers, Till had overstepped his bounds and needed to be made an example of for being too “uppity” and not “knowing his place.”

Sixty years later, rights for African-Americans have marginally improved, but the white supremacist feeling that we have a certain “place” is still ingrained in the fabric of our society. Unarmed black people are killed at twice the rate of unarmed whites. Victims like Sandra Bland, Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, Walter Scott, Freddie Gray, and Mike Brown are blamed by racists for their own deaths, saying that they should have just complied

with police orders. What they're really saying is that African-Americans should stay in the roles this white supremacist society has chosen for them, meaning that they should submit themselves to the indignity of being pulled over for “driving while black” and being treated more violently by cops than their white counterparts.

However, history has proved that things won't change for blacks unless we step out of the “place” that the U.S. white supremacy hegemony has created for us. The courageous decision by Emmett Till's mother, Mamie Till-Mobley, to have an open casket and display her son's disfigured remains to the world allowed her to expose the ugly reality of the epidemic of lynchings of African-Americans in the South. The decision of Till's great-uncle, Moses Wright, to stand up in court at the trial of the murderers and positively identify them was defiant in the face of the attempted suppression of witnesses by the local sheriff. The prominence of Till's death in the news media and the acquittal of the killers helped spark the beginning of the powerful black Civil Rights Movement of the 1950's and 1960's.

Although African-Americans have made gains in employment, housing, education and voting rights since 1955, the systemic killing of unarmed blacks by police officers is today ushering in another stage in the long struggle for equal rights. The camera phone video of Walter Scott being shot eight times in the back as he ran from North Charleston patrolman Michael Slager is comparable to the pictures of Till's maimed body being published in magazines and newspapers around the country: evidence of the continuing war U.S. monopoly capitalism and imperialism is carrying out against the African-American people. The "Black Lives Matter"

movement is emerging in response to the prominence of police brutality against unarmed African-Americans.

As comrade Ray Light recently pointed out, "... the fight by any means necessary against police brutality needs to be sustained and intensified. This needs to become part of the struggle for Black Power. ... And the struggle for Black Power needs to be connected to the struggle for a Socialist USA and a Socialist World."



Emmett Till

WE WHO ARE BLACK THE ARRESTS OF FREDDIE GRAY AND DYLANN ROOF

A POEM

by LORETTA A. HAWKINS

This is the tale of two arrests, and how the arrestees were treated. The contrast is stark – the end results true, and how justice was totally defeated. It's the tale of arrests of two young men, one African-American, the other one white. And what happened to each after apprehension, suggests something in America's not right.

Now Freddie was walking down the street and the police looked up and saw him. And for whatever reason, we'll never know, Freddie ran – and the police immediately chase him. A cell phone was present a video made, and on TV we see Freddie can't walk. "His leg is broke," a bystander screams, and other voices try to talk. We see how police roughly drag Freddie Gray, we see them throw him into the van. The next time our eyes fall on Freddie Gray, he's a paralyzed broken-up man.

We learn his spine was almost completely severed. His body bruised and pitifully swoll. He died without ever gaining consciousness, a tale that too often is told. A reporter spoke – asked for a report. "What exactly did Freddie Gray do?" "He looked at us," the policeman said. "And then he ran – so we had no choice but to pursue." So that is the sad tale of Freddie Gray – of how another innocent black man died. And we who are black – and understand – saw and once again silently cried. For again they exposed their savagery, that's been imposed upon us since slavery.

Now let's look at the arrest of Dylann Roof. Let's examine what did he do. He entered a church and prayed with them, then nine innocent prayers he slew. And like Freddie Gray – he ran away- like Freddie he also was caught. But here the stories diverge so much, for what happened to Dylann from this point on – ought not. We watched on TV – and we who are black – see how gently they handled this man. See how carefully they shielded his head from harm – Our brains struggle to comprehend! Our cognition screams, "What is this

thing?" Dylann said to the cops, "I'm hungry." So they took him to Burger King.

Yes! They took him to Burger King, before they took him to jail. And that is just one hiccup, you know, in this sad melancholy tale. For here was a man who had killed nine times! Killed nine people because they were black! And we were not surprised, we who are black, that he arrived at the station with his whole back intact. In fact, not one little blond hair was injured on his lily white head. But Freddie! Freddie was dead!

There were so many ludicrous things that were said, when we found out that Freddie was dead. One witness purportedly said Freddie tried to commit suicide, by throwing himself inside the van side to side! If so, it would have been in history the very first time, a human committed suicide by deliberately breaking his own spine!

Now the witness who said Freddie committed suicide – the witness who we all know lied, felt police who are responsible that Freddie no longer has life, implied Freddie deserved to die because he had a knife! A knife!?? To die because you have in your pocket a knife? Just another day in American life! To kill nine people who did not one wrong thing. To kill nine people then be treated to Burger King! What is this thing?

God, we ask you, "What is this thing?" It's certainly not about the song they sing. About the land of the brave. The home of the free? Where black people still are not given dignity! After all of these years. After all of our fears! After hundreds of years after slavery! We who are black can so clearly see, that this land is not brave and it's certainly not free!

(Written 6/23/15) Copyright 2015 by Loretta Hawkins

(special section continues on p. 4)

August 2015

Letter to Editor

[on Robert Williams and Armed Self Defense],

Dear Ray,

Congratulations on the outstanding article on the Charleston, SC massacre ... calling for the "urgent need for Afro-American National Liberation." Permit me to raise an additional thought in relation to an important short run demand of the Afro-American masses — the action of armed self defense.

Robert Williams, the courageous civil rights leader of Monroe, NC and beyond, led the most significant movement of armed self defense during the modern civil rights movement. I would encourage all your readers to read "Negroes with Guns", by Robert Williams. In addition there was a very positive PBS documentary produced a few years ago on Robert Williams and the movement he led in North Carolina. I suggest that now is a good time to get hold of a copy, view the documentary and share and discuss with friends in house gatherings, etc.

Attitudes toward gun control are changing among the Afro-American people in response to the Charleston murders, the police terror directed at the Black communities and people, and refusal of law enforcement to protect the Black communities. In a July 15, 2015 Reuters article published in a number of major newspapers, Philip Smith, who recently founded the National African-American Gun Association, is quoted as saying, "If anyone should have the right or need to carry a gun, it should be the African-American

community." The article quotes a board member of an African-American church who wants to be prepared, "They won't be the only one pulling a trigger." The article reports on the activities of the Huey P. Newton Gun Club in Texas which was formed last year after the police killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri.



Robert and Mabel Williams

Referring to recent polls, "The idea that guns provide protection appears to be quickly gaining currency among American blacks. In December 54% of blacks polled by Pew said they believed guns were more likely to protect people than to put their safety at risk. That figure was up from 29% two years earlier."

Armed self-defense is an important democratic right of the African American people in the face of white supremacist terror inflicted on their communities.

Comradely,
Mike S.

* * * *

The Afro-American freedom Struggle

Toward Victorious Afro-American National Liberation

"A Valuable Resource for the re-emerging Black Liberation Movement"

July 1982, 452 pages

The 2008 Presidential Election, The Barack Obama Campaign, and the Need for Afro-American National Liberation
(Newsletter, Feb/March 2008)

For Revolutionary Defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal and the Struggle for Afro-American National Liberation and Socialism
(Newsletter, April/May 2000)



Donations Welcome

(Imperialist War bi-Partisan Problem continued from p. 1)

I quickly learned though through much trial, heartbreak and profound disappointment that even though BushCo were a HUGE problem, it was not THE problem. Unfortunately, most of my comrades during the Bush regime years have not come to that same conclusion.

Of course, a relative handful of others and I, have continued the struggle against US Imperialism since the oppressors allowed Bush to leave office and Obama to move in as the head C.E.O. of USA Murder, Inc. However, the antiwar movement was effectively co-opted and demobilized as far back as 2006 when the Democratic half of Imperialism reared its ugly head.

A few of the Obama regime's lowlights include: the expansion of US troops to Afghanistan; the continuing and now expanding occupation of Iraq; greatly expanding the use of "drone-bombing"; "kill" lists; the absolute destruction of Libya; increased tensions and hostilities with Russia as the Obama regime supports neo-fascists in Ukraine; and the creation of ISIS and all of its crimes with increased incursions into Syria, Yemen, and Kurdish areas. Most of these "Nobel Prize" winning events were met with little opposition, and in fact with outrageous shows of support from the same people who would have apoplectic fits if, say, a McCain or Romney regime were pulling the same disastrous stunts.

Currently, we have the "Iran Nuclear Treaty" deal. Of course, the "deal" was forced on Iran (which by all accounts and evidence is NOT seeking a nuclear bomb and does not have Imperial or colonial designs like the US and Iran's closer neighbor, Israel). Top Iranian officials signed the "deal" to, I am sure, alleviate some of the crippling economic sanctions that were hurting them. [That is, both the Iranian rich and the Iranian people. — *the editor*]

The treaty is one-sided and negotiated by a "super" power that has thousands of atomic weapons at its disposal, and, by the way, the only nation that ever used atomic weapons against civilian populations. The treaty is opposed by the colonist and Zionist state of Israel, which has hundreds of nuclear weapons on hand and has been shown to be like its benefactor: not opposed to brutally slaughtering innocents.

The same forces and organizations that have given Obama a free-pass when it comes to his crimes against humanity, are now in an uproar because the Republican sector of the US Imperialist state opposes this treaty and the "peace" NGOs are telling us that this "deal" is the "best chance for peace in the Middle East." My response is "seriously?"

I have been asked to sign petitions and write letters to members of Congress to urge them to pass the treaty, but these petitions and letters NEVER mention the fact that the USA and the USA/Israel collaboration are in

fact the biggest blocks to "peace in the Middle East" and are responsible for killing millions, directly or indirectly through terrorist proxies.

The state of Iran, with all of its issues, is NOT the major deterrent to peace in the Middle East or the biggest sponsor of terrorism. Plainly and simply, that would be the USA.

Considering the fact that the USA has never entered into a treaty it hasn't broken (especially with indigenous populations), I am not sure what all of this cheerleading for this newest treaty is about, really. However, I suspect it is just another hammer to use to beat the dead horse of partisan politics with: "Democrats good and peaceful" vs. "Republicans bad and warlike."

In my humble opinion, the best chance for "peace in the Middle East" would include, but not be limited to:

- 1) The US removing all occupying forces from the Middle East and closing all Military bases and CIA /covert operations;
- 2) The US stopping support to "terrorist" organizations such as al Qaeda and IS(IS);
- 3) Israel ending its occupation of Gaza and territorial expansion with focus being on the right of return and a Palestinian state;
- 4) The US paying reparations to the people it has harmed and giving aid for rebuilding and repair.

The US (under Obama) is greatly expanding its military/economic Empire to Africa and is trying to isolate Russia and China, so "peace in the Middle East" is actually just one piece of the Imperial pie.

The antiwar movement has been effectively neutralized by its affiliation with and devotion to the Democrat Party, but we as true revolutionary anti-Imperialists must never waver in our resolve to resist and smash the US Empire and to try to lead others to the same conclusions and principled action.



On the 10th Anniversary of Hurricane Katrina

by THE EDITOR

Hurricane Katrina and its horrifically lethal, man-made aftermath resulted in the deaths of several thousand people and perhaps many more. It clearly exposed the fact that U.S. imperialism is the enemy of the poor and working people within the USA just as it is the enemy of the oppressed peoples and the international working class everywhere. In pursuit of maximum private profit, U.S. monopoly capitalism and imperialism wages ceaseless war against all the oppressed and exploited people of the earth. On this tenth anniversary, we are republishing our (we were “Ray O. Light, USA” at the time) official statement released immediately after the hurricane. Even with the explosive growth of the internet since then, it is arguably our most widely reprinted statement ever. Within that first week, it traveled around the globe, as millions of people learned, mainly through the medium of television, that, for poor people, even in the USA, in the belly of the beast, U.S. imperialism cares about them not at all.

In the ten years since then, thousands of Afro-Americans who were dispersed around the country at the time have still been unable to get back home. Much of this formerly Afro-American majority city in the Black Belt South homeland has not been rebuilt, while monopoly capitalist speculators have run rampant. The criminal administrative role of Republican President George W. Bush and his FEMA buddies in the actual Katrina disaster caused untold human suffering. Nevertheless, for most of this period, the President of the USA has been a man of color, an African-American Democrat, a fact which has not helped the Afro-American victims and other poor people, the hardest hit survivors of Hurricane Katrina. The main value of reprinting the statement ten years later is revealed by its title, “Hurricane Katrina Exposes Imperialist Nature of System.”

* * * * *

Hurricane Katrina Exposes Imperialist Nature of System

Statement by Ray O. Light, USA
(9-6-05)

The blood of the poor and largely Afro-American victims of Hurricane Katrina is on the hands of the Bush Regime and its Democratic as well as Republican representatives of US imperialism in Congress just as surely as the blood of the Iraqi people is on their hands. And the US ruling class is waging a ruthless war at home as well as in the Middle East and throughout the world in ruthless pursuit of maximum private profit.

The devastating winds and flood waters of Hurricane Katrina washed away layers of rhetoric, deception and outright lies about the nature of the present socio-economic system operating in the USA. The real face of US monopoly capitalism and imperialism appeared with the emergence of the victims – especially the poor and the working poor, largely Afro-American people of New Orleans. Far more quickly than any organized rescue efforts on behalf of these victims, the two previous US Presidents, Bush’s father a Republican and Bill Clinton a Democrat, were appointed by George W. to head the effort to cover over the naked reality.

US liberals and radicals, and self-described revolutionaries along with conservative and bourgeois elements have decried the failure of the system, and demanded that the system right itself, thus attempting to provide an organized rescue effort for US imperialism. The truth is just the opposite. The system did not fail. US monopoly capitalism and imperialism worked in the interests of the US ruling class. *It was business as usual.*



For example:

1. In pursuit of maximum short-term profits for the biggest bankers and capitalists: “Engineering feats... tamed the flow of the Mississippi and turned it into one of the world’s richest shipping channels... [at] a heavy price: Relentless erosion of marshes, swamps and barrier islands along the coast that once acted as buffers to the surging waters from storms. Without them, New Orleans sat defenseless.” (*USA Today* 9-2-05 editorial)
2. For at least twenty years, scientists, environmentalists and other concerned citizens have warned about the dangerous and worsening condition of the New Orleans infrastructure. In the past four years or so Louisiana state officials have joined them in demanding a twenty year plan to restore the coast. Yet every year since 2001, the Bush Regime, with Congressional blessing,

(contd. on p. 7)

- “has slashed Louisiana’s request for flood control funds” (ibid). Massive tax cuts for the richest one-tenth of one percent of the population combined with massive public expenditures on US imperialist wars for oil/gas seizures and control in order to maintain US economic hegemony in the world capitalist system served this same US ruling class, while protecting the lives of the citizens of New Orleans was no priority at all.
3. To commandeer all available automobiles, buses, trucks, trains, planes, cruise ships, etc. to evacuate those without private automobiles or the cost of a bus ticket would have interrupted the normal flow of business for private profit. It is this clear priority of the system, private profit for the rich no matter what the expense to the masses of humanity, especially the poor and the working poor, which explains why no mass public evacuation efforts were even attempted, despite the advance warning of Hurricane Katrina’s impending wrath. By contrast, the Cuban government under the leadership of Fidel Castro, to whom the people’s wellbeing is a priority, despite the poverty of the country, has demonstrated time and again remarkable ability to move well over a million of its citizens out of areas where Hurricanes have threatened to unleash deadly destruction. To Bush and the US ruling class, thousands of lives of Afro-American people and poor whites and Latinos along the Gulf Coast are expendable, are of just as little concern, as the lives of the US military men and women, the children of the poor and working poor, who have been sent to kill and be killed by the people of Iraq fighting to liberate their country from US imperialist occupation.
 4. New Orleans was an important port in the old Slave South; it is an important city in the oppressed Afro-American nation today. In 1927 at the time of the Great Flood on the Mississippi River, while the white settlers’ families were evacuated from the area, thousands of Afro-American sharecroppers, at considerable risk of their lives, were compelled by armed white settlers on horseback to fortify the levees and the nearly half million Afro-American men, women, and children were compelled to remain in the dangerous Delta area because the white settlers knew that if they got out many would never voluntarily return to their semi-slave status in the Delta. It is no accident that 70% of New Orleans population was still Afro-American when Katrina hit and that among the estimated 20% of the people of the city (the poorest of the poor) who were unable to leave their percentage was much higher. All of this is a reflection of the long shadow of the plantation system. The ability of US imperialism to reap super profits from the New Orleans area continued to be based on the special oppression of the Afro-American people on their own land.

5. Apparently large numbers of small Afro-American groups, many out of desperation to seize any food, clothing or shelter available and angered by their desertion by the US government in their hour of need, spontaneously took up arms. Some apparently took aim at any US authorities that began to appear in New Orleans. To keep the Afro-American victims of this disaster from having their justifiable anger spill over into the beginning of an Afro-American armed national liberation struggle based in the Black Belt South as well as to continue to protect private property over human life, Shoot to Kill orders were given to the US military coming in to New Orleans and Commander in Chief George W. Bush declared “Zero Tolerance” for “looting” by those whom he had deprived of all public support.
6. Finally, the immediate price gouging by US oil companies at gas pumps all over the country in the immediate aftermath of the Hurricane and before any relief efforts were even begun on the Gulf Coast is a striking reminder to all US citizens of whose class interests the current US government serves, of what this system’s priorities really are.

Conclusion:

In the short run, maximum mobilization of aroused citizens throughout the USA should compel US imperialism to provide food, clothing and shelter as well as medical care, education and jobs to the displaced. (“Money for Hurricane Relief, Not for Imperialist War!”) Over the long run, Katrina should become a battle cry for revolutionary organization, so the peoples fury, rather than disintegrate into every man/woman for themselves, can be directed against the devastation of US monopoly capitalism and imperialism and their two party puppet apparatus that shipped thousands of body bags to New Orleans rather than spend public dollars to evacuate thousands of people to safety.

Katrina should become a battle cry for socialist revolution throughout the USA – for the poor and working class people of the United States to organize against Bush and the US ruling class, including the oil companies, their war of occupation and plunder in Iraq and around the world and their profiteering at home and to fight for an end to the system of private profit. Katrina should become a battle cry for Afro-American national liberation, for land and state power, in the Black Belt South of the USA. The establishment of an Afro-American Peoples’ Democratic Republic, much like present day Cuba, that will defend the well being of its people, is a realistic goal. Today the Iraqi Resistance is showing the way.

Remember Hurricane Katrina:

**Independence for the Oppressed
Afro-American Nation!
Socialism in the USA!**

CLINTON JOINS TRUMP ON IMMIGRATION

by ROSE BROWN

When billionaire Donald Trump officially announced his candidacy for President of the USA in mid-June, he projected the BIG LIE that Mexico was sending “rapists, criminals and drug users” across the border into the USA! His campaign slogan is “Make America great again.” His way to do that? Build an impregnable wall between the United States and Mexico and deport the eleven million undocumented immigrant workers presently in the USA who came here fleeing economic hardship and political repression in their native lands dominated by U.S. imperialism! He has even raised the demand to change the U.S. Constitution so that what he has called “anchor babies,” i.e. U.S. citizen children of undocumented immigrants born in the United States, would no longer be U.S. citizens.



Arrogant, bombastic, chauvinistic, openly hate-mongering Donald Trump has risen in the polls to become the front-runner of the Republican presidential candidates, tapping into a deep-seated white and great nation chauvinism and frustration and

dissatisfaction of U.S. white middle class and working class folk in particular which has been fueled by the long standing capitalist economic crisis. CNN reported in mid-August that Trump was the clear leader of the Republican presidential candidates “with the support of 24% of Republican registered voters” and that 44% of Republican voters “trust Trump over others on illegal immigration.”

Democratic front runner Hillary Clinton has criticized Trump for his “inflammatory” rhetoric. But when Trump responded with his “inflammatory” tweets to a random tragic killing in San Francisco by an undocumented Mexican immigrant, Clinton responded to the situation stating: “The city [San Francisco] made a mistake, not to deport someone that the federal government strongly felt should be deported ... I have absolutely no support for a city that ignores the strong evidence that should be acted on.” (*Huffington Post*, 7/7/15) So there we have it once again! Leading candidates of both Republican and Democratic political parties, what Ray Light has referred to as the “Republicrats,” with the same message – Attack, intimidate, and terrorize undocumented workers and their families!

The Democratic Obama administration, within which Hillary Clinton has been a key player, has deported over two million undocumented immigrants, more than any other administration in U.S. history.



According to a recent *New York Times* article, today “immigration enforcement takes up half the nation’s entire law enforcement budget. The border patrol’s budget alone has increased more than tenfold since 1970 to \$4 billion.” The article also points out that “Border Patrol personnel have doubled since 2004, to 21,000. More than 650 miles of fencing have been built, festooned with sensors and backed by drones.” (“Donald Trump’s Shaky Grasp on Immigration,” 9/1/15) Trump’s “wall” is already in place!

In May 2006, in an article entitled “The Growing Movement for Immigrant Rights in the USA and the Question of Immigration,” Ray Light pointed out “The aim of US imperialism is to maximize private profit through exploitation and super-exploitation of workers both within the United States and around the world. The various proposals for ‘immigration reform’ being considered by [both Republicans and Democrats in] the US Congress represent two sides of a strategy to entice immigrants into the United States to work (*‘Bring ‘em here’*) and to maintain a workforce submissive and ripe for super-exploitation (*‘Beat ‘em down.’*) Such exploitation and terror directed against one section of the working class serves also to further repress all sections of the working class (*‘Beat ‘em all down’*.” (*Ray O’ Light Newsletter #42, May 2006*)

In opposition to this imperialist approach, workers of all nationalities who form part of the multi-national U.S. working class have a direct stake in working class unity. In the current climate of ongoing capitalist economic crisis, proletarian vanguard forces must remain ever vigilant to rally the entire U.S. working class against the dangerous “scape-goating” of the Latino immigrant section of the working class, in particular. The “immigrant-bashing,” bi-partisan immigration policies of Trump and Clinton and other “Republicrats” divide us and only serve the Wall Street monopolist capitalist and imperialist ruling class.

The Emergence of Bernie Sanders in the 2016 Presidential Election Campaign and its Revolutionary Significance

(A substantially edited and excerpted contribution by a longtime ROL-USA activist to the initial internal debate within the Revolutionary Organization of Labor, USA regarding the 2016 US Election—*the editor*)

This summer we are witnessing the meteorite rise of Senator Bernie Sanders in the primary season of the Democratic Party leading up to the U.S. presidential election. He and his message are taking the country by storm. Tens of thousands of people have turned out for rallies throughout the country from Maine to Wisconsin, Portland OR to Phoenix, Dallas and Houston. 28,000 gathered in Los Angeles alone. One evening of recent “house parties” garnered 100,000 participants.

Who is Senator Bernie Sanders? Seventy-three year old Bernie Sanders is a senator from the largely rural and mostly Caucasian state of Vermont with its tiny population. He began his political career as the mayor of Burlington, Vermont’s largest city. Prior to becoming



Senator in 2007, he served as the state’s only representative in the House of Representatives.

In all his previous elections he refused to run with either the Democratic or Republican parties, running as an independent. He openly identifies himself as an “independent socialist” in a society where over the last seventy years “socialism” had become a “dirty word,” vilified and demonized by the ruling class and imbued in the culture of the masses of people. Nevertheless, during his years in Congress he has caucused exclusively with the Democratic Party. Last year, emphasizing his loyalty to the Democrats, he was appointed by the Democratic Party leadership to be their “ranking member” on the powerful Senate Budget Committee.

As an elected Congressional representative, he has maintained a “pro-union”, “pro-U.S. worker” and “pro-civil-rights” record. He has been active in the fight against fast track trade authority and the Trans Pacific Partnership, advocated for a \$15 (“living”) wage, built a political coalition to defend and expand social security and actively championed defense of the public postal service. He walked picket lines with the Fairpoint telephone workers during their recent strike in New England.

However, like the Democratic Party he is now openly serving, over his years in political office, he has proved to be a consistent defender of the U.S. imperialist Empire and open enemy of the international working class and the oppressed peoples. Following 9-11 he became part of the frenzied drive toward war and voted to give then President George W. Bush extensive war powers to prosecute the so-called “war on terror.” In this connection, Sanders has been a persistent defender of the Israeli settler state and opponent of the Arab people. Sanders did vote against the war in Iraq, but subsequently voted multiple times to fund the war. And, as ROL, USA has established over the years since 9-11, since George W. Bush launched the U.S. Empire’s War of Terror, there is a dialectical relationship between the U.S. Empire’s War abroad and War at home. Thus, to support the Empire abroad is to strengthen it at home against the workers and oppressed nationalities *within* the USA as well. Not surprisingly, Sanders voted against the Patriot Act but then voted to make it permanent.

What has caused the uproar about the Sanders’ candidacy?

In late April, 2015, Bernie Sanders announced his run for President of the United States opting to run in the Democratic Party primaries. Few in the media and even Sanders himself, saw it as a viable campaign for president of the United States, but rather as a podium to raise important issues.

But in a time of growing income inequality, a starvation minimum wage, extensive joblessness, home foreclosures, declining standards of living, growing student debt and austerity policies directed against the workers, Sander’s progressive domestic program is striking a powerful chord. He is espousing a strong anti-corporate, anti-Wall Street, pro-people platform that calls for an end of the oligarchy of the billionaire class. He promotes a “living wage” of \$15/hour (thus uniting with the demands of the fast food workers), free college education at public universities, medicare for all as a single payer health care system, breaking up the “too big to fail and too big to jail” Wall Street banks and firms, expansion of social security benefits, an end to trade deals like the TPP, taxing the wealthy, a Robin Hood Tax on Wall Street financial transactions, ending the corporate buying and selling of elections including repeal of “Citizens United” and a massive infrastructure rebuilding program to create 13 million new jobs.

(Bernie Sanders - 2016 Presidential Campaign continued)

These are similar issues that led to the bursting forth of the Occupy Wall Street movement and the Sanders campaign undoubtedly has become a continuer of the political expression of that positive movement. The enthusiasm and broad appeal of the Sanders candidacy has caught the ruling class and their pundits by surprise. As Sanders rapidly rises in the polls (for example he is now leading the presumptive Democratic Party nominee Hillary Clinton in the early primary state of New Hampshire polls, 44% to 37%, rising from 8% support a few short months ago)* the ruling class is not sitting idly by. The fact that sitting Vice President Joe Biden is now seriously weighing a presidential run “out of the blue” is in direct response of the ruling class to stop the Bernie Sanders express as Clinton drops in the polls.

On the other hand, the Sanders’ campaign *within the Democratic Party*, serves as *an obstacle* to Afro-American, Latino, labor, environmental and other progressive *third party* initiatives in the very election period following the bitter experience of the working class and oppressed nationality masses with almost seven years of the Obama Regime. Think: Black Lives Matter, Deportation of immigrants, Obama’s Republican-led Fast Track Authority on the Trans Pacific Partnership.

General Principles with which we examine the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election Campaign

There is no question that the capitalist system cannot be reformed and that bourgeois elections exist to sustain capitalist rule under the scam, sham and illusion of “democracy.” *“Marx grasped the essence of capitalist democracy splendidly, when ... he said that the oppressed are allowed once every few years to decide which particular representatives of the oppressing class shall represent and repress them in parliament.” (Lenin, The State and Revolution.)*

Through Newsletters, articles and books, and political activity, including recently in the struggle to block the Republican-led Fast Track Authority for Democratic President Obama regarding the Trans Pacific Partnership, Ray Light and the Revolutionary Organization of Labor organization have consistently and correctly documented that the historical facts of the last decades prove, over and over, that the Democratic party is but one of two corporate parties, that cooperatively combine as “Republicrat rule” to politically represent the U.S. Empire against the working class and oppressed, abroad *and* at home.

Our long run goal of workers’ power and a collective socialist economy cannot be won primarily with elections, but mainly through a revolutionary seizure of power where the working class becomes the ruling class. But, as a revolutionary working class organization

*New Hampshire is next door to Vermont. But Sanders is on the verge of catching up with Clinton in Iowa as well.

guided by Leninism, we know that it is the working class and the oppressed masses in their thousands, millions and billions (and not the vanguard in isolation) that make world history. The working class and oppressed peoples within the US multinational state, just like those throughout the rest of the world, need their own direct political experience in order to become convinced that the difficult path of revolution is the only path to freedom. Bourgeois elections are part of that direct political experience.

Editor’s Note:

In this context, we will continue our coverage of the 2016 Presidential Campaign in our next issue. It will include, among other things, our collective tactical decisions regarding the limits of our participation with the Sanders’ candidacy. Meanwhile, we would be happy to hear from you on this subject.

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

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan made the statement in October 2014. He and his ruling Justice and Development Party have maintained this official position throughout the ten months since.

While the big news in the USA about the Obama-Erdogan agreement portrayed it as a big step forward in the fight against ISIS, the reality has been the opposite! Just days before the supposed dramatic shift of the Turkish government to active participation in the U.S. coalition against ISIS, *the Wall Street Journal* had carried an extensive front page feature story admitting the fact that Kurdish women and men fighters, linked to the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK), have been the only successful fighters on the ground against ISIS.

The reactionary Turkish regime, behind the smokescreen of joining the war on ISIS, has waged war against the PKK and the militant Syrian Kurdish fighters who have effectively fought ISIS. As a “senior U.S. military official” explained, “Turkey wanted to move against the PKK, but it needed a hook. It’s clear that ISIL was a hook.” (“U.S. Concerns Grow About Turkish Bombardment of Kurdish Separatists,” *Wall Street Journal*, 8-12-15)

In this respect Erdogan and the Turkish Regime have learned from the master, Obama and U.S. imperialism. For U.S. imperialism, the main terrorist in the Middle East, has continued, in the name of “fighting-ISIS,” to go into Syria, Iraq and other areas it was unable to invade or re-invade before. The recent agreement with Erdogan allows Obama and U.S. imperialism to use the Incirlik Air Base “to send fighter jets and armed drones to attack fighters based in Syria and Iraq.” (See *Wall Street Journal*, 7-24-15)

—the Editor

In the belly of the beast

31 Per Cent of World's Mass Shootings Here

by RAY LIGHT

“The U.S. is home to 5% of the world's population, but has had 31% of the public mass shootings worldwide between 1966 and 2012 ...,” according to Adam Lankford, a University of Alabama criminal justice professor. (See “Why the U.S. Has 31% of the World's Mass Shootings” by Tanya Basu, *Time on-line*, August 2015) Presenting his new study at a late August meeting of the American Sociological Association, Lankford stated that there were “292 public mass shooters who have killed a minimum of four people between 1966 and 2012. And when you narrow shootings down to just those that occur at school and work, American incidences account for 62% of global cases.”

Lankford believes his study is the first to confirm that “there's something strongly American about public mass shootings.” He and *Time's* writer Tanya Basu try to link this mainly to the number of firearms per capita in the USA which leads the world by far. But Lankford knows there is more to it. He points to the “strong sense of exceptionalism and individualistic culture, something that American kids are taught from an early age.” But the bankruptcy of Lankford's theory is exposed by the following (cited by Basu). “There's a silver lining, however. *Because the U.S. has a preponderance of public mass shootings, the country is better prepared than any other to deal with them,*” Lankford says. He points to Columbine and Sandy Hook as events that shaped enforcement procedure.” (sic and sick) (My emphasis, ROL) Clearly the orientation of the criminal justice professor is to control the U.S. population, not deal with the society's sickness.

Compare the following excerpts from my 2013 article, “The Brutal and Decaying U.S. Empire and the Newtown School Tragedy” (*Ray O' Light Newsletter* #76, January-February 2013):

“President Obama's response to the tragedy was to immediately back stronger gun control laws. This has been the overwhelming response of the U.S. ruling class, including its military leaders. Already gun buy-back programs have been implemented by such notorious law enforcement agencies as the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). At the same time, other ‘enlightened’ ruling class folks have called for better access to mental health support. And all kinds of social-democrats, pacifists, and other opportunists are prescribing some combination of disarming of the U.S. population (but not the police and the military who are armed to the teeth) and a better mental health care system.

“Whatever their specific prescriptions, however, the apologists for monopoly capitalism have a unified message: *there is nothing fundamentally wrong with this imperialist society; just a few tweaks will take care of the problem.*”

“But a closer look at the facts leads to a different conclusion entirely. The horrific Newtown, Connecticut school tragedy has the “mark of the beast” all over it — *the decadent U.S. Empire, having already devoured so many of the world's peoples as it grew ever more fat and parasitic over the past six decades, is now in sharp decline and is beginning to devour its own young.*”

“For example, between 1991 when the first U.S. Gulf War led by Republican President George Bush I ended and 2003 when his son, George Bush II, embarked on the second unprovoked U.S. war against the people of Iraq, a constant saturation of U.S. Air Force aerial flights enforced a ‘no-fly zone’ that effectively upheld a U.S. embargo, preventing medical supplies and much necessary materiel from reaching the children of Iraq. The estimates are that from 500,000 to a million Iraqi children under the age of five perished as a result of this U.S. embargo that lasted for more than a decade, most of it under Democratic commander in chief Bill Clinton. Were these Iraqi children any less precious than the twenty children of six and seven who were murdered in Newtown, Connecticut last month?!”

“The social fabric of U.S. society in 2013 is woven almost entirely from the reality of the crumbling of the U.S. Empire, that is, from the decades-old violent and parasitic legacy of U.S. imperialist hegemony and from its *current and precipitous decline.* ...”

“No wonder millions of ‘red blooded American boys’ have gotten the message that might makes right and that mayhem and murder is the solution to their problems. There is an epidemic of mass murders in U.S. society. Many of them have had a white supremacist and/or fascist motivation. ... And there is every indication that tragic mass murder events in the USA will become not less but *more frequent* in the foreseeable future. ...”

“Given the current political and economic developments in the USA, the only remedy to this sick situation, the only way to avoid an out-of-control epidemic of mass murders such as have occurred so recently in Aurora, Colorado and now Newtown, Connecticut and the developing military-fascist state is to **defeat, dismantle and destroy the U.S. Empire.**”

[For a copy of the entire 2013 article, please send your request to:
Boxholder, 607 Boylston St, Lower Level Box 464, Boston, MA 02216]

NOTE FROM CINDY SHEEHAN:

Ray O' Light Newsletter Now On Line!

Dear Comrades,

The Soapbox People's Network (www.cindysheehanssoapbox.com) has been diligently publishing everything that the ROL Newsletter sends us. We are receiving over 100,000 hits per month and the information is certainly getting out there.

The ROL page is at:

<http://www.cindysheehanssoapbox.com/ray-olight.html>

I can always be reached at my email:

CindySheehansSoapbox@gmail.com

In struggle,
Cindy Sheehan

* * * * *

*"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

Rose Brown, Assistant Editor

Carl Pappos, Production Coordinator

Boxholder, 607 Boylston St., Lower Level Box 464, Boston, MA 02116 USA