

# CLASS WAR

## Internationalist News and Analysis

Volume 2 Number 4 Spring 2015, Solidarity Donation \$2.00-\$4.00

### U.S.A. became Imperialist--What about NZ, South Africa and Australia?

*Arising out of our analysis of the reasons for the emergence of China and Russia as [new imperialist powers](#), a few other questions have surfaced. If China and Russia can, why not Brazil, India, even South Africa? The [answer](#) is that semi-colonies cannot accumulate enough surplus value to become economically independent of existing imperialist powers. However, there may be one category of semi-colonies that could break out of this trap, or so some of the 'left' thinks. These are the European settler colonies. We think we can prove them wrong.*

The epoch of imperialism arose in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as the main European powers expanded beyond their borders to embark on colonial exploitation to escape the limits to capital accumulation. Marx in Vol. 3 of *Capital* explained the need to find cheaper land, raw materials, and labour power to escape the limits of the Tendency of the Rate of Profit to Fall (TRPF).



At the time Lenin wrote his pamphlet, *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, in 1915 he envisaged a world economy in the process of being divided among all the imperialist powers into rival "spheres of interest." Competition to expand further would mean more wars unless the workers of the world rose up and overthrew their imperialist ruling classes.

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### The Revolutionary Crisis in Greece



*We wrote the following article in the immediate aftermath of the Greek elections. We still defend every point made below and we note that SYRIZA leader Tsipras has said that if Greece is forced to leave the Euro-zone, Spain will surely follow. This signifies that Tsipras expects a "Podemos" victory in Spain. And then the question for us is whether Podemos will also opt for a popular front government right out of the starting chute? SYRIZA economics minister Varoufakis holds that Marxism only provides economic answers in the long run and that Keynesianism is the practical economic solution for the near-term. We think he is talking rubbish and that no justification for a popular front or its policies will withstand any serious scrutiny.*

The January 25th parliamentary elections were a victory for SYRIZA, but is it a victory for Greek workers? It is to the extent that it opens the road, not to the utopia of an independent Greek capitalism, but rather to an independent Greek Socialist Republic as part of a Socialist United States of Europe.

SYRIZA is a social democratic coalition of mainly former Communists and Social Democrats who left the KKE and PASOK. They left the KKE because it stands for an independent Greek capitalism when that is not possible, since Greece is a semi-colony of EU imperialism. No semi-colony like Greece can win independence unless it becomes a

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### Workers need a program that fights for a clean planned socialist economy!

*Two conferences on the future of Railroad Safety were convened, first in Richmond, CA on March, 14, with a follow up on the 21st in Olympia, Washington. In the spectacle of the American left of endorsers including various syndicalist, socialist, and environmentalist NGO's, CBO's gathered under the banner of safety with little else to unite them. Some advocated for letter writing to politicians for better conditions, some told us "all you need is love", while the Richmond Progressive Alliance (RPA) and its "Third Camp" leader Mike Parker from Solidarity and Labor Notes, who in the last Mayoral campaign withdrew and threw his and the RPA's support behind long-term Democratic politician Tom Butt, brought the popular front to this conference in the guise of "non" political opening statements by the spokesperson for the Democratic Mayor.*

*Despite advocacy for general strike and social revolution from the floor, the main gist of the conference was on the issues of safety, logistics and trade union solidarity with active participation from Tesoro refinery steel*



Early American Socialist Eugene V. Debs

*workers who were still on strike. The common sense and good trade unionist instincts of Railroad workers long trapped in conservative craft unions has birthed the Railroad Workers United (RWU). RWU adopted*

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## Editorial

The U.S. war on terror has collapsed. Be assured it is not the shooting that has stopped but only the pretext for waging it that has exploded. U.S. imperialism's favorite absolute monarchy, Saudi Arabia, has put together a coalition of the majority-Sunni nations and defied the U.S.-led imperialist bloc's tilt toward Iran. The Saudi war on the Yemeni Houthi movement is confirmation of our judgement in our [last issue](#) that Saudi confidence in the U.S. ruling class' willingness to defend any Sunnis has diminished, and now has diminished to the point where even the royals have acted out. The U.S., previously fixated on Al Qaeda, has had to scurry behind its biggest oil supplier with logistics, intelligence and a headquarters (read money.) The *Wall Street Journal* has revealed that Israeli hospitals are patching up wounded members of the Al Nusra Front (Al Qaeda in Syria) and sending them back to the battle in Syria. Not to be outdone, the *Jerusalem Post* ran the headline "Israel Backs Al Qaeda." And when was the last time you heard about Darfur and the war crimes charges leaders of Sudan are supposed to face in the International Criminal Court? You are not supposed to remember! Sudan has joined Saudi Arabia's coalition to fight the U.S.A.'s proxy war in Yemen. So these bedfellows, who were U.S. enemies only yesterday, are today's U.S. allies, or allies of allies in the war against revolution.

Now the U.S. rulers have had to revert to pretending the big prize they are aiming at is an agreement with Iran not to develop nuclear weapons. This was never the case. It is our task to fight against our capitalist class' providing the means for wrecking Yemen, just as it has intervened on the side of reaction, and threatened to wreck one middle

east and North African country after another since the "Arab Spring" began upsetting all their semi-colonial arrangements, so carefully crafted since the 1940's.

None of our opponents noticed that the Saudi royals had watched the rise of the Houthi Shiites in Yemen without special concern for **10 years**. Neither was any rise of "Sunni extremism" outside Saudi national borders much of a concern. The sudden decision for war is

exactly in context.

The Yemeni popular masses and their uprising dating from 2011 demands our support and the support of all proletarian fighters. It is their misfortune to be a sacrificial experimental animal for the Saudi royals and Gulf feudalists (Gulf Coordination Council,) for the expression of their interests and to grab the attention of the U.S. administration to demand that their interests be respected in any comprehensive deal with Teheran. In consequence, the Yemeni workers and peasants are caught between the Houthi alliance with a sector of the bourgeoisie and the army backed by Iran and another exile sector of the bourgeoisie backed by Saudi Arabia, Israel, and by the U.S.

The palpable, real world result of the U.S. "War on Terror," apart from terrorizing travelers and internet communications, is the expansion of the realm of the Mullahs, the all-time arch foes of the Saudi monarchs. Of course Guantanamo has not been closed! And the unfortunates who were snatched off their hometown streets and rendered as "unlawful combatants" are locked away so that Wall Street's contradictions remain out of sight. Likewise, the U.S. troop presence in Afghanistan and the fight against the Taliban will go on until at least the end of 2016, and this can only be an assurance to Teheran that the U.S. is willing to protect its eastern border even though the Kabul regime has already rewarded the big minerals prizes to Chinese imperialist firms. So Obama, 2008's peace candidate, turns out to be just as much of a "wartime President" as G.W. Bush ever was.

The fake moderates of the Rouhani regime in Teheran are the allies of both imperialist blocs in the war against ISIS/Daesh. The U.S. tilt to Teheran has failed to woo the servants of

the Grand Ayatollah away from the influence of and greater engagement with the Russia/China bloc. The tacit alliance is a formula for producing 2, 3, many Al Qaedas unless socialist revolution can get a grip on the minds of the masses. Imperialism's vaunted weapons turn out to be counterproductive. ISIS gets to say that the Saudi attacks are just client services for the U.S., and hungry people believe them.

And why shouldn't they? The U.S. policy is in such a disarray as to appear as an "Alice in Wonderland strategy" according to [Patrick Cockburn writing in The Independent](#). If the two imperialist blocs are cooperating in a war against revolution with the aim of a new Sykes-Picot type redrawing of the maps of the region, the present moment is also a rare and wonderful opportunity for the revolutionaries to forge a greater unity and solidarity and mutual aid. To win, revolutionaries have to combat the various proxy forces for the two imperialist blocs and Teheran and everywhere agitate for the permanent revolution to keep the democratic revolution alive and to reverse the defeats of the recent past. This means no confusion by any popular front posing as an anti-imperialist united front. This means no deals with either bloc nor with Saudi Arabia, and fighting on two fronts at once if necessary.



*Leon Sedov Brigade martyrs, circled*

Meanwhile, the U.S. pays the bills for the Baghdad regime, which nevertheless is obviously allied to Teheran. Baghdad understands that winning tank battles does not defeat the righteous movement of an oppressed people, one that is for the moment the unfortunate political captive of ISIS, and so engages in a policy of ethnic cleansing. The servile U.S. press ignores this, as does the fake anti-imperialism of most of the U.S. left, who see the bourgeois regimes in Teheran, Moscow and Beijing as anti-imperialist. Expect the World Social Forum meeting to reproduce more of this blindness to the conflicting agendas of TWO IMPERIALIST BLOCS.

The socialist revolution has many supporters and fighters in Syria, and the surface appearance of confusion of aims in U.S. Syria policy is the smokescreen behind which Capital connives at suppressing the revolution. They can seem to be on Assad's

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side in the fight against ISIS/Daesh, but protest that they are not and even make a big fuss about how they are training anti-ISIS Syrians who are NOT expected to take up the mission of fighting the Assad dictatorship, whom Washington also claims to oppose. **What this setup hides is a division of labor, freeing Assad to crush the revolutionaries, while preparing a “moderate” force to crush them should he fail.** We call for an immediate end to all U.S. aid to each and every Middle Eastern government! For workers to live, imperialism must die! And notwithstanding our profound differences with the [FLTI \(Internationalist Leninist Trotskyist Fraction, a national Trotskyist current in Latin America.\)](#) we call for the international left to raise workers’ brigades to follow the example of the [Leon Sedov Brigade](#), who fight to topple Assad and usher in the permanent revolution across the region!

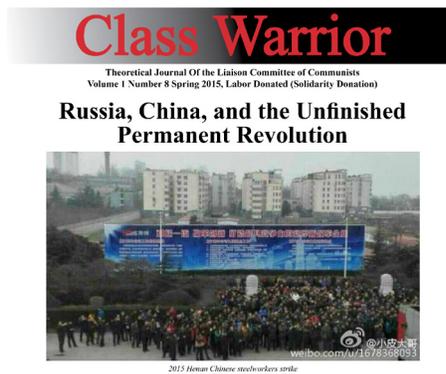
It did not escape our notice that U.S. Air Force tankers refueled the Saudi fighter bombers engaged in attacks on Yemen. We also noticed that no sooner had Egypt joined Saudi Arabia’s coalition of anti-Yemen marauders than Obama resumed military aid to the Al-Sisi government, the dictatorship of the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces (SCAF)! So we took part in the first demonstration against this aggression and war crime on 4/3 at the Saudi Mission to the U.N. in New York.

We raised the following preliminary slogans:

- **NO U.S. proxy wars!**
- **Stop Bombing the Yemeni People!**
- **Down with monarchy, theocracy and Womens’ Oppression!**
- **Defeat the U.S. War Drive in the Middle East with Labor Action!**

### Russophiles, “Tankies,” Eurocentrism and inter-imperialist war

When we last wrote, the crepe hangers for the anti-Assad forces were gleefully displaying their dim-wittedness, sure that the entrance of big battalions of Hezbollah fighters on Assad’s side would signal a quick victory, and the revolutionary forces in particular took some terrible losses. But since February, one after another of Assad’s offensives have been blunted and rolled back. He has now lost the entire Jordanian border and the provincial capital of Idlib in the Northeast, Syria’s 3rd largest city. Politically, the pro-Assad forces on the U.S. left all turn out to be Russophiles who have some stake somehow in trying to paint the Putin government as “anti-imperialist”; many are Eurocentric and some we would even call orientalist. Some, like the defunct Humanist Workers for Revolutionary Socialism (HWRS), maintain



that drought (!! ) has eliminated the Syrian working class. Others never did agree that there was a Syrian working class. But now we see that the advances of the rebel forces are causing sections of the big bourgeoisie to opt for a ‘one-basket’, Assad-only strategy. This was already the view of the Council for Foreign Relations, and now it is the editorial position of the *New York Times*. Every time we see the various Marcyites we ask them whatever did Assad ever do that led you to think he has an anti-imperialist bone in his body? [i.e., the Workers World Party (WWP) and the Party for Socialism and Liberation(PSL)]

All our opponents get this wrong and don’t seem to acknowledge that for the bourgeoisie, their own view of what is happening, including the evident interimperialist friction with the Chinese-led bloc, the S.C.O., is what they base their behavior on. It seems our opponents are much too eager to find justifications in the present for their old forgettable forecasts to be bothered with how reality confounds them.

The first tribe of these, in terms of size, are the Russophile Marcy-inspired sects. No one we meet on the streets knows when the WWP, the PSL or the Answer Coalition dated the capitalist restoration from in the former U.S.S.R., but in attributing thoroughgoing anti-imperialism to the Putin government, and just as bad (!!), in their conception of an Anti-Imperialist United Front led by bourgeois regimes, the counterrevolution hasn’t caused them to wonder why they go on casting Russia as the same “progressive” force they always did. At times, Sam Marcy himself showed he gave serious attention to economics. But his latter-day followers show no willingness to examine how the two major former workers’ states have become imperialists in the 21st century.

The Marcyites (WWP, PSL), the Robertsonite tendencies (i.e., the Spartacist League, the Internationalist Group and the International Bolshevik Tendency) and also some defections from Healyism, such as “Socialist Fight” in the U.K. got the name “Tankies” along the way somewhere. Some “third camp” forces, who date the counterrevolution

in the U.S.S.R to the 1930s (some even to the 1920s,) and called the U.S.S.R.’s war with Finland in 1939-40 “Soviet imperialism,” take the credit for inventing the term, pointing to how these groups seem to cheer every time Moscow sends their tanks rolling. So, for instance, the Marcyites cheered Moscow’s tanks rolling on the Hungarian uprising of 1956. The Robertsonites joined this chorus of “tankies” in cheering the suppression of the independent union movement in Poland by Jaruzelski. Nowadays they cheer the completely suspect plebiscite that was set up to return the Crimea to Russia as “national self-determination” and otherwise paint Russia’s Ukraine policy as “anti-imperialist,” when in fact it is the opposite. To say that is to recognize what is. Taking the warhawk editorials in the U.S. bourgeois press to heart instead of watching real economic events, the “tankies” (and the pro-Kiev “third camp” as well!) think the U.S. will foment World War III over the Russian support for the breakaway eastern Ukraine.

This Europe-fixated view fits well with the tankies’ poisonous “Anti-Imperialist United Front” (AIUF) conception that not incidentally abandons the working class of “anti-imperialist” countries to depending on their own capitalist classes to secure their defense against the might of the U.S.-led bloc. There is much more to say about fake Trotskyism and their social-imperialist and national-Trotskyist excuses for supporting AIUFs and popular front governments, and we explore some truly egregious Latin American examples in light of the recent coup scare in Brazil in the new edition of “[Class Warrior](#)” available now.

We pointed out that Moscow has a real political problem with the self-proclaimed “Peoples Republics” of Donetsk and Luhansk. Only an immense groundswell of public support for these Russian-speaking eastern Ukrainians drives Putin’s support for them in the aftermath of Russia’s retaking of the strategic Crimean peninsula. This multiplies the complexity of any possible NATO military move as well as its cost in bodies and political support, at least in Europe. **Putin can have no love for those with an evident hankering for post-capitalist property relations and conditions of employment!** And he wants a gas delivery deal with Kiev to replace the one that expired on 4/2/15, and in fact has extended it and even given Kiev a \$100 Million discount! Putin knows Kiev got money for this gas from the European Community (EC). The EC is confounded by how all the various fascist-organized “National Guards” with all their western arms and approval were repulsed and have to lick their wounds and plot revenge. Poroshenko in turn has to worry more about

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them than Putin does in the short run, hence the ceasefire and pullback. Russia badly wants to sell to Western Europe, especially after the decline of oil prices, but particularly to Ukraine, which even now (!) is a bigger trading partner than Germany.

We see World War III coming unless socialist revolution makes it impossible for the capitalists to start any war the working class can prevent or finish as victors! We see environmental cataclysm rushing toward humankind and all living things, and this approach can only be accelerated by Capital's fortification with the looming corporatist state provisions of the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement, itself part of a plan to encircle and contain China. We see the China Sea frictions between China and U.S. allies, their re-armament plans and Obama's "Pacific Pivot" all on a collision course with the BRICS nations' desire to escape domination by the dollar. And so we see China and Russia countering their encirclement by funding a BRICS Development Bank and the [Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank](#), even as they increase their own military spending. Every one of these developments are 'organic' developments of capitalism. The robbery of the worker that begins at the cellular level in the wages system cannot sustain profits now without destruction of Capital, human and machine, so as to supply new markets and to redivide the world markets now existing at the losing powers' expense.

### Kiev and Athens

We observe how deep the pockets of the western bloc are for extending piles of credit to the Kiev regime and contrast this to the grinding austerity they have troweled new courses of on top of the Greek people. We don't hear about any payment deadlines being held over the heads of the Poroshenko gang, even though it is plain that their treasury coffers are already empty. The western bloc wants to extinguish the Donetsk and Luhansk republics as a matter of ideology. Whereas in Greece we have the SYRIZA party at the head of a popular front the western bloc is extorting with impossible deadlines for enormous payments in July and August. Greece is forced to privatize state assets at fire sale prices, and among others we see the Chinese state enforcing the claims of their capitalists to deals done by the preceding government, including the sale of the port of Piraeus.

Exactly because SYRIZA is committed do-or-die to bourgeois parliamentarism AND staying in the Eurozone, it will do nothing real to resist the collectors of the Troika. This means betrayal of the worker masses who elected them to smash the Troika austerity diktat. The LCC demands that SYRIZA

break with the popular front! Popular fronts are fake defenders of democracy who have littered history as set-up men for military and fascist coups d'états! Socialist revolution is the only way out of immiserating austerity and slavery!

The workers cannot triangulate their way to power through the popular front's thicket of reform promises in parliament but must smash the class enemy's obstacle off their path! For the bourgeoisie, the entire 'legitimacy' of bourgeois parliamentarism consists in its unswerving commitment to bourgeois class rule, and not to ANY rights the masses may sometimes be permitted by law to enjoy. This means popular fronts only last as long as they serve the class enemy's purposes! The left wing of SYRIZA must either win over the ranks from the class collaborators or split to form a revolutionary party that will build the mass organs of proletarian power needed to finish with and finish off the bourgeois state, ushering in at last the European socialist revolution, and with it a new workers international equipped with the theoretical conquests necessary to win world socialism! To do so it must adopt a transitional program, one that is popular in content and transparent in its method and revolutionary goal.

### Coalescence of Menshevik Cloggage

Capital is so desperate to find some way to restore its rate of profit that it has trashed the incomes and prospects of the U.S. working class.

We noticed Prince Charles inject his goofy face into hyping the "Earth Hour," the symbolic one hour worldwide "responsible" blackout. His appearance would have been completely forgettable had he not mentioned that the planet is running out of time.

Maybe his say so will convince somebody, but apparently Solidarity, Socialist Alternative, the IWW and the Transport Workers Solidarity Committee do not think the species survival question is urgent. Otherwise how does a sensible person explain their performance and their resolutions for the recent [Railroad Workers Safety Conference](#). These alleged leftists let the Democrats, Greens, liberal NGOs and the hustlers of the Richmond Progressive Alliance steal the show. So, for instance, the [IWW reduces railroad safety](#) to the single issue of sleep for train crews! The decrepit roadbeds, rolling stock and the cheap design of tanker cars that should be double-hulled, the antiquated signals that don't prevent head-on collisions, and freight trains operated through level crossings add up to a crisis looking for places to happen. Rail systems require billions in investment, but Capital sold off all of the land in the rights of way, so the present rail system can only be tinkered with and not qualitatively upgraded

either for speed or for safety. We are sure that Big Bill Haywood, Eugene V. Debs and Daniel De Leon would all agree that safe rail transport is non-negotiable and cries out for workers control of a nationalized rail system. But you won't hear these California Wobblies saying anything the Democrats will not approve of.

After the recent disasters involving trains shipping petrochemicals and passenger carrying train derailments, the whole pack of above-named ostensible opponents of the Trumka AFL-CIO bureaucracy leave the question of the environmental consciousness of the working class to their friends in McKibbens' "350.org" class collaboration scheme, selling as plausible an environmental remediation led by the capitalists, by Wall Street! This while [Obama plans to fast track the TPPA](#) to finish off all local environmental protection, consumer protection, and perhaps even child labor laws that interfere with corporate profits with the secret provisions and Investor Tribunals courts that will snuff out such laws as are not written by the corporatists. Some of this advocacy of class collaboration is cynicism and some is just stupidity. The [TPPA has explicit](#), if secret provisions, making nationalizations without compensation of foreign owned assets in member countries illegal, thus providing a legal cover for imperialist intervention.

The "militants" at this conference who styled themselves as Trotskyists have a lot to answer for. We don't care whether they waste Prince Charles' time but we object on principle to their turning conscientious rail workers over to a popular front cabal and its class peace planetary suicide pact.

The role of the TWSC in the Railroad Safety Conference must be placed in relation to the coalescing of what perennial socialist candidate Peter Camejo famously and quaintly referred to as "watermelon environmentalism." Green on the outside and red on the inside. This common enough cliché was overheard at the Railroad Conference, when it was invoked by an RPA member, as well as in the critique of Naomi Klein's politics on the [KPFA noontime show of 3/26/15](#), an interview conducted by Doug Henwood. What this watermelon metaphor signifies is the concrete manifestation of the popular front in American politics today.

Check [Chris Hedges' article](#) where he tries to foster the development of a new anti-corporate third party by quoting liberally from Kshama Sawant and putting her into the mix along with the Green mayor of Richmond, CA, and the RPA, touting their fake home anti-foreclosure project! Hedges did not report that this saved no homes, and also did not report that it created a venue for an ex hedge fund flunkey and real-estate

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operator to collect generous fees if they ever were to carry out one of these home saving projects. This link of Socialist Alternative to the Greens to Solidarity (via Mike Parker) and ultimately to the capitulation of the RPA to the endorsement of the Democrat Tom Butt for mayor is the face of “watermelon environmentalism” in which the program of the NGOs dominates and the program of the working class is suppressed. Trotskyists understand this from the POUM (Spain 1936) to the [POR \(Bolivia 1952\)](#) to Allende (Chile 1973). Workers need to recognize the popular front when we see it emerging and congealing. It is poison. Tolerating it, never mind supporting it is fatal for the working class.

Then, “subjectively revolutionary” individuals under the “go along to get along” social/economic/political pressure of the “radical milieu” seek accommodation to the popular front at the level of organizational blocs, at the level of programmatic blocs, at the level where complicity is created by silent agreements not to criticize, and thus create blocs of silence, all of which will work to subordinate the program of the working class. The working class program is thus not asserted and does not compete for dominance. We see these blocs turn the subjectively revolutionary activists into the support mechanism for the popular front.

Witness the TWSC climbing into a bloc with the Communities for Better Environments (Andres Soto of the RPA) which is backed up by the big bourgeoisie like the Ford Foundation, etc. The RPA is itself a bloc of the Greens and Solidarity and other “independent leftists,” and Solidarity is linked to the U.Sec., which publishes “International Viewpoint”, in which Richard Lichtman published a [critique of Chris Hedges’ revision of the history of liberalism](#). Yet the American co-thinkers of the U.Sec. build their multi-class bloc with the Greens, the RPA, the NGOs, the IWW, SocAlt and the TWSC at the Railroad Safety Conference, subordinating the workers program to the program of the bloc that Hedges seeks, which is a radical anti-corporate third party that is in “[alliance with labor](#).” “*Anti-Corporate*”, such as *the project Hedges peddles is not anti-capitalism. Nowhere does he call for a worker’s party to fight for a workers government. This attempt to revive liberalism, which Marxism today understands cannot resolve the crisis and is ultimately the bourgeois core of the popular front, acts as a roadblock to the workers seizure of power; it does so even now, at least conceptually and ideologically.*

This is the political method rife throughout the left in America. Just as the IWW (under the wing of the TWSC) forges popular

front alliances with the NGO’s with direct ties to the capitalist ruling class, Sawant and the CWI sells the Democratic Party/union bureaucracy on foisting the [sub-living minimum wage program](#) upon the masses... and then goes on to sell that struggle out in the end. The reformists and centrists present an ideology that claims to be for socialism or simply for “good things” *up to and excluding* the workers’ class-independent political party and historic revolutionary program!

### Ferguson: Cops Out of the Unions!

The brutal killing of Michael Brown has brought to the forefront the racist reality of American capitalism for a whole new generation. The Justice Department’s exposure of the racist *modus operandi* of the Ferguson police department as a legally sanctioned municipal shakedown racket has still resulted in no convictions. Cops in San Francisco who amuse themselves with racist text messages are simply fired, the rest of the force will get additional “sensitivity training” and the killings will go on. Yet Kshama Sawant of SocAlt, the American Section of the Committee for a Workers International (CWI), maintain the anti-Marxist characterization of cops as workers.

She ran on a platform of civilian police review boards which are supposed to hold the police “accountable.” After decades the evidence indicates that none of these boards have restrained any police from using deadly force on any pretext against our black and brown working class sisters and brothers and their children. The police will never be “accountable” under capitalism, except to the ruling class whose system is what they protect and serve. The bourgeoisie is ready to sell all police departments body cameras courtesy of the tax payers’ treasury. But those civilians who catch police in the act of murder such as Ramsey Orta, of Staten Island who filmed Pantelleo choking [Eric Garner](#), are harassed and thrown in prison. Thus when Feidin Santana filmed [Michael Slager](#) of the North Charleston Police Department shooting Walter Scott in the back, he was afraid to come forward with his recording, fearing police retribution.

Retribution has always been a fixture of the racist bourgeois state; retribution judicial and extra judicial. Judicial, as in the Bill making its way through the New York State Assembly that would felonize resisting arrest. Extra judicial, such as the Pennsylvania prison system withholding and manipulating medical treatment and family access for Class War prisoner Mumia Abu Jamal this April.

Historically, the masses have only curbed police violence through organizing self-defense. This is the lesson of the Minneapolis Teamsters in the 1930’s and the Deacons

for Defense and the Black Panthers in the 1960’s. The President of Georgia’s chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, [Rev. Samuel Mosteller](#), stood recently to the left of these fake-Trotskyists by calling for black self-defense and for black people to “*avail themselves of their Second Amendment right.*” Of course, for Sawant and the CWI, who see police as workers, and thereby revising the Marxist understanding of the state, such militant class struggle means are beyond their real political appetites. [Sawant](#) would rather propose “... *a public service, for policing in alliance with the communities, for accountability, for transparency.*” Here SocAlt buries another section of the workers Transitional Program in favor of accommodation with the program of bourgeois and anarcho-feminist forces who favor civilian police review boards instead of labor black and brown self defense: for example, [Radical Women/Freedom Socialist Party](#), Blue Stockings, and various spokespersons for [Black Lives Matter](#).

We read the reformist press of the [International Socialist Organization](#) and find that they support “civilian review boards with real power.” Imagine how unsurprised we were to find the same logic in the ultra left positions of the Revolutionary Tendency (S. Argue) and the International Bolshevik Tendency (IBT). These groupings call on the state to “Jail Racist Killer Cops.” What unites these two ostensibly different positions is their advocating reliance on the class enemy state for the accomplishment of justice. Let anyone call us sectarian; we will persist in telling the truth. *Marxists* say you cannot get justice from the capitalist state, it exists to oppress you.

In contrast, trade union militants in the CWG drafted a resolution that was widely circulated via electronic media as well as to other trade unionists in an attempt to cohere a class struggle opposition to racist police terror. The [resolution](#) called for kicking the cops out of the unions and the labor federations, and called for “*labor, black and brown self-defense guards*” and for labor strikes against racist police terror.

## Vodafone Maternity Leave Deal

Vodafone, the communications multinational that has networks in 21 countries and provides IT services to business in 65, is the 3rd largest firm on the London stock exchange. The Vodafone bosses have figured out how to save money, to the tune of \$19Bn/year, by granting a paid maternity leave of 16 weeks, followed by six months of 30 hour week employment at 40 hours pay(!) And they are instituting this policy in all 21 countries, which

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The following statement was distributed at the Black Lives Matter protests following the murders of Michael Brown, Eric Garner and Tamir Rice.

**There is No Justice in the  
Capitalist Courts!  
The Working Class Must  
Never Forget Michael Brown!  
Organize Labor, Black and  
Brown Struggle!**

The majority white Ferguson Grand Jury in refusing to indict Darren Wilson has whitewashed the summary execution of Michael Brown. This outrage will embolden every racist cop in the United States to continue their terror against the black, brown and immigrant communities. The cops know that all they require is a complaint for 'sufficient' cause to kill a black person; that their weight with the justice system is so great that they can routinely commit legal lynching and walk away free.

The Ferguson Grand Jury was a "Star Chamber" of the most objectionable type, with the proceedings dragging on for months, with a majority white jury that was not sequestered during the media hype and a prosecutor who made certain there would be no indictment. New York State Chief Judge Sol Wachtler once remarked that a prosecutor could persuade a grand jury to "indict a ham sandwich." In cases of police killings, indictments are extremely rare. The Brown family will likely not even find any compensation in a civil court for the death of their loved one, as the media hype will have tainted every jury pool. The report of the Grand Jury was nevertheless a freak report. In 2010, in 162,000 Grand Jury cases in the U.S., only 11 failed to bring indictments. That's .0000679, i.e., 6.79 times per 100,000 cases. This fact has to be known by Obama, legal scholar and leader of the Democrats. The Democrats have no fundamental commitment to defense of Black lives or to Mike Brown's good name, but only to the superior bourgeois rights of property.

There will never be justice for the black, brown or immigrant persons in the capitalist courts. As we wrote in our *Class War* supplement, "[There is No Justice in Capitalist America!](#)":

*"It has been [reliably established](#) that a black person is killed by cops or vigilantes [every 28 hours](#) in the U.S.A. Only the most flagrant abuses of police brutality and terror come to light, while the black, brown and immigrant communities face daily harassment, beatings and murder at the hands of the racist cops."*

## Ferguson is Everywhere

Moralists, academics and journalists, in short the occupants of the bosses ideological ivory tower have "discovered" sociological truths which are the everyday life experience of peoples of color, the working poor and marginalized people. The criminalization of poverty, the school to prison pipeline, the privatization of prisons, the disproportionate "stopping and frisking" of men of color, the fee-seeking judicial rackets, the institutional structures of racist economic oppression that marginalize entire demographics and the subliminal effect the historic economic oppression and marginalization have on prejudicial, stereotyping and racist dehumanization of "the other" (in particular but not exclusively young black and brown men,) by the human material that maintain those structures -- the police -- are unleashed as an occupying army. Thus the local tax man has a Praetorian guard engaged to "protect and serve" the system of economic exploitation and oppression which creates the poverty and the marginalization and supports ruling class hatred of the poor in general, which when translated through the eyes of the white middle class becomes racist hatred of the black and brown poor (never mind the hidden numerical majority of whites in poverty.) They focus on and perpetuate racial prejudice and hatred, and serve the ruling class as well. But today all the little ugly truths are showing up in cell phone videos and studies of arrest ratios and the criminalization of debtors. The merge of these ugly truths in the recent cowardly murder where [Walter Scott](#) ran for his life and was shot in the back; revealed despite police efforts to spin a cover up. Scott ran because he was in debt. He could not pay his debt and did not want to go to prison again for non-payment of court-ordered fees; he ran and was gunned down. Police in the U.S. shot and killed 111 people in the month of March alone. This is more than twice as many (52) as were killed by police in the UK in the last 100 years. Ferguson is everywhere!

The hand wringing crowd, who squirm every time the pit bulls of the ruling class are exposed as the rabid dogs they are, cannot deny the barrage of facts so they "advance" the national discussion within the acceptable liberal parameters. The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement champions some good demands but the academics and populist politicians hoping for a boost in the polls from the People of Color (POC) constituency and liberal pundits who do not want all the dots connected jump forward with 'solutions' that leave the entire structure of oppression intact. Dash cams, body cams, sensitivity training, residency requirements, civilian review boards, recruitment and advancement of POC and LGBTQ cops and of course the ubiquitous call upon the oppressed to get out and vote for their oppressors is the chaw, the stock in trade of the talking heads.

They will advance any idea as long the capitalist system is not challenged by the self-organization of workers and the oppressed. Unabashedly, we declare all these "reforms" will not stop the institutional racism that pervades and guides the organizations of state repression. Even when racism is legalistically written out of the bureaucratic state system and even if the state hires and advances POC up the chain (don't forget the chief law enforcement official in the country is black!), the value to capital of racist oppression of the black and brown people is that it keeps the poor from uniting against their class enemy, the 0.1% and their millions of enforcers and lieutenants in management, in the political party structures, among the tea party and even in the leadership of the organizations of the workers, poor and oppressed. Oh yes, Ferguson is everywhere.

Darren Wilson will either be reinstated to full duty and pay to be able to freely conduct racist gunplay in Ferguson and the St. Louis area, or he will broker his resignation and leave with a nice pile of money. Meanwhile, the protesters demanding justice will be facing massive state repression at the hands of the militarized police forces, the FBI, the fascist KKK and the National Guard.

It is only the organized self-defense of the masses based on a political program of struggle that can curb the excesses of an increasingly Bonapartist police state. There will be ever-increasing racist gunplay and there will be many more Michael Browns

until the masses start to organize Labor, Black and Brown community self-defense militias and carry out labor-centered actions to counter the racist violence through political labor strikes. "**They shoot us down, we shut them down!**" A fighting, multi-racial labor movement would have launched a general strike in reaction to Michael Brown's murder.

We in the Communist Workers Group are not alone in calling for these self-defense organizations, but these run headlong into the resistance of a trade union bureaucracy that has anchored its fortunes in the capitalist Democratic Party and who are happy to collect the dues of the Police Benevolent

*Cont. from pg. 6 Michael Brown...*

Associations, telling us that the killers in blue are union sisters and brothers! So our first task is to drive the police out of the AFL-CIO and Change to Win labor federations. The police are not workers. They are the hired guns of Capital.

**No more Fergusons!** Right now, the frequency of police killings is increasing and is at epidemic levels, with more Americans killed by cops in the last decade than have been killed in Iraq. In order to reverse this trend, the social vanguard of the labor movement, the black, brown and immigrant communities need to take to heart the historic lesson of the Deacons for Defense and Social Justice, the best days of the Black Panther Party, Robert F. Williams and the Minneapolis Teamsters Union Defense Guard. The pacifists have led you into blind alleys and into T streets for the police to ambush you, while politically disarming the masses with impotent attempts to 'reform the police.' We will remember the advice of Malcolm X who said "*We'll be non-violent with those who are non-violent with us.*" Until such time as racists fear for their lives and well-being, they will feel entitled to act out their perceived white-skin privilege with deadly force and none of the behavior of the bourgeois state will give them any reason to believe otherwise.

**An injury to one is an injury to all! Defend Ferguson protesters! Drop all charges and for the immediate release of all Ferguson protesters!**

**For organized trade union contingents to Ferguson to demand justice for Michael Brown! National Guard out of Ferguson!**

**Down with the militarization of the police! No stop and frisk! Defeat racial profiling!**

**Down with La Migra and police attacks on immigrants! For immediate full citizenship rights for all immigrants!**

**No faith in the bosses' courts! We need our own institutions to gain justice!**

**Turn the meetings and mobilizations into organizing meetings for Labor, Black and Brown self-defense guards and tribunals! Form up multi-racial Labor, Black and Brown self-defense guards to defend against racist police, KKK and vigilante terror!**

**For workers' tribunals to bring murdering racist cops and vigilantes to justice! Build Labor, Black and Brown political strike actions to bring these criminals to justice!**

## **Resolution Calling for Labor Defense Against Racist Police Terror**

**Whereas**, police racial profiling, stop and frisk and police terror and killings of black and brown people is rampant, with extra-judicial killings of black people on the street, as with **Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Oscar Grant and John Deng**, and

**Whereas** these killings by the police serve as legalized lynching with only a complaint required for cause, obviating the difference between states that do and states that do not have a death penalty, and

**Whereas** America has the largest incarcerated population in the world, disproportionately targeting the black and brown communities, and

**Whereas** the police constitute an occupying armed force in these communities, where the role they play is not providing public safety but that of an army of racist terrorists whose job it is to keep people marginalized along racial lines, in order to keep working class and oppressed people from organizing together, particularly during this period of severe capitalist economic crisis where the ruling class fears social upheavals, and

**Whereas**, a half century after the Civil Rights movement that ended formal, legal Jim Crow segregation, the social position of the black communities is as impoverished as ever, economic segregation relegates generations to chronic poverty, police state terror and hopelessness, and

**Whereas**, the police are being militarized as part of an increasingly Bonapartist state, as witnessed by the {your county here} acquisition of an MRAP (Drones etc.), and

**Whereas**, while the police are targeting the black, brown and immigrant communities today, resurgent labor and youth struggles will place the entire multi-racial working class in their sights, and

**Whereas** the police and "intelligence services" are not part of the working class, and their primary job is providing social control through strikebreaking and racist terror, their employee "benevolent associations" protect them when they violate the rights of workers and oppressed peoples, and

**Whereas** racism divides the working class, and the oppression of black and brown people drags the whole class down, morally, culturally and economically, when black, brown and other specially oppressed workers are treated as second-class citizens and therefore a "last hired, first fired" super-exploited section of the working class exists, and

**Whereas** these workers constitute a strategic section of the working class in America, with greater class consciousness and a higher unionization rate and concentration in strategic sections of the economy, and

**Whereas**, the multi-racial working class that is under attack will make no significant gains until they *effectively* defend the democratic rights of the oppressed black, brown and immigrant communities, as part of a fight for social and economic justice for the workers and all the oppressed,

**Therefore be it resolved** that {your labor org here} condemns the Johnson County, Iowa purchase of the MRAP and demands that it be sent to the scrap heap, and

**Be it further resolved** that {your labor org here} stands opposed to any expansion of the Johnson County, Iowa jail as well as any other increase in the repressive apparatus of the state, and

**Be it further resolved** that {your labor org here} calls for *the police and the police "unions" to be kicked out of the AFL-CIO, the Change to Win Labor Federation, and all national, state and city labor bodies thereof*, and

**Be it further resolved** that {your labor org here} shall immediately *form a labor, black and brown action/struggle committee*, drawing in the mass of the ranks, to educate, organize and mobilize labor defense of the black and brown communities against racist police terror, and

**Be it further resolved** that said action/struggle committee will *mobilize organized trade union contingents*, with union marshals, to march in these anti-racist protests and to defend them against police attack, and

**Be it further resolved** that said action/struggle committee shall *convene mass democratic labor, black and brown assemblies* to discuss, debate and decide

Cont. from pg. 7 Resolution ...

the way forward, linking the struggle of organized labor to that of the black, brown and immigrant communities, to the unorganized workers and to the struggles of the low-wage fast food and big box store workers, and

**Be it further resolved** that said action/struggle committee shall **build and organize the labor political strikes that are necessary to fight the racist police terror**, to meet every act of police beatings and killings with strike actions; “They shoot us down? We shut them down!”, and therefore we call for the democratic election of local union strike committees and delegates to inter-union strike committee bodies, and

**Be it further resolved** that said action/struggle committee shall **build and organize trained, disciplined, labor, black and brown self-defense guards to defend the oppressed communities against police violence**, and

**Be it further resolved** that {your labor org here} demands **billions be provided for public works programs to eliminate want and provide dignified jobs for all** through spreading around the work by **shortening the work week to 30 hours, while providing 40 hours pay, with wages and prices set by committees of workers and consumers’ representatives**, and where the employers claim their coffers are empty, we will demand to **open the books and nationalize the commanding heights of the economy without compensation** to the big shareholders, and that those **nationalized industries be run under workers control**, and

**Be it finally resolved** that {your labor org here} delegates shall **take this resolution to the higher labor bodies**, the Central Labor Councils and the State Federations, the {your labor org here} International Convention, as well as to the State Federation and AFL-CIO and Change to Win conventions.

Respectfully,  
{name}  
{official union title}



*Robert F. Williams  
who organized armed  
self-defense against  
racist KKK terror.*

[http://www.pbs.org/  
independentlens/  
negroeswithguns/rob.  
html](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/negroeswithguns/rob.html)

Cont. from pg. 1 Greece...

socialist republic. They left PASOK because it did not fight austerity. SYRIZA offered the hope that Greece could fight austerity and yet stay in the EU. The January 25<sup>th</sup> electoral [victory reflects the growing hope](#) that SYRIZA could achieve this goal by negotiating a compromise with the ‘Troika’ (EU, ECB and IMF). But what will it have to do to realise these hopes?

First, SYRIZA has to reject its [alliance with ANEL](#) (Independent Greeks) a rightwing bourgeois nationalist party. It is the KKE of the right with links to [Russian fascism](#). No left government can survive an alliance with a bourgeois party that represents the shipping magnates and the high command of the military. It ties the hands of the working class and disarms them facing a fascist coup. Those on the left who claim that this [choice](#) was forced upon it by the KKE refusal to give SYRIZA support in parliament are parliamentary cretins. A popular front with ANEL will drive away KKE supporters and vindicate the KKE characterisation of SYRIZA as in bed with EU capital.

SYRIZA must break with ANEL and fight as a minority government on the policy of cancelling the debt to win the support of the KKE membership and win enough MPs to win an absolute majority to fight for a socialist program. **Workers must be told the truth that any negotiated deal to reduce the debt will still leave generations of Greek workers as debt slaves.** This is the way to prove to the workers of Greece that to survive they must be prepared to repudiate the debt and leave the EU and the Euro. Nor should the masses be fooled that Russian or Chinese imperialism will rescue the economy. For the masses to live, Greece must become a socialist republic independent of the US/EU and Russia/China imperialist blocs!

To avoid the destructive consequences of a default and break from the EU leading to the collapse of Greek capitalism, SYRIZA has to prove to workers that only a Workers’ Government that comes to power on the back of workers councils and workers militias can turn the break with EU imperialism into a victory for the working class - a Workers Republic. Such a republic can only survive if it is based on the armed power of a workers militia that defends the revolution from the counter-revolution.

Whether this can happen depends on the ability of the [revolutionary left](#) inside and outside of SYRIZA to overcome its reformist

illusions and its sectarian practices. The majority on the left are reformists who think that socialism will come through a [process of peaceful transformation](#) via parliament. Most ignore the popular front as a necessary evil or [realpolitik](#) to form a government. Those like Left Unity who still think of the bourgeoisie as the enemy and attempt to [justify the popular front with ANEL](#) are complicit in tying the hands of workers on behalf of the Greek bourgeoisie.

Those who saw SYRIZA as another cynical manoeuvre to fool the masses, and refuse it [‘critical support’](#) or even call for its overthrow, are **anti-parliamentary cretins**. SYRIZA is a coalition that contains the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. That is a bourgeois program and a proletarian mass base. It is necessary for the revolutionary left to put proletarian demands on SYRIZA to explode this contradiction from below so that the majority of workers who have hopes in SYRIZA will now see that a mass revolutionary party can only be built, not on electoral lists, but on the basis of workers councils and militias.

The popular front will not solve the problem of unemployment. The alliance with ANEL would not survive concrete measures to provide full employment. These would be seen as a provocation by the whole bourgeoisie and the EU, NATO and U.S. imperialism. Consequently the working class vanguard, while calling for the destruction of the popular front [must not rely on parliament](#) to lead in providing full employment. This will come from the workers’ own actions: factory occupations and sit down strikes and nationalizations under workers control that result from work-ins and the reorganization of production to employ the unemployed. Work site occupations will require armed pickets because they will be subject to violent attack by the fascist Golden Dawn and the police. The “legitimacy” and “legality” of the workers reorganization of production will derive from the support of the workers councils not the bourgeois parliament.

Now is not a moment too soon for worker militants to begin wholesale fraternization with the enlisted ranks of the armed forces, the workers in uniform. It is time to begin the organization of soldiers’, sailors’, and airmens’ councils and to coordinate their actions with those of the organized workers. It is time to sort out and replace the defenders of the popular front in the trade union movement, as well as the treacherous leaders of PASOK and KKE, insofar as they support capitalist solutions that are based

*Cont. from pg. 8 Greece...*

on pipedreams that capitalism can resolve its crisis without putting workers through many more years of life on the rack of IMF austerity.

So while it is urgent that to open the road to a socialist republic, SYRIZA must break with ANEL, at the same time it is even more urgent that the membership of SYRIZA mobilise mass support for the party to fight as a Workers' Party on a Socialist Program based on the demand to 'cancel the debt'. This mass support has to be based on building workers councils to mobilise action on the streets, building to a political general strike, and workers militias to defeat the fascists and defend the strike, leading to the seizure of power and installation of a Workers Government.

- **Break with the popular front now and for good! Class political independence is the first prerequisite for the survival of the working class. And class independence requires adoption of a revolutionary socialist program.**

- **Abrogation of the repayment agreements with the Troika. Repudiate the debt!**

- **Guaranteed union wages and benefits for all! For a thirty hour work week and forty hours pay with a sliding scale of wages and hours so that all able bodied persons can be employed. The right to employment is the last right the workers have before the complete triumph of tyranny.**

- **For billions to employ workers in environmental remediation. Not one cent for the French and German bankers!**

- **For free quality socialized medicine/health care for all. An immediate investigation and national dialogue on women's health care needs. End denial of access of birth control and abortion. For full free abortion on demand. For free 24-hour child care. Equal pay for equal work.**

- **Free quality education for all. No tuition and open admissions. Living wage stipends for students.**

- **Greece to quit NATO!**

- **Publication of all government secret treaties!**

- **Withdraw all Greek troops from all NATO military adventures.**

- **For Greek solidarity with the Syrian and Arab revolutions.**

- **For military support for the Local Coordinating Committees in Syria and for their proliferation across the MENA.**

- **Defend the immigrant populations and support their rights to self-determination.**

- **For workers tribunals which investigate, try and sentence those who are guilty of racist, ethnic, homophobic and misogynist crimes of violence.**

- **Defense of minority and alternative sexuality populations and neighborhoods.**

- **For LGBTQ democratic rights now! These rights will only find their fullest development when guaranteed by workers democracy.**

- **For labor defense of minority populations and neighborhoods. For the immediate organization of inter-communal workers militias. . For the suppression of the counter-revolution.**

- **Organize a Marxist revolutionary workers party that has as its principal activity the advancement of the working class to power and the consolidation of a workers state with an internationalist revolutionary program.**

- **For a new revolutionary workers international based on the program and method of Trotsky's 1938 Transitional Program, the first four congresses of Lenin's Third International and the resolve to accomplish all the revolutionary tasks of the completion of democracy, socialism and the march of civilization to communism.**

- **For a Socialist United States of Europe!**

See our statements "We are all Greeks!" from 2010

<http://redrave.blogspot.co.nz/2010/05/greeks-arent-we-all.html>

and "No electoral solutions! For Workers Councils and a Workers' Government!" from 2012

<http://redrave.blogspot.co.nz/2012/06/greece-no-electoral-solution-for.html>

*Cont. from pg. 5 Vodafone...*

will cost a projected \$28Bn, only because losing the average number of their trained female employees who get pregnant in a year, and having to train replacements, would cost them \$47Bn/year.

In the insane world of the working conditions of females in the U.S.A., where UNPAID maternity leave is supposed to be a legal right, many states now seek to felonize any woman who has a [miscarriage at home](#) and the first convictions have already been handed down! We have heard no protest over this "law and order" from the AFL-CIO, nor even from the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), who seem to have fallen off the face of the earth since the Obama era began. Little wonder then that [Scott Walker](#) can get away with comparing union members to ISIS and the champion of immigrant womens' rights

Rasmeah Odeh finds no defenders among the upper echelons of the official labor movement. The parasite layer wants to assure workers that the rights of working women will be defended by Wal-Mart's friend Hillary Clinton. So do their fake left errand boys on the "'60s and SDS" Facebook page, some of whom are professional enemies of the Labor Party idea.

The CWG sees the concession by Vodafone to its accountants as a small but significant gain for female workers.

It has been shown that over her lifetime, the female worker in the U.S. makes on average \$410,000 less than males performing the same work. As the bourgeois politicians shop for your franchise with nonsense "recovery," "consumer confidence" and "unemployment rate" figures that are all contradicted by the abysmal monthly job creation figures (that always have to be revised downwards,) we call for a return to the historical program of Women's Liberation. This was spurned by those who sought to expunge the class question in the 1970's, demobilizing what was a mass movement into coffee table consciousness-raising and "act locally" bourgeois feminism. Rightists over time got the picture. They no longer needed to murder doctors who performed abortions. With the success of ALEC supported candidates and template laws, they could legislate the working women back to the multiple oppressions of shoeless poverty and additional children whom they can scarcely feed and clothe. A fighting workers' labor party will need to adopt a fearless Women's Liberation Program!

The celebrated mass movement of 1970 raised the demands for "equal pay for equal work," for "free abortion on demand," and for "free 24-hour childcare centers." That this is not a complete program is obvious when compared to the section of the Transitional Program titled "[Open the Road to the Woman Worker! Open the Road to the Youth!](#)" This in itself not a complete program.

How Vodafone arrived at 16 weeks as the amount of time women need to readjust their entire life routine we don't know. We think it's an accounting question for them that was established by the KPMG cost/benefit analysis. None of this makes Vodafone any champion of women's rights and neither does it indicate any real possibility of reforming capitalism. With a general rise of militancy we will expect to see factory committees in Vodafone facilities just as in the auto plants and mills of the economic royalists.

See the "[Struggle Against Women's Oppression in the '90's](#)"

Given this battle to re-divide the world by the imperialist powers, none of the colonies would be able to break free of dependency upon imperialism short of socialist revolutions. Failing that, they would remain colonies, semi-colonies or 'neo-colonies'. Their political independence was rendered inoperative because of their economic dependence.

### European Settler Colonies

One category of colonies, European Settler Colonies, may be the exception to this rule. They seem to have more real political sovereignty and control over the economy than other semi-colonies. Thus the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Brazil and Israel are often held up as countries that were able to make the transition from settler colony to imperialist powers (if relatively small), while the vast majority of colonies that were not settled by Europeans, remained trapped in neo-colonial dependency.

Yet if we look at these countries, only the US was able to become a major imperialist power. The fate of the others is less clear cut. The reason for this is that the US had a complete national revolution where it broke its ties of political and economic dependence on its former colonial master, Britain. It could impose tariffs on British goods and protect local manufacturers until they were big enough to compete. It also had a Civil War that eliminated backward pre-capitalist modes of production.

All the other countries settled by Europeans, however, did not have wars of independence against their colonial masters (except in Latin America where the wars of independence fell short of economic independence from European capitalist powers). While they had a limited self-government that enabled them to protect their domestic economies, this was insufficient to prevent imperialism from retaining a large share of national surplus-value and limiting national capital accumulation. Nevertheless, some argue that they were sufficiently 'decolonised' in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century to achieve economic independence and become minor imperialist powers.

We can test the proposition that political 'decolonisation' in the 30 years between the Great Depression and end of the post war boom enabled the former settler colonies to resist economic 'recolonisation' during the neo-liberal years from the 1970s to the present. To what extent did national economic

development enable these countries to become sufficiently 'independent' so as to resist neo-liberal 'recolonisation'?

We can test this fairly easily in the case of the weakest states, New Zealand, South Africa and Australia. These settler colonies very early became part of an imperial division-of-labour where they produced raw materials for export and imported finished goods from the imperialist motherland. Tariff protection enabled a degree of domestic manufacturing but this always remained relatively limited mainly based on 'branch plants' owned by imperialist capital and financed by imperialist banks. In other words, the 'decolonisation' process was largely illusory as surplus value was siphoned off by imperialism leaving these countries relatively underdeveloped and economically dependent.



*For Coordinated International Workers' Actions to Smash the TPPA!*

### NZ, South Africa and Australia

There is no question that NZ was very quickly 'recolonised' from the early 1970s as domestic capital sought to modernise and compete internationally. The 'neo-liberal' counter-revolution during the Fourth Labour Government 1984-89, virtually destroyed the basis of economic protectionism built up over 40 years in 5 years. The [fake left](#) in NZ say that NZ is *mini-imperialist* on the basis usually of its predatory role in the South Pacific and historic high living standards.

In the case of South Africa, we have written about its dependence on imperialism, Anglo-American historically, but now increasingly that of [China](#). We reject any notion that South Africa is imperialist by any conception. Nor is it 'sub-imperialist' in the terms of the [BRICS intelligentsia](#) which adds to South Africa's semi-colonial dependence. Nor does it have any measure of 'independence' earned by a share of the surplus for performing a '[subcontracted](#)' role as manager of imperialist affairs in the whole of Africa.

Australia, however, is viewed by many on the left as a minor imperialism. This included ourselves (CWG NZ) since the 1990s.

Australia's protected manufacturing allowed a weak national bourgeois fraction to emerge, alongside the traditional pastoral and mining bourgeoisie. Australia was more resilient than NZ to neo-liberal deregulation as it was not dependent on protected manufacturing alone and could sustain growth in the late '80s and '90s due to its booming mining industry.

However, the neo-liberalisation of Australia under Hawke and Howard saw this national bourgeoisie largely swallowed up by international finance capital. And while NZ banks were all Australian-owned, the [big four](#) Australian banks became controlled by HSBC, JPMorgan, Citigroup and BNP Paribas as the shareholders. As one commentator puts it: "*Both commercial and mining companies' ownership are dominated by HSBC Nominees, JP Morgan Nominees, and Citibank Nominees as the top three shareholders of most companies. If one examines company directorships there is a tight cross-linking across commerce, banking and mining in Australia today. Commerce, banking and mining are now part of an oligopoly.*"

We conclude that Australia developed behind protectionist barriers for the period from the 1930s to 1980s yet failed to achieve economic independence. Its national bourgeoisie remained weak and dependent on international finance capital. The hallmark of imperialism is the over-accumulation of capital that must be exported to gain access to cheap land, raw materials and labour power. Australia has failed to do this on its own account. Its national finance capital is dominated by EU, US and **increasingly** [Chinese finance capital](#). In the key growth sector of mining, the three largest "[Australian](#)" corporations, BHP Billiton is 75%, Rio Tinto 80%, and Xtrata 100% foreign owned. The monopoly rent from mining has therefore been largely siphoned off by international finance capital.

So the flow of FDI into Australia and OFDI out of Australia does not represent super-profits accruing to an Australian imperialist class but rather to international finance capital of the major banks and corporations. This control was demonstrated by the defeat of the Rudd Resource Super Profits tax that gifted \$billions to the foreign owners of the mining industry.

The OECD says that [Australian federal revenue](#) from mining profits is the lowest in the world. The foreign shareholders get [about half](#) of the "value added": "For every

*Cont. from pg. 10 Imperialism...*

\$100 in value added by the mining industry, state governments get \$6 and employees get \$20. This leaves a profit of \$74. Of that amount, the federal government gets \$14, foreign shareholders get \$48, and Australian resident shareholders get \$12.” It seems then that far from breaking out of semi-colonial dependency into mini-imperialism, Australia has been ‘taken over’ by international finance capital and Chinese monopolies.

### Australia as “sub-imperialist”

Various left groups call Australia small, minor, mini, regional, or junior imperialism. Their method is empirical in toting up the foreign investment figures and pointing to Australia’s ‘policing’ role in partnership with Britain or the US.

Ashley Lavelle, in “[Who Owns Australia](#)”, writing in 2001, argues against the radical nationalist line that Australia is being taken over by foreign investors. Australia is an “advanced capitalist economy” as only 25% of Australian firms are owned and controlled by foreign capital. This means that the main enemy is not foreign capital, but the Australian ruling class. In the two main sectors of the economy we find 9% penetration in mining and 30% penetration in finance. Even in 2000 this is enough concentration of finance capital to dominate the Australian economy. The [Democratic Socialist Party](#) joins the pack yapping at the nationalists heels. It claims that Australia is a “small, regional imperialist power”, a “junior partner of Washington” with its own “sphere of influence” such as Melanesia and East Timor. Sandra Bloodworth of the International Socialist Organisation, writing in 2004 says Australia is a minor but “regional imperialist power”. Australia joined the war on terror in support of the USA and acted to fulfil its ‘regional’ policing role in the South Pacific, for example in the Solomons. Australia profits from investments in this region, e.g. in Papua New Guinea mining and owns 50% [of Fijian business](#). Another left [outfit](#) accuses Australia of mini-imperialism in exploiting and oppressing East Timor and seizing its oil resources in the Timor Sea.

Tom Bramble of Socialist Alternative writing in the *Marxist Left Review* “[Australian Imperialism and the rise of China](#)” aligns himself with other left academics who speak of Australia and Canada as ‘secondary’ imperialisms. Bramble recognises the rise of imperialist China has consequences for Australian trade and its relationship with the US. But China has been imperialist for some



*Pacific end of Keystone pipeline*

time according to the Cliffites.

Yet Australia’s dependence on the US and increasingly China, does not cause him to challenge the prevailing Australian Cliffite and DSP view on Australian junior imperialism. He does not question Australia’s obvious subordinate role to UK and US finance capital and as an exporter of minerals to China. He fails to notice that the Australian mining industry is largely foreign owned, increasingly favouring China. And that Australia’s regional policing role has been overtaken by its integration under Gillard and Abbott as a forward base for the US military. The Northite ICFI (WSWS) writing in 2014 sees Australia as [imperialist](#) despite its political [subservience](#) to US imperialism. WSWS argues that after the Global Financial Crisis and the 2010 ‘coup’ to remove Labour Prime Minister Rudd (because he was in favour of US and China friendship and the resource tax), Australia has been drawn completely into the US “pivot to Asia”.

The Abbott Govt is even closer to the US. The result is Australia coming under direct domination by the US dictating a militarist foreign policy and an austerity domestic policy which it calls a ‘counter-revolution’. The Shorten Labor Party is also committed to war and austerity. But for the WSWS Russia and China are not imperialist, and Australia despite its dependence on the US remains a minor imperialist power!

It’s clear that while the case made for Australia’s economic independence is weak, most of the left regard Australia as a junior partner of US (and increasingly) Chinese capital on the strength of its imperialist policing role. Therefore, we can file the various labels for Australian junior imperialism under ‘sub-imperialist’ which is the vogue term on the BRICS left to mean a small power that serves imperialism and is paid in a share of the subcontracted colonial tribute.

We have argued that the label “sub-imperialist” is meaningless since it represents a distributional definition of oppression which looks at shareholdings on stock markets and living standards but ignores the fundamental reality that the bulk of surplus-value produced is expropriated by international finance capital at its source, even if some of it flows back as kickbacks to the Australian capitalist class. A good example of a kickback for Australia’s military bloc with the US is Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton [licence](#) to mine public land in the US.

Reviewing the evidence of ‘takeover’ we think that we were wrong to get taken in by the flash statistics of economic independence when foreign ownership of the key economic sectors has always been British and increasingly US. With [China](#) being [welcomed](#) to buy up mining interests and privatised state assets by the Rudd Government it seems that Australia’s economic dependence must increase. While some of the ‘left’ have noted the growing influence of China and US, this influence is not taken to its logical conclusions.

Australia’s political sovereignty is up for sale with the US FTA and the impending TPPA. China now has a TPA and is also ready to invest heavily. Australia’s independent ‘policing’ role has been overtaken by US bases in Darwin and suborning its navy to RIMPAC in the military containment of China. It is the sausage in the sandwich as the hegemonic US and the rapidly rising China flex their muscles to contest control of the Asia Pacific region.

**Our conclusion is that for all Australia’s so-called “sub-imperialist” role as South Pacific partner of Britain and the US it has always been a form of dependency and is now clearly exposed by the growing rivalry between China and US imperialism. Even hard bitten liberal journos can see that this rips Australia apart as its ruling class tries to serve two imperialist masters at the same time.**

**The political consequences of this reality are that Australian workers have the task of kicking out their ruling class and taking the leadership of the struggle to win national independence from both US and Chinese imperialism, creating a Socialist Republic of Australia within a Socialist United States of Asia Pacific!**

*Next Issue: Canada and the USA.  
Reprinted from CWG-NZ*

the following principles of good industrial trade unionism, Unity of All Rail Crafts, An End to Inter-Union Conflict, Rank-and-File Democracy, Membership Participation and Action, Solidarity, No to Concessionary Bargaining. The attack by the transport industry bosses on labor including the unsafe demand for one man crews, long trains and long hours has increased the other hazards inherent in rolling stock with bomb like loads of chemicals and fossil fuel products. The failure of the craft unions to united workers around their interests has resulted in back biting and general weakness by dividing the various categories of RR workers. In the face of the failure of the craft unions the movement toward industrial unionism that the RWU represents is progressive, long overdue, and cannot be won unless the workers embrace class struggle methods to fight anti-labor laws which prevent rail strikes, general strikes and secondary—solidarity—strikes. This requires that the rail workers unions unite and declare their class political independence from the twin parties of the bosses who indoctrinate the union leaders and the membership into submission to the anti-labor laws and into the regular political activity of supporting the “labor friendly” candidate.

Even militant industrial trade unionism cannot win unless it breaks the chains to the Democratic and Republican parties and this requires a political fight which the syndicalist IWW supporters of the RWU are dead set against. The IWW members explicitly tell RWU members that they do not need their own workers party. Prominent IWW/Occupy leader Elliot Hughes was overheard in the lunch line telling workers they do not need a labor party. Despite the attendance from Soc Alt, Speak Out, Socialist Workers Party and the Transport Workers Solidarity Committee only the Communist Workers Group advocated for class political independence, to challenge the labor bureaucracy for leadership with class struggle methods and for a workers party that fights for a workers government, to much applause and waving red flags (IWW leader Steve Ongerth was the time keeper waving the red flag). The following leaflet was distributed:

We need safe decent jobs, quality education, medical care, pensions, and housing for all! We need massive infrastructure programs with investment of billions to employ the unemployed, to make the transition to clean energy production. Millions are out of work or have sub-living minimum wages and survive

in poverty while the owners of the energy and transport industries attack working conditions and violate our safety both at work and in our homes and in the wild. The energy extraction and transportation industry under capitalist ownership driven by the profit motive will not and cannot make this work safe, therefore our program requires the expropriation of the extraction and energy industry as well as the transportation industry and the commanding heights of the economy because they are all intertwined. Only social ownership of the means of production, workers self-management and a rational socially planned economy can provide a road out of the economic and environmental crisis. To advance the conditions of workers we submit that this conference resolves and calls upon rail workers to initiate strike actions that stops the Obama/Bufet fossil fuel dependency and perpetuation plan; to call on steel workers, auto and electrical workers to launch the general strike that initiates the retooling and massive implementation of clean energy solutions (solar, wind and geothermal) now!

We can learn well from what railroad union organizer, socialist and wobbly, Eugene V. Debs taught workers over one hundred years ago. On December 10, 1905 at the Grand Central Palace in NYC Debs admonished the crowd of workers and forward thinking people, socialists, anarchists and trade unionists:

**“The Industrial Workers is organized— not to conciliate, but to fight the capitalist class. We have no object in concealing any part of our mission; we would have it perfectly understood. We deny that there is anything in common between workingmen and capitalists. We insist that workingmen must organize to get rid of capitalists and make themselves the masters of the tools with which they work, freely employ themselves, secure to themselves all they produce, and enjoy to the full the fruit of their labor.”**

He then asked the rhetorical question: **“Why should you be dependent upon a capitalist? Why should this capitalist own a tool he cannot use? And why should not you own the tool without which you cannot live?”**

So today we have to ask what has changed? Is there any reason to make common ground between the workers and the capitalists? Consider Deb’s analysis of the economics and see if it sounds familiar:

**“Every few years there is a panic, industrial paralysis, and hundreds of thousands of**

**workers are flung into the streets; no work, no wages; and so they throng the highways in search of employment that cannot be found; they become vagrants, tramps, outcasts, criminals. It is in this way that the human being degenerates, and that crime graduates in the capitalist system, all the way from petty larceny to homicide.”**

Jailed for organizing the 1894 Pullman rail workers strike Debs read from Marx ultimately guiding these comments:

**“At the beginning of industrial society men worked with hand tools; a boy could learn a trade, make himself the master of the simple tools with which he worked, and employ himself and enjoy what he produced; but that simple tool of a century ago has become a mammoth social instrument; in a word, that tool has been socialized. Not only this, but production has been socialized. As small a commodity as a pin or a pen, or a match involves for its production all of the social labor of the land; but this evolution is not yet complete; the tool has been socialized, production has been socialized, and now ownership must also be socialized; in other words, those great social instruments that are used in modern industry for the production of wealth, those great social agencies that are socially made and socially used, must also be socially owned.”**

The actual workers organizations here today can either declare the truth that the early IWW and Debs fought for as the clarion call of the working class and likewise declare that this assembly also resolves that: **“We deny that there is anything in common between workingmen and capitalists. We insist that workingmen must organize to get rid of capitalists and make themselves the masters of the tools...”** and initiate the call for strike action to defeat the capitalist offensive. Or by lack of declaration turn the political leadership of this assembly back to the NGO’s who organized it.

Today in the shadow of the legacy of Eugene V. Debs, workers face the decades old subservience of the trade union leaders to the ruling class. Through which the bosses orchestrate their will by control of the labor aristocracy maintaining and perpetuating a backward consciousness across the working class that traps workers behind the misleaders, the so called progressive layer of Democrats, the NGO’s that pose as environmentalists and fake left outfits like the Richmond Progressive Alliance, Socialist Alternative, [libcom.org](http://libcom.org), the IWW (redux) and

*Cont. from pg. 12 Railway Conference...*

the Transport Workers Solidarity Committee who all come together at this conference under the banner of workers safety and environmental concern and conspire to keep the workers separated from their historic transitional socialist program.

Today this Rail Safety conference (<http://www.railroadconference.org/>) sponsored and supported by a host of seemingly pleasant and progressive NGO's have tied this assembly by a thousand threads to the big bourgeoisie<sup>1</sup>. This seemingly educational forum can either serve the interests of the working class or it can serve as the embryo of the Popular Front which shackles labor to capital in all forms of cross class alliances up to and including state power. If the assembly does not declare for the program of the working class the program of the board members of the NGO's dominates by default. If you care to follow the links of the sponsors you will find:

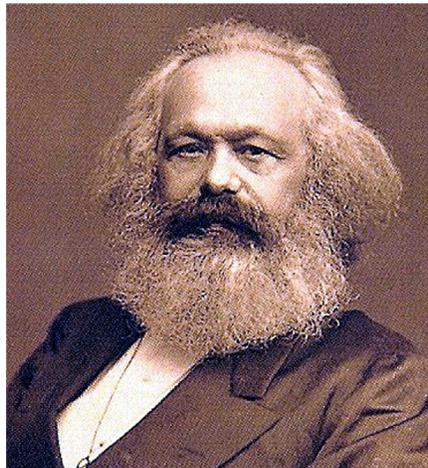
**The Lands Council** is backed by co-owner of Keystone Software now owned by Tude City IMS running logistics for big rail, ocean and lake vessels. Behind the **Communities for a Better Environment** you have **Liberty Hill Foundation** behind which you find the Ford Foundation, the Hewlett Foundation and the **California Endowment** which includes the likes Russ Gould who served as Senior Vice President for Wachovia Bank. Dan DeLeon joined The California Endowment in 2008 as Vice President and Chief Financial Officer and he was the L.A. regional vice president of Finance for Time Warner Cable. **Climate Solutions** at its web site promotes the CERES Washington/Oregon Business Climate Declaration which is supported by anti-union Whole Foods and Charter School promoter Microsoft and of course CERES backs the Obama Climate Action Plan. The CERES Mobilizing Business Leadership for a Sustainable World has Anne Stausboll sitting on their board. She is the CEO of CalPERS and was the chief investment officer of CalPERS at the peak of the real estate bubble and crashed workers retirements in the bubble after employers withheld contributions during the "fat years"! She sits on the advisory Board of the Toigo Foundation which is a tool for the big bourgeoisie governed by the likes of Carlye group and JP Morgan. Then you have the **Washington Environmental Council** on whose board Jim Hanna from Starbucks environmental affairs department sits. And behind it all is the main conference sponsor **Backbone Campaign** whose board member

Sandra VanderVen is the senior organizer at **Fuse** Washington and still volunteers for **MoveOn.org** and in **Fuse** you have the likes of Dean Nielsen principle of Cerillion N4 Partners a political consultant who worked for Clinton in '92 and for Solidarity in Poland, Gore/Lieberman, EMILY's list, the NEA, NARAL and the Democratic party in several states.

To counter the program of the NGO's we need our workers program. It starts with the fight to turn unions into class struggle organs and leads to a workers/labor party that fights for a workers government. The path is via a Transitional Program based on a method that exposes the current need (e.g. jobs) and resolves it by shortening the work week 30 hrs. work for 40 hours pay. The incompatibility of the workers needs with the inability of the capitalists to resolve the crisis leads step by step to the expropriation of the capitalist class. But unfortunately the working class misleaders from Socialist Alternative, the IWW and the TWSC have something in common with their bourgeois partners at this conference, their unwillingness to raise the historic program of the working class. This is how the fake left acts to pave the path for the triumph of the popular front and the defeat of the working class. Workers need their revolutionary party and world party of socialist revolution to defeat the fakers and break the illusions in the popular front from Richmond California to Cape Town, São Paulo, Athens and Caracas.

#### Endnotes

1. See the board of directors of all the NGO's that sponsored this and the boards of directors of the NGO's that fund those NGO's and whom the board members of the sponsors work with and for.



## TWSC: SYNDICALISM CLOGS THE PATH

The Transport Workers Solidarity Committee, composed of a handful of retired workers, some actually from the ILWU, convened a well-attended meeting (mostly by long term leftists) in SF on Tuesday, March 31<sup>st</sup>, at the church across the street from ILWU HQ. This followed the ILWU caucus to discuss and review the current tentative agreement (TA) with the Port Management Association (PMA), the bosses.

For the most part the attendees were leftist supporters of the ILWU and only a few actively working ILWU members showed up. The meeting was advertised as a discussion of the difference between business unionism and militant unionism. The executive editor for the Logistics Management ([Logistics Management](#)) Journal warned management that this meeting was the core of a Vote No campaign advocating the TA be rejected. Reading the leaflet for this gathering, one could surmise the attendees would be shown a road forward, a path to a decent contract and a road out of the current stagnation and backward consciousness perpetuated by the labor bureaucracy and current crop of leaders of the ILWU in particular. But this was not the case and never was in the cards as we will show.

Considering the decline of the ILWU leadership's militancy even to the point where Business Agents were witnessed acting as SCAB herders during the Oakland Port Truckers picket line, and some back gate scrambling to scoot past the anti-Zionist ZIM pickets last summer in Oakland, militant workers could have expected the seasoned militants of the TWSC to present a balance sheet of the ILWU's trajectory, and a path forward for victory. Sadly that was not forthcoming.

Among the cast of presenters none explained that for the fight against concessionary bargains to succeed, the "A" men would have to embrace a program that unites with the "B" men and especially the "casuals", who labor without benefits and only slim hope of ascending to decent jobs with regular living wages and benefits. None of the presenters explained how the union which fought for its birthright against the shape up and for the hiring hall had fallen victim not only to a two tier system but to a three tier system. The cancer of the caste system was lamented

*Cont. pg. 14*

but no fighting program was offered. The caste system isolates the top tier from the lower two as well as from the port truckers and other dock-based warehouse workers, who by their thousands subsist on low and sub-living wages (often organized by the Teamsters' and Laborers' internationals.)

This materialist stratification of wages is the basis for the conservatism of the ILWU leadership and explains how the ILWU leadership's long-term support for the Democratic Party acts as a lock on the door of the class struggle, blocking the union from leading labor to defeat Taft Hartley through struggle. No one explained that the bureaucracy was an expression of the material interests of the labor aristocracy arrayed against the historic interest of the workers to take power by expropriating the bourgeoisie. One speaker hinted that the bureaucracy dresses like and lives like the bosses but this is an observation divorced from programmatic proposals for the workers to rally behind.

The assembled were presented with some history and some critique of the current TA but very little in the way of a program for the dockworkers to move forward or to advance the class struggle and build the type of unity in action and program needed to unite the working class to win in this period of capitalist offensive.

Dan Coffman, the ex-president of Local 21 of the ILWU in Longview, WA, retold the story of militant pickets blocking the grain train in 2011, of the role of the "ladies auxiliary" in standing down the cops, and the powerful support of the retirees who provided both financial support and cooked breakfast for the workers on the line. Coffman lamented that despite the militancy of the workers, he himself signed off on a concessionary contract which he explained was the same deal the workers could have gotten within the first two weeks of the initial confrontation. He explained the job losses the ILWU accepted by giving up the master console and the elevator, losing at least two jobs in the elevator and one on the ship, losing the hiring hall and accepting the 12 hour day in lieu of the 8 hour day they were fighting for.

Coffman, no communist, lamented that the labor movement is at its lowest point since the 1960's and 70's when he claimed the Democratic Party supported the workers. *A point which none of the self-proclaimed Bolsheviks on the dais corrected.* In closing,

Coffman again lamented he signed the contract and made a call for a "Working Party," which concept he quickly qualified by stating we needed it to be open to business owners. Maybe it was obvious to all that the type of business owners he was talking about was the mom and pop shop and the Avon sales force and the "independent truckers," but he did not have the classical tools of historical materialism which would have guided him to explain the task of building a workers party that fights the bourgeoisie for the allegiance of the lower levels of the middle class.



ILWU EGT Longview Struggle

Brother Anthony, a 15-year ILWU Local 10 militant, whom by way of introduction emcee Jack Heyman celebrated, had answered the April, 2011, call for action from the public workers occupying the Wisconsin capitol by putting the motion to strike on April 4<sup>th</sup> in solidarity against the bosses attack on union rights. Anthony's call was taken up by ILWU Local 10, which has a radical history including use of its monthly and contractually negotiated safety meetings, as a day of action on behalf of social, political and economic struggles of the workers and oppressed communities. These actions, more akin to weekend political rallies held during non-work hours, are often presented a political strikes by the most ardent propagandists, but truth be told, more often than not they are actions which do not stop work which the bosses had on their monthly planner.

However, unlike the "strike" for Mumia, the "strike" for Oscar Grant, the "strike" on May Day in solidarity with the immigrant workers, the "strike" against the Afghanistan and Iraq war in 2008, on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2011 the strike extended beyond the one shift safety meeting and cargoes the bosses had scheduled for that day were indeed stopped at the port! Stopping cargo flow on behalf of the international working class, in this case public workers, reminded the capitalists of the anti-apartheid hot cargo action by the ILWU in 1984, where South African cargo from the Nedlloyd Kimberly was not handled, and the 2010 symbolic one-day shut down of the

Zionist ship the "Shenzhen" by a community picket, one that would foreshadow the two port shut downs instigated by Occupy in 2011.

The masses responded to the police shooting of Iraq war veteran Scott Olson more vigorously than they had for Oscar Grant. Upwards of 40,000 workers and oppressed unleashed the long-restrained fury at police brutality, the war, the oppression, the austerity, the joblessness, the militarization of the streets by the Democrats and shut down the port for more than one shift on November 3, 2011! On December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2011 Occupy protesters went into more or less open confrontation with west coast labor leadership and challenged them to shut the port in support of Local 21 in Longview. The bureaucracy would not stop any bosses work by calling a genuine strike but conceded to the masses initiation and paid for a few porta-potties and hamburgers; in any event the masses understood the importance of the Longview strike and wanted labor to win!

As class struggle ebbs and flows, when it does not reach resolution, lessons are learned by the masses and the flashpoints recede into history. But the unresolved crisis gave the politicizing youth opportunity to find out that many less than 40,000 can disrupt the flow of cargo. The Occupy would be successful a second time with just 5-8 thousand. The more massive the actions, the more likely the arbitrator would agree with the ILWU that the port was not providing safe work conditions and that therefore there would be no penalty for not crossing the picket line. This experience of community pickets, expressing the will of the masses over the head of the labor bureaucracy, was becoming a tool in the arsenal of the class struggle and it was being wielded both by the unrestrainable mass (such as following the shooting of Scott Olson) and by vanguard elements and coalitions of workers and oppressed peoples. The bureaucracies proposed Tentative Agreement (TA) would make it impossible for the members to honor such picket lines without financial penalties.

The community picket method relied upon the historic traditions of ILWU rank and file militancy, and the organic integration of the port workers in the workers' communities and communities of the oppressed to honor the picket with the tradition that "An Injury to One is an Injury to All!" This is significant because in a sense the ILWU militants and the labor movement hid behind the arbitrator's safety decision to declare the

*Cont. from pg. 14 TWSC...*

picket a worksite hazard. And as the masses from the heyday of Occupy were no longer on the streets, the use of this method would be challenged. Our Class War journalist would, in October, 2013, witness a Local 10 Business Agent (BA) act as a SCAB herder, working behind police lines used to restrain the largely immigrant port truckers and their supporters. The Port and the bureaucracy were acting on all fronts to restrain these actions. In 2014, anti-Zionist activists stopped the ZIM lines from unloading twice. As reported at this TWSC forum, Local 10 BA's were spotted leading workers around the ZIM picket from adjoining berths.

### **BOSSSES LEARN, BUREAUCRATS DON'T**

The bosses may not have foreseen the Occupy Port shutdowns, but knew they had to put an end to wildcat actions, which disrupted their logistics and profits. The management association, the PMA, sued the ILWU for losses incurred on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2011. The bosses insisted that the ILWU pay a price for "stepping over the line" and actively challenging Taft Hartley with solidarity strike action that would ultimately be deemed illegal by the bosses' arbitrators!<sup>1</sup> Although the ILWU fought the PMA within the boundaries of contract language legality, it did not mobilize its membership to defeat Taft Hartley or in any way fan the flames of workers discontent. The bureaucracy clearly was getting fed up with the membership's latent desire to 'fight back,' a desire which Brother Anthony's resolve sparked into important solidarity action in violation of the bosses anti-labor laws! In turn it was left to Bay Area members of small left organizations to march on the PMA in defense of the ILWU against the bosses' lawsuit.

<sup>1</sup> *As an historical curiosity and footnote to this episode, our reporter petitioned the executive board of the California Association of Professional Scientists (CAPS), the bogus union to which he was a dues payer at the time, and proposed that CAPS issue a statement of solidarity and supply support for the ILWU and thereby express gratitude to the members of the ILWU for having stuck their necks out and having taken direct action on behalf of ourselves and all public workers. The CAPS leadership refused to support the ILWU, resting their excuse upon the bosses' lie that the action was "illegal," a wildcat and that CAPS could not associate itself with such!*

A toothless resolution of the San Francisco Labor Council (SFLC) served as an alibi for bureaucrats who refused to do what was necessary, refusing to mobilize the membership to force the PMA to drop the suit. Resolutions can string together many fine words; the Wisconsin South Central Federation of Labor even went on record to endorse a general strike against the attacks on public workers. But we notice they did not call or even make any practical moves to organize for one; and likewise the SFLC left the ILWU hanging without any mass mobilization in their defense.

*Brother Anthony then spoke about his motion at Local 10 to bring the steady men back to the hall (these 9.43 men are management hires, "shop men" who work everyday.) The membership approved his motion but he related that just because the rank and file votes for something does not mean the leadership carries through the fight. When the rank and file takes action to defend workers rights on a crew or work-to-rule it is the 9.43 men who pick up the 'slack.' He reported that there were a number of actions last year where the rank and file took action to shut down a terminal, but where they were admonished or overridden by the leadership. The consequence of which was the Local was pressured into working at the bosses pace and in the lead-up to the holidays "...we worked ourselves right out of our power..."*

The emcee introduced Stacey, a rank-and-file Local 10 member. She reported that during the ZIM Piraeus protest she witnessed the BA leading workers around the picket via the TraPac back gate where she was working. Stacey claimed not to be political but explained that "...if you don't fight for the rest of the nation how do you expect them to fight for us...?" She explained that with automation we may all be out of work in one or two contracts.

### **ANYBODY HEAR OF THE TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM?**

Howard Keylor, a veteran of the Nedlloyd Kimberly hot cargo action, has been a member of the ILWU since 1953. In discussing the contract Howard pointed to a number of problems with this TA: he warned about hidden one-liners that will "kill you"; one example in the current contract is the removal of a letter of agreement which had made it ILWU work to drive the container directly under the cranes. The elimination of this letter effectively turns this dangerous work over to the Teamsters if they choose to

pick it up. Language was also changed to legitimize crossing picket lines; the multiple pay differential scales is getting wider and the cancer of "the steady man" (men who don't have to go to the hall for a job ticket,) is being further exploited by the bosses. The steady man situation and the caste system with the "B" men getting less pay means "...in a strike situation you cannot get solidarity...", Keylor said. Without presenting even a semblance of a fighting program, Howard lamented "...due to the lack of sophistication of many of the members I am not optimistic."

Jack Heyman, another ostensible bolshevist, explained how the ILWU International had over a number of struggles, signaled to the bosses that it was no longer operating from a position of strength. He spoke about the fight in Longview over the grain contract and how the owners of the Export Grain Terminal (EGT) wanted to eliminate all the clerk jobs and locked out ILWU out for a year and a half and brought in scabs. Our history, he explained, is to get rid of scabs as we did in Stockton in 1992. But after a year and a half, after rejecting the EGT contract by 96%, essentially the same contract was passed by a vote of 93%. Heyman did not explain how this could have happened.

The Boron Rio Tinto strikers set up pickets at the port of LA in an attempt to prevent their brothers from unloading the scab ore being mined during the Rio Tinto strike, but the ILWU leadership warned the members to stand down, let the scab ore through or lose their strike pay. When all was settled The Dispatcher (the union periodical) called the concessionary contract a victory. And in another case in LA, the employer called the arbitrator who argued that the clerical workers' picket was not bona fide because the union was not bargaining in good faith and ordered the ILWU to cross the line. So the "...PMA is not scared, seeing what is going on..." Jack's warning to the members considering the TA is, "...read this TA with a fine tooth comb...you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear..." He went on to point out how the Rio Tinto arbitrator's ruling was overturned two years later and that the real power is the picket line. He said, "the picket line is the battle line, the class line...is at the point of production not in the arbitration room..." and that "... some of the leadership are business men who get double and triple pension and think like businessmen and play golf with the bosses."

*Cont. pg. 16*

Cont. from pg. 15 TWSC...

The following statement may have been what sparked the editor of Logistics Management Journal to warn the bourgeoisie that there is a nascent rebellion in the ILWU led by the TWSC for a no vote. Heyman remarked, "... after EGT there were half a dozen members who signed a letter stating the ILWU was going the wrong way..., it included Leo Robinson, Howard, myself and others." Heyman said that following the 2008 "strike against the war" the ILWU was acting from strength and won the next contract fight, but that today those militant traditions are fading. Heyman argued that when the union takes up community and class wide issues like the war, like "Free Mumia", like Oscar Grant and the public workers, then the union is strengthened and emboldened to fight and win. But he then explained that the business unionist leadership are trying to deny the membership their class-based strength in an attempt to pave the road to automation which will eliminate members jobs. For Heyman, the Transitional Program is reduced to the call for shortening the workday: "A couple of caucuses ago we called for a sliding scale of wages and hours 6 hours work for 8 hours pay then you can have 4 shifts a day but the business unionists won't fight for it. Instead there are rumors of side deals with the steady walking bosses and the steady crane men and if that is the case, "...we should kill this contract ...in 1989 we killed side deals...."

Militant trade unionism in one craft with no accompanying political perspective on the situation of the entire working class worldwide as a context for your local union's own struggle is a formula for leading workers to defeat, where it is not a formula for more defeat of the exact same kind that the ILWU has recently suffered. Episodic departures from support to the Democratic Party make the ILWU appear to be the vanguard of the U.S. working class. But this is a show for the credulous and does not bear close examination. What type of militant trade unionism makes peace with the bosses' multi-tiered wages system, which to those at the bottom must appear as a social caste system that permits little or hope for upward mobility. In the circumstance of this acceptance it is no surprise that the ILWU would cross the port truckers' picket lines.

A genuine militant caucus in the ILWU would not permit the mystification of the South African Freedom Charter and neither would it glorify Mandela, but would support revolutionary socialist fighters in South Africa and elsewhere with material solidarity.

Such a militant caucus would lead the fight for a fighting workers labor party and would fight to cut all ties to the "industrial partnership" "team concept" and political organizations of the ruling class. Such a militant caucus would champion the casuals and port and transportation trades seeking to organize. They would put organizers on the road to build new industrial unions that fight for prevailing rate, union living wages, and jobs for all with a 30 hour week for 40 hours pay. This means that all U.S. ports must be nationalized under workers control so that the benefits of the real shipping profits are shared by the working class of the entire community. Where the merely militant trade unionist tries to excerpt selected transitional demand for the exclusive benefit of their own craft, the revolutionary caucus members will promote the entire historic workers program, fighting for gains for all workers everywhere.

*From V.I. Lenin, Left Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder "The principal reason for this was explained many times by Marx and Engels between the years 1852 and 1892, from the example of Britain. That country's exclusive position led to the emergence, from the "masses", of a semi-petty-bourgeois, opportunist "labour aristocracy". The leaders of this labour aristocracy were constantly going over to the bourgeoisie, and were directly or indirectly on its pay roll. Marx earned the honour of incurring the hatred of these disreputable persons by openly branding them as traitors. Present-day (twentieth-century) imperialism has given a few advanced countries an exceptionally privileged position, which, everywhere in the Second International, has produced a certain type of traitor, opportunist, and social-chauvinist leaders, who champion the interests of their own craft, their own section of the labour aristocracy. The opportunist parties have become separated from the "masses", i.e., from the broadest strata of the working people, their majority, the lowest-paid workers. The revolutionary proletariat cannot be victorious unless this evil is combated, unless the opportunist, social-traitor leaders are exposed, discredited and expelled. That is the policy the Third International has embarked on."*

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1920/lwc/index.htm>

## **Wisconsin passes anti-union, anti-worker "right to work": Democratic Party labor-fakers prove themselves yet again incapable of defending our unions! Build a class struggle leadership of the unions!**

### **Intro**

Four years ago, in 2011, Wisconsin Republican governor Scott Walker spearheaded a reactionary attack on the public sector unions, collective bargaining and twentieth century social gains. Despite mass protest, he was able to push through the legislation that effectively stripped most public sector workers of legal union rights in the first state where collective bargaining was won for public sector workers. Emboldened by these attacks, Walker has now turned Wisconsin into a "right to work" state that no longer requires **private sector** workers to pay a union fee if they do not belong to the union. This legislation will further decimate the Wisconsin labor movement that was already devastated from 2011, and embolden the ruling class to launch yet further attacks on organized labor, social gains, as well as on the entire working class and on oppressed communities. After Wisconsin in 2011, Michigan and Indiana passed right to work legislation.

The entire working class is under attack, as racist police gun down Black and Brown youth on a daily basis, La Migra deports immigrants, public education is under wholesale assault and put on rations. Where elected leadership enjoys their upper middle class pay brackets they refuse to make more than a token stand and steer the membership into pathetic electoral recall campaigns with the result that unionization is at the lowest level in 100 years. The once militant ILWU (Longshoremen) has abandoned its class struggle traditions. The ILWU leadership has capitulated in any number of ways: they have become scab-herders and have scabbed on the port truckers strikes, and they have given away the union hiring hall in Longview in the aftermath of the 2011 strike, and their current contract will prevent the membership from honoring community picket lines, as the members will be docked their pay for honoring those lines.

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## Labor bureaucracy

The response of the entrenched Democratic Party union bureaucracy has been the same old tune. Political lobbying, electing Democrats and legislative (non) solutions, along with the insipid legalism and policing the labor movement for the bosses and the ruling class to keep the lid on class struggle. Together these are the entire content of what passes for labor leadership in the Obama era.

We see it as a dangerous sign that members of the bureaucracy are seriously considering minority unionism or “members only unionism.” This is abject surrender in the hands of a labor misleadership that will not fight even to defend the existing unions. This method abandons workers who do not choose to pay dues instead of defending their rights in a pedagogical battle to win them to membership. Even the craft unions always understood the necessity to organize and represent everybody working for a signatory boss.

Once more, the question of leadership and political program comes to the forefront. 2011 was four years ago. A labor leadership worth its salt, even in the face of defeat, would have learned the lessons of 2011 and started to prepare the workers for struggle. Instead they are preparing them for Hillary or Warren.

## October and Beyond

We can already see what Governor Jerry Brown has up his sleeve for California workers. He has tricks that appear to be small pay increases but are givebacks and these sit on top of big cost of living losses. Readers should keep in mind that California under the Dills Act that was Brown’s fathers claim to fame has fake public employee unions organized by persons who under the laws of other states would be racketeers. But the labor movement has much graver problems. Not only do we face the destruction of every kind of local law protection should the TPPA be adopted, but the Supreme Court meeting in the first week of October are likely to take up Antonin Scalia’s pet project which would make all of the U.S. a right to work country.

Where are the rank and file action (and strike) committees, local, inter-union and Central Labor Council (CLC), to build the fight that is needed? Who is telling the workers and the oppressed that the only way to defend against these attacks is through methods of struggle, solidarity strikes and political general strikes and a campaign to organize unorganized workers across the board? Strike action could be organized and develop rather quickly. But this would require making the fight for class consciousness and class

political consciousness and these are the last things the labor bureaucracy wants to know about. And ultimately this is why the the rank and file will have to and will revolt against their leadership.

The [Wisconsin South Central Fed of Labor](#), the AFL-CIO central labor council that covers Madison, has no effective answer to Walker’s attacks.

*“Over the past week, workers and friends of workers have packed the Capitol hearing rooms, the rotunda, and the sidewalk outside. We have had conversations with our neighbors, we have testified to our legislators, and we have made our voices heard in overwhelming numbers. This week, join our coalition as we stand up for all workers. Make your voice heard at a committee hearing, at a rally, or on the phone.”*

There you have it. The pathetic Democratic Party labor-skates that constitute the union bureaucracy...the misleadership of our unions.



Their action plan is “conversations,” “testifying to our legislators,” phone-banking and rallies. Anything and everything except trying to organize the hard class struggle that built the unions in the first place and that is desperately needed today. Walker said in 2011 that he didn’t care how many protesters marched around the capitol...and he didn’t as he launched his vicious attacks on the public sector unions that were a foretaste of what is happening right now and will put the wind in the sails of anti-union, anti-working class attacks nationally. The union leaderships had four years since 2011 to build the action committees and worker/oppressed assemblies to take on Walker today through general strike action. Where are the action committees?

## Left Tails of the Union Bureaucracy

[“What’s Next after “Right to Work”](#) published in Jacobin, was written by union officers, both co-presidents of the Teaching Assistants’ Association (TAA) at the University of Wisconsin. This union represents graduate student Teaching Assistants getting advanced degrees. They *know* the history of labor and the politics (academics is their

profession after all.) They reflect that layer of academic intellectual leftists prevalent within the American labor movement.

Despite the grumblings in the article, they only go so far politically and they actually come down against strike action at this time. So they recognize many things and raise a lightweight critique of the Recall and the Democrats and the union bureaucracy. They also recognize the need for labor to come to the defense of the oppressed communities. Yet they fail to draw any hard political conclusions. At least none they are willing to impart to the workers with any kind of political clarity. Is the workers political program secret knowledge only for the privileged intellectuals???

*“Having ruled out the possibility of electoral victories or short-term solutions, many on the Left have begun to look more deeply at issues like racial justice and how they relate to the battle against austerity...”* is not saying a whole lot. It is not a program for fighting back, is not breaking illusions in the union bureaucracy and the Democrats and is not politically fighting for class independence and is only leading the workers and the oppressed onto a path away from the type of class struggle that is desperately needed. Are the residents of the oppressed communities, the ghettos and the barrios, supposed to jump for joy when their “traditional” community leaders join with leftists in ineffectual occupations of state capitols? Does anyone believe that “moral Mondays” will win anyone increased purchasing power? Why can’t these academics tell the workers the truth about what is objectively needed to fight racist terror which is to form labor-based community defense guards and organize labor political strikes against police violence?

No, class struggle is not on really on their agenda, as they play leftist tails for the union bureaucracy in misleading the masses: *“Impatience can also lead to [hasty](#) calls for a general strike, without investing the time and work required to build movements strong enough to support one.”* One of our CWG comrades in 2011 in Madison, Wisconsin was told by a Teamster rank-and-file union brother that their business agent told his local that *“there was not going to be any general strike.”*

Both the conservative union bureaucrats and their leftist tails unite on the common political basis of no militant indefinite strikes or strikes otherwise organized to win. It is the union bureaucracy that plays the role of labor political cop for the ruling class, keeping the workers in line and keeping a lid

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on class struggle, to keep it within acceptable limits. It was early American socialist Daniel De Leon who labelled the union bureaucrats as “Labor Lieutenants of Capital”, a term as fitting today for the labor misleaders who suppress class consciousness as it was for the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) who characterized the bureaucracy as “labor-fakers.”

So calls for a general strike are “hasty”? Who is seriously talking about launching a general strike tomorrow morning without any preparation? This critique is simply a political method for pushing aside what is objectively needed; it is for liberal political appetites. Granted that preparing for strike action does take time, although effective strike action could be organized in a relatively short time, when the hell are preparations for strike actions going to start? Given that four years after Walker’s 2011 attacks the union labor-fakers have done nothing to prepare for strikes, the CWG can say with a fair amount of confidence that the answer is **never** if the question is left in the hands of the current labor leaderships.

The TAA leaders certainly are not building for strikes, as their (not so much) [action plan](#) for fighting Walker consists of testifying before the Joint Finance Committee, phone banking, postcards, lobbying and informational picketing. Informational picketing is an anachronism that was foisted on the labor movement by the provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act. 1948 was a long time ago and tactics corresponding to the defense of the unions in 1948 do not defend the unions against extinction today. We need picket lines that no one crosses. We need strike actions and we need to build the organizational forms such as strike committees to engage in them.

Fundamental to the defense of our unions in this period of wholesale assault by the class enemy is class political independence and the understanding that the Democratic Party is not an ally but an enemy. We need to explain to every Sister and Brother the role of the class-collaborationist union leaderships and the need for a class struggle leadership of the unions armed with the fighting, [historic workers political program](#). This is not the trajectory of the TAA union officials.

The TAA union leadership whose officials produced the above Jacobin article is qualitatively no different than the run-of-the-mill Democratic Party union bureaucracy. Same political methods, but with a leftist veneer.

For their part, the IWW, which has been attracting politicized youth, have no workers program capable of defeating the entrenched pro-capitalist union bureaucracy. They

will **not** tell the workers the truth about the Democratic Party **or** wage the political fight to defeat the entrenched class-collaborationist union bureaucracy.

The syndicalist call for revolutionary unions is effectively abstention from the political fight. ***If one cannot politically defeat the labor misleaderships where the workers are actually organized, then one cannot defeat the liberals and reformists among the unorganized.*** So instead the IWW makes common platform with them ([see our report on the Railroad Safety Conference](#).) The same political questions of class independence and workers program will arise again and again and the IWW will tell the workers that they don’t need their own party.

Relying on the spontaneity of the masses, in 2011 the IWW mass distributed leaflets and propagandized for a general strike. The IWW fetishizes spontaneity as the authentic will of the working class. But there was no shortage of spontaneity in Madison, as tens of thousands of workers came running from around the country without any invitation from the bureaucracy. What **was** lacking was the class consciousness, the political understanding of the role of the union bureaucracy and the Democratic Party of the bosses.

Class independence is something the IWW was not willing to explain, as they tailed after the South Central Federation of Labor-AFL-CIO Central Labor Council (SCFL) leadership that went through the formal motions of “support” for a general strike, yet did nothing to organize one. What was required then and there, and you can call it spontaneous if you like, would have been the recall of those leaderships and their replacement by ever more militant groups of workers who understood the stakes and who were ready for whatever was required to make the general strike begin in Wisconsin.

Instead, Wisconsin was a prime example of a lack of revolutionary leadership. Even a small Marxist party of a few hundred members with a base in the unions, armed with a class struggle program, could have provided the necessary political clarification and direction.

### Action Plan

Start organizing the rank and file strike committees in the union locals. Draw in the organizations of the oppressed communities. Turn these committees into broader inter-union and Central Labor Body assemblies. You do this, you will have to fight the Trumka’s at every step. Try to do the same in other states and internationally (remember ILWU shut down the ports in defense of Wisconsin in 2011).

Replace those labor leaders who hold back the struggle with class struggle militants. Who needs leaders who do not want to fight and who try to trap the workers in the Democratic Party? Warn the workers that the Democrats are the class enemy, that class political independence is needed and that relying on the Democrats or electoral solutions will be the graveyard of the struggle just as in 2011. Emphasize the need to build a working class/labor party with a fighting class struggle program.

Start educating, agitating and organizing for a general strike to be run with the efficiency of a military operation (press, communications, medical, delegated leaders, strike pickets and captains.) Send union organizers to organize the unorganized and start signing union cards, particularly in the strategic sectors and among low-wage workers. Build the workers assemblies, rallying against Walker’s attacks and for prevailing rate living wage union jobs for all with full benefits, for free quality healthcare, education and housing for all. Naturally, ***this means fighting everywhere for the closed shop***, to defend collective bargaining and create new institutions of workers democracy.

Then when ready, strike! Shut it all down in Wisconsin and spread the strike nation-wide to make it a fight for all of labor. For all out class struggle. For smashing Taft-Hartley and associated anti-labor laws which ban secondary, sympathy strikes and political strikes.

Your bureaucratic leaderships would have you believe that gone are the days when labor held out the prospect of enhanced rights to unionize. They take no responsibility for the disappearance of the bargaining table or even the national conversation of the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA). Thanks to them, long gone is the struggle for the Equal Rights Amendment and the fight for equal pay for equal work. Likewise gone is the mirage of the Hillarycare health card that no one could take from you. Instead you are mobilized to defend the Affordable Care Act (i.e. Obamacare) which will not protect the premium payer from real estate speculators who flip healthcare facilities for profit, driving up costs for procedures at a time when more and more people are out of work and wages are falling across the country.

***We say to workers you have run out of time for letting someone else look after your interests and affairs! There is adequate time to organize the general strike and defend the union movement, if you begin now.***

**REFORM VS REVOLUTION:  
‘You want elections? We’ll give you  
elections! Just don’t get too caught  
up in having your own program,  
party or candidates and don’t  
elevate the struggle from the ballot  
box to the picket line!’  
(so the bureaucrats say)**

Propelled by Socialist Alternative (SocAlt) Kshama Sawant’s election to Seattle City Council in 2014 which followed the “watermelon” Greens from Richmond, Ca., and SYRIZA’s victory in Greece, today’s opportunist social democrats in the United States see their vehicle into “big time” bourgeois political office mostly in municipal elections. Sawant, who was elected on a populist/reformist political program that was an only slightly more militant version of the union bureaucracy and Democratic Party’s spiel to raise the sub-living poverty wage to a higher poverty wage of \$15, which itself is far below a living wage in much of the country. And now she he has already betrayed even that minimal program, as have the varied advocates of \$15 who rather see the campaign as a road to \$12.75 in some places and \$10.10 in others.

Rather than standing firm and fighting for the conditions of the lowest paid members of the working class to rise as a whole, she caved in to the Democratic Party mayor Murray’s \$15 minimum wage ordinance that was devised with the collaboration of the labor-fakers and businesses. This ordinance will *not* raise the minimum wage to \$15 immediately, and even then (2017), not for all workers. Few mention that by the time workers in Seattle get \$15 in 2017 it will have been 5 years since the launch of the FF\$15 campaign and the cost of living will have risen annually between 1.5% and 1.7% which would have scaled the \$15 to \$16.25.

This is a phased-in scam over a period of seven years, with provisions for exempting small and big firms that allows businesses to work *teenagers* at a subminimum wage for their first 90 days of employment. So much for “*equal pay for equal work!*” Some victory! The Democrats, the union bureaucracy and the businesses were clearly in the driver’s seat here and this ordinance, the Mayor’s plan which Sawant voted for in the end, was designed to head off working class discontent and to prevent working class struggle and union organization. Worse still is the back-slapping and self-aggrandizing and self-congratulatory attitude of the leadership of labor and in particular Mary Kay Henry of the SEIU, who has been touting labor’s new strategy of gaining pennies through moral persuasion and fake strikes where no

union cards are signed, no union contracts are gained and no work is stopped and a living wage is not the goal!

Workers need to be unionized across entire low-wage industries “wall to wall” and this can only happen through hard class struggle! We need the tactics of mass picket lines that will not be crossed, job site occupations, solidarity and general strikes and class-wide defiance of the bosses’ strikebreaking laws. The fight to defeat Taft Hartley needs to be revived. The Labor Councils can defeat Taft Hartley but only through strike action. To win living wages for all, Labor Councils and Labor Feds will need to launch massive class struggle actions and to do so labor must break from the political parties of the capitalist class enemy. Tied to the Democrats and in some cases the Republicans or Greens, workers’ organizations keep labor subservient and promote a popular front with the bosses’ hand-picked politicians who invariably stab labor in the back and ignore their promises. Remember the EFCA? Instead of settling for the endless cycle of poverty that sub-living and minimum wages perpetuate, we need jobs for all at true prevailing union living wage rates with full union benefits. The capitalist politicians will pander to the FF\$15 but will continue to keep the workers from a living wage, and the reformist “Municipal Socialists” like Sawant and McLaughlin (ex-Green Mayor of Richmond, CA) will do the same. The reform “socialist-Green” watermelons are the leading edge of the popular front and unite the vanguard workers with their class enemy in a joint effort to prevent the workers from taking up their historic methods of struggle and their historic program to seize the means of production, establishing the ownership and control of the working class.

Sawant’s platform in 2013 was a set of liberal reformist demands that leave power in the hands of the bosses. Rather than fighting for labor, black and brown self defense against state repression, she promotes the oft-tried and doomed to failure civilian review boards to hold the racist police accountable, and for rent control instead of guaranteed housing for all. Today the big banks hold the foreclosed homes and they are so devalued that big companies are folding them into their pay packages, while tens of thousands are homeless (or in transition) due to the current and ongoing economic crisis. Socialism was given the back-burner and her current re-election website has no formal platform.

On her website, in the articles, she calls for rent control, a fully-funded public transit system and the standard liberal “tax the rich” line. Her website also features a glowing endorsement from Democratic Party King County Council Member Larry Gossett. As an ex [Tacoma SocAlt member](#) pointed out

in an open online letter, Sawant attended “...*King County Council Member Larry Gossett’s fundraiser and her defense of him is a significant breach of principle. It just continues the pattern that I have observed, of SA leadership spending more time and energy trying to appeal to middle class voters and build relationships with union leadership and democratic party leadership than they do on building a base among workers, youth and the poor.*”

This should not be that surprising though, as SocAlt have no qualms about crossing the political class line and supporting the capitalist Green Party and recently in the Chicago mayoral election, they [in effect supported](#) Democratic Party Cook County Commissioner Chuy Garcia against the strike-breaking Democratic Party establishment incumbent mayor Rahm Emmanuel. The result of the politics of the popular front, is the binding of the workers and oppressed to the capitalist parties and the suppression of the workers program. To socialize the means of production over all the objections of the capitalist class, independent working class-wide political strike actions are needed. Folks like SocAlt and the Richmond Progressive Alliance (RPA) make stock in trade telling workers they can vote for socialism in \$5.00 bits. If they were a mass party, they would be a bourgeois workers party and would be helping to administer capitalism for the bourgeoisie, under the guise of an orderly and evolutionary transition to socialism. They have already been put to the test on their own terms, on their own minimalist \$15 sub-living minimum wage demand, and they have failed!

Chuy Garcia was the candidate of choice chosen by the Caucus of Rank and File Educators (CORE) leadership of the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU), after President Karen Lewis decided not to run. CORE is a rotten bloc of Democratic Party union bureaucrats, Solidarity and International Socialist Organization (ISO) leaders (CTU Vice President Jesse Sharkey.) This was the union ‘leadership’ that [sold out the Chicago teachers strike in 2012](#), right when it was being effective and Emanuel was threatening strikebreaking injunctions. Today they lament the loss of the 54 schools in the months following the strike. Yet CORE claimed the strike was a victory even though they got a crappy, concessionary contract and Emanuel went on to devastate the Chicago public school system.

The working class of America could have gotten a 1934 Minneapolis or San Francisco in Chicago, instead we got the shaft from the CTU labor misleadership that caved in as soon as it was clear that Randi Weingarten

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and the AFT leadership were not going to continue to support them. Weingarten does not care how many schools Emanuel closes; some of them will have to become charter schools, which is fine with Weingarten, who supports privatization generally, and says teacher union chapters need to organize the charter schools. Democratic Party union leaders like Weingarten have no leftist pretensions. For a contrast, consider how in 1966, Transport Workers Union Local 100 President Mike Quill, in the face of a strikebreaking injunction, told the judge to "...drop dead in his black robes!" and went to jail. But the strike was won.

The CORE leadership went scurrying to push through the concessionary contract and demobilize the struggle the second Emanuel and the ruling class started to get nervous. The masses had him cornered and we were laying down the combinations and then the bell rang and like gentlemen we went back to our corner. That may be the Queensbury rules but it don't work in the class struggle! When you get them on the mat you have to finish them off and the ISO trade union caucus in CORE did not even try and in fact betrayed the masses.

While the ISO will not blatantly support the Democrats as an organization, and will criticize the Democrats, like SocAlt they do cross the class line and support the Green Party. [The ISO](#) even comes down formally against Garcia in their press. However, in Chicago, the CTU leadership promoted Garcia and ISO leader Sharkey even introduced Garcia as "the next mayor of Chicago" at a CTU dinner. [Garcia was less than enthusiastic](#) about playing leftist for the likes of the CTU labor-fakers:

*"One of the most cynical moments of the Garcia campaign orchestrated by the CTU leadership took place in late March, with Garcia and Sharkey holding a press conference in support of a fifteen dollar an hour minimum wage for all Chicago Public School workers. Certainly this was a perfectly good demand to raise. The problem is, it was already obvious that Garcia was not committed to it at all and his actions following it made a mockery of the demand.*

*The very next day, according to a Chicago Tribune reporter, Garcia described his actual plans for Chicago public sector workers in a televised debate with Emanuel. If he could not get additional funding from the state of Illinois, then "we have to sit down with the teachers' union and have a difficult discussion with the teachers," he said. Garcia also responded to a question from Emanuel about whether he was beholden to the public sector unions. Assuring his commitment to austerity,*

*Garcia responded, "Given the state of affairs you have put the city in—the fiscal free-fall—I'm gonna tell the unions a lot of bad news because the situation is so dire...."*

*....The next week Garcia reiterated this theme of lean budgets. There will be "some very tough conversations for some tough medicine to be swallowed by all of the partners," he said. "So there's no gravy to go around."*

There is certainly no secret political agenda here for the likes of Lewis, Sharkey or the ISO. Garcia isn't trying to fool these political sophisticates and pull the wool over their eyes. ***Garcia is a capitalist politician who if ever elected, when push comes to even a little shove, will impose cuts and austerity on the workers and oppressed!*** This is the politics of class-collaboration and is a recipe for defeat for the working class.

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, SocAlt published a ridiculous piece called "[Thousands Call on Elizabeth Warren to Run](#)" that makes the pathetic liberalism of the ISO look positively revolutionary. The article ends with "If Warren is really serious about wanting to fight back against the "rigged system" she so vehemently condemns, then she and "the Warren wing" need to declare their complete independence from corporate cash and join those, like Kshama Sawant, who are trying to build a new political force to represent the interests of working people and the poor." SocAlt, seeking a 'progressive' wing of the bourgeoisie! Problem is, even in the wake of Seattle, SocAlt is small potatoes in American politics. The logic of popular frontism, ***real honest to goodness class-collaboration to betray and screw the working class***, requires a mass working class party, or at least mass working class organizations. Somehow, the CWG doesn't think the bourgeoisie is going to bite on this one. Elizabeth Warren is a supporter of imperialist U.S. butchery and supporter of Obama's repressive measures like the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA.) In contrast to 'organizing' a wing of the capitalist ruling class, the CWG seeks as our audience the mass of the working class and the oppressed as we seek to organize revolutionary class struggle to sweep away this system of exploitation and all wings of the bourgeoisie, 'progressive' or otherwise.

The Chicago Socialist Campaign took yesterday's Democratic Party politician and activist Jorge Mujica, slapped a socialist label on him, raised the demand for \$15 along with other liberal reformist demands and ran him for City Council. This is the method of today's Mensheviks, as they present politics of liberal reformism wrapped up as socialism. On top of all this, Green Party candidate Howie Hawkins ran for governor of New York on a ticket with ISO

leader Brian Jones for lieutenant governor that actually had a program to the left of Sawant, in that they called for such things as a Green New Deal and jobs for all. The Green Party has no intention of actually mobilizing the working class for struggle, and once in office, the Green Party sticks it to the workers and oppressed as can be seen with Gayle McLaughlin, the former 8-year mayor of Richmond, CA.

This last election cycle the leader of Labor Notes, early member of International Socialists and now a Solidarity activist, Mike Parker, was the chosen candidate for the Richmond Progressive Alliance as the successor to Gayle McLaughlin, but when long-term Democratic Party politician Thomas Butt announced he was running he made a back room deal with Parker. 'Step down, throw "Team Richmond's" (Team Richmond is an electoral fraction within yet not under the discipline of the RPA) support behind me and I will put you on the city council in my vacated seat.' This was a promise that Butt could not legally make or keep but Parker got caught with his fingers in the cookie jar and has since been relegated to the role of citizen activist at the city council, rallying the ascended members of "Team Richmond" (Benkeles, Martinez, etc.) to oppose district elections. Ironically, district elections was the first point on the agenda of the first leaflet and program put out by the [RPA in 2004](#). For more on the role of the RPA in building the popular front see "[Workers need a program that fights for a clean planned socialist economy!](#)" on page 1 in this issue of [Class War](#).

A "[FUTURE OF LEFT & INDEPENDENT POLITICS](#)" conference has been organized for May 2<sup>nd</sup> in Chicago as "a gathering of candidates, individuals, and organizations committed to a left political alliance in opposition to the two-party system of corporate-capitalist rule." Rather than independent working class politics and an embryonic workers party, this conference is the politics of the popular front, as it brings together SocAlt, the Green Party, leaders of the RPA, the Peace and Freedom Party and the ISO to "forge unity." Nowhere in their conference call do they mention political program, except a workshop on the fight for \$15. For Marxists, political program and working class consciousness is key. Rather than politically arming the working class with the party, program and historic class struggle tools they need, these opportunists just want to get elected to bourgeois office.

We distinguish ourselves from the reformists who run to be seated in the offices and to rule benevolently based on their higher moral standards. When revolutionary socialists or communists run with the intention to win seats or positions it is not to run the government or

state in the interests of the ruling class but to usher in the self-organization of the workers and oppressed.

Where in San Francisco ex-Green, turned Democrat Sheriff Mirkarimi garnered support from the labor community as well as the San Francisco Democratic Party stalwarts for his election and for support against a right wing attempt to unseat him for battering his wife, a they now tiptoe away from him because he finds himself administering a department under investigation for running gladiator-type fights in the jailhouse and forcing inmates to pleasure deputies with sex and violence.

The CWG is not opposed to running for electoral office on principle. But it is not fundamentally about winning political office. If running candidates in an election, a Marxist party needs to run explicitly against all capitalist parties on a full historic political program of transitional demands against the capitalist system. It is a means for a Marxist party to bring a revolutionary program to the masses, to build class consciousness and mobilize the working class for their historic task, which is the abolition of capitalism. This requires complete political independence from the bourgeoisie, building a class struggle workers/labor party, and mobilizing the working class for class struggle to fight for a workers government to break the power of the capitalist ruling class once and for all, and build a rational socialist planned economy for species survival and social needs, not profits.

## One Africa for All Africans! Workers of the World Unite!

### Who is Behind the Race Riots?

These race riots have been building since the great recession of 2008. They are symptoms of the bosses trying to solve their crisis of falling profits at the expense of workers. By whipping up racist attacks on 'foreigners,' the bosses turn workers against workers and divert attention from the complicity of the African National Congress (ANC) which oversees the rising exploitation of South African workers on behalf of imperialism. These racist divisions do not originate in the working class. They are a disease spread in the working class by the capitalist ruling class. By pointing to conflict in Natal they attempt to blame some historic antagonism between the Zulus and Indians. But xenophobia was not made in South Africa. It was imported from Europe. It is the legacy of colonial exploitation begun by the white settlers and kept alive today by the ANC regime.

As a South African woman posted on Facebook "Unfortunately for our brothers and sisters



from the rest of the continent, the problem is not just the king [Goodwill Zwelithini]. It is also the ANC which continually comes up with new, highly publicised schemes specifically targeting people from the rest of Africa for deportation. It is statements like those made recently by Zwelinzima Vavi, who said he condemned xenophobia but the displacement of South Africans from spaza shops was not sustainable and above all it is white capital, which lords it over Black people in SA, with the complete endorsement of the ANC and DA..." (ed. note, DA is the Democratic Alliance, the successor party to the white colonialist Nationalist Party of the Apartheid era.)

And as another South African wrote on Facebook...

*"If South Africans were so inherently Xenophobic why have such a huge amount of foreigners been absorbed and tolerated in our communities for so long, Many of our African brothers have married and assimilated into local communities, we share our schools, clinics and even our churches and mosques with them. In most townships the poorest of the poor appreciate the low prices and the small quantities and the long trading hours and the convenient proximity of especially Somali Spaza shops, Criminals have exploited these vulnerable traders, but they survive despite the constant harassment of police and gangsters, because communities need their services.*

*Many are renting spaces which in most cases are the only income for poor households, The mutually beneficial nature of the presence of so many Somali and Bangladeshi traders inside previously no-go zones attest to the fact that South Africans can and have been extremely tolerant. Of course locals are affected, when they can't compete, but have the locals been able to deliver the quality of service that these foreign owned Spaza's are able to deliver.*

*In the lower paid job market Foreign Nationals have taken local jobs, and of course they are being exploited by unscrupulous employers who dodge all the statutory requirements to save on their wage bill. But this is a regulatory issue, not the fault of the foreigners who are as desperate as the locals for work.*

*The only real beneficiaries of all this*

*chaos is Shoprite who can now replace the displaced spazas with USaves, and with the elimination of their only competition they can now comfortably raise prices and exploit township markets to their hearts content. Remember Whitey Basson earned R600 million rand in 2013 and his workers are the lowest paid most of whom are sourced from labor brokers. So yes township malls creates a few jobs, but do they really contribute to empowerment within the township economy. Does the extensive buying power of the informal retail sector not contribute to manufacturing and distribution related employment, and the economy as a whole. The minimal profits of the small and informal sector compared to the gigantic profits posted by the Corporate retail sector clearly indicates that there are vested interest in getting rid of foreign traders in the townships, I believe there are sinister forces at work and that much of what we see right now is not Xenophobia but premeditated political wrangling that diverts attention from the real issues which is excessive Corporate profiteering off the backs of the poor and governments failure to govern and regulate efficiently."*

The powerful South African working class, both domestic and immigrant, needs to mobilize for its own class solutions against xenophobic anti-immigrant racism and attacks. Racism and xenophobia are poison to the working class! It is necessary to build militant demonstrations in defence of foreign traders. In regards to the ANC, workers need to demand an end of ANC complicity with big business to deport migrant workers. Political strikes in defence of immigrant workers would go a long way also in fighting back against the attacks on the entire working class by the ANC popular front government which acts in the service of world imperialism.

Workers/immigrant defence guards need to be organized immediately to protect small traders from these xenophobic gang attacks. In order to organize this struggle, militant workers need to take these demands to the unions to break workers from the capitalist ANC/SACP/COSATU popular front government and to build a mass workers party to adopt a workers plan to **socialise South Africa under a Workers and Oppressed Government based on a program of One Africa for All Africans! For a socialist Africa!**

**Revolutionary Workers Group of Zimbabwe (RWG-ZIM)**

Email: [rwg.zimbabwe@gmail.com](mailto:rwg.zimbabwe@gmail.com)

Website: [www.rwgzimbabwe.wordpress.com](http://www.rwgzimbabwe.wordpress.com)

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## International Labor Defense

*An Injury to One is an Injury to All!*

***For International Working Class Defense of All Class War Prisoners and Victims of Capitalist State Repression!***

The CWG stands for the non-sectarian working class defense of class war prisoners and all the oppressed based upon the old Wobbly principle that “An Injury to One is an Injury to All!” We place no faith in the capitalist courts, government agencies or labor boards to achieve justice. We call for the united International Working Class in alliance with the oppressed to come to the defense of all victims of capitalist state repression with class struggle methods. This means not only union resolutions but mass labor mobilizations and political strikes.

### State Attempts Medical Murder: **Free Mumia Now!**

Unable to carry out racist legal lynching with the death penalty, the state now is trying to kill Mumia Abu-Jamal through calculated medical negligence. As reported by the [Free Mumia](#) website:

“.....Mumia is once again subject to attempted execution, this time through medical neglect and malpractice. With no history of diabetes, and subsequent to having three blood tests only weeks earlier, on March 30, Mumia went into diabetic shock.

He was hospitalized on Monday, March 30, with life-threatening high blood sugar, but two days later was transferred back to the same prison that failed to diagnose or treat him even though he was still very ill. His diet is dangerous and his health is deteriorating.....”

We want to let everyone in Pennsylvania know that we are watching the racist state’s behavior. They are trying to commit medical murder to accomplish what they could not thru jurisprudence or police summary execution. It is urgent that the international working class come to Mumia’s defense and demand that he receive the medical care he needs, that his sentence be revoked and that he immediately be freed!. What is needed are mass labor-centered demonstrations and above all, labor actions such as political strikes.

Mumia is a political prisoner, a victim of racist state repression, of a racist hanging judge and a police force which bombed the MOVE house and has a rabid history. It was mass international protests that were able to halt his execution and eventually rescinded his death sentence in the courts for a sentence of life without parole. As Marxists, we stand opposed to the racist death penalty and call for its abolition. However, Mumia is innocent and life in a capitalist prison hellhole is no real life at all.

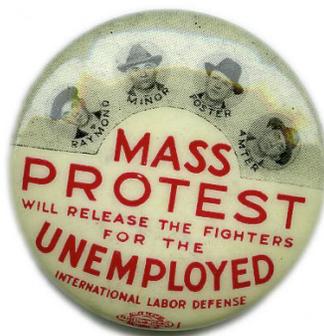


**Mumia is Innocent!  
Free Mumia Now!**

<https://www.change.org/p/john-e-wetzel-pa-secretary-of-corrections-tom-wolf-pa-governor-stop-the-medical-execution-of-mumia-abu-jamal-by-neglect-and-malpractice-3>

<http://www.freemumia.com/2015/04/mumia-hospitalized/#more-3345>

<http://www.phillymag.com/news/2015/03/30/mumia-abu-jamal-in-icu-after-medical-emergency-say-supporters/#G1xZTmfuA41RLV2U.01>



## New Jersey Teacher Suspended for Get Well Cards for Mumia

New Jersey Third Grade teacher Marylin Zuniga was suspended and may lose her job for asking her class to write get well letters to Mumia Abu-Jamal. Apparently teaching writing skills along with compassion for the ill is not allowed in America, unless it is compassion for the ruling class. In 2009, elementary kids in Texas [wrote get well cards for Barbara Bush](#) without repercussions.

Marylin Zuniga is involved in projects within her community for children. She coordinates a “Books and Breakfast” project that provides free books and breakfast. There is no doubt about her commitment to teaching and to children. [On February 5th](#) she presented a quote by Mumia, “So long as one just person is silenced, there is no justice,” to her class as part of her lesson. Her class later wanted to write get well cards for Mumia after discovering he was ill.



The American ruling class that has run this economy into the ground and has little use for an educated working class, as public education is undergoing all out assault by both political parties. And as far as compassion, black and brown youth can hope for little from American capitalism. If they can avoid being killed or beaten by the racist cops, and avoid the industrial prison system where one in three black men can expect to be incarcerated at some time, it is a tough climb to make it in America, where blacks still face vicious de facto racial segregation as a “last hired, first fired” super-exploited section of the working class. And now even the public sector union jobs that guaranteed a tolerable standard of living in the major metro areas for the black and brown communities are under attack.

The suspension of Marylin Zuniga is an attack on education, on human compassion, on the black community, on the Black Lives Matter protesters, on all those standing for social justice and on the working class as a whole.

***An injury to one is an injury to all!***

Reinstate Marylin Zuniga with full restitution, no disciplinary record and no future retribution!

<http://www.refusingtokill.net/PrisonUS/MarilynZuniga.htm>

## Down with U.S. State Repression! Free Mahdi Hashi!

Mahdi Hashi was born in Mogadishu in 1989 in Somalia. His family moved to the UK and when he was 15 he was naturalized. But because Britain does not accept dual UK /Somali citizenship, Hashi became a British citizen only. After returning to Somalia to care for his grandmother, Hashi married and had a son and embarked upon a family life. He then found that UK Home Secretary Theresa May had stripped him of his UK citizenship. She said she did so because the English Secret Service claimed that Hashi was involved in Islamic extremist activities. This rendered him stateless even though it is illegal under British law for actions of the UK government to render a person stateless.

While in Djibouti in 2012, he was “rendered” along with two other foreign nationals to the U.S. and charged with giving support to a terrorist organization, in the U.S. District Court in Brooklyn, New York. According to FBI documents, the three had been detained on their way to Yemen. If convicted of the charges of giving material support to Al Shabaab and using machine guns the group faces a minimum of 30 years (to life) in prison. Hashi is now being held in the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Manhattan (“The Tombs”).

He has been subjected to “special administrative measures (SAMs),” which includes 23 hour solitary confinement and restricted contact with loved ones and family. And the U.S. Attorney has lodged an additional allegation against him, and [Salon.com](http://Salon.com) revealed that this allegation charges that Hashi and the others know about a substantial Al-Qaeda chemical weapons program. It is now more than two years since Hashi was rendered. We demand his immediate release!

We say that Hashi is a prisoner of convenience for a U.S. government that has no trouble killing persons they suspect with drones but have great difficulty in bringing credible charges against actual Islamist militants. Hashi was a setup as a stateless person with no embassy to appeal to. And so his file of spurious charges has accumulated from the time he was a teenager, first when he studied in Egypt then when British agents attempted to blackmail him into being their spy in Somalia (he repeatedly refused) and then in Djibouti where the local police interrogated him for months before supplying him to the U.S. No real counterterrorism is involved in his victimization. **We demand his immediate release and abolition of all charges! Free Mahdi Hashi!**

<http://no-separate-justice.org/cases/mahdi-hash/>

## Zimbabwe Political Activist Itai Dzamara Abducted



Well-known Harare Occupy Africa Unity Square democratic rights activist, Mugabe critic and journalist Itai Dzamara was seen being [abducted by five men on March 9](#) and has not been seen since. The abductors drove away with him in an SUV commonly associated with the Central Intelligence Organization (C.I.O.), which is the brutal secret police of the Mugabe government. The C.I.O. has a sordid history of human rights abuses from unlawful abductions to torture.

Itai Dzamara was brutally beaten by the anti-riot police in [November of 2014](#) when they attacked the peaceful Occupy Africa Unity protesters. He shortly returned to the demonstrations and heroically [“vowed to continue”](#) his opposition to the Mugabe regime.

CWG has no doubt that the Mugabe regime is behind his abduction. **The international working class must demand that Itai Dzamara be returned safe and alive immediately! For a workers tribunal to bring his criminal abductors to justice!**

## SYRIZA Hands Off Anarchists! Free All Class War Prisoners in Greece!

The Greek popular front government of SYRIZA has continued the repression against social protests by targeting anarchists. Recently 8 anarchists ended their hunger strike protesting the provisions of anti-anarchist security laws that are survivals of earlier Greek governments. We don’t have to agree with anarchists to defend political prisoners against the backsliding of the SYRIZA government. Their treatment of political prisoners must rapidly corrode illusions that the SYRIZA government is any champion of Greek workers.

How can SYRIZA justify upholding convictions of worker activists? **Free Antonis Stamboulos, Giorgos Karagiannidis, Fivos Harisis, Argyris Ntalios, Grigoris Sarafoudis, Andreas-Dimitris Bourzoukos, Dimitris Politis and Yannis Michailidis! Free all Greek political prisoners!**

<http://hunger-strike.espivblogs.net/>

## Free Rasmia Odeh! Let her stay!

As reported by [Justice for Rasmia](#), “Over the objections of a prosecution team that called for 5-7 years in federal prison, a harsh sentence with terrorism enhancements, Judge Gershwin Drain sentenced Rasmia Odeh, Chicago’s 67 year-old Palestinian community leader, to 18 months for Unlawful Procurement of Naturalization, of which she was convicted last November.” This is an outrageous sentence, as was the trial, where she was “prevented from presenting evidence about the events that led to her conviction by an Israeli military tribunal 45 years ago....” If she loses her appeal, she will serve her sentence, lose her American citizenship and be deported.



After Israelis tortured her and extracted a false confession, sentenced and jailed her for supposedly participating in bombings, they released her. It was obvious that she was of no intelligence value to them, however her prosecution in the U.S. has taken the bogus Israeli convictions as gold-standard jurisprudence exactly for the purpose of attacking the movement of solidarity with Palestinian resistance in the U.S., and by extension, in Palestine. This was a show trial. And the evidence in such show trials is of little consequence compared to the states’ objectives.

**We demand the overturn of Rasmia’s conviction and restitution for her persecution. All friends of Class War should remain vigilant for the announcement of her appeal hearing. Plan to attend and protest this miscarriage of justice.**

<http://justice4rasmia.org/news/2015/03/12/rasmia-sentenced-to-18-months-but-is-coming-home/>

### Rasmia Odeh’s Speech on International Women’s Day

“.....Before I finish, I would like to remark that we all need to continue to work hard to eliminate the disease of racism and national oppression against Palestinians, Arabs, Muslims, Black people, Latinos, and other people of color in this country.....”

<http://www.fightbacknews.org/2015/3/10/rasmia-odehs-speech-international-women-s-day-event-chicago>

## What we Fight For

### We fight to overthrow Capitalism

Historically, capitalism expanded world-wide to free much of humanity from the bonds of feudal or tribal society, and developed the economy, society and culture to a new higher level. But it could only do this by exploiting the labour of the productive classes to make its profits. To survive, capitalism became increasingly destructive of “nature” and humanity. In the early 20th century it entered the epoch of imperialism in which successive crises unleashed wars, revolutions and counter-revolutions. Today we fight to end capitalism’s wars, famine, oppression and injustice, by mobilizing workers to overthrow their own ruling classes and bring to an end the rotten, exploitative and oppressive society that has exceeded its use-by date.

### We fight for Socialism

By the 20th century, capitalism had created the pre-conditions for socialism –a world-wide working class and modern industry capable of meeting all our basic needs. The potential to eliminate poverty, starvation, disease and war has long existed. The October Revolution proved this to be true, bringing peace, bread and land to millions. But it became the victim of the combined assault of imperialism and Stalinism. After 1924 the USSR, along with its deformed offspring in Europe, degenerated back towards capitalism. In the absence of a workers political revolution, capitalism was restored between 1990 and 1992. Vietnam and China then followed. In the 21st century only North Korea survives as a degenerated workers state. We unconditionally defend the DPRK against capitalism and fight for political revolution to overthrow the bureaucracy as part of a world socialist revolution.

### We fight to defend Marxism

While the economic conditions for socialism exist today, standing between the working class and socialism are political, social and cultural barriers. They are the capitalist state and bourgeois ideology and its agents. These agents claim that Marxism is dead and capitalism need not be exploitative. We say that Marxism is a living science that explains both capitalism’s continued exploitation and its attempts to hide class exploitation behind the appearance of individual “freedom” and “equality”. It reveals how and why the reformist, Stalinist and centrist misleaders of the working class tie workers to bourgeois ideas of nationalism, racism, sexism and equality. Such false beliefs will be exploded when the struggle against the inequality, injustice, anarchy and barbarism of capitalism in crisis, led by a revolutionary Marxist party, produces a revolutionary class-consciousness.

### We fight for a Revolutionary Party

The bourgeoisie and its agents condemn the Marxist party as totalitarian. We say that without a democratic and a centrally organized party there can be no revolution. We base our beliefs on the revolutionary tradition of Bolshevism and Trotskyism. Such a party, armed with a transitional program, forms a bridge that joins the daily fight to defend all the past and present gains won from capitalism to the victorious socialist revolution. Defensive struggles for bourgeois rights and freedoms, for decent wages and conditions, will link up the struggles of workers of all nationalities, genders, ethnicities and sexual orientations, bringing about movements for workers control, political strikes and the arming of the working class, as necessary steps to workers’ power and the smashing of the bourgeois state. Along the way, workers will learn that each new step is one of many in a long march to revolutionize every barrier put in the path to their victorious revolution.

### We fight for Communism

Communism stands for the creation of a classless, stateless society beyond socialism that is capable of meeting all human needs. Against the ruling class lies that capitalism can be made “fair” for all, that nature can be “conserved”, that socialism and communism are “dead”, we raise the red flag of communism to keep alive the revolutionary tradition of the Communist Manifesto of 1848, the Bolshevik-led October Revolution, the Third Communist International until 1924, and the revolutionary Fourth International up to its collapse into centrism, with the closing of the International Center. We fight to build a new Communist International, as a world party of socialism capable of leading workers to a victorious struggle for socialism.

**Join us: Where overthrowing capitalism is all in a days work !!!**

*“The feminists are striving to acquire political rights. However, here too our paths separate.*

*For bourgeois women, political rights are simply a means allowing them to make their way more conveniently and more securely in a world founded on the exploitation of the working people. For women workers, political rights are a step along the rocky and difficult path that leads to the desired kingdom of labour.*

*The paths pursued by women workers and bourgeois suffragettes have long since separated. There is too great a difference between the objectives that life has put before them. There is too great a contradiction between the interests of the woman worker and the lady proprietress, between the servant and her mistress... There are not and cannot be any points of contact, conciliation or convergence between them. Therefore working men should not fear separate Women’s Days, nor special conferences of women workers, nor their special press.*

*Every special, distinct form of work among the women of the working class is simply a means of arousing the consciousness of the woman worker and drawing her into the ranks of those fighting for a better future... Women’s Days and the slow, meticulous work undertaken to arouse the self-consciousness of the woman worker are serving the cause not of the division but of the unification of the working class.*

*Let a joyous sense of serving the common class cause and of fighting simultaneously for their own female emancipation inspire women workers to join in the celebration of Women’s Day.” -Alexandra Kollontai, “‘Women’s Day’ February 1913”*

### Communist Workers Group – USA (CWG-US):

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Website: <http://cwgusa.wordpress.com/>

Class War (Paper of the CWG-US)

### Liaison Committee of Communists

*Integrating the RWG (Zim), CWG (A/NZ), CWG (USA)*

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Revolutionary Worker (Paper of RWG-Zimbabwe)

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Websites: <http://redrave.blogspot.com>

<http://livingmarxism.wordpress.com>

Class Struggle (Paper of the CWG-NZ)



*Labor Donated*