from the hearts and minds of north america’s political prisoners and friends

Jericho 10/10 March ● 2008 Elections ● San Francisco 8 ● Black August Updates ● A Basic Introduction to Dialectical and Historical Materialism
Welcome to 4strugglemag

You have just come to a dynamic and unique publication, where Truth (real and raw) speaks to power. This magazine focuses the insights and experiences of U.S. political prisoners on major issues of the day. While a lot of the writing is by political prisoners, other activists, allies, revolutionaries and insightful outside voices are included. We publish 3 issues a year and all back issues remain posted on the website (4strugglemag.org).

4strugglemag is an independent non-sectarian revolutionary voice. We are unapologetically anti-imperialist and solidly in support of progressive National Liberation, especially the struggles of New African/Black, Mexican/Chicano, Puerto Rican and Native American Nations presently controlled by U.S. imperialism. Reflecting the work and principles of political prisoners held by the United States, 4strugglemag advocates for Justice, Equality, Freedom, Socialism, Protection of our Mother Earth, Human Rights and Peace.

www.4strugglemag.org is primarily an e-magazine, but hard copies are available (free to prisoners, $4 an issue for people outside -- yearly $12 subscriptions are available). We encourage readers to respond, critique and carry on discussions in the magazine. We have a discussion board at www.4strugglemag.org/board, and we welcome email and mail at our P.O. Box. We value and encourage feedback and discussion. The address of each political prisoner is posted with their article so people can directly communicate with them (no political prisoners have access to the internet). We like dialog, but we are not going to print racist or pro-imperialist messages, so you government agents and klansmen don’t bother wasting your time.

Each issue of 4strugglemag focuses on at least 3 main topics. Additional unrelated poems, graphics, essays, announcements and more are included. Unsolicited writings and graphics are accepted and welcomed. We won’t guarantee printing, but we’d like to see your work. This and other correspondence should be sent via regular mail to the following address: (remember it costs 69 cents to send a letter to Canada from the U.S.). Please note that our address has changed, and use this address in the future. If you have sent mail to our old address, don’t worry – we’ll get that too.

Call for contributors

4strugglemag is looking for quality writing that contributes to critical, revolutionary thought and reflection. In particular, we are interested in the following:

Feature articles: We’re looking for in depth, analytical articles that critically examine a particular issue, historical occurrence, political idea, or current event. We are looking for well-researched articles that broaden and challenge revolutionary thought. If you are in need of research help, don’t hesitate to ask. We may be able to help supply some of the resources needed in order to write a well-informed piece. We can also help with the editing and/or process. Let us know if you have any idea.

Book reviews: Is there a book you’d like to review for 4strugglemag? Let us know. If you don’t have the book, we can arrange to get it to you.

Letters: We love to hear from you. Please let us know if you would like your letter printed in the next issue.

Art on pages 2, 11, 18 and 39 by Kevin "Rashid" Johnson #185492 Red Onion State Prison PO Box 1900 Pound, VA USA 24279
Strugglingmag

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Introduction

Hey everyone, welcome to issue 11 of 4strugglemag, a powerful voice of political prisoners in the U.S.!

We had hoped to get this issue out early this summer, instead it is coming at you in late August. We are having some problems, especially getting hard copies produced and mailed out. Any activist groups who could help with this are urged to contact us.

This issue has timely and important information for you. The first section is all about the Jericho October 10th, free all political prisoners march to the UN Building in NYC. Everyone is urged to check out and spread this information. The 10/10 march must be large, loud and dynamic. Everyone who can come and everyone who cannot, needs to know that this rally is the single most important event for ALL U.S. political prisoners and really needs your support. Your support can mean the difference between life and death.

Section two has information on the San Francisco 8 case. Their trial starts in September. We missed August this year, but we still have information on Black August in Section three.

Section four has information on a variety of issues, including the annual ABCF sponsored Running Down The Walls benefit runs. They are being held in LA and many other cities and prisons across the country. Everyone is urged to join a run or organize one in your prison or city. There are also thoughts on Obama and the elections, and more.

In the final section, we are doing something different. We are reprinting an entire pamphlet - “A Basic Introduction to Dialectical and Historical Materialism.” This is a time acutely needed document used in and out of prison. Various activist and revolutionary groups have used it to help people learn and sharpen their revolutionary analysis skills. 4strugglemag will open its pages in future issues, to questions, feedback and dialo[...]

More Information from Jaan Laaman

Earlier this year, I began doing short (7-10 minute) radio commentaries for KCBLR (www.KCBLR.org). A few other radio stations and internet sites using my commentaries. They are all available at the freejaan blog site, but anyone who is interested in regularly using my words for radio or other air wave stations/programs has also available for listening or downloading at www.freejaan.com. At least one or two new ones are produced each month. The latest one, no.7, is on the Jericho October 10 march in the UN building and provides background information on political prisoners in the U.S., the Jericho Movement, and details on the March. I am open to doing commentaries for all political prisoners, needs to know that this rally is the single most important event for ALL U.S. political prisoners and really needs your support. Your support can mean the difference between life and death.

One other piece of information I’d like to let people know about - at the end of this year, I’ll complete my Mass state sentence (I’ve been here in Walpole the past 5 years). I’ll then be sent back to the federal system, to begin an on and after 53 year sentence (conspiracy to overthrow or disrupt the U.S. government).

I don’t know what federal prison I’ll be sent to. I will certainly not regret leaving Walpole state prison, although I will miss some good brothers here. Heading off to some new penitentiary with a big sentence pretty much sucks too, but I do look forward to seeing some of my political prisoner comrades again in the federal system.

4strugglemag readers in prison should be aware that while I can receive mail directly from other prisons here in the Massachusetts state system, the federal system does not allow prisoners to receive mail from other prisons. 4strugglemag and the freejaan blog site will keep people informed of my new address.

Wherever I wind up, I am keeping on struggling – hope you do too.

Jaan Laaman

Reviews

rights feminists were at the time leaders of the abolition movement). Wimyn’s liberation peaked in the 1920s, and then declined after the primary goal of suffrage had been reached. This occurred at an equal time, the revolutionary 1960s, when political and social changes were dramatically taking place all over the world. This sought a greater equality for wimyn in the family, the workplace, and political life.

However, while some concessions have been gained, wimyn are far from liberated. There is a dangerous trend within liberation movements to mistake concessions as lib- ertation, and this trend quenches the revolutionary spirit. Concessions quickly turn from stepping stones toward freedom to full-fledged capitulation of the struggle, to a pacifist. Polished handcuffs are still handcuffs. Concessions, like religion, can be the opium of the masses. Reform can be one of the greatest weapons against revolu- tion. And just as former colonies of Empires can be held in neo-colonialism - a state of being politically independent yet economically and psychologically held under the sway of the m[...]

To put it bluntly, wimyn are still considered as the man’s slave. Suffrage has not effected liberation, for the capital- ist system in which these votes are cast gorges itself on all kinds of oppression and exploitation, and cannot be voted into ceasing this ravenous trend. Consider the television commercials that are forced down our throats and into our minds. Of all the advertisements for cleaning prod- ucts, grocery shopping, cooking supplies, and all the other things that have to do with the household, when have you ever seen an ad for doing the toilet, buying the groceries, feeding the children (or the wife)? It is always the womyn doing these things, reinforcing the idea that womyn are in the home. This is due to womyn’s divinely sanctioned role as the man’s servant, the man’s accessory, the man’s slave. It is still considered as a “ro- mantic” exception to the rule when the man cooks for the man. Womyn’s mental is also dominant in television shows like Friends, which is dominated by male presence. The man is the head of the house, work, where it is humorous how the man usually hates his wife (especially as they get older), where he usually hates to have sex with her, when he does have sex with her it is a jok[...]

An isolated feminine movement can be just as reaction- ary as reverse racism. Wimyn must be their own libera- tors; however, that can only truly happen if their struggle is kept in the right perspective, within the broader focus of ending capitalist exploitation of humanity, viewing every specific liberation as a microcosm of the whole. We need wimyn in our ranks, creating revolutionary programs that serve to liberate themselves and at the same time promote the liberation of the international proletariat as a whole. Wimyn, we need you! Rise up and throw off the millenia- old yoke of male domination. From the workshops to the boardrooms, from your equality, and join the Panthers in the revolutionary movement to do all this, and bring humanity from the epoch of exploitation to the epoch of freedom.

Wimyn!!! ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE!!!

Spider

Billy Johnson

P.O. Box 279

Clifton, TN 38425 USA

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Free the Wimyn!

BY COMRADE SPIDER, Spokesperson, White Panther Organization

Before there were gods, there was the Goddess. Before Zeus, Horus and Yahweh, there was the Great Mother. The Earth was her physical presence and fertility was the most potent expression of her power. The feminine conceptualization of deity was a reflection to a time when lineage was reckoned according to the wimyn (as opposed to the man), and wimyn as a whole were greatly revered as the source of one’s life and being. In short, fertility was the all-important aspect of these economically simple times, most prominently displayed in wimyn giving birth, and therefore the power of fertility was personified in the Great Mother.

However, as man’s role in the economic production of society increased (as did the need for the subjugation of women), the deity began to take on more masculine forms. And as the man began to express his newfound prominence in more dominant ways, so did the deity begin to morph from a life-giver or an incarnation of nature to an overlord, kind and tyrant. Mother right was overthrown and patriarchy took the throne. The same gods that were created by the male would end up instituting male-dominated priesthoods and codes of law, in which were enshrined, codified, and ratified the divinely sanctioned lordship of the male over the female. As the economic production and exchange in society became increasingly more complex, syncretistic and contradictory, this symbiotic relationship between the male and his god followed suit, and the nature of the deity became more paradoxical, illogical, and unfortunately oppressive.

Almost nowhere is the materialist conception of history given such credence than in the parallel between a society’s economic relations and its idea of a god. But more concrete than issues of change in religious dogma is the way that women have suffered, since the establishment of patriarchy as the norm in male-female relations. The role of wimyn in society has undergone its various transformations as the mode of human production has evolved to present-day imperialist capitalism, with ever-increasing subtle subjection and oppression as the theme that runs through every societal change. As the capitalist system compels the bourgeoisie to exploit the proletariat if such a system is to exist; and as the system of slavery by its very nature necessitates the exploitation of the slave by the slave master; so the current socioeconomic system of oppression profits by reinforcing the concept that the wimyn is to remain subordinate to the rule of the man, that she must stay in her god-sanctioned “place” in society, and that she will always be the “weaker vessel.”

I mean, think about it. Wimyn make up about 51 percent of the United States population. And a great number of those are to this day living in some form of repression, as wimyn, whether they realize it or not. That’s 51 percent of a country’s population that not only has to deal with the crushing weight of capitalist exploitation, but also the double weight of gender oppression. In other words, the pervasive patriarchal mentality that is supported by the current system serves to ensure that wimyn, half the nation’s population, are held in submission by debunking psycho-religious chains. It is therefore doubly more difficult to rebel against the current order, not having the advantage of “male privilege.”

And all of this in spite of suffrage. Yet, does the right to vote signify that liberation has come? Did New African suffrage liberate New Africans? The first major wave of the wimyn’s liberation movement took place in the 1830s, mainly as a response to the great economic and political changes brought about by the industrial revolution, a very significant parallel with the proletarian rebellions of that time. (It is also no accident that many of the equal rights activists were wimyn.)

Letters

Loyal readers of 4strugglemag will know that in the past we have faced some challenges in financing our publication and distribution. This is in part due to the success of this project—we’ve got more subscribers than ever across Canada and the United States, and we remain committed to sending free copies to prisoners. We appreciate your patience as we work to find ways to put out new issues as often as possible.

We thank our comrades Jill and Dave of Vancouver’s Anti-Poverty Committee for their generosity and hard work in producing and distributing Issue 10, and we thank our friends in DC for taking responsibility for the current issue. Moving forward, we will continue to rely on others in our community to support 4strugglemag. We are also planning a subscription drive that will encourage outside activists to help keep sending free copies to prisoners.

We’ll keep working to improve the magazine: the level of analysis, the focus on topics that will propel social justice forward, and the opportunities for dialogue across movements, across generations and across prison walls.

For that reason, we’re introducing a letters section to this issue, starting with one that we’ve had for a while now. When you write, please mention if it’s okay for us to print your letter in the magazine. We can’t print all of the letters that we get (and we may edit for length and clarity), and we certainly hope that you’ll keep sending us articles, poetry, artwork and more. This is just one more way of giving our readers a voice.

- Sara Falconer and Karen Emily

Revolutionary greetings

Dear 4strugglemag laborers,

I just got my eager hands on Issue 5 and Issue 8 of your magazine only after engaging my PPC Brothers in a conversation about the plight and suffering of (mis-educated) juvenile males living without parole (LWOP) and other harsh sentences in America’s concentration camps improperly terme d prisons.

Thereafter strongly encouraged me to reach out to you in hopes of joining us in highlighting the inhumanity and injustices done to child offenders, and other criminal offenders, and other cruel and unusual punishment sentences given to youths. We believe the national attention would be the impetus to help wake up and mobilize the locals to American neo-racism, class elitism and gender bias – as it relates to youths, mainly youths of color, more specifically New African (Black) males, and unjust sentences not only here in Michigan but other states within the U.S. Empire, which imposes such unredemptive sentences on children/offenders.

But first, I had never read your e-magazine until April 4, 2007. This is after the previously mentioned conversation. Then one of the PPC Brothers said, “I got somethin right for you.” I read the two issues of 4strugglemag. After later reading everything, I overwhelmingly thanked him. He responded, “I got a few more where that came from.” Now that I’m aware of your existence, I’d like to say THANK YOU FOR putting such functional, right knowledge. The New African experience in America has been cornered off into a few places, due to the insidious nature of the poison of white supremacy, racism and its allied (mass) media cohorts, but the ones who contribute to and live for the cause and struggle stand strong in their beliefs and convictions and I admire all of you for giving so much of yourselves to helping others find themselves and their humanity.

I hope all of you remain strong, safe and continue striving to spread political consciousness to those who are socially engineers and asleep on their feet, from the negative ill-effects of imperialism, colonialism, fascism, sexism, monopoly capitalism and white supremacy racism, to mention a few.

Having said that I formally request to be placed on your mailing list to receive future issues of 4strugglemag. I also have two important recommendations that I would like to suggest for your consideration:

1. Because of new readers like myself, would you please define such ideologies as colonialism, fascism, imperialism, sexism and white supremacy racism (in historical and contemporary contexts)?

2. Can you designate a page solely for the purpose of recommending a list of books – for reading and studying?

In order to build a mass (people) movement that enable us to checkmate and/or eliminate the negative “isms” and create a world predicated on Ma’at and Ngozi Saba we have to build human beings by providing them with a proper education and culture that moves the people’s minds – into the direction of unity, solidarity, supreme organization and sacred love – and away from their polar opposites, if you will.

Each One Teach One

Like Brother Akili, I too have noticed a central theme concerning the experience and knowledge of our organizations. Very few of these mags have addressed and diagnosed the impact of imperialism, monopoly capitalism and white supremacy racism on the psyche and minds of youths in concrete terms, and once internalized (consciously or subconsciously) what are the characteristics or symptoms? And what role does this play in them being targeted?
geted by the imperialists and extreme capitalists for prison incarceration and expansionism. How does anti-depression medication of the youth play into all of this? I’ve never seen so many young persons on anti-psychotic drugs, etc., on which they depend as though it was a mother’s breast or a baby’s bottle. It is really disheartening and disturbing.

Anyhow, when I read: Welcome to 4strugglemag, the second paragraph I knew that I had to touch base with you at some point in time, and encourage you to obtain a copy of Human Rights Watch’s report entitled “The Rest of Their Lives: Life Without Parole for Child Offenders in the U.S.” and urge you to seriously consider running a series of articles centered around this report.

My PPC Brother said, “PPC (juvenile lifers) are like the forgotten voice in the struggle.” I’m hoping this letter will be the beginning by which we change this. What 4strugglemag will lend its hand, arm and voice in expressing its oppositional position to LWOP sentences (etc.) on child offenders, in direct violation of Articles 34 and 40 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

I look forward to your revolutionary response.

All power to the poor and oppressed. Free all PPs and POWs. Abolish the death penalty and LWOP. End SHUs. Down with imperialism, sexism and racism

Ona Move
Love and Struggle,
Sankofa
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Note: Ma’at is an ancient Afrikan concept defining the unifying principles of harmony (or balance) by which ALL creation is ordered, and Nguzo Saba are the seven principles of Kwanza (or Communalism).

Pamoja Tutashinde! (Together we will win!) [Note from 4struggle: We will run excerpts from the Human Rights Watch report on LWOP for child offenders in Issue 12, and will also work towards building the definitions of terms and book recommendations that Sankofa requested. We hope that readers will contribute to these discussions!]

a worker to dig up the raw gold ore. Let’s say the worker digs up 100 pounds of gold ore in eight hours of work. Now the capitalist has 100 pounds of gold ore, which we’ll say is worth $1000 for the work done to extract it. The capitalist pays for his/her day’s work, leaving the capitalist $900 extra value (for simplicity sake we will call this all profit, but some of it is other than that), and now the gold itself has a value of $1000. The capitalist now hires a gold smelter who in eight hours, he’ll say, melts the ore down into a gold brick, which we’ll say is worth $2000. The capitalist pays the smelter $200 in wages, smelting being more skilled labor than digging, leaving the capitalist with a $2000 gold bar that cost him or her $300 to acquire (the workers actually paid that cost). Now the capitalist finds a goldsmith who he has to turn the gold bar into many gold rings. He pays the goldsmith $500 for his work. The capitalist then sells the rings for $4000 – their exchange value. The workers whose labor brought the gold from zero value to its full $4000 value got $800, and the capitalist got the remaining $3200. This is just a simplified example, but the rule is that commodities get their value when a worker puts his/her labor and time into changing some material into a commodity.

Under developed commodity production, when commodities are exchanged through the medium of money, their values are expressed with a definite sum of money. The value of the commodity is expressed in terms of money. Exchange value becomes the price of the commodity. This is a very simplified look at what Marx called THE LABOR THEORY OF VALUE.

Returning to the idea that most jobs, especially the worst ones, could be automated, we see that the capitalists cannot move to this stage because if only human labor power is involved, it will make little profit, thus they need human labor power. This does not mean that people won’t keep losing their jobs in the U.S. because of automation, similar to capitalists’ rate of profit. If the capitalist has one laborer and one machine doing the work that ten workers without machines did before, then of course, he/she has to pay less wages and saves money or increases profit, but it does not mean that the capitalists will take that total step. Only socialism, not governed by profit, could and will move to a stage where backbreaking labor is less needed, because this would be to the benefit of working people.

Finally and generally, socialism as a social-productive system is the first time since primitive communities that society is run and controlled by the majority of people (the working class). The people who work and produce would also be the people who own and decide what should be done, when, how and why. The working class as opposed to the capitalist class would be the class in power, and it is also the class that controls the economy, who also controls the government. The working class as a whole would determine how society would live and grow, by setting up and using truly democratic methods and institutions.

This is just a short outline of socialism. How any specific socialist society would look would be up to the people of that country to determine. Part of this determination is how industrially and materially developed the country was to begin with. Cultural, historical, and environmental factors will also influence the faces of socialism. Therefore, it is not necessarily true that different countries will have unique aspects to their socialist democracies.

Conclusion

This, then, is a basic look at dialectical and historical materialism and, very briefly and generally, a materialist breakdown of the stages of human society’s development, including a peak at how socialism will be in our country. This is not reading fortune cookies, astrology charts, or any other metaphorical hocus-pocus. It is a concrete evaluation of concrete realities using the powerful tools of dialectical materialist understandings of the real world. These tools, and the insights we gain using them, enable us to move forward with foresight and planning. This is only an introduction; so many points were left out and most aspects were only covered briefly and generally and, therefore, somewhat mechanically. It is hoped and urged that at least two additional short books be read: Dialectical and Historical Materialism, On The Contradiction, by Mao Tse Tung. Both are available at political bookstores and both provide a much richer understanding of this powerful tool that we need if we want to struggle more effectively.

Even with only this basic understanding, we can see that the world is moving forward and that the day of the common people, the working class, is approaching. As in all other movements, we must realize that conditions develop and groundwork is laid while the majority of people are still not aware of their full scope. But when a certain point is reached, we begin to see and understand (if we don’t purposely shut our eyes) the full nature of our enemy, as well as our own power and duty. Thus begins the day of the new people. The people whose day has come must then step forward and make that complete qualitative leap ahead. This is not easy and it never has been, but all we really need to do is be the people who own and decide what should be done, to a life of wage slavery in a system of discrimination and injustice, the chains that hold us in prison cells in capitalist dungeons, the chains that allow us only frustrated half lives as the oppressed class in a capitalist nightmare. The New Day Is Ours To Build!
collectively own the means of production and the goods they produce, and decide how to allocate those goods as well. As it now stands, all production is done for only one purpose – profit. The capitalists are not concerned with whether the commodities and services they have produced are useful or not as long as they can be sold. In fact, a huge portion of U.S. production today is war production. In the summer of 2008, the Iraq war is costing U.S. taxpayers $12 billion a month. This comes out to $5000 a second!

For the capitalists, war production is a highly profitable business, and when war involving U.S. troops breaks out they rarely send their sons or daughters to die. Meanwhile, people in this country today, left alone in the rest of the world, are going hungry, live in rotten housing, cannot afford decent medical care, have to send their children to overcrowded schools, etc. What has happened is that now, when our country has reached a point where poverty and suffering could be wiped out, the capitalists refuse to do it, because it is not profitable. The capitalist class has outlined all its usefulness and is standing squarely in the way of necessary progress. This is not just because they are all greedy nasty individuals (although most, no doubt, are), but because the only way the capitalist system can operate is on private property and profit, and these are thus protected as inherent, constitutional rights that may not be legally challenged. Therefore, the solution requires more than a matter of putting a so-called “nice guy” into office. Even a “good guy” has to act within the limits of the system.

While we are reaching the level of production where all the goods needed could be produced and made available to working people, we find ourselves plagued with inflation, recessions, depressions, severe cutbacks, and declining living standards. Why? Again, because the capitalist class is only after profit. They not only don’t produce what is needed, they actually destroy crops while people are hungry, produce business jets and even more senseless cars and gadgets while many people still do not have refrigerators or running hot water, or even a home to live in. Under socialism, goods and services are produced not because someone can make a fast buck, but because they are needed and wanted by the people. Capitalism always has and will have cycles of recession, depression and so-called good times. Although in the 1950s and 60s, a lot of talk was centered around what to do with the gold that is lying underground. Now a capitalist comes along and hires people in this country today, let alone in the rest of the world, are going hungry, live in rotten housing, cannot afford decent medical care, have to send their children to overcrowded schools, etc. What has happened is that now, when our country has reached a point where poverty and suffering could be wiped out, the capitalists refuse to do it, because it is not profitable. The capitalist class has outlined all its usefulness and is standing squarely in the way of necessary progress. This is not just because they are all greedy nasty individuals (although most, no doubt, are), but because the only way the capitalist system can operate is on private property and profit, and these are thus protected as inherent, constitutional rights that may not be legally challenged. Therefore, the solution requires more than a matter of putting a so-called “nice guy” into office. Even a “good guy” has to act within the limits of the system.

Karl Marx, 170 years ago, discovered that under a money system (A capitalist system, that is, although money is used for a while when a country is transforming to socialism. Goods and services are allocated by other means once it becomes fully socialist, so money becomes useless and disappears.), all goods and services that are made to be sold (commodities) only get value once some worker has put his or her labor on them. By value we mean exchange value or price, not use value. Anything that is use-ful has use value (air, for example) but only commodities that are made to be sold have exchange value or just value. Having resolved these work relations contradiction, it is possible to establish a socially owned means of production. Having resolved these work relations contradiction, we would begin building not only a more materially plentiful life, but an emotionally and socially satisfying and ecologically sustainable one as well. Under capitalism the idea is that you gain at someone else’s expense. Such a basis for society quite naturally leads to an overall hostility, distrust and negativity amongst the people. Socialism is instead based on the principle that mutual cooperation leads to advancement. It is not hard to see how, in a socialist system, society would grow increasingly harmonious and people, regardless of race, sex, or any other features, would have the greatest possible freedom to develop their full human potential. Looking ahead, we can see we are reaching a point in the United States where most hard manual labor could be performed by machines. The capitalists will never move to this stage because it will mean cutting their own throats. Instead, they focus on automating good jobs for which workers must be paid well and leaving low-pay hard labor for the workers.

Unskilled workers, who do most of the dirty, dangerous, boring work, tend to be cheaper than the machines that would replace them. They are also plentiful and easily replaced, which makes it difficult for them to make demands on the bosses. Skilled workers, whose jobs tend to be more interesting and satisfying, must be paid more because their knowledge is in short supply. Also they can make demands on the bosses because they are not so easily replaced. You can’t go to the Home Depot parking lot and pick up a van-load of diesel mechanics. In order to understand this more fully, we will examine a certain aspect of work and capitalist production.
On October 10th 2008, the Jericho Movement will mark the 10th year of their march to the United Nations. Jericho will be joined by supporters on this momentous occasion to demand freedom and justice for all political prisoners and prisoners of war. In order to commemorate this event, we are printing statements written by political prisoners to mark the occasion. They are political prisoners anywhere in the world! Despite this, we remain committed to our communities, movements and most of all, our principles. As best we can, through our voices and lives, we continue to uphold the politics of justice, equality and liberation, especially for the poor and working class people throughout the world.

In 1998, a very principled and politically conscious march and rally of over 10,000 people gathered in Washington DC to demand and protest the freedom of political prisoners in the United States. The march was the Jericho Freedom March, and from it the Jericho Movement was born. The Jericho Movement is the only nationwide political prisoner advocacy organization, whose sole purpose is to inform the public about and advocate for the release of all political prisoners in the U.S. This Fall, ten years after the original Jericho march, on October 10, 2008, the Jericho Movement is calling for a march and rally to demand freedom for all U.S. political prisoners, in front of the UN building in New York City. We, political prisoners held by the United States, are fully and energetically in support of this march.

Most of us who were already political prisoners at the time of the original 1998 march are still behind prison walls today. There have been a small number of joyous advances. President Clinton released 11 Puerto Rican Independence activists in 1999. Just before he left office in 2000, he gave amnesty to two more political prisoner sisters. A few individuals have been released on parole or after long fought appeals. Death from illness, after decades of captivity have sadly taken some respected and loved comrades as well. The large majority of women and men who were political prisoners prior to this march have been locked up today. In addition, the ranks of U.S. political prisoners have grown in the past several years. Many people have been imprisoned for their work on our behalf. The Puerto Rican Independence movement as well as the New African/Black Liberation struggle have also seen more of their activists imprisoned for social and economic justice struggles, and especially in the past several years, from the environmental and animal rights movement.

We, U.S. political prisoners, are Black, white, Latino, Native American and Asian. Most of us have been in captivity since the 1970s and 80s. Some of us have been locked up for over 30 years now. Recently people have also been imprisoned for anti-war activities. This includes active duty U.S. soldiers who have courageously refused to continue to participate in the wars Bush started, wars that most Americans today oppose. The capitalists are vehemently against the change to socialism. Just like the nobles were against change to capitalism, the capitalists are vehemently against the change to socialism. Because they control the vast majority of the government, political prisoners are also imprinted with an additional struggle to convince the working people that socialism is no longer a choice but a necessity for us all. We see this every time a union goes on strike and throws up a strong picket line. If union workers (or prisoners or anti-war fighters or anyone who fights for justice) try to accept their rule over us. If need be (and we see this every time a union goes on strike and throws up a strong picket line or a prisoner or an anti-war fighter refuses to continue their struggle), they will use force to try to stay in power. Still, even with all their courts, cops, and miseducation, the tide of history is against them and sooner or later the capitalist class must be moved aside and a new age can begin.

We U.S. political prisoners want and need your awareness, support and participation in the 10/10 march. Personally, I am in my 24th straight year of captivity. Along with my comrade Tom Manning, who is being held in the federal prison system, we are the last two Ohio 7

This demonstrates the protracted nature of our struggle. The capitalists developed the new means of production and capture the wealth from the working people. We must keep in mind, though, that when we say the capitalists developed industrial production, we mean they were the force pushing us all into working for them. It was the working class who actually sweated and worked to build the factories and who then worked in the plants and produced the goods. Just as the feudal nobility and its subordinate craftsmen class became useless with the development of machinery, so, too, the world is now at the stage where the capitalists are worse than useless: they are a drag on further social progress. Today, all production is done socially (many people work together to produce the commodities), yet the instruments of production are owned privately and therefore, the products become the private property of the families of the owners. This necessarily represents a struggle between social production and private appropriation. Put in blunt terms, laborers work and produce everything, while the owners do little to nothing, but get to keep most of the benefits of our work. On top of this, they turn around and try to convince us that they are doing us a favor by giving us a job - by letting us work our lives away to make them rich! Plus they get to make the decisions about what is produced, meaning much of our productive capacity is wasted on military madness to defend bourgeois power and produce luxury goods no one but a minority elite can afford, instead of food, water, health, health care, transportation – social goods for all.

We are joined by millions of others who are also imprisoned for their work to protect our Earth and environment. The ideas and setting up the plants. It was the working people who actually grew the crops and brought the world the machine age. We must keep in mind, though, that when we say the capitalists developed industrial production, we mean they were the force pushing us all into working for them. It was the working class who actually sweated and worked to build the factories and who then worked in the plants and produced the goods. Just as the feudal nobility and its subordinate craftsmen class became useless with the development of machinery, so, too, the world is now at the stage where the capitalists are worse than useless: they are a drag on further social progress. Today, all production is done socially (many people work together to produce the commodities), yet the instruments of production are owned privately and therefore, the products become the private property of the families of the owners. This necessarily represents a struggle between social production and private appropriation. Put in blunt terms, laborers work and produce everything, while the owners do little to nothing, but get to keep most of the benefits of our work. On top of this, they turn around and try to convince us that they are doing us a favor by giving us a job - by letting us work our lives away to make them rich! Plus they get to make the decisions about what is produced, meaning much of our productive capacity is wasted on military madness to defend bourgeois power and produce luxury goods no one but a minority elite can afford, instead of food, water, health, health care, transportation – social goods for all.

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Socialism

Socialism is the latest (fifth) main stage of human society that some countries are already beginning. It is the level of developed societies where the class struggle between social production and private appropriation is resolved by making the appropriation social. This means the major industries (factories, farms, railways, or, in other words, all the major means of production) are under the control of the working class. This is easily accomplished by socializing these enterprises (socialized is where the people, community, or state owns them). Under socialism, the state or government in turn is truly controlled by the working people; they not only vote once every couple of years for government officials, but also have more direct and real control of the day-to-day operation of the workplace.

For example, if you were working in a factory, you and your co-workers would be making most of the decisions on the work, conditions, etc., as well as having a real voice, along with all the working class, in deciding national and other large issues as well. This is really only logical because it is the working people that actually make all the goods that the country needs. Therefore, they should be the ones who up by the larger ones; and, finally but most importantly, the continuous and irremediable class struggle between the decadent capitalist class, who are trying to hang on to their power even thought the huge majority of people suffer and the ever-growing strength of the working class, which is moving to bring a new and better system and age. It is this last contradiction, the struggle between the working class or proletariat and the capitalist class or bourgeoisie, which is based on the concrete reality that capitalism is not meeting the needs of working people. That is the propelling force which will bring about the next qualitative social change to socialism.
The Palestinians under its control. Saudi Arabia has a pup-
pet legislature and disenfranchises women, no one votes
for the King, etc. While democracy is the label that capi-
talists use for this system, it does not mean all people
have real equal rights or opportunities. It actually means
democracy for the capitalists and “obey” the rules for the
working class. In fact, democracy only allows a small
amount of political democracy: the right to pick be-
tween a few candidates selected by the ruling class. Social
and economic democracy is conveniently omitted from
the capitalist definition. People don’t get to vote at all on
the things that are currently most important to them such as
job issues or property relations.

On top of this, they turn around and try to convince us that they are
doing us a favor by giving us a job – by letting us work our
lives away to make them rich!

As we saw, many merchants and traders had become rich
in the later part of the feudal era, but since they were not
born to the “right” parents, they were a force without any
real political power. These early capitalists controlled the
towns and cities, but only so many people could be em-
ployed as craftsmen and shippers, etc. The cities stayed
small and the real political power remained in the hands of
the landowning nobility. Then came the industrial revolu-
tion, the invention of the steam engine and the invention of
large-scale machinery. In other words, a large qualitative
leap occurred in the means of production.

The qualitative advance in the means of production not only
led to political change – the government power was taken
from the landowning nobility class by the capitalist class.

The invention of machinery ended the handicraftsmen
method of production and brought in the rise of facto-
ries and the corresponding mass movement of the people
from the countryside to the cities to work these new mills.

While the industrial system of capitalism freed the com-
mon people from one type of bondage, it created a new
anti-imperialist political prisoners still in captivity. I will
fully complete my Massachusetts state sentence at the end
of 2008, and then I will be transferred to the federal system
to begin a 53 year sentence.

Captoritty takes its toll on human beings. My comrade Tom
has and continues to deal with serious medical issues, as
of many of the other aging political prisoners. I continue to
miss and mourn my comrade Richard Williams, who died
of illness added by the extremely poor prison health care
system, while in a federal prison 2 years ago.

The government imprisons people as political prisoners for
multiple reasons. First of all in order to take serious lead-
ers and activists out of circulation and to stop their work.

Imprisonment is also used to intimidate other activists and
to slow down or destroy liberation, peace and justice orga-
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UN 10/10 March

BY SUNDIATA ACOLI

Greetings Sisters, Brothers and Comrades,

My name is Sundiata Acoli, and I’m a 71 year-old New African PP/POW who’s been behind bars for the last 35 years in maximum security prisons. A few months ago I was transferred to FCI Otisville, New York (a medium security prison) and I’m coming up for parole again in 2010. That’s the update on my case.

It’s not that different from many other New African PP/POWs or exiles, some who have been down as long or longer than I have: Rachel Magee, Hugo Togi Pinell, Robert Amiri Shakur, Jalil Muntaqim, Herman Bell, Asata Shakur, Nhanhdari Abdi- sodi and others. The one thing we all have in common is that we’re Black and not White. A PP/POW has ever been granted amnesty or a pardon. So we still have a lot of work to do as a U.S. PP/POW movement.

But it can be done: the Puerto Rican movement has shown us how to do it, and the anti-imperialist movement did too, to a lesser extent. I’d like to congratulate Ashanti, Paulette, Kazi and the rest of the crew for the great job they’ve done in re-invigorating Jericho and moving it in a direction it needs to go.

As for what’s happening today? I think the PP/POW move- ment is in a transition stage. By that I mean Bush waked up a lot of people up. He was the but whose farmhands had, over many hundreds over people of color and the poor at home and abroad.

Our people and movement suffered setbacks, but Bush’s arrogance, bluster and blunders brought the imperialists close to many military, political and economic setbacks too (except for “Big Oil” corporations) so generally it’s “Good rid- ing the winds of change.”

Feudal ruling class had enormous power over the people. The vast majority of people were peasant farmers or serfs who were legally tied to the land they worked (they could not leave the land that they owned the land). The serfs, however, had some rights. For example, while they still could be bought and sold as part of the land, they could not be killed arbitrarily. They also owned their own tools and animals, and were allowed to keep a portion of the crops they grew on their land. The aristocracy needed the labor of the serfs to ex- tract the wealth from the land and maintain the infrastruc- ture on which the nobles’ power was based, and so had to grant these concessions to the peasants.

This system developed through further improvement of the means to production. Iron and steel were produced and high-grade weapons and tools like swords and plows and other parts that could be made. This meant that war could be faster and better. A slave, however, gets the same amount of food and rest and remains a slave whether he works fast or slow and therefore has no incen- tive to produce more, even with better tools. But if a person can see some gain in his/her work, like the possibility of keeping part of the product, s/he will work more. This gave landowners incentive to discard the slave as a less produc- tive laborer in favor of the serf, who had his her own tools, animals, and a greater interest in his her work. Landowners also did not have a big investment in serfs that were young or ill or ran away. These fears, as well as more and more slave revolts and the breakdown of the old slave-owning empires, led the system to change – it led to the development of feudalism.

With feudalism’s new methods and tools, people were able to look after their own needs, and goods that flowed into trade and stores on a scale that never could be done better and faster. Handicrafts and later, artisan manufacture (not to be confused with industrial production which did not develop until capitalism), grew and developed. Towns and cities arose to accommodate this new type and level of commerce. Some serfs ran away from the nobles to learn volleyball in the growing districts, which expanded even more. Some nobles set certain peasants up in apprenticeship to craftswoman. These factors, as well as more and more slave revolts and the breakdown of the old slave-owning empires, led the system to change – it led to the development of feudalism.

Feudalism was marked by two main types of struggle: first, the class warfare of the serfs against the nobility and, later, the conflict between the growing capitalist forces of bank- ers, merchants, traders, and manufacturers against the ruling nobility class also. The serfs struggled because they wanted freedoms and their own land, and the bankers, etc., wanted profits and profits, not land- and agriculture. The feudal system, with its constant wars, irrational property relations and other factors, was in contradiction to the rising new contradiction that would allow societies to grow and develop through new forms of economic and social activity. In this situation, the nobility was one aspect of the contradiction: peasants, workers and the bourgeoisie was the other as- pect.

Capitalism

This leads us to the fourth stage – capitalism – and its most recent and usual political system, capitalism democracy. We must bear in mind, though, that when they need to protect their political and economic power, the capitalists think nothing about changing from capitalist democracy to other systems. For example, the CIA and the secret society was an example of this, as were the CIA and the secret society overthrow of the popular democratic governments of Iran, Guinea, and La Patisserie, which suppressed the self-chosen leaders, which suppressed the self-chosen leaders, which were often called bargingers in Europe, and from this word came the term “bargainer,” which was used by American and with religious authorities, remained in control of the gov- ernment’s decisions, but increasing, was nationalist, was still mostly local.

These were the seeds of the new system, capitalism, which was developing while the feudal system was still strong. The strength of the feudal system is what sharpened the contradictions between the then ruling class of land-owning nobles and the new mercantile class, the peasant class, and the emerging body of workers not employed as farmers. The rise of new tools and procedures in agriculture, the growth of world trade and commerce also raised new contradictions and struggles grew as the needs of the nobility and the mi- nority class were being served... The power of the new nobility was also marked by the subjugation of the majority of the people by the minority noble class. The basis of the nobles’ class power was that they owned the land, which was the major means of production for the majority of people. This gave them material power, and the wealth derived from the land dwarfed all others sources of wealth.

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Frankly, should Obama win, most revolutionaries won’t expect anything to change other than the Black masses finally re- alizing their long-held dream of a “Black President” and various sectors using that fact to declare the race issue solved. But I do think an Obama tenure would leave people of color and the poor with a more realistic inter- pretation of how “color doesn’t matter really,” how racism and exploitation are embedded in the system and how the only way the masses will ever get a break is the revolution.
ship of certain weapons, did not yet exist. Tribes grew up the fruits of the work. The idea of private ownership of the means of production, such as it was, and to the sharing of worked in common led to the common ownership of the food together was the only way they could survive. Labor or loved each other any more than at any later age; they did together in small wandering groups, spending almost all of them, as nature ful
how at the time. Frequently, they had no need to develop agriculture because people did not have the tools or know-
qualities leap forward). More settled lives also allowed people developed these new tools, weapons, and methods to use metals – copper, bronze and later iron – to make better tools and weapons (the means of production took a qualitative development). People could be farmed and produced if more people could be put to work. Their superior weapons enabled them to conquer less developed peoples, encourage them to settle and bring them to their lands to work. So the slave system came into exis-
tence. The development of better tools/weapons, more could be produced and communal societies began to develop a surplus of goods; that is, not everyone had to work full time for the group to survive. This surplus could either be divided equally among all or it could go to a few who then were grown to prey to work. At first, the communal system remained, but then some people developed better weapons and knowledge of agriculture. The surplus that these ad-
ances provided was kept by individuals and we begin to see the concept of private property develop. Since certain people developed these new tools, weapons, and methods (excepting of farming) before others, they saw that more smartly or loved each other any more than at any later age; they did it because working together, hunting and gathering plant food together was the only way they could survive. Labor worked in common led to the common ownership of the means of production, such as it was, and to the sharing of the fruits of the work. The idea of private ownership of the means of production, except perhaps for personal ownership of certain weapons, did not yet exist. Tribes grew up over the years and they shared their common goods. While there may have been occasional fighting between differ-
ent tribes. Instead, the people lived and shared equally among themselves. There was no exploitation, classes or class struggle.

Primitive communalism was by far, the longest-lasting system that existed everywhere on Earth. When human be-
ings first appeared, we lived in small groups and survived in primitive communal families, clans and tribes, sharing and working together for thousands and tens of thousands of years.

Slave Owning

Next we see the slave owning system. It must be noted that this was only one major way of organizing the whole world did not develop all at once. Some areas moved ahead while others remained at the lower level because of the particular conditions and situations in each area. We can still see the older parts of the world today where feudal type (peasant and landowner) relations exist, but mostly the world is capitalist with some areas having other types of relations.

As primitive communal groups learned how to better use their environments, some became less nomadic. This helped bring about the beginning of agriculture (the de-
liberate culls of crops and domestic animals) which also led to more permanent settlements, since it was less necessary to follow and hunt wild animals. This in turn led to the slave owning system. Where new people moved to use metals – copper, bronze and later iron – to make better tools and weapons (the means of production took a qualitative development). People could be farmed and produced if more people could be put to work. Their superior weapons enabled them to conquer less developed peoples, encourage them to settle and bring them to their lands to work. So the slave system came into exis-
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graph and Martin Stolar of the National Lawyers Guild, recounted that in their vast experience with grand juries, the public has never been excluded from hearings on motions to quash, nor have such motions ever been filed under seal. The court ordered briefs on the secrecy issue, as well as a showing on the motion to intervene, and ordered the government to respond adequately to the motion to quash and reveal whether the subpoenas or grand jury questions were found in illegal electronic surveillance.

The motions will be argued on July 28. If they are denied, and if Frontera and Torres refuse to collaborate, as they have publicly stated, the ranks of Puerto Rican political prisoners will unstably grow by two. This swelling of the ranks would take place one month after the adoption of the annual United Nations Decolonization Committee resolution, affirming the application of international law requiring decolonization to the case of Puerto Rico, and if Frontera and Torres refuse to collaborate, as they have publicly stated, the ranks of Puerto Rican political prisoners will unstably grow by two.

Carlos Alberto Torres and the Network are preparing his parole case (which as of this writing) is set for February 2009 as well as engaging in a fundraising campaign for his pottery workshop, El Cemi. Carlos is also adjusting to his new surroundings, after being transferred to FCI Pekin, IL. For more information on the campaign, please email alejandro@boricuahumanrights.org.

Oscar Lopez Rivera has written several articles, one on the UN Decolonization Committee hearings this past July, for Jericho as well as produced several new paintings.

To view them, and for more information on Puerto Rican Political Prisoners, please visit: boricuahumanrights.org

Oscar Lopez Rivera #87651-024

Terre Haute, IN 47801

U.S.P. Terre Haute

Call to Action

BY MARYL BUCK

No one is born a political prisoner. We each become a political detainee from whatever time or place in which our conscience and imperative to challenge injustice and inequality developed.

The U.S. political prisoners and POWs are doctors, scientists, workers, artists, unemployed people and the disenfranchised, marginalized and historically oppressed. Most of them are anti-imperialist and anti-colonialists and have carried on the tradition of seeking justice, living with compassion and clear eyes even inside these cruel, deranged prison cages.

As an internationalist, I am outraged at the war, the torture of prisoners, assailing and driving civilians into exile from Iraq and Afghanistan to right here in the U.S. in New Orleans, LA. I would hope that all the political prisoners and POWs also support women’s equality and freedom world-wide. There has been much foot-dragging when it comes to women’s liberation which has not only impoverished the resources of newly-liberated nations but has also played a major role in the ability of many countries to remain free of the shackles of neo-colonialism and anti-democratic political, social and economic conditions.

While different ones of us struggle on different fronts, let us hope that we all remain standing to support the right to self-determination of nations, and end to the hierarchy of capital, nation, race and gender, and for that principled piece that will aid life to survive on this planet.

Most of the U.S. political prisoners have been imprisoned for 25 years and more, though as the U.S. continues its wars and pillage, there are many younger U.S. residents detained as political prisoners. Meanwhile, other nations that have held political prisoners for decades are releasing their prisoners. Germany not long ago released long-held Red Army Faction prisoners held more than 25 years.

Let the conscience of the world, represented in the UN, speak out in the name of the U.S. political prisoners and POWs.

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ings), but because they confront a different set of material circumstances and thus have a different type of economic system (a way of making and distributing the necessities of life). The social system and consequently political organizations are based. We have a different system and this is what leads us to think, feel and act differently. It is not any particular tendency on the part of any people, but nearly all the social orders of a society, although leaders and religions do play a major role (as at one time in the U.S. under the right wing and at garrison victories). It is mainly the specific concrete material conditions of that society at that time in history that determine, overall, how people think and live and how they see themselves and the world. It is people’s social being that determines their social consciousness.

The third feature of materialism is that it recognizes that all things are fully knowable and understandable, if not now, then at some future stage of development. Contrary to capi-
talist idealism, which denies the possibility of knowing the world and its laws and holds that the world is full of secrets that can never be known to science, materialists show that the world and its laws are fully knowable, that knowledge of the laws of nature, tested by experiment and practice, is real knowledge hav-
ing the validity of objective truth. Further, there aren’t any things above being known in the real world. There cer-
tainly are things that are still unknown, but these will be discovered and made known by the efforts of science. This includes that knowledge of things that are seemingly a secret story. Hundreds of years ago they used to argue that the earth was flat, that the sun revolved around the earth, that eclipses of the sun and moon were caused by gods and so on. Today, even little children know these things are not true. In the same way, what we have yet to discover is not something magical, esoteric, or something that our children will have the task of making known.

There is a final factor to consider about materialism. What is the single most important thing that decides what ma-
terial conditions exist in a society at any given time? Who owns the products produced by the workers (the forces of production)? This term describes the relationship between the workers and machines they use to produce goods and what is done to the means of production and the goods produced by them. The relations of production answers the question of who owns the products produced by the workers (the forces of pro-
duction), using the machines/tools (the means of produc-
tion). There are only three general categories of relations of production: cooperative, exploitative and a combination (partly cooperative, partly exploitative).

If workers collectively own their own factory and their own means of production, then they would also own what they produced. This would be cooperative relations of pro-
duction.

If a capitalist corporation owns the factory, the work-
ers would not own anything they produced. This is explo-
litative relations of production. Here the workers get so many dollars for each hour of their labor. If the workers are prisoners, they will get so many pennies an hour. In

Geography is important. Land changes, rivers move, moun-
tains rise up and wear away, but this happens very slowly in physical time. However, human beings can change places on the globe, and long-standing political and social changes, drawing upon the land and its resources. Look-
ing at the U.S., for example, we see that about 400 years ago the Spanish conquistadors came here (built homes and a society for themselves that grew and developed. About 230 years ago, they fought a violent independence war (the American re-
olutionary War) and brought about great changes in their society. One hundred years later, the democratic revolu-
tion moved qualitatively forward, again through a violent struggle (Civil War), through which Black people won le-
gal rights (on paper at least). This also gave federalism and industrial development full control of the economy and government. Previously, slave-owning agrarian landlords shared political and economic power with the industrial and financial capitalists. Over the last 150 years, however, labor and civil rights struggles raged, gaining labor and political rights for broad sections of the people, including women. Yet 50 years later, women have not changed places in society. We have not changed in any sense greater, except for human-made changes like cities and environmental damage, etc. We have to say that geography alone, because it changes so slowly, is not the most important factor either.

The single most important factor in determining what ma-
terial level a society is on is the means of production. The means of production is a term that describes the instru-
ments and resources used to create the goods that a society needs and wants. The means of production primarily refers to machines and tools, but it also includes natural resources and land.

Closely associated to the means of production are the forces of production, which simply means the workers and their knowledge of how to make things. Connected to this, and also important, are the relations of production. This term describes the relationship between the workers and machines they use to produce goods and what is done to the means of production and the goods produced by them. The relations of production answers the question of who owns the products produced by the workers (the forces of pro-
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8
The Jericho Movement: 10th Anniversary

BY JALIL MUNTAM

The effort to build support for U.S. Political Prisoners is far less than the 10-year existence of the Jericho Amnest Movement. The struggle in support of political prisoners has existed sinceichte slavery and the abolitionist movement in this country. Often, various communities band together to demand the release of those who fought against racism, sexism and environmental contamination. We are forced to make whole what the corporate government has sought to exploit and destroy.

It is in this rich history of struggle that the Jericho Move- ment evolved and came into existence. From out of the Free Angela Davis movement, the Free the San Quentin 6 movement came the Free the Panther 21, Free the N.Y. 3 and the Move 9 to the continuing struggle to Free Leon- ard and Mumia Abu Jamal. All of these struggles further indicate how over the centuries and decades there has been a continuum of U.S. corporate govern- ment repression5 and efforts to fight back leading to activist, dissenters and revolutionaries being captured and imprisoned.

Today, we are in an unique position to build a united and uniform national organization that represents the issues and concerns of U.S. political prisoners. We are able to build a national and international determination to de- mand amnesty — calling for their immediate release and in- ternational support, 3. To do this, we need to build a movement that the U.S. Senate Select Committee condemned. The importance of demanding, for example, the reopen- ing of Cointelpro hearings. In this regard, it is possible to point to direct an illegal and unconstitutional government opera- tion that the U.S. Senate Select Committee condemned.

The Jericho Amnest Movement is historic in what it seeks to achieve in terms of forging a coalition of activists con- centrated in the support of U.S. political prisoners. It has been established via a petition to the United Nations, wrought by International Tribes to repress dissident and usher in State overt fascism in this country.

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If the information is bad or our analysis is wrong, we are like the chicken trying to hatch a rock; no matter how good our thinking is, we will never hatch correct conclusions.
power of the UNITED STATES and its creditors.” (Emphasis added)

Furthermore, pursuant to Title 28 U.S.C. 3002 (15) (a), the United States is a Federal Corporation. Title 28 U.S.C. 3002(15) (v) assures us that all departments of the U.S. is part of the corporation. The Commerce Department acquires birth certificates via county and state municipalities, which contractually, makes these live births ultimately commerce property of the U.S. Corporation, with a monetary value attached to each certificate.

Jalil A. Muntaqim, Co-founder of Jericho An- nesy Movement

The Jericho Movement Change Address: P.O. Box 301057
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MOVE Update: Parole Hearing

BY MOVE

In April 2008 the MOVE 9 were denied parole despite us doing 30 years in prison and being highly recommended for release by the prison administrations. The parole board claims their reasons for denying us parole is, we didn’t take responsibility for the crime by not admitting guilt. They want people to think that if we had said we were guilty, we wouldn’t have been tried, given the same charges, but 3 people were released when they said they were not MOVE members. The judge sent 9 innocent people to prison for the claim of the, we are MOVE; looking at 3 other people in the basement of the MOVE house, when the cop was shot, who were tried separately from the 9 of us. But the judge said everybody in the basement of the MOVE house when the cop was shot is guilty - meaning that 12 people should be in prison for murder of one of us or something. Judge and said statement and the release of the other 3 people who were in the basement that day proves that the MOVE 9 ain’t in prison because we didn’t admit guilt, but because we kept in prison because we are MOVE members committed to JOHN AFRICA.

Judge Maimed stated in an article a few days after he sentenced us that “MOVE members have said they are a family and so I sentenced them as a family,” but we were being tried for murder not being a family. Sending us to prison for being a family is a contradiction of the charges, which is like trying a person for a rape they did not commit and finding them guilty of arson when they are innocent of arson and rape.

Philadelphia officials know MOVE didn’t kill nobody but they want us to face the public and nervous the bloody repu-
tation. They murdered 11 of our family members May 13, 1985, because our family was pushing for an honest inves-
tigation into the death of our family members. Each one of murder not one cop or official spent a day in prison. This horrendous act of injustice has caused people around the world to be outraged. It has drawn people to the MOVE’s contradiction in every single thing, and this, more than all else, causes its motion and development. External forces are also important, but dialectics understands that external conflicts causes change, while internal causes are the basis of change. For example, a chicken sitting on an egg will lead to a baby chick, while the same chicken canBarButton through a series of steps between internal and external contradictions are the most important factor in the develop-
ment and motion of not just the egg, but all things.

Similarly, dialectics shows us that while the capitalist sys-
tem and government might seem powerful, the less visible realities of life, ideas and general conditions of work and existence carried around in the hearts, minds, and lives of the people. The struggle to advance freedom and development of mankind is the more powerful force. We see glimpses of it now and then, during the middle of an uprising, on a solid picket line, at a rally, or even when a group of oppressed people sit down to
gether and discuss how to get out from under the injustice. Thus, we see that the people’s consciousness is a force that has always been present to some degree, and what will eventually take over the old system. Of course, this does not happen without a lot of pain and struggle and, es-
pecially, it will not happen until we, the people who are the victims of injustice, begin consciously pushing and fight-
ing for change.

This, then, is an introductory definition of dialectics, a method that teaches us how to observe and analyze the movement of contradictions in things in the real world and, on the basis of such analysis, to find ways to resolve the contradictions and thus bring about a new thing or situa-
tion.

Put another way, dialectics is the scientific method of un-
derstanding how things are and how they change. Dialec-
tics recognizes: 1) that all things are connected; 2) that all things are changing; 3) that quantitative changes (changes in size or amount) are step by step changes that lead to qualitative chang-
es (changes in essence or type) which come about swiftly or abruptly (and in the case of society, violently and abruptly), transforming the old into a new (how and situation or 4) that the primary basis of all change and movement is the internal contradiction that exists in all things.

So when we face a problem, we should look at its internal motion. We should look at the various aspects of the con-
diction, examine its connections to other things, determine what the progressive new aspects of the situation are and how they are working against the old and external things. Then, finally and most importantly, we determine how our own actions on the problem will speed up these new progressive aspects to the point that a quali-
tative change, or a change that brings the new force to the dominant position, can be made.

Historical

The historical part of dialectical and historical materialism means that there is a scientific way of understanding the same tool of materialist dialectics. History then becomes (1) understandable not as a series of accidents or mistakes of history; (2) the conscious and active role of material forces that are connected, in motion, and chang-
ing into new forms; (3) progressively, changing the world; changing their form. Therefore, we can see that there is no so-called “eternal” principle of history, except change it-
self, and every system must be seen in its own conditions, time and place. Struggle and change builds up the pres-
sure of internal contradiction until complete transforma-
tion, including the basic social relationship, suddenly occurs. Nonsense like the so-called “eternal right” of capitalist private property thus makes as much sense as the so-called “divine right” to rule everything ancient (and some present) kings and queens claim. Dialectical understanding allows us to sweep aside all arguments that there are unchangeable situations like the subjugation of peasants to nobility in feudal times or workers to capitalists in modern times.

Materialism

Materialism is the way of understanding or interpreting the world that sees the real, physical, or material things around us as what this planet is really made of. Many an cient philosophers used semi-materialist forms of under-
standing to explain the world. It wasn’t until Marx and Engels developed the dialectical method in connection with the materialist understanding though, that we had a scientific method of studying the development of human kind. In addition, it wasn’t until 1917, when the Russian people kicked out the capitalist rule and the beginning of socialism. Since that time, Marx and Engels and many college professors, etc. – either do not un-
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derstand the subjugation of peasants to nobility in feudal times or workers to capitalists in modern times.
cess of movement from one level to a completely different level. This is described as the quantitative change or movement at some point leading to a qualitative change. This means that things don’t just repeat or go in circles. Because a thing is connected and influenced by many other things, it is moved step by step (quantitative change) up to a certain point, where the thing then rapidly and abruptly makes a complete change (qualitative change) in itself. Let us take an example of this in the world of nature by looking at water, which has the property of changing form. If we apply heat or cold to water, it changes degree by degree (quantitative change), until it reaches a certain point. There the water abruptly changes its form (qualitative change) to steam or ice. It makes a complete change. This same process of change is true for all things. Take a society for instance. As methods of industry change, as inventions are made, as people create their necessities of life in new ways and learn new things, and as numerous other factors change, sooner or later the institutions, including governmental structures, have to change. The power has to be moved from the hands of one class of people to another. The new ruling class will then begin building new institutions and methods of running society (new political, social and economic structures).

The American colonists mentioned above, for example, were at first loyal subjects of England. But as this country developed and shipping and farming grew and commerce and manufacturing developed, the colonial government’s system of taxation and regulation became obsolete to the point of actually holding back the development of the industrial and commercial development and growth in the colonies. Since English rule did not allow the qualitative change the expansion demanded, some of the colonists became influential and some of the American public began to organize to get rid of the old order. After a period of peaceful attempts to secure the needed changes, the Revolution began in 1776 and after the successful completion of this war against imperialism, a new system of government was established. This new system allowed a much greater degree of independence for the development of economic and social life.

This new system was essentially a capitalist and slave owning regime in which a minority elite of property, plantation and business-owning white males had the power. The power was based on control of resources and commerce, freed itself from the restrictions of feudal privileges administered by English monarchy. Though a qualitative change had preceded it, that change was not as great a qualitative step as that made by the Bolsheviks in overthrowing the Russian monarchy, also mentioned above. In the American Revolution, the genocide practiced against the Native population was not reversed, Black slavery was not abolished, the conditions of indentured servitude were not improved. Many poor white men remained disenfranchised, and women of all colors and classes could not vote and had even fewer rights than their men. A new ruling class replaced the old, new contradictions emerged and the seeds were sown for the next great qualitative change, toward which we are working today. The system established 200 years ago was far from perfect and still has its problems. Although significant progress has been made in increasing popular freedom, today the system is still not working adequately for anyone concerned with protecting democracy. Although we have gained more freedom, today our government’s system is still not working adequately for anyone concerned with protecting democracy. The government has been denied control because we maintain our innocence. Phila. officials and cops admitted to murdering 11 Move people 5 of our children and not one of these cops or officials have ever apologized, shown any remorse and they continue to minimize their crime. Every year on May 13th, when the murder of our family members is remembered, Phila. officials, namely D.A. Lynn Abraham who opposed our being paroled, says to people, “it’s time to move on,” well when are they going to apply that to Move. Thirty years is enough - Move should be released and let us move on. That is the solution to the unrest in Phila. between Move and the city.

The fourth point, though last, is the most important one in order to understand and use materialist dialectics. Number four states that besides all the outside influences on a thing (and let us remember we are talking about everything that exists), the thing in question has internal contradictions. Everything has two opposing aspects (internal contradictions) and each set of these opposite aspects forms a contradiction. When we speak of a thing we are really talking about a set of opposites that struggle with each other, yet coexist and combine to form the thing itself. There is no up without down, no cold without hot, no victory without defeat, no capitalist class without a working class, etc. When a ball is thrown in the air two contradictory forces are at work, the upward (downward) force to balance and increase, and downward (upward) force to bring the ball down. When gravity is weaker, the ball goes up. When gravity becomes stronger the ball changes direction and falls down. Likewise, in modern society we have two main classes, the capitalist class or bourgeoisie and the working class or proletariat. Although the two classes have different interests, they coexist together and form one society. As long as the capitalists hold the upper hand in the society, they can dictate the rules to a great degree and will do so to their own advantage. While we, the working class, are kept in the secondary or weaker position, the bourgeoisie take the capitalist form. But when the working class turns this around, when we assume the dominant position of the contradiction, when we become the class in control of our society, we will have the greater say, we will dictate how and why the society will develop and grow. In other words, the seeds of the new are present even in the old, when the old is still powerful.

...the seeds of the new are present even in the old, when the old is still powerful.

The racist apartheid government of South Africa released Nelson Mandela after 27 years in prison. Even though the stand against apartheid was seen as illegal, the U.S. government applauded his release, criticized and condemned the apartheid government of South Africa for the murder and unjust jail of the people of South Africa. The U.S. government is committing the same crimes against Move - being arrested for a political crime and keeping us in prison because we maintain our innocence. Phila. officials say that Move people since 1972, and keeping us in prison because we are not a threat to society. This is not just a Move issue this is an issue of injustice. If people let this government continue to do this to Move, the government will do the same thing to you, your children and all of those you love.

To Quote JOHN AFRICA (quote)

When a person sends innocent people to prison, those who think this violation stops with the victim are much as a prisoner of hite tyrant as those behind the prison wall. When an innocent person is sent to prison like geese, the principle of innocence is under attack and the innocent of all the innocent is assaulted, an innocent example is a free example. Those who are silent about the condition of the innocent are silent about the position of freedom. When innocence is jailed it ain’t just John Brown that is jailed. Freedom is jailed because freedom does not stop with John Brown no more than innocence stops with John Brown’s mother - end quote, long live John Africa!

Remember the fight the MOVE Organization is waging in the courts and prisons is for your sons and daughters too. The drugs, the beatings, the rape of men and women by prison officials and inmates exist, the mental cruelty prisoners have to endure exist, and unless you are rich you and your children are not immune to these conditions...JOHN AFRICA

For more information, check out www.onamov.com
I want to alert the public to the horrors of the mass incarceration industry. He said, “Why? Nobody cares about prisoners.” I suppose he’s correct.

In a country that adheres to a code of individual vengeance, a tendency toward torturing individuals seems a logical progression. Employing extraordinary rendition, among other techniques, the U.S. presently holds up to 27,000 people in secret prisons around the globe doing God-knows-what to them...but...relax...we are assured by moral arbiters like Bush, Dick Cheney and John Yoo that it’s all legal. Why do they get away with it? Because everybody in those secret prisons or in Guantanamo or Bagram AFB or Abu Ghraib are terrorists, that’s why. You know...terrorists.

Worse, the average American believes this crap. A drumbeat of patrioticuga is rhythmically hammered into Ameri- can brains through mainstream media mantras presented by well-coiffed news-readers, embedded in the back pock- ets of powerful local, state-wide, national, and international corporate mouthpieces. The audience swallows this hypnotic swill wholesale, even if they don’t believe it.

Although mass incarceration has become a useful method for social control of millions, particularly poor people with a special emphasis on people of color, one category of inmate has never been interned in U.S. prisons, political prisoners. There are no political terrorists...er...prisoners in the United States.

Inmates are dying due to the lack of medical care because there are too many prisoners straining the inadequate health services. No state agency, few legislators or any governor of either major political party has the courage to address this catastrophe.

Recently, I heard a radio interview with the economist Dr. Michael Hudson, from the University of Missouri. He discussed the causes of America’s recent economic collapse... war, greed, corporate theft...and the rather glum prospects for the near future. I told some prisoners about Hudson’s declarations and stated that soon, if not already, California will be incapable of paying for its prison debt to keep 160,000 inmates. They said, “Good! They’ll have to let us out!” I thought, “Hmm-mm.” I then told the same info to a much more politically savvy inmate. She said, “Omgod! They’ll lock the gates, stake out the pe- rimeters with sharpshooters, and these places will become prisons.” But...Nobody cares about prisoners. There are no political prisoners in the United States.

That’s one reason that it’s so difficult to organize support for political prisoners. Americans believe that if you’re in prison - hell, if you’re merely indicted – you’re guilty! And therefore, say prisons, we have to see all the related aspects. Of course, not every connection between things is of equal importance. Deciding which are the most significant connections at any given time in the situation being studied is also important. Looking at things and their connections in a dialectical materialist way helps us look at only one thing in a narrow increase and decrease way, we will not really see the underlying reasons why the thing in question is happening. By not understanding the connections between things, we often wind up fighting each other (white against black and so on), instead of deal- ing with the real oppressor. We must always, then, view all related aspects from the beginning of any situation to determine what are the connections which are most impor- tant, and how they affect each other.

The second point of materialist dialectics is that all mat- ter, everything, is in motion. Things never stay the same. Instead, something is always arising and developing and something is always disintegrating and dying away. The only real constant is constant motion and change. This is true in all aspects of our lives. The modern materialist dialectical method developed by Marx and Engels and therefore used by us with a much clearer understanding. Materialist dia- lectics goes beyond just seeking the truth of a statement, beyond just understanding that contradictions are present in statements, into understanding that contradictions ex- ist throughout nature and the whole material world. The Marxist dialectical method has four basic features. First, all phenomena of nature (or simply put, all real things) are connected. Second, everything is in constant motion. Third, all phenomena are constantly changing. Fourth, the change and development of things is the result of the interaction of opposing forces or internal contradic- tions within everything. All this is in opposition to what is called metaphysics. Metaphysics sees the world and things in it as static, isolated, one-sided. It views any change there is as simply one of magnitudes, a mere increase or decrease, in quantity on a set stage. Metaphysics is the common phi- losophy advanced by capitalist thinkers and is taught in U.S. schools. In general it is the type of world outlook the capitalist system tries to foist on us so we stay in the dark about what’s really going on.

The first point of materialist dialectics is that all matter – everything is in motion. Not only are, say, people and prisons and courts and cops related, but all life – water, fish, air, people, machines, countries, etc. – all things are organically connected with, dependent on, and determined by each other. In order to understand any one thing, say prisoners, we have to see all the related aspects. Laws, for example, who makes them? Who are they made to serve and protect? Courts: who are the judges? Are they from our backgrounds and communities, or are they rich and privileged? Cops: who do they arrest? Do they collar the petty burglar and pot smoker? Or do they even inves- tigate the corporate executive who daily steals millions by price fixing and other schemes? And who does the system protect? Does it serve the bankers and corporate elites who live off poverty wages in unsafe factories that pollute air, water and land in our com- munities?

Of course, not every connection between things is of equal importance. Deciding which are the most significant connections at any given time in the situation being studied is also important. Looking at things and their connections in a dialectical materialist way helps us look at only one thing in a narrow increase and decrease way, we will not really see the underlying reasons why the thing in question is happening. By not understanding the connections between things, we often wind up fighting each other (white against black and so on), instead of deal- ing with the real oppressor. We must always, then, view all related aspects from the beginning of any situation to determine what are the connections which are most impor- tant, and how they affect each other.

The second point of materialist dialectics is that all mat- ter, everything, is in motion. Things never stay the same. Instead, something is always arising and developing and something is always disintegrating and dying away. The only real constant is constant motion and change. This is true in all aspects of our lives. The modern materialist dialectical method developed by Marx and Engels and therefore used by us with a much clearer understanding. Materialist dia- lectics goes beyond just seeking the truth of a statement, beyond just understanding that contradictions are present in statements, into understanding that contradictions ex- ist throughout nature and the whole material world. The Marxist dialectical method has four basic features. First, all phenomena of nature (or simply put, all real things) are connected. Second, everything is in constant motion. Third, all phenomena are constantly changing. Fourth, the change and development of things is the result of the interaction of opposing forces or internal contradic- tions within everything. All this is in opposition to what is called metaphysics. Metaphysics sees the world and things in it as static, isolated, one-sided. It views any change there is as simply one of magnitudes, a mere increase or decrease, in quantity on a set stage. Metaphysics is the common phi- losophy advanced by capitalist thinkers and is taught in U.S. schools. In general it is the type of world outlook the capitalist system tries to foist on us so we stay in the dark about what’s really going on.

The first point of materialist dialectics is that all matter – everything is in motion. Not only are, say, people and prisons and courts and cops related, but all life – water, fish, air, people, machines, countries, etc. – all things are organically connected with, dependent on, and determined by each other. In order to understand any one thing, say prisoners, we have to see all the related aspects. Laws, for example, who makes them? Who are they made to serve and protect? Courts: who are the judges? Are they from our backgrounds and communities, or are they rich and privileged? Cops: who do they arrest? Do they collar the petty burglar and pot smoker? Or do they even inves- tigate the corporate executive who daily steals millions by price fixing and other schemes? And who does the system protect? Does it serve the bankers and corporate elites who live off poverty wages in unsafe factories that pollute air, water and land in our com- munities?

Of course, not every connection between things is of equal importance. Deciding which are the most significant connections at any given time in the situation being studied is also important. Looking at things and their connections in a dialectical materialist way helps us look at only one thing in a narrow increase and decrease way, we will not really see the underlying reasons why the thing in question is happening. By not understanding the connections between things, we often wind up fighting each other (white against black and so on), instead of deal- ing with the real oppressor. We must always, then, view all related aspects from the beginning of any situation to determine what are the connections which are most impor-
A Basic Introduction to Dialectical and Historical Materialism

What is Dialectical and Historical Materialism?

Dialectical and historical materialism is the most precise way of thinking about and understanding the real world: what goes on around us, why, how it began, where it might and should go. It is a tool for people to use in understanding how and why things happened and in planning how to create the future changes that we know are necessary. In short, it is the world outlook of revolutionary scientific (as opposed to daydreaming or wishful thinking) socialism. This theory was first developed by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. They drew the logical parts, the real truths, from earlier philosophies of ancient dialectics and worked wholeheartedly. In the first time enabled people to understand the full workings of reality, including social life.

Breaking the terms of dialectical and historical materialism down, we will see that the way we examine how real things begin, develop, and end is dialectical, while the way we understand this reality is from a materialist viewpoint. The historical part means that history, the story of humankind, is also scientifically understandable by dialectical materialism.

Why Should We Be Concerned About This Way of Thinking and Understanding What Goes On Around Us?

This is a very legitimate question, especially for us in poor inner-city communities, sweatshop workplaces, jail-like schoolrooms or actual prison cells. The politicians, bosses, cops and a lot of other fools and cowards all have some kind of game they tell us. Answering this question about how to understand and think about the world is not just another game. Nor is it simply an academic exercise to conduct in a classroom or in your head.

If we put our own fantasies and bad-mouth yard talk aside for a moment, we will have to admit we are in a pretty nasty situation, at least or close to it. We are all on the losing end, if not the actual bottom of this system: low-paying, no security, dead end jobs or no jobs at all; unvet, overpriced housing; poor or no medical care; schools that miseducate and often encourage conflict between groups of students. To enforce our subjugation to this social arrangement, the U.S. government’s Bureau of Justice Statistics (in 2008) reports that about 2.5 million people are locked up (over 1.6 million in prisons, 800,000 in jails and over 100,000 in juvenile facilities). Another five million-plus are on bail, probation, parole or house arrest according to a recent Pew Center report. In all reality, very few of us can honestly say we have beaten the system. For working people and the rest of us in the communities, life is just making it week by week.

Most of us in prison are locked up for small-scale scams. Whether it is stealing, dealing or something else, it usually involves a few hundred or maybe a few thousand dollars. These scams are almost always at the expense of some other relatively poor person. They are not usually done by rich owners, whose far more destructive corporate crimes are outside our petty offenses. Others are locked up for victimless crimes - smoking grass, prostitution, etc. Still others are in captivity for crimes of anger, frustration, or despair. Some of us have been railroaded, some convicted for fighting against the government and the state. No, if any of us, can say we have gone a fair break or justice. Almost all of us are剥夺ed of our rights by our means. In our communities, as in captivity, life is a long hustle.

Though we find ourselves on the bottom, many of us are by no means defeated or resigned, and we are always looking for ways to get relief, ways to bring about better conditions. Yet in many instances, when we finally rise up and show our concern and anger, we are only partially successful. All too often we are beaten back or sold out and this leads to further frustration and despair. There are, of course, many specific reasons for various non-successful strikes and movements. But a common and crucial problem is that we really do not know our enemy. We are not aware of how they got their power and control. Not power in the simple sense of say, the warders whom were appointed by the board of trustees or director of prisons — rather the more basic understanding of how the politicians, bankers and corporate heads own and control everything, including our lives. We don’t really know how they maintain this authority, nor where their primary weaknesses are. Likewise, we often have studied and thought our own positions, both our weaknesses and lack of control and our strengths and sources of power, as well as the best methods of using these most effectively. In other words, if we enter a struggle with little or no idea of the future, we can only be successful by luck or chance. This is just as true in our daily battles with landlords, bosses or in institutional actions of actual military engagements. Dialectical and historical materialism can provide us, and all oppressed people, the tools to understand how our situation is conditioned and, more importantly, how we can change this.

The purpose of this pamphlet is not to lay out any specific strategy of struggle. Rather, the hope is that it will help some folks develop this particular and proven method of understanding. Dialectical and historical materialism is a tool — a tool to examine any situation that we may be confronted with. This paper seeks to introduce this tool. All the ideas in it are much more thoroughly explained and demonstrated in numerous books and pamphlets. The purpose of this booklet is to make the more detailed writings a little more accessible.

On the Here and Now

BY HERMAN BELL

I write this to salute Icherio for the years it has been in the storm fighting for liberation and social justice, and to say a few things about a comprehensive strategy to free our PPs.

I urge our friends and supporters to develop a comprehensive package that calls for the release of all our PPs. Rather than addressing their plight on a case-by-case basis, which is how it has traditionally been done since the 70's. It has not been a successful strategy — though one or two brothers have gotten out, too many comrades remain confined, and none of them are getting any younger.

Thus in the traditional case-by-case approach, I see no future for our PP's released from prison. In my view the case-by-case approach confines their plight within the criminal justice system — limiting it to the so-called "criminal justice system". Yet in our case this approach is equivalent to having to find the needle of a constitutional violation in a haystack of a so-called fair and impartial trial and jury verdict. It’s like having Sisyphus in Hell consigned to push a rock up a hill that can be pushed but so far before it tumbles back down again and he continuously has to start over again. Thus the case-by-case is the rock that we’ve been pushed down a hill that the criminal justice hill to get our people out of prison and like Sisyphus we’ve had no success.

Instead, our fight for their freedom ought to be fought in the political and humanitarian arena, where the blind eye of U.S. justice is precluded from impinging or coloring un-fairly the cause motivating their political and humanitarian struggle for social justice. In practically every country since the 70's, political detainees who were imprisoned and impressed without a fair and impartial trial and jury verdict.

By contrast, except for a limited number of Puerto Rican and anti-imperialist comrades, the U.S. has released none of its political detainees. Why not? Why not indeed: in my view this question changes the playing field. Thus places the plight of our PP’s squarely within the political and humanitarian arena, and it lends even more substance to our political and humanitarian arena that we seek rather than in a courtroom where success has stubbornly eluded us. The U.S. could well be ready to engage in this type of discussion for reasons that are beyond the scope of this call.

Such a strategy suggests a more promising outcome than what we’ve experienced in the past; and perhaps our comrades can go home before they grow too old to care.
The SF8: A 37 year-old case

BY CLAUDE MARKS

The San Francisco Eight (SF8), former members and associates of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense, were charged in 2007 with murder and conspiracy charges from 1971! Herman Bell, Jallil Muntaqim (aka Anthony Bottom), Ray Boudreaux, Richard Brown, Hank Jones, Rich- ard O’Neal, Harold Taylor and Francisco Torres range in age from 58 to 73. They are husbands, fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers, and they have been employed for many years in professions including licensed electrician, building engineer, estate appraiser and community court judge. They are well respected in their communities and deeply loved by their families.

The case against the SF8 is a frame up, based on tortured-induced confessions and fabricated evidence. In 1975 this same case was thrown out of court. It has been revived by Homeland Security using funds that are available to target political activists as “domestic terrorists” in the post-9/11 era. ALL CHARGES AGAINST THE SF8 SHOULD IMMEDI-ATELY BE DROPPED!

The case against the SF8 is built on tortured confessions

“Do you remember me?” Those words, smugly uttered in 2003 by Homeland Security deputized agents, Frank McCoy and Ed Erdelatz, sent shock waves of痛み mem-ories through John Bowman (now deceased but named in the criminal complaint against the SF8 as a co-conspirator), Ruben Scott and Harold Taylor. Back in 1973, McCoy and Erdelatz were inspectors with the San Francisco Police Department investigating the death of Sgt. John Coy and Erdelatz were inspectors with the San Francisco Police Department investigating the death of Sgt. John Coy and Erdelatz were inspectors with the San Francisco Police Department investigating the death of Sgt. John Coy and Erdelatz were inspectors with the San Francisco Police Department investigating the death of Sgt. John Coy and Erdelatz were inspectors with the San Francisco Police Department investigating the death of Sgt. John Coy.

In San Francisco, the FBI wiretapped Panther headquarters, infiltrated the chapter, and used every possible avenue to provoke violence within the organization. The case against the San Francisco 8 has to be understood in the context of COINTELPRO’s program to destroy the Panthers, the organization which was called the country’s greatest security threat by J. Edgar Hoover.

Today’s Phoenix Task force is a continuum from COIN-TELPRO,” argues Daro Inouye, Jalil Muntaqim’s lawyer. “The Phoenix Task Force is the umbrella organization that has empannelled various Grand Jury investigations in this case and is overall responsible for this decades-old Panther prosecution. It includes the US Attorney, the FBI, local police agencies including the SFPD, and the California Depart-ment of Justice. Homeland Security money makes the attempt to re-criminalize the Panthers possible.

Homeland Security’s role

McCoy and Erdelatz retired from the San Francisco police department, but immediately after 9/11 they were depu- tized as Homeland Security agents and given a huge federal budget to reopen this dormant investigation. Emboldened by their new position and empowered by a seemingly end-less flow of money, the pair began visiting the eight men and their spouses, as well as relatives, ex-wives, employers (current and former), neighbors and associates all over the country.

McCoy and Erdelatz barged everyone they visited with probing questions, all the while trying to convince them that they were really investigating “white activists” from

Introduction: What is “A Basic Introduction to Dialectical and His torical Materialism and Why is 4strugglemag Printing it Now?”

BY JAAN LAAMAN

This relatively short pamphlet was originally written 35 years ago in N.H. state prison, by a young revolutionary who had recently been thrown into prison for anti Vietnam War activities. It was written to inform and educate small circles of prisoners who were quietly meeting in political awareness study groups. It was often retyped and later on photocopied.

It was read, studied and passed on, hand to hand. From N.H., it made its way to other prisons in New England and later to the federal prison system and beyond. In time, so targeted by the Federal Government and activist organizations also came across this writing and used it to help inform and train their members.

Over the years probably thousands of activists and revolu-tionaries have read and/or studied this booklet. It has been used by certain underground fighting organizations and some public activist groups to help train their cadre. Untold numbers of prisoner study groups across the country have also used it to train members.

This pamphlet lays out the need for, and explains the method of, using scientific revolutionary analysis to break down any problem.

It is only by truly understanding the roots of a problem or situation, that we can begin to plan and ex- ecute solutions and campaigns to overcome the problem, obstacle or enemy.

To really analyze a situation or problem, we should have a scientific structured method to break down the problem to understand its causation. Dialectical Materialism is the best tool to do this. This pamphlet presents a basic picture of Dialectical Materialism, especially to readers who don’t have much or any previous familiarity with it.

This pamphlet has been updated a few times. It was just updated and revised in 2008, primarily by political prisoner Bill Dunne, with the assistance of Jaan Laaman, the origi-nal author of this booklet.

4strugglemag recommends, especially to young readers and activists, that you read and study this material. Make copies, pass them around. It is most useful to sit down with a small group of fellow activists and study it together. If someone has previous knowledge or study experience with dialectical and historical materialism, with scientific revo-lutionary analysis, then they could be the study group coor-di nator. If everyone is pretty much on the same page, take turns leading the reading and discussions. Go over it sec-tion by section in and in at least some sections, line by line.

Although there is serious information in this pamphlet, it is an introduction to scientific revolutionary analysis, and the suggested follow up readings and other more detailed writings on dialectical and historical materialism should be pursued.

Any comments, questions and feedback are welcome. If there is an interest, 4strugglemag will reprint all feedback on this in the next issue.

Communicate to educate - Educate to liberate!
A Basic Introduction to Dialectical and Historical Materialism

the sixties and seventies. For Bowman and Taylor, seeing their torturers again brought the nightmares from 1973 rushing back.

When the visits failed to produce the desired results, the men were harassed and subpoenaed to federal and state grand juries over the course of the next few years. They were required to give fingerprints, DNA samples and eventually were jailed for civil contempt because of their refusal to give testimony before a state grand jury.

Upon their release from jail in 2005, they founded The Committee for the Defense of Human Rights (CDHR) to publicize their experience and the range of human rights abuses perpetrated by the United States government. As members of CDHR they traveled around the country speaking at various venues and sharing their stories. With the help of supporters they created a DVD entitled “Legacy of Torture” and planned its premier for late January 2007 in San Francisco. Five days before the premier, they were arrested, charged and held on $10 million bail. McCoy and Erdelatz had carefully circumvented the San Francisco District Attorney’s Office and had prevailed upon newly elected California State Attorney General, Jerry Brown, to take up the prosecution supported by the federal bankroll.

Building Support for the SF8

A team of dedicated and experienced defense lawyers quickly came together and provided representation for the men. Through their efforts, bail was reduced to amounts the men could raise with assistance from their families and supporters. Herman Bell and Jalil Muntaqim have been imprisoned for over 35 years on another COINTELPRO case and are eligible for parole. Upon their release they resumed their speaking engagements building awareness about their case, COINTELPRO and political prisoners. They have been invited to speak and show the DVD at forums across the country. Support among prominent politicians, actors, lawyers and religious leaders continues to grow as well as among community members and grassroots activists. Danny Glover, Harvard Law Professor Charles Ogletree, Ron Daniels, former Executive Director of the Center for Constitutional Rights, Bill Fletcher, former President of TransAfrica, Michael Ratner, Board President of the Center for Constitutional Rights, Lou Dauway of the World Council of Churches, former Georgia state representative, Cynthia McKinney, Cindy Sheehan and Noble Prize Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu who launched an International Campaign calling for the dismissal of the charges and release of Bell and Muntaqim. The initial signers of the International Call were as follows:

The Most Reverend Dr. Desmond Mpilo Tutu, Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town, Primate of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa; Nobel Peace Laureate 1984

Mainebox Corrigan Maguire, Community of Peace People, Northern Ireland; Nobel Peace Laureate 1976

Betty Williams, Community of Peace People, Northern Ireland; Nobel Peace Laureate 1976

Darryl Jordan, Director-American Friends Service Committee* Third World Coalition (Nobel Peace Laureate 1947)

William Wardlaw, Executive Director’s Leadership Council, Amnesty International* (Nobel Peace Laureate 1977)

* Organizations listed for identification purposes only

WEAKNESSES OF THE PROSECUTION’S CASE

• Defense motions make clear reference to missing exculpatory evidence including “negative comparisons” of latent fingerprints by FBI fingerprint examiners from 1971 and 1975.

• No DNA samples match any of these men.

• The government hoped that the Grand Juries would pressure someone into cooperating with their prosecution. Instead the brothers refused to cooperate and built unity.

• The prosecution hoped that the charges and arrests would break someone. The opposite has happened and the SF 8 are using this as an opportunity to organize, build a movement against repression, and talk about other political prisoners, torture and COINTELPRO.

• The case continues to depend almost entirely on the tortured statements that have been discredited and thrown out of courts in the 1970s.

The Abu Ghraib/Guantánamo Connection

Abu Ghraib, Guantánamo and Extraordinary Rendition have exposed the ugly reality that the U.S. employs and backs torture in prisons and detention facilities around the world in direct violation of international law. The U.S. has ignored the international outcry and instead has tried to legitimize its use of torture as necessary in its war against terror. The case of the San Francisco 8 extends the effort to make torture an acceptable practice to a domestic case. The prosecution is hoping that what was inadmissible 35 years ago has now been normalized. This case could set an intolerable moral standard and a disastrous legal precedent.
Meanwhile, the support committee is circulating an open letter to Jerry Brown, demanding that all charges be dropped even while support across the country builds. Visit www.freethesf8 for more information on this.

In the spring of 2008 the original conspiracy charges against five of the men were dismissed because they had exceeded the statute of limitations. Similar motions to dismiss on behalf of the remaining three men charged with conspiracy will be reargued after the preliminary hearing. Richard O’Neal was charged only with conspiracy and is no longer a defendant in this case. However, immediately after the dismissal of his conspiracy charges the prosecution served him with a subpoena to testify on its behalf against his former co-defendants at upcoming hearings.

In 2009, the preliminary hearing along with hearings on a number of defense motions including motions to dismiss will begin.

The importance of community support for the SF8 has been consistently felt in the courtroom. People of all ages flock to the court proceedings and frequently high school classes can be seen in attendance. What better way to teach them about civil and human rights than to bring them to court to watch “justice” unfold?

For more information about the SF8 go to www.freethesf8.org  Please donate generously and help to spread the word about this important case.

**Hip-Hop Wrong!**

**BY JALIL MUNTAQIM**

In the rhythm of an urban jungle we hop-scotch across a body chalk-out on asphalt, we hip-hop without reason or knowledge of the time in rhyme, lock-step to a funky beat, finger-popping and heads nodding to a death march of lyrics setting a tone without hesitation of self-annihilation.

Coming to terms with the spoken word whose message is to suffer peacefully with your eyes closed to a racist reality. Just as there is a calm before the storm, a tornado of destructive music rumbles through your brain, leaving in its wake the shame of what happened yesterday – fragmented memories slammed against the wall of today’s tragedies.

Lessons unlearned - karma repeated in a future term. As capitalists capitalize the capital flies the racist flag – bars and stars or stars and stripes, when they come at night it doesn’t matter they bring the same fright, a lead coated hangman’s noose shaped like a dum-dum, you can’t run to afraid to fight intoxicated by the illusions of their might. And the band play on with a bass-line that thumped in syncopation to slamming drums to a drugged-out hip-hop nation.

**Oppression Is!!!**

**BY KAMAU TEBOGO ZULU DAMALI**

Oppression is slave boats, shackles and bloody whips; sick infants being tossed out of ships, women being raped, men being eviscerated – wizened to wimps; Oppression is the mugging of Alkebulan/Afrika, Asia, Australia, and what is now known as the Americas; Oppression is HIV/AIDS orchestrated by Europe to destroy entire villages and to orphan millions of children;

Oppression is rapacious pale faces with blue eyes, lost Black, Brown, Red, Yellow men strapped with techniques and abused little babies with never ending cries;

Oppression is the United States House of Representatives, where bills are passed to manufacture more prisons, to keep the wealthy ones rich and the poor ones in check by way of Truth-In-Sentencing;

Oppression is the U.S. military invading nations in the name of democracy and liberation, when its true aim is plunder and subjugation;

Oppression is the heinous molestation of young precious children, the horrific discrimination of all women and the systemic marginalization of poor people.

Oppression is the death penalty, where hundreds of innocent people reside, where close to a thousand, over the years, have met their demise, where government decides who dies; what week, what day, what month, what year, what time;

Oppression is the FBI and DEA who infest economically disadvantaged communities with drugs and guns to justify modern day slavery;

Oppression is immense hunger and starvation, utter poverty, unemployment and Kapital exploitation;

Oppression is police brutality; violent beatings, excessive shootings, racial profiling, false imprison-ment – and they claim to serve and protect humanity;

Oppression is the Department of Corrections, where injustice, persecution and repression is the normal practice

Oppression is the United States Government... Yeah, That’s what oppression is!!!

Kamau Damali
S/N Raynell Morgan 279380
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Boscobel WI
USA 53805
Under cross-examination, Katenies was asked by the Crown lawyer if she would accept paying a cash bond. She replied, “That would be extortion at this point because justice has not been dealt with.” She added, “I don’t see why you should incarcerate me and beat me into submission without answering my question.”

She refused the accusation of contempt, stating, “It is [your law] and your constitution that you keep talking about. Why do you continue to ignore me and our people, who have our own land and constitution?”

In his final submissions, the Crown argued that Katenies “has nothing but complete disdain for the laws of these courts,” adding: “Youth, Worship, both mother and daughter don’t recognize our jurisdiction.”

The Crown asked the court to keep Katenies in custody.

Nonetheless, the presiding Justice of the Peace, Ms. Leblanc, decided to release Katenies under certain basic conditions: that Katenies reside with her mother and notify the Akwesasne police of any change of address (Katenies has lived with her mother for the past eight years, since the death of her father); that her mother post a surety (a $1,000 bond without a deposit); and that Katenies appear in court or designate counsel to appear in court for her. Her next court date has been set for July 14, 2008, at 9am at Cornwall’s Superior Court.

The following is an excerpt from a recently released report by Mohawk Nation News (MNN), “written in consultation with family members and with direct witnesses to the events described.”

On June 14, Katenies, Kahentinetha [two Mohawk grandmothers, both part of the MNN network and known for their outspoken criticism of US, Canadian and international power structures] and Sakowaiaks [a companion] went through the [Canada-US] border and were told by US federal authorities they were wanted by Canadian authorities. They were stopped. Eventually their vehicles were searched and released. Only for an hour, surrounded by guards. Some Mohawks were told to wait under the canopy. They sat peacefully through the [Canada-US] border and were told by Mohawk Nation News (MNN), “written in consultation with family members and with direct witnesses to the events described.”

She was imprisoned and held incomunicado. They would not let her mother see her or talk to her. She had heard her daughter was injured. She asked several times and was refused. Katenies asked to see her mother. The guards said she didn’t ask for her. She was strip searched...

It was only after the assault on Katenies began that Kahentinetha was ordered to get out of the car. She saw...what they were planning to do to her. Kahentinetha had been beaten by police in the past...

Sakowaiaks was dragged...from the car...They yelled racial taunts and threats at her and kept order...for an hour, surrounded by guards. Some Mohawks were told to wait under the canopy. They sat peacefully through the [Canada-US] border and were told by Mohawk Nation News (MNN), “written in consultation with family members and with direct witnesses to the events described.”

The month of August gained special significance and importance in the Black Liberation Movement beginning with a courageous attempt by Jonathan Jackson to demand the freedom of political prisoners/prisoners of war which the Soledad Brothers’ case were the center of attention.

On August 7, 1970 Jonathan Jackson, William Christmas, James McClain, and Rachelle Magee were gunned down at the Marin County Courthouse Uprising in Aptos, California. This was the first attempt in 1971 in that attempt for freedom. Rachelle Cinque Magee remains the sole survivor of that bid for liberation. He also remains a POW at Folsom prison doing life. Though this rebellion was put down by gory pigs and their agents it was indeed part of the people on the outside in the larger prison as well as those in the concentration camps (prisons), internalized in the same fashion in the African American freedom fighters who sacrificed their lives for the people and the liberation.

On August 21, 1971, almost exactly a year following the slave rebellion at Marin County Courthouse, George L. Jackson (older brother of Jonathan Jackson as well as one of the indigenous people to whom the term “Black Panthers” was given) was assassinated at San Quentin prison in an alleged escape put forth by prison administration and the state to cover its conspiracy. Convicted and sentenced to life, George Jackson was a highly respected and purposely influential leader in the Revolutionary Prison Movement. Jackson was also very popular beyond prison, not only because he was a Soledad Brother, but also because of the book he authored appropriately entitled “Soledad Brother.” This book not only revealed to the public the inhumane and degrading conditions in prison, he more importantly, correctly pointed to the real cause of those effects in prison as well as in society, a decadent Capitalist system that breeds off racism and oppression.

On August 1, 1978 brother Jeffery “Khaturi” Gualden, a Black Freedom Fighter and Prisoner of War, captured within the walls of San Quentin was a victim of a blatant assassination by capitalist-corporate medical politics. Khaturi was another popular and influential leader in the Revolutionary Prison Movement.

An important note must be added here and that is, the Black August Concept and Movement that it is part of and helping to build is not limited to our sisters and brothers that are currently captured in the various prison Kamps throughout California. Yet without a doubt it is inclusive of these sisters and brothers and moving toward a better understanding of the nature and relationship of prison to oppressed and colonized people.

So it should be clearly understood that Black August is a reflection and commemoration of history; of those heroic partisans and leaders that made it possible for us to survive and advance to our present level of liberation struggle. People such as Nat Turner, Harriet Tubman, Gabe Prasser, Frederick Douglass, W.B. DuBois, Marcas Garvey, Paul Robeson, Rosa Parks, M.L. King, Malcolm X, and numerous others in our more contemporary period. It must be further clarified that when we speak of “Cultu re Development,” we are not advocating Cultural Nationalism and/or merely talking about adopting African names, jewellery, dashikis, etc. Our primary interest lies not only in where we came from, but the nature of “WHY” we were forced to fight here, vs. assuming the chair a "Continuous" struggle with the recognition that it is a Protracted struggle and developing the necessary lifestyles to guarantee its success.

On August 20, 1619: First born African captives were brought to England’s North American colony of Jamestown, Virginia.

On August 16, 1768: Charleston, South Carolina. Rebel lions African slaves (known as maroons) engaged British military forces in bloody battle defending their camp which was a haven for fugitive slaves.

On August 30, 1800: Day set for launching Gabriel Prosser’s revolt. Over 1000 armed slaves gathered to defend their freedom for the people and the liberation.

On August 19, 1801: Day set for launching Gabriel Prosser’s revolt. Over 1000 armed slaves gathered to defend their freedom for the people and the liberation.

On August 21, 1831: Slave revolt launched under the leadership of Nat Turner which lasted four days and resulted in fifty-one slaveholders and their loved ones being subjected to rape and murder.

On August 29, 1841: Street skirmish took place in Cincinnati between Africans and Euro-Americans, wherein for five days Africans waged valiant struggle in defense of their women, children and property against brutal, racist terror
Amerikan co-conspirators in Talladega County, Alabama. Freedom (slave) conspiracy uncovered with August 1860: among slaveholders. Only recorded casualties was between fugitive slaves and slaveholders who sought their capture and re-enslavement. Garvey founded Universal Negro Improvement Association, advancing the call for Land, Freedom, and African Nation. African soldiers (in service of Babylon) engaged in street skirmishes that left more than seventeen Euro-American racists dead. USSR contends that not only was such resistance a factor in the slave economy. On the other hand, when one understands New Africans are still an oppressed nation, the reason for such deception becomes clear. Black August contends that not only was such resistance a factor in the destruction of the slave economy, but New African resistance to slavery continues to this day. Herbert Aptheker (the author of "American Negro Slave Revolts") recounts the personal remark of one New African involved in the civil rights struggle: "From personal experience I can testify that American Negro Slave Revolts made a tremendous impact on those of us in the civil rights and Black Liberation movement. It was the single most effective antidote to the poisonous ideals that blacks had not a history of struggle or that such struggle took the form of non-violent protest. Understanding people like Denmark Vessey, Nat Turner, William}

**Black August Program**

Most standard history books tend to either play down or ignore New African resistance as a factor in the destruction of the slave economy. On the other hand, when one understands New Africans are still an oppressed nation, the reason for such deception becomes clear. Black August contends that not only was such resistance a factor in the destruction of the slave economy, but New African resistance to slavery continues to this day. Herbert Aptheker (the author of "American Negro Slave Revolts") recounts the personal remark of one New African involved in the civil rights struggle: "From personal experience I can testify that American Negro Slave Revolts made a tremendous impact on those of us in the civil rights and Black Liberation movement. It was the single most effective antidote to the poisonous ideals that blacks had not a history of struggle or that such struggle took the form of non-violent protest. Understanding people like Denmark Vessey, Nat Turner, William
lives his political convictions. At the time of his arrest for the shooting of a police officer, Zolo was a well-known activist in his hometown of Gary, Indiana. He was an ex-convict who had served most of his sentence before he was also the valedictorian of his CETA federal job training class and had received a scholarship to Purdue University just prior to his arrest. He was involved in the campaign to make Martin Luther King’s birthday a national holiday and had designed a button used by campaigners in Gary. He also started the Black August Project, which was involved in the struggle for self-determination of African people in America.

Since his arrest Zolo has fought the charges against him from his prison cell, often on death row. His tireless efforts have exposed the unfair and racist way his case has been handled by the authorities. He has defended his own rights and the rights of fellow prisoners and jailers alike. His victories, overturning his death sentence twice, have set precedents cited by other prisoners.

As Indiana Circuit Court Judge Steve David wrote in a May, 2005 decision; “Fundamental principles of fairness, due process, and speedy justice” were violated in Zolo’s case. Judge David also pointed out that “The State bears most of the responsibility for the delay between the defendant’s 1982 conviction and the currently pending penalty proceeding.” In 1993, the Indiana Supreme Court overturned Zolo’s original death sentence because the prosecution had failed to turn over a gunshot residue test. In 2002, the Indiana Supreme Court overturned Zolo’s second death sentence because “the jury pool selection process was fundamentally flawed,” including the unconstitutional exclusion of Blacks.

Judge Steve David ruled that prosecutors could no longer seek the death penalty because Zolo’s constitutional rights to a speedy trial and due process would be violated. But prosecutors appealed and two years later, the court ruled that “neither the delay nor any prejudice that Azania may suffer from it violates his constitutional rights. The State may continue to seek the death penalty.” The Court then appointed Marion Superior Court Judge Robert Altice as special judge to preside over Zolo’s new penalty phase, and Judge Steven David was called to active military duty.

Now the Indiana courts have set a new date for a trial before a jury on the sole issue of Zolo’s sentence on October 20, 2008. The proceeding will probably be in Fort Wayne. However, Zolo and his lawyers, Jesse A. Cook of Terre Haute, Indiana and Michael E. Deutsch of the National Lawyers Guild and the People’s Law Office in Chicago are fighting for a change of venue to Gary, Indiana or Indianapolis, both cities with a more diverse jury pool. Zolo hopes that progressive activists will again pack the courtroom to show their opposition to the death penalty as they have in the past.

The Indiana courts have also held that Zolo’s new sentencing proceeding will be conducted pursuant to the current Indiana death penalty statute enacted in 2002, which means that when the trial court judge receives a sentencing recommendation from the jury, he is to sentence the defendant “accordingly,” whether the jury recommends the death penalty, or a term of years. The jury will thus be presented with the stark choice of the death penalty or Zolo’s release within a short time, and the danger is that the jurors will choose the death penalty because they may succumb to media hysteria and believe that a person convicted of killing a police officer is too dangerous to let out of prison.

Zolo Azania #4969
Indiana State Prison
P.O. Box 41
Michigan City, IN
USA 46361

Zolo Azania

Lloyd Garrison etc. provided us with that link to our past that few ever thought existed."

Black August contends that from the very inception of slavery, New Africans helped illegally to commemorate and draw strength from New African slaves who met their deaths in defense of their freedom, to inspire the next generation of New Africans in their fight for freedom. Zolo’s re-sentencing will provide an opportunity for each generation of New Africans faced with the task of liberating the nation, to draw strength and encouragement from the life and death of Zolo Azania.

New African resistance moved decisively into the 1920s and 1930s, when the post-war generation of New African intellectuals and activists who had previously been involved in the struggle for African self-determination in the U.S. emerged as the leaders of the movement to build a new generation of African resistance.

In 1983, the Indiana Supreme Court upheld Zolo’s original death sentence on the basis of the 2002 death penalty statute enacted in 2002, which means that when the trial court judge receives a sentencing recommendation from the jury, the judge is to sentence the defendant “accordingly,” whether the jury recommends the death penalty, or a term of years. The jury will thus be presented with the stark choice of the death penalty or Zolo’s release within a short time, and the danger is that the jurors will choose the death penalty because they may succumb to media hysteria and believe that a person convicted of killing a police officer is too dangerous to let out of prison.

The Indianapolis Star has written that “In Azania’s case, and the evidentiary basis of the most of the responsibility for the delay between the defendant’s 1982 conviction and the currently pending penalty proceeding.” In 1993, the Indiana Supreme Court overturned Zolo’s second death sentence because the jury pool selection process was fundamentally flawed, including the unconstitutional exclusion of Blacks.

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The Indiana Supreme Court has written that “In Azania’s case, the evidence of theSentencing discretion limited by the 2002 death penalty statute amendment, we emphasize again that a trial judge is not expected, and indeed not permitted, to enter a sentence where the sentence, or the manner of arriving at it, is illegal.”

The stakes are high for this next step in Zolo’s more than a quarter century of fighting for justice, for his freedom and for his very life. Those who oppose the death penalty need to continue to get the word out that Zolo is a wonderful person who contributed much to the lives of others and still has much to contribute, and that the government should not be allowed to put him to death.

What can we do to support Zolo?

Plan to come to court in October 2008, and write to Zolo at:
Zolo Azania #4969
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New African organization should be one of resistance. Black August is the antithesis to “celebration” and empty “honor.” Black August attempts to place struggle and sacrifice on center stage. In this respect, Black August summons all progressive people who identify with the legacy of colonial oppression to actively participate in Black August. Thus during the entire month of August in commemoration of those Africans who have made the supreme sacrifice for the cause of African liberation and reflect upon the significance of those contributions as well as to draw closer to the continuing necessity for resistance, we embrace the following as tenets to be practiced during Black August.

Tenets of the Black August Program

1. A fast which historically has been used as an expression of personal commitment and resistance. Hence, from the sunrise until evening meal we will abstain from eating.

2. We abstain from consuming any type of intoxicants for the entire month of August. The necessity for this should be self-evident for all serious participants of Black August.

3. We limit our selection of television and radio to educational programs, i.e. news, documentaries and cultural programs, etc.

4. During BA we emphasize political and cultural studies for individuals involved in BA. Participants in BA should pair off with someone else you know to study and share knowledge of African Affairs.

5. As an outward expression of BA we wear a Black arm band on the left arm or wrist as a tribute to those Africans who have died as a result of colonial oppression. The arm band can be worn either on the inside or outside of your clothing.

Black August (BA) is a revolutionary concept. Therefore, all revolutionaries, nationalists and others who are committed to ending oppression should actively participate in Black August. Such participation not only begins to build the bridges but it is a way to build solidarity that we strengthen ourselves to struggle for victory.

James “Doc” Holiday # 86555-012
P.O. Box 1000
Marion, IL
62959 USA
I Stand Accused

BY DEANDRE WILLIAMS

I stand accused in a land of fools, convicted of a crime never accrued. You see, they claim that I’m a threat to the future of our innercity Black youth because I refuse to let them blind our Black children with all these psycho-social lies and holocaustic half-truths which are specifically designed to perpetuate the progression of genocidal crimes against our own kind by planting seeds of “self-hate” inside the music which our children listen to and embrace, oblivious of the messages machinations to completely eradicate the existence of the entire Black race.

And see…

While these children of ours are busy nodding their heads to the beat, all they’re really doing is nodding off to sleep. But they don’t realize this, cause they’re too caught up in the vibe to recognize the obvious. And you can look into their eyes and see that they’re not even there. I mean, it’s like their minds are ensnared by the illicit practices of psychological warfare, which has caused a lot of these broths and sistas to become lost in the chaos, gambling away their lives with the shillings of ghetto life, killing each other just to make a living in a land of shambles — ridden with strife. Which ain’t nothing but a cemetery surrounded with the flickering flames of sacrificial candles, despite the undying struggle of sistas and brothas like myself who beat our fist against the brick walls of prison cells — in our rebellions fight for our freedom and our rights. With solidarity as the foundation of our final call…

I stand accused…

As one of the few young Black men who understands what this government is trying to do by capturing the minds of innocent individuals like me and you, and using us to nod off to sleep. But they don’t realize this, cause they’re too caught up in the vibe to recognize the obvious. And you can look into their eyes and see that they’re not even there. I mean, it’s like their minds are ensnared by the illicit practices of psychological warfare, which has caused a lot of these broths and sistas to become lost in the chaos, gambling away their lives with the shillings of ghetto life, killing each other just to make a living in a land of shambles — ridden with strife. Which ain’t nothing but a cemetery surrounded with the flickering flames of sacrificial candles, despite the undying struggle of sistas and brothas like myself who beat our fist against the brick walls of prison cells — in our rebellions fight for our freedom and our rights. With solidarity as the foundation of our final call…

And see…

They feed us scraps and mislead us into traps, and whenever we’re in need they flip the script on us and give us their backs. And yet, we continue to pay their paychecks and hustle up their money stacks, while using us to support their statistical facts of recidivism — knowing good and well who the hell is coming back to jail.

It’s like villainism,

The way we’re thrown into these cells and held as hostages — against our will. Imprisoning us in a place where they were meant to dwell: And then they wanna refer to us as “animals” for the acts we allegedly commit, when they’re nothing more than “cannibals.” It’s just that: “We refuse to submit” — regardless of the fact that this is some “real inhumane shit!” Attempting to dehumanize us by changing our names to “digits.”

Zolo Azania Update

Reprinted from the National Jericho Movement Website (http://www.thericjomovement.com/zolozania.html )

Zolo to Face a Third Death Penalty Trial

Indian Supreme Court in a 3 to 2 decision allows the State of Indiana to seek the death penalty for the third time in the case of Zolo Agona Azania.

Indianapolis -- On Thursday, May 10, 2007 the Indiana Supreme Court reversed Boone County Superior Court Judge Steve David’s ruling that barred the state of Indiana from pursuing the death penalty in the case of Zolo Azania. Lake County Prosecutor Bernard Carter appealed Judge Dave’s ruling and that resulted in oral arguments before the Indiana Supreme Court on June 7th, 2006. Zolo, who was convicted of murder in 1982, has spent the last 26 years in Indiana prisons, most of that time on death row. Twice the state has had Zolo’s death penalty verdict overturned by the Indiana Supreme Court due to the prosecution’s suppression of evidence favorable to the defendant, ineffective assistance of counsel, and systematic exclusion of African Americans from the jury pool.

In Judge David’s ruling, he argued that the state could not seek the death penalty against Zolo a third time because of the length of time that had passed since the crime was committed (24 years at that time), and that the delay was caused primarily by the state. Many of the witnesses, material and character, are now deceased and much of the evidence is either missing or destroyed. David also found that a jury at a third sentencing trial would be unduly focused on the “future dangerousness” of the convicted, depriving Zolo of an unprejudiced decision by the jury. Judge David concluded that society’s interest would be best served by barring the state from a third death sentence.

The majority opinion, written by Justice Sullivan and supported by Chief Justice Shepard and Justice Dickson, tries to blame Zolo Azania for the 25 year delay by having the audacity to file appeals to his conviction and death sentence which ultimately exposed mistakes and misconduct by the prosecution in his trials. As stated above, it was this same Indiana Supreme Court that found there was just cause for these appeals. To now blame Zolo for the delays caused by pursuing them is tantamount to blaming the victim.

Justices Boehm and Rucker both wrote dissenting opinions supporting Judge David’s ruling. In his dissenting opinion Justice Boehm found the majority opinion’s arguments for attributing the delays to Zolo as “both novel and indefensible.” Justice Rucker was troubled by the inordinate delay (25 yrs plus) affecting Zolo’s ability to produce character witnesses and cross examine state witnesses.

The state of Indiana has already convicted and held Zolo for over 25 years for a crime for which he has always maintained his innocence. It is only fair that it drops its pursuit of the death penalty that is cruel, inhuman, racist and has no place being used in a civilized society.

Zolo’s lawyers are considering a petition for certiorari to the United States Supreme Court.

Sentencing Hearing October 20, 2008

The Indiana courts have set a new date for a trial before a jury on the sole issue of Zolo’s sentence, which could be the death penalty, on October 20, 2008. Since 1981, for more than 25 years, he has been imprisoned by the state of Indiana. He is recognized by the Jericho Movement and others as a political prisoner. Zolo did not receive a fair trial and has always maintained his total innocence of any involvement in the crime for which he is imprisoned.

Zolo is a prolific writer and an accomplished artist whose work has been exhibited in many places around the country. His writing and his art reflect who he is: A man who...
Running Down the Walls in Boston

On September 14th, folks from all over will come together in the spirit of fitness and social justice. People inside and outside the prison walls will be taking part in Running Down the Walls, a 3k to raise funds for 1010, a national mobilization calling for freedom for U.S.-held political prisoners and prisoners of war. Our goal is to raise $2,000, as well as raise consciousness and mobilize our communities to liberate these Freedom Fighters.

The organizers of the Boston RDTW are in full support of those running on August 23rd, however we have chosen to hold our event in September to keep with our tradition of combining RDTW with a celebration of brother Leonard Peltier’s birthday. This year Leonard will be 64 years old, and has spent the last 31 years in captivity. It is time we come together once and for all to free Leonard Peltier and all political prisoners and prisoners of war! If you’re in the area, please come down to the pond. We will be getting in shape together, and providing much needed resources for our comrades.

Jaan Laaman Legal Freedom Fund
P.O. Box 681
East Boston, MA 02128

In Memoriam

On August 30, 2008, as Issue 11 of 4strugglemag was going to print, political prisoner Bashir Hameed passed away after more than 26 years of unjust imprisonment. Bashir’s supporters and family had been campaigning against the medical neglect he was experiencing despite ongoing complaints of shortness of breath, chest and stomach pains, and a history of heart surgery. We salute Bashir for his long history of inspirational resistance, and we will feature a tribute to him in Issue 12.

A Letter from Colombian Political Prisoners

More than 7500 political prisoners of war in Colombia have a long history of struggle and resistance inside the prison walls. We are a product of the social and armed conflict that rages in our country, between the putrid oligarchy who wages war to protect the interests of the exploiting class, and the diverse social sectors (students, workers, peasants, natives and insurgents) who struggle for emancipation. Because we want to be free, we are victims of assassinations, disappearances, displacement, and mass arrests. A counter-insurgency plan - dubbed Plan Colombia - designed by the CIA and DEA, make extradition a weapon used to dismantle and uproot freedom fighters. The most vile frame-ups have been used against freedom fighters like, Simon, Sonia, Ivan. They have already been tried by North American courts. Three other comrades, Nelson, Efrazin, y Álvaro, have been summoned by the Imperial North, in spite of the Colombian Constitution and international treaties that stipulate that no national can be extradited for political crimes. Prisoners are held in maximum security penitentiaries in Colombia built with money provided by Plan Colombia and directed by the USA’s Prisoner Bureau. These prisons are veritable concentration camps where we feel we have been extradited, since each prison is like a piece of the Empire on our own territory. Despite the on-going repression, we, the political prisoners, have managed to develop our political and organizing work with the help of social sectors on the outside who denounce the injustices of what we live through on the inside. From our jail cells, we continue to struggle for another world which is possible.

Check out the Projet Accompagnement Solidarité Colombie (www.pasc.ca) for more information.

I stand accused...

Because I refuse to be a fool – having paid my dues. I mean, what do I look like starving myself just to stuff their mouths with food? Especially when the government has us so confused that we’ve begun to fool ourselves into believing the dreams that these politicians sell – like crack cocaine on the streets of memory lane. This shit is insane!! I mean – so-called “Negroes” swear they know the game. But if they knew anything about their history and present circumstances, they’d understand the hidden incentives involved – they’re being systematically tamed by their own egos – while watching the wheel of life revolve like the cylinder of a pistol in the midst of a draw: the government done basically gone AWOL…

And see...

A lot of us embrace ignorance, like a rebel without a cause, working against our own selves by helping to make their laws. And I can’t say that I don’t understand this because I do. I mean, it ain’t hard to understand the idiosyncrasies of a fool when analyzing his or her language or studying his or her pattern of behavior – cause their symmetry of stupidity is too deeply imbued...

I stand accused,

Sort of like a nation under siege. In the middle of a battlefield, branded as an enemy, - essentially, because of my insight, I’ve become the cause of all “their” enmity.

You see, I’m not meant to be intelligent, because people of my complexion are regarded as irrelevant. And when it comes to counting votes, our votes are nothing more than “anecdotes” – a politician’s private joke I mean.

Who are we to them when it comes to making decisions – except products of a white collared economy, where our individual identities are as descriptive as anonymity?

While I stand accused… you think about it…

My patience strong!

DeAndre Williams
#99A0052
Upstate Correctional Facility
P.O. Box 2000, 309 Barehill Road
Malone, NY 12953 USA
American Tears

BY NAOMI WOLF - Originally published by the Huffing- ton Post: www.huffingtonpost.com

Naomi Wolf is a mainstream American writer and best-selling author.

I wish people would stop breaking into tears when they talk to me these days.

I am traveling across the country at the moment -- Colorado to California -- speaking to groups of Americans from all walks of life about the war and the 10 steps now underway in America to a violently closed society.

The good news is that Americans are already awake. I thought there would be resistance to or disbelief at this message of gathering darkness -- but I am finding crowds of people who ask me how they can help to stop the war, if I don’t get off. Someone else says that his friend opened his luggage to find a letter from the Treasury saying that they did not appreciate his reading material before. I got into the security lines, I find myself editing my possessions. In New York’s LaGuardia, I reluctantly fished myself putting a hardcover copy of Tariq McKelvey’s excellent Monstering, an expose of CIA interrogation practices, in a garbage can before I get into the security line; it is based on classified information. This morning at my hotel, before going to the airport, I threw away a very nice black T-shirt that said “I am so scared. I look at my kids and I am scared. How do they think there would be resistance to or disbelief at this message of gathering darkness -- but I am finding crowds of people who ask me how they can help to stop the war, if I don’t get off. Someone else says that his friend opened his luggage to find a letter from the Treasury saying that they did not appreciate his reading material before. I got into the security lines, I find myself editing my possessions. In New York’s LaGuardia, I reluctantly fished myself putting a hardcover copy of Tariq McKelvey’s excellent Monstering, an expose of CIA interrogation practices, in a garbage can before I get into the security line; it is based on classified information. This morning at my hotel, before going to the airport, I threw away a very nice black T-shirt that said “I am so scared. I look at my kids and I am scared. How do

But I can’t stand the stories I am hearing. I can’t stand to open my email these days. And wherever I go, it seems, at least once a day, someone very strong starts to cry while they are speaking.

In Boulder, two days ago, a rosy-cheeked thirtysomething mother of two small children, in soft yoga jerseys, started to tear up when she said to me: “I want to take action but I can’t stand the stories I am hearing. I can’t stand to open my email these days. And wherever I go, it seems, at least once a day, someone very strong starts to cry while they are speaking.

In D.C., before that, a beefy, middle-aged thirtysomething mother of two small children, in soft yoga jerseys, started to tear up when she said to me: “I want to take action but I can’t stand the stories I am hearing. I can’t stand to open my email these days. And wherever I go, it seems, at least once a day, someone very strong starts to cry while they are speaking.

The people I am hearing from are conservatives and independents as well as progressives. The cardinal rule of democracy as usual. It is clear that we will need more drastic action than emails to Congress.

More times than I can count, courageous and confident men who are telling me about speaking up, but who are risking what they see as the possible loss of job, home or the ability to pay for grown kids’ schooling, start to choke up. I heard a woman in one gathering started to cry simply while talking about the degradation of her beloved country.

And always the questions: what do we do?

It is clear from this inundation of personal stories of abuse and retribution against ordinary Americans that a network of criminal behavior and intention is catching up more and more mainstream citizens in the United States. It is clear that this is not democracy as usual -- or even the corruption of democracy as usual. It is clear that we will need more drastic action than emails to Congress.

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It is clear from this inundation of personal stories of abuse and retribution against ordinary Americans that a network of criminal behavior and intention is catching up more and more mainstream citizens in the United States. It is clear that this is not democracy as usual -- or even the corruption of democracy as usual. It is clear that we will need more drastic action than emails to Congress.

More times than I can count, courageous and confident men who are telling me about speaking up, but who are risking what they see as the possible loss of job, home or the ability to pay for grown kids’ schooling, start to choke up. I heard a woman in one gathering started to cry simply while talking about the degradation of her beloved country.

And always the questions: what do we do?
Ramsey County Charges
RNC 8 Under State Patriot Act, Alleges Acts of Terrorism

BY BRUCE NESTOR

In what appears to be the first use of criminal charges under the 2002 Minnesota version of the Federal Patriot Act, Ramsey County Prosecutors have formally charged 8 alleged riot leaders in the RNC Welcoming Committee with Conspiracy to Riot in Furtherance of Terrorism. Monica Bicking, Eryn Trimmer, Luce Guillen Givens, Erik Ose- land, Nathanael Seorr, Robert Czernik, Garrett Fitzgerald, and Max Spector, face up to 7 1/2 years in prison under the terrorism enhancement charge which allows for a 50% increase in the maximum penalty.

Affidavits released by law enforcement which were filed in support of the search warrants used in raids over the weekend, and used to support probable cause for the arrest, are based on paid, confidential informants who infiltrated the RNCWC on behalf of law enforcement. They allege that members of the group sought to kidnap police officers with firebombs and explosives, and sabotage airports in St. Paul. Evidence released to date does not corroborate these allegations with physical evidence or provide any other evidence for these allegations than the claims of the informants. Based on past abuses of such informants by law enforce- ment, the Na- tional Law- yers Guild is concerned that such police in- formants have incentives to lie and exaggerate threats of violence and to also act as provocateurs in raising and urging support for acts of vio- lence.

“These charges are an ef- fort to equate publicly stated plans to block- ade traffic and disrupt the RNC as being the same as acts of terrorism. This both trivializes real violence and attempts to place the staged political views of the Defendants on tri- al,” said Bruce Nestor, President of the Minnesota Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild. “The charges represent an abuse of the criminal justice system and seek to intimidate any person organizing large scale public demonstrations potentially involving civil disobedience,” he said.

The criminal complaints filed by the Ramsey County At- torney do not allege that any of the defendants personally have engaged in any act of violence or damage to property. The complaints list all of alleged violations of law during the last few days of the RNC -- other than violations of human rights carried out by law enforcement -- and attempt to hold the 8 defendants responsible for acts committed by other individuals. None of the defendants have any prior criminal history, including acts of violence. Searches con- ducted in connection with the raids failed to turn up any physical evidence to support the allegations of organized attacks on law enforcement. Although claiming probable cause to believe that gunpowder, acids, and assembled incendiary devices would be found, no such items were seized by police. As a result, police sought to claim that the seizure of common household items such as glass bottles, charcoal lighter, nails, a rusty machete, and two hatchets, supported the allegations of the confidential informants.

“Police found what they claim was a single plastic shield, a rusty machete, and two hatchets used in Minnesota to split wood. This doesn’t amount to evidence of an organized insurrection, particularly when over 3,500 police are present in the Twin Cities, armed with assault rifles, concussion grenades, chemical weapons and full riot gear,” said Nestor. In addition, the National Lawyers Guild has pre- viously pointed out how law enforcement has fabricated evidence such as the claims that urine was seized which demonstrators intended to throw at police.

The last time such charges were brought under Minnesota law was in 1918, when Matt Murkin and others organiz- ing labor unions for the International Workers of the World on the Iron Range were charged with “criminal syndical- ism.” The convictions, based on allegations that workers who advocated or taught acts of violence, including acts only damaging to property, were upheld by the Minnesota Supreme Court. In the light of history, these convictions are widely seen as unjust and a product of political trials. The National Lawyers Guild condemns the charges filed in this case against the above 8 defendants and urges the Ramsey County Attorney to drop all charges of conspiracy in this matter.

Bruce Nestor, President
Minnesota Chapter of National Lawyers Guild
3547 Cedar Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55407

out recourse to a lawyer in a U.S. held-prison, abused and terrified for weeks -- and scared to talk once he got home. Another whistleblower in Iraq, as reported in Vanity Fair, held in a trailer all night by armed contractors before being ejected from the country.

Last week contractors, immune from the rule of law, butchered 17 Iraqi civilians in cold blood. Congress mildly ob- jected -- and contractors today butcher two more innocent civilian Iraqi ladies -- in cold blood.

It is clear yet that violent retribution, torture or maybe worse, seems to go right up this chain of command? Is it clear yet that these people are capable of anything? Is it obvious yet that criminals are at the helm of the nation and need to be not only ousted but held accountable for their crimes?

Is it treason yet?

This is an open invitation to honorable patriots on the Right and in the center to join this movement to restore the rule of law and confront this horror: this is not conservatism, it is a series of crimes against the nation and against the very essence of America. Join us, we need you.

This movement must transcend partisan lines. The power of individual conscience is profound when people start to wake up.

Former Deputy Attorney General James Comey said No; he told a colleague that they would be ashamed when the world learned about the Administration’s warrantless wire- tapping. Comey said No: history will look at this torture and disgrace the torturers. A judge today ruled that the U.S. can’t just ship prisoners out of Guantanamo to be tortured at will -- she said No. The Center for Constitutional Rights is about to file a civil lawsuit -- against Blackwater: they are saying No.

In Germany, according to historian Richard Evans, in 1931-1932, if enough Germans of conscience had begun to refuse to blacken the teeth of those with whom they disagreed, the movement must transcend partisan lines. The power of individual conscience is profound when people start to wake up.

If we go any further down this road the tears will be those of conservatives as well as progressives. They will be American tears.

The time for weeping has to stop; the time for confronting must begin.

He is the son of Richard Williams, a long held black propagandist. Williams said in 1931: “I'll speak truth even thru a toothless and beaten mouth. I'll speak truth even thru a toothless and beaten mouth.

I've learned to date and number the pages of letters written and sent to know which ones have been lost, stolen or hidden and when

I’ve known too many scape-goats strong, beautiful self less ones media made into thieves cut-throats and thugs

I’ve said I was scared to join them and scared is exactly what I meant. But I also learned that if you don’t stand tall the first time, then... a punk gets punked out so calling ugly things ugly is a big part of it. What’s all about and in this “Free” Country I’ll speak truth even thru a toothless and beaten mouth.

Netdahe Williams Stoddard lives in Vermont. He is the son of Richard Williams, a long held political prisoner who died in 2005.
Barack Obama and the 2008 Elections
BY JAAN LAAMAN

Clearly, 2008 has been and continues to be a history mak-
ing election year for the USA. The nation is faced with a vast and elec-
tive dilemma: who will be the next President? Clearly, Barack Obama has presented himself as the candidate of change. The people are desperately looking for real change, and Obama has positioned himself as the more anti-war candidate. The ever rising cost of the war in Iraq and Obama's ongoing campaign and possible presidency is a good and positive development that will benefit this country and reach beyond the next election.

The economic crisis and prospects for class struggle
Barack Obama is the first Black person to be the nominee of a major party in the US, and he is the first Black presidential candidate. However, Workers World believes that supporting the candidacy of Barack Obama is not the reason why we are supporting McKinney. McKinney’s “Power to the People Campaign” gets most of its votes from the Reconstruction Party. Activists in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast, together with supporters nationwide, have been developing a program for a political vehicle to fight for the reconstruction of the Gulf and justice for Katrina survivors.

The draft program of the Reconstruction Party is inspired by the program of the original Black Panther Party. The Reconstruction Party draft program calls for, among other things: self-determination for Black people, the relocation of displaced survivors of Katrina back to the Gulf, jobs, healthcare and housing, reparations for Black people, an end to racist terror and political repression, an end to the prison-industrial complex and an end to the war.

McKinney’s campaign is laying the foundation for a radical alternative to the two parties that has demonstrated that the Bush government might push the country into a third war against Iran before the November elections, even though they don’t have an extra army of 2 or 3 hundred thousand soldiers to invade Iran. The Bush government is bogged down in two wars it cannot win and is afraid or unwilling to abandon. The possibility exists that the Bush government might push the country into a third war against Iran before the November elections, even though they don’t have an extra army of 2 or 3 hundred thousand soldiers to invade Iran.

Large sectors of the ruling class in the United States recognize that a President Obama can do more to support and consolidate societal change and progress in the U.S., and this is a good thing. The economic crisis and prospects for class struggle are the key issues in the 2008 elections.

Race, or what some of us call the national question, is central to the 2008 election. But then there is the negative side to this contradictory development. Should Obama win the election (a prospect that shouldn’t be considered certain), the U.S. imperialist, working-class-centered socialist orientation to the globe blame the U.S., at least in part, for slumping economies and global warming. Europeans are more positive towards the U.S. government now than they were in the year 2000, and highly negative views prevail across the Muslim world.

We have no illusions regarding the difficulty that McKinney’s campaign will face, because this presidential election is like none other before it.

Until now, the economic crisis and prospects for class struggle have not been developing a Reconstruction Party as a mass political vehicle to halt the rapid deterioration of their position as the imperialist, working-class-centered socialist orientation to the base with the potential of unlimited growth. Of course, we believe that the struggle should not be con-
lined to the electoral arena, especially as the capitalist rul-
ing class completely dominates the electoral process. We must be in the streets fighting the war, fighting foreclosures and evictions, fighting in solidarity with immigrant work-
ners, etc. However, Workers World believes that supporting the McKinney campaign is a step forward towards the path that the movement needs to take. That is a minimum. It is a higher level of clarity, seriousness, confidence, solidarity and coalition building.

The Obama phenomenon is more than anything else a sign that the period of political reaction, which has held the working class back and weakened revolutionary move-
mments, organizations and their revolutionary ideas, is coming to an end. No matter who wins the election, the magnitude of the spiraling crisis of world imperialism, centered here in the U.S., is going to challenge all the forces who share an anti-
impertialist, working-class-centered socialist orientation to put aside narrow sectarian, views and small differ-
cences that have festered during a long and demoralizing period of world reaction.

The material conditions for resurgence of the working class may reach levels not seen in this country since the 1930s. In order for the working-class movement to grow politically and organizationally, it will take time, experience in the class struggle, and the assistance of con-
scious political forces that are dedicated to reviving the struggle.

What is required of all of us who consider ourselves among the dedicated? At a minimum it is a higher level of clarity, seriousness, confidence, solidarity and coalition building.

Barack Obama has presented himself as the candidate of change. From the begin-
ing, his campaign was backed and pushed by some sectors of the U.S. ruling class. There is more and more of these powerful corporate and moneyed ruling forces have recently thrown their support behind Barack Obama. Large sectors of the ruling class in the United States rec-
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Obama's ongoing campaign and possible presidency is even now opening doors of societal change and progress in the U.S., and this is a good thing. With the possibility that he will try to open doors for U.S. imperialism especially in other countries, this won’t be good for us the people in the U.S., and this is a good thing. If he becomes president, the U.S. corporate interests.

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The threat of a CIA-supported Islamic takeover on the USSR’s southern flank posed an unthinkable military and political challenge to the degenerated workers state. As we wrote at the time: “A victory for the Islamic-feudal insurgency in Afghanistan will not only mean a hostile, imperialist encroachment on the USSR’s southern border. It will mean the extermination of the Afghan left and the re-imposition of feudal barbarism—the veil, the bride price. Moreover, the Soviet intervention offers the possibility of a social revolution in this wretchedlybackwarded country, a possibility which did not exist before.” – Spartacist (English-language edition) No. 29, Summer 1980

The Soviet intervention was unambiguously progressive, underlining the Trotskyist understanding that despite its own degeneration under a Stalinist bureaucratic caste, the Soviet Union remained a workers state embodying the historical gains of the October Revolution of 1917, centrally the planned economy and collectivized property. These were enormous gains, not least for women and the historically Muslim peoples of Soviet Central Asia, where conditions before the Bolshevik Revolution had been as backward and benighted as in Afghanistan.

A Red Army victory posed the extension of the social gains of the October Revolution to Afghanistan through a prolonged occupation and the country’s integration into the Soviet system. Though undertaken purely for defensive geopolitical reasons, the Soviet military intervention cut against the grain of the nationalist Stalinist dogma of “socialism in one country.” The Red Army troops, many of them recruits from Soviet Central Asia, who fought against the Taliban and the CIA-backed mujahedin believed they were fulfilling their internationalist duty. And so they were! This military intervention also offered the prospect of reanimating the Bolshevik revolution and internationalism in the Soviet Union. Pointing to the Stalinist bureaucracy’s capacity to betray, we stressed at the time that a genuinely internationalist perspective toward Afghanistan would require a workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and return the Soviet Union to the road of Lenin and Trotsky.

Joining the imperialists’ anti-Soviet war drive, the bulk of the left internationally condemned the Soviet “invasion” of Afghanistan. The anti-Communist ISO and its then-parent group in Britain, Tony Cliff’s Socialist Workers Party (SWP), criminally stood with the imperialists. The 12 January 1980 issue of the SWP’s Socialist Worker blared, “Criminally, the RCP, in particular the RCP headed by(collection name), invented Afghan Maoist groupings opposed to both the mujahedin and the Soviets. But the real enemy of this “opposition” was the liberating Soviet troops, as the RCP made clear in a retrospective article in Revolutionary Worker (10 March 2002): “Revolutionary and progressive forces, including the country’s Maoist organizations, threw themselves into the fight against this barbaric, southern invasion.”

The horrors being played out today in Afghanistan are among the starkest expressions of the choice that has been since the advent of the imperialist epoch in the latter part of the 19th century: socialism or barbarism. As proletarian revolutionaries, we see the condition of the Afghan people and youth to the understanding that the most reactionary force standing in the way of human progress is U.S. imperialism, represented by the Republicans and Democrats and their small-time offshoots, like the Greens. We fight to build a revolutionary workers party to overthrow of this barbaric system and to establish of workers rule.

Why Workers World is Endorsing Cynthia McKinney for President
Reprinted from Workers World, July 17, 2008

Workers World newspaper in the past has supported the candidates of Workers World Party running for national office in the U.S. presidential elections and who have put forward a revolutionary socialist program. This time we are taking the unusual step of endorsing the candidacies of Cynthia McKinney because these are unique times and this is a unique candidate.

McKinney, a courageous Black woman and former U.S. Congresswoman is a genuine change agent, the most militant leaders and voices for the U.S. left, progressive and Black movements.

Because of her militancy in the struggle against the war, the struggle to impeach Bush, as well as her struggle to expose the government’s role in the displacement of survivors of Hurricane Katrina, she was branded too Black and too radical to walk the halls of Congress. She was pushed out, not once but twice, by the leadership of the Democratic Party. Last year, McKinney severed her ties to that party.

On July 12, McKinney and her running mate, activist Rosa Clemente, called for the Green Party, the only national party currently running for president and vice-president, respectively. The Green Party’s nomination will put McKinney on the ballot in about 20 states, which is no small thing in the U.S. where the ruling class has made it very hard for any electoral formation independent of, and even slightly to the left of, the two major ruling-class parties to get ballot status. The Green Party

U.S. Imperialists Out of Afghanistan, Iraq!
Reprinted from Workers Vanguard #918 (1 August 2008) www.icl-fi.org

Break with the Democrats! For a Workers Party!

As he prepared for his recent trip abroad, Barack Obama fleshed out his plan to remodel the U.S. imperialist presence in the Near East region. In a July 14 New York Times op-ed piece titled “The Case for Electing a Democratic president candidate,” he called for “redeploying” troops from Iraq while maintaining “a residual force” in that country that could total as many as 50,000 troops. He also called for dispatching two U.S. combat brigades—as many as 10,000 soldiers—to Afghanistan, in addition to the 32,000 U.S. troops already there. In his July 24 speech before an enormous crowd in Berlin, Obama appealed to the European powers to send more troops to Afghanistan, declaring: “America cannot do this alone.”

But not so long ago, the U.S. bourgeoisie, including its neoliberals, were denouncing the唷 edervative destruction of the Soviet Union, which left Washington less restrained in its machinations.”

“Obama憧憬着…”

Down With U.S. Imperialism!

Obama’s trip took place at a time when the situation facing U.S./NATO forces in Afghanistan had become, as he put it, “precarious and urgent.” June was the deadliest month for U.S. troops in Afghanistan since the war began in late 2001, a result of what U.S. commanders say is a 40 percent increase over last year in insurgent attacks. Republican and Democratic politicians nowadays like to rail against Islamic fundamentalism. But not so long ago, the U.S. bourgeoisie, including its neoliberals, were denouncing the imperialist order through socialist revolution. As Trotskyists (i.e., genuine Marxists), we continue to protest, on principle, any capitalist politician—Democrat, Republican, conservative, liberal, socialist—ourselves. In the U.S., the president is the top cop responsible for the most reactionary force standing in the way of human progress the murderous imperialist order through socialist revolution. As Trotskyists (i.e., genuine Marxists), we fight against the Soviet invaders.”

Before I end, lets stop and be honest now. Wouldn’t it be kind of cool to have a President named Barack Obama? Wouldn’t we all be just a little bit proud to see this happen?“4strugglemag is not connected to or affiliated with Work- er’s Vanguard or Worker’s World newspapers, nor are we members of their respective parties. We do see both of these Left-Socialist organizations and publications as real advocates for revolutionary change. That is why we are offering this perspective from them on the elections. As ob- vious, they have quite different ideas on how to respond to the upcoming elections.

The Worker’s Vanguard, “Break With the Democrats! For a Workers Party!” piece is an excerpt of a much longer article (readers can go to their site for the whole article).

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dependent activist voices heard -- our anti-war voices, our voices of outrage at gas prices, food costs and police abus- es. Our independent activism, our rejection of Bush and his corporate policies, our demand for peace and bringing all U.S. troops home now, might even help to push Obama and his campaign in a more progressive direction.

Down With U.S. Imperialism!

Meanwhile, in recent months, U.S. forces have carried out a number of airstrikes, often with the approval of the Paki- stani military-backed regime, within Pakistan itself. This is

their class interests, a workers party committed to sweep- ing away the murderous imperialist order through socialist revolution. As Trotskyists (i.e., genuine Marxists), we fight for the political independence of the working class from the capitalist class enemy. We take a principled stand of never voting for, or otherwise extending any political sup- port to, any capitalist politician—Democrat, Republican, Green or “Independent.” Nor would we run for executive office—president, governor or mayor—ourselves. In the U.S., the president is the top cop responsible for the most reactionary force standing in the way of human progress the murderous imperialist order through socialist revolution. As Trotskyists (i.e., genuine Marxists), we fight
similar to the policy of U.S. military incursions into Paki-
stan’s western tribal regions that is advocated by Obama.
On May 14, a Predator drone hit the village of Damadola
near the Afghan border, killing more than a dozen people.
On June 10, U.S. planes hit a Pakistani border post, kill-
ing eleven soldiers. Many enraged Pakistani military com-
mmanders believe that U.S. attack as a deliberate act intended to “punish” Pakistan for not preventing insurgents from crossing into Afghanistan.

The Afghan war, which was embraced by liberals as a “just” response to the September 11 terror attacks, has meant continued brutal oppression of women as well as warfare among the various tribal warlords. Afghanistan’s imperialist conquerors believe in a constitution that effec-
tively enshrined Islamic fundamentalist sharia law, while in Iraq, Islamic clerics are granted authority to strike down “un-Islamic” law.

As proletarian-internationalist opponents of U.S. imperi-
alism and its allies, the Spartacist League, the Revolutionary Communist Party of Iraq and Afghanistan aim their blows against the U.S. occupiers and their lackeys, such acts coincide with the interests of the international proletariat. But we do not imbrace presently organizing guerrilla attacks on U.S. forces with “anti-imperialist” credentials.

We warn that in the absence of working-class struggle in Iraq and Afghanistan, military victories and the vic-
tory of one or another of the reactionary clerical forces is likely to come about through an alliance with U.S. impe-
rialism. We are intransigent opponents of the murderous communal violence against other ethnic, religious and na-
tional populations oftentimes carried out by the very same forces inспота о змен. And we condemn the kidnappings and executions of foreign civilian workers in Iraq.

We have stressed from the beginning that the chief means of defending neocolonial Afghanistan and Iraq against imperialism is through international working-class struggle, especially by the prole-
tariat in liberation movements. And we have been bold in our analysis of the bombings in Afghanistan and the devastation of Iraq in which the U.S. and its allies have taken part.

The signals from Washington concerning a possible attack against Iran have lately been mixed. In late June, responding to reports that Tehran had placed on display a long-range missile that was said to have the range to reach Israel, President George W. Bush announced that he had approved the use of a military strike as a “last resort” against Iran. In the same month, U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates said that Israel could use a U.S.-provided missile defense system to help it defend itself against an attack from Iran.

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In June, a range of fake leftists such as Socialist Action, the International Socialist Organization (ISO), the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) and Workers World joined in an array of liberals at a gathering in Cleveland dubbed the “National Assembly to End the Iraq War and Occupa-
tion.” Endorsing the American imperialist war was to condone the kidnappings and executions of foreign civilian workers in Iraq.

We are in no position to judge the likelihood of an im-
peachment of U.S. or Israeli attack on Iran. As revolutionary opponents of U.S. imperialism and its allies, we support sanctions against Iran, which are an act of war. The Iranian government says that it does not plan to develop the bomb. In fact, given the threats by the imperialists, it would be per-
fectly reasonable and necessary for Iran to pursue getting nuclear weapons and adequate delivery systems to deter attack. In today’s world, possession of nukes has become a necessary means of maintaining national sovereignty. In the event of an attack by U.S. or by Israel—the only nuclear-armed country in the Near East—operating on behalf of the U.S., it is in the interest of the international proletariat to stand for the military defense of Iran without giving an iota of political support to the reactionary Tehran regime.

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We Said: Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!

The insurgents of the U.S. faces in Afghanistan today are Frankenstein’s monsters turned on their former masters. U.S. aid to the Afghan mujahedin began in the late 1970s under the Carter administration as an attempt to back a multi-
ti-Soviet “human rights” crusade. The Islamic fundamen-
talists, who made up the bulk of the Afghan resistance, were opposed to the Soviet warlordism and the efforts of the U.S. government to create a new “Islamic” Afghanistan.

But as the war dragged on, the mujahedin began to turn on each other, and the Americans began to see the war as a failure. In late 1979, the U.S. government announced that it was ending its support for the Afghan mujahedin, and the war began to wind down.

In the intervening years, the situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated significantly. The Taliban, a fundamentalist Muslim group, took control of the country in 1996, and has since been involved in a brutal and ruthless campaign against all those who do not accept its version of Islamic law.

The Taliban have used a combination of bombings, killings, and other forms of violence to maintain their control. They have also been involved in the production and trafficking of drugs, which is a major source of revenue for the group.

The international community has been unwilling to intervene in the conflict, largely because of the cost and because of the fear of American reaction. The United States maintains a large military presence in Afghanistan, and there have been frequent reports of U.S. military actions that have resulted in the death of civilians.

The situation in Afghanistan is dire, and the prospects for a peaceful resolution of the conflict are slim. The international community must take a harder line against the Taliban, and must work to create conditions for a political solution.