

MIM Notes



March 15, 2003, Nº 278

The Official Newsletter of the Maoist Internationalist Movement (MIM)

Free

Pentagon to send 3,000 more U.S. troops to Philippines

Arroyo regime scuttles implementation to save face

An agreement between the Philippine government of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and the United States to allow U.S. troops to engage in combat on Philippine soil fell through on March 1st, one week after the Pentagon leaked its plans to send 3,000 troops to the southern Philippines. Widespread opposition in the Philippines forced the U.S.-backed Arroyo regime first to try and renegotiate the “semantics” of the deal, then to table it indefinitely.(1)

The Philippine constitution (re-written after former U.S.-backed dictator Ferdinand Marcos’ ouster) forbids foreign troops from engaging in combat there. The U.S.-Arroyo regime justified the arrival of over 1,000 U.S. troops in January of 2002 using a technicality: they were there as part of “training exercises” and would not participate in combat “except in self defense.”(2)

When the Pentagon’s planned “military operation” became public knowledge, Philippine Defense Secretary Reyes flew to Washington—not to change the substance of the plans but, to haggle over terminology. According to “a senior [U.S.] defense official,” “There is no gap [in understanding the mission] between the two militaries. They knew exactly what we were going to say and how we were going to say it.... [Americans] will be on patrol with them, so they’ll have to be able to operate [in combat].”

All that remained, according to another talking head, were “some legal niceties that have to be massaged for public

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AGAINST THE WAR



Imperialist drive in the Middle East

1991 Continued

If we are to be successful in building on the opposition to the war on Iraq, today’s anti-war activists need to keep the larger imperialist picture in mind. To that end, we reprint the following excerpt from MIM Notes 48, January 1991. Although the economic balance between Amerika and its allies is somewhat different today, after a strong showing for Amerika in the late 1990s, the imperialist motivations today are largely the same as they were last time around. Amerikan leaders do have personal motivations and political styles, but the underlying pattern is as old as imperialism. Protestors may chant “Impeach Bush!”, but today’s war over the Middle East is not a product of the decision to give the presidency to George W. Bush. For the full text of this issue of MIM Notes, see <http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/mn/mn.php?issue=048>.

by MC12 & MC44

Instead of choosing between war and diplomacy, the United States is pursuing both with a vengeance. Consolidating power over allies, creating puppets and punishing defectors, the USA is laying the groundwork for a broader military victory in the war of expansion in the Middle East. The wide-

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L.A. passes weak anti-war resolution

MIM stumps for Sison, pushes anti-imperialism

Los Angeles

MIM handed out MIM Notes and collected 26 signatures on our petition to support Prof. Jose Maria Sison (1) from demonstrators calling on the Los Angeles City Council to pass a resolution against a unilateral Amerikan war in Iraq. The council passed the resolution 9-4 on 21 February, and Mayor Jim Hahn signed it, making L.A. the largest U.S. city to oppose the Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld war plans.(2) In the same meeting, the council voted unanimously to ask the Federal government for more money to prevent terrorism in the city of L.A.

The crowd was extremely friendly to Prof. Sison’s cause, and most people who

stopped to talk about the petition had firm and progressive opinions on the wrongheadedness of the “War on Terrorism.” Asked to sign a petition

defending the democratic rights of political refugees, one bystander quipped “that depends on the refugee!” S/he was referring to John Ashcroft’s policy of calling refugees whose persecution the united snakes funds (like Palestinians), while turning Iraqi refugees into poster children for the need to bomb Saddam Hussein out of office.

Other demonstrators only needed to hear that Prof. Sison is a revolutionary political activist smeared as a terrorist by the Amerikan government, and they were clamoring for our clipboard. And a couple were already familiar with Prof. Sison and his situation. Everyone who got a copy of MIM Notes was pleased to see us out there and happy to take a newspaper with politics much more radical than the resolution they had turned out to endorse.

In the council meeting, MIM saw the LAPD “protect and serve” an older white-haired woman wearing a t-shirt and buttons with anti-war slogans. She stood up towards the end of the debate to make some comment, and before three words were out of her mouth two pigs grabbed her arms and started dragging her from the council chamber. She later told MIM that she had only been trying to tell the city council of plans to carpet bomb

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MIM reviews books, films on the “war on terrorism”

In this issue we review several popular books on the so-called “war on terrorism” and the impending war on Iraq: “Terrorism and War” by Howard Zinn (page 7), “Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace: How We Got to Be So Hated,” by Gore Vidal (page 4), and “Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire” by Chalmers Johnson (page 5). We also review the film, “Power and Terror: Noam Chomsky in Our Times,” (page 8).

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Letters

Money in Bush's pocket

Greetings and respects to one and all.

First, thank you for MIM Notes. I have finally received it. Second, MIM states in the January 1 issues (#273, p. 6, "Koreans Step Up..."): "Bush is meddling in their affairs for profit."

MIM could not have said it any better. In fact it seems as if Bush's main concern is money in his pocket. His, not ours.

For example, Iraq. Now we all know that Iraq is rich in oil, second to Saudi Arabia from what I'm told. Okay, do you think that Bush really cares about the treatment of the Iraqi civilians when in fact while governor of Texas his so-called "tough on crime" administration killed way too many Texas prisoners on Death Row? At the same time, Texas Department of Correction officers were very underpaid with the threat of physical violence and serious harm surrounding them every day on the job. TDC during Bush's term in Texas was the most violent of all other state prisons, from gang violence to individual violence.

I'm being told one thing, but my eyes see different. I actually believe that Bush wouldn't give a rat's ass about Iraqi civilians if I wasn't for the billions of barrels of oil that Iraq sits on top of. Nor would he have a care for North Korean civilians if he didn't see a profit in arms sales to South Korea. Bush is all about money in his pocket and forget the rest of us.

P.S. I'm going to pass the MIM Notes down our line. I'll let you know the responses.

—a Texas prisoner, Feb 2003

MIM replies: Thank you for writing, and for sharing our MIM Notes with other prisoners. We agree that Bush's action toward Iraq and north Korea are self-interested; however, it's important to see that the interests he represents is a class interest, that of the imperialist bourgeoisie, not just his own personal interest. That means, also, that he's not just interested in short-term profits, but in long-term domination of Third World labor and resources. That's why the US is planning a long-term occupation of Iraq and maintains a permanent presence in the Middle East and Asia.

With regard to Texas prisons, we agree Bush is hypocritical to complain about the treatment of Iraqis after presiding over the Texas gulag system with such a heavy hand. However, we don't agree that Texas prison guards are overpaid. Like other members of the labor aristocracy in Amerika, their wages are subsidized by the exploitation of members of the oppressed nations in North America and abroad. These guards are pretty low in the labor aristocracy hierarchy, of course, and we don't deny that they have difficult jobs in some respects. But the solution is not to pay them more; rather, it's to change the social relations that make their positions necessary. They are cogs in the machine of imperialism. The people of Iraq and north Korea — and the prisoners in Texas — are the victims of that machine's domination.

"American patriot" doesn't like MIM

Dear MIM: You people have no idea what it takes to keep a nation free. You relish the benefits [sic] of freedom and spit in the face of those who provide it for you. If the Iraqi people are so poor then how can their leader pledge to spend billion\$ in trade with Germany over the next year. The greatest threats to the Iraqi people are Saddam Hussein and YOU!!! Sit back, thank God your [sic] an American, and let the Greatest President we have had in 10 years continue to provide you with the freedom to protest....

Thank You,

—Patriot, Veteran, AMERICAN, Feb 2003

MIM responds: These comments reflect the typical jingoism of Americans who ignore facts in favor of pleasant sound bites from government-mouthpiece media. Anyone denying the poverty of the Iraqi people is living with their heads in the sand as even government agencies admit the devastating effects of UN sanctions. Nor can it be true that current Iraqi misery is solely due to Mr. Hussein enriching himself, as before 1991 Iraq had one of the most advanced healthcare systems in the region.

As RAIL reports on its "Imperialism Kills" web page: "A new survey of central and southern Iraq by the United Nations agency UNICEF shows that half a million children under five years old died as a result of the U.S. war and sanctions from 1991 to 1998. The UNICEF survey covered the parts of the country that are not under direct foreign control. These regions are home to 85% of the population. It showed that 'under-5 mortality more than doubled from 56 deaths per 1000 live births (1984-1989) to 131 deaths per 1000 live births (1994-1999). Likewise infant mortality — defined as the death of

children in their first year — increased from 47 per 1000 live births to 108 per 1000 live births within the same time frame.'" (<http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/rail/impkills.html>)

We get this kind of hate mail from American patriots so often we have a FAQ page on our web site devoted to it.(1) There we state:

The facts about imprisonment in the United States are that the United States has been the world's leading prison-state per capita for the last 25 years, with a brief exception during Boris Yeltsin's declaration of a state of emergency. That means that while Reagan was talking about a Soviet "evil empire" he was the head of a state that imprisoned more people per capita. In supposedly "hard-line" Bulgaria of the Soviet bloc of the 1980s, the imprisonment rate was less than half that of the United States.

To find a comparison with U.S. imprisonment of Black people, there is no statistic in any country that compares including apartheid South Africa of the era before Mandela was president. The last situation remotely comparable to the situation today was under Stalin during war time. The majority of prisoners are non-violent offenders and the U.S. Government now holds about a half million more prisoners than China; even though China is four times our population.

The rednecks tell MIM that we live in a "free country." They live in an Orwellian 1984 situation where freedom is imprisonment.

Notes:

1. <http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/faq/freecoun.html>.

Editor, MC206; Production, MC12

MIM Notes

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MIM Notes is the bi-weekly newsletter of the Maoist Internationalist Movement. MIM Notes is the official Party voice; more complete statements are published in our journal, *MIM Theory*. Material in *MIM Notes* is the Party's position unless noted. *MIM Notes* accepts submissions and critiques from anyone. The editors reserve the right to edit submissions unless permission is specifically denied by the author; submissions are published anonymously unless authors insist on identification (prisoners are never identified by name). MIM is an underground party that does not publish the names of its comrades in order to avoid the state surveillance and repression that have historically been directed at communist parties and anti-imperialist movements. MCs, MIM comrades, are members of the Party. The Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist League (RAIL) is an anti-imperialist mass organization led by MIM (RCs are RAIL Comrades). MIM's ten-point program is available to anyone who sends in a SASE.

The paper is free to all prisoners, as long as they write to us every 90 days to confirm their subscriptions. There are no individual subscriptions for people outside prison.

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What is MIM?

The Maoist Internationalist Movement (MIM) is the collection of existing or emerging Maoist internationalist parties in the English-speaking imperialist countries and their English-speaking internal semi-colonies, as well as the existing or emerging Maoist Internationalist parties in Belgium, France and Quebec and the existing or emerging Spanish-speaking Maoist Internationalist parties of Aztlan, Puerto Rico and other territories of the U.S. Empire. MIM Notes is the newspaper of MIM. *Notas Rojas* is the newspaper of the Spanish-speaking parties or emerging parties of MIM. MIM upholds the revolutionary communist ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and is an internationalist organization that works from the vantage point of the Third World proletariat. MIM struggles to end the oppression of all groups over other groups: classes, genders, nations. MIM knows this is only possibly by building public opinion to seize power through armed struggle. Revolution is a reality for North America as the military becomes over-extended in the government's attempts to maintain world hegemony. MIM differs from other communist parties on three main questions: (1) MIM holds that after the proletariat seizes power in socialist revolution, the potential exists for capitalist restoration under the leadership of a new bourgeoisie within the communist party itself. In the case of the USSR, the bourgeoisie seized power after the death of Stalin in 1953; in China, it was after Mao's death and the overthrow of the "Gang of Four" in 1976. (2) MIM upholds the Chinese Cultural Revolution as the farthest advance of communism in human history. (3) As Marx, Engels and Lenin formulated and MIM has reiterated through materialist analysis, imperialism extracts super-profits from the Third World and in part uses this wealth to buy off whole populations of oppressor nation so-called workers. These so-called workers bought off by imperialism form a new petty-bourgeoisie called the labor aristocracy. These classes are not the principal vehicles to advance Maoism within those countries because their standards of living depend on imperialism. At this time, imperialist super-profits create this situation in the Canada, Quebec, the United States, England, France, Belgium, Germany, Japan, Italy, Switzerland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Israel, Sweden and Denmark. MIM accepts people as members who agree on these basic principles and accept democratic centralism, the system of majority rule, on other questions of party line.

"The theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin is universally applicable. We should regard it not as dogma, but as a guide to action. Studying it is not merely a matter of learning terms and phrases, but of learning Marxism-Leninism as the science of revolution."

- Mao Zedong, Selected Works, Vol. II, p. 208.

Victory Against Censorship in Attica

Regular readers of Under Lock & Key will already know that after 14 months of almost complete censorship of MIM in Attica Correctional Facility we began to see signs of progress in October 2002. Thanks to the diligent work of many RAIL comrades and USW leaders who took up the battle immediately after being transferred to the notorious maximum security prison, we now have word directly from the Chairman of Media Review that MIM can send materials to prisoners in Attica. Of course, Media Review reserves the right to censor any material it deems a "threat to security" as it does throughout the NYS DOCS. However, this is a substantial victory. Where previously all letters, MIM Notes and books were returned, now we can expect only the occasional rejection of Under Lock & Key as we see in other NY prisons.

One prisoner who put a substantial amount of energy into this campaign

recently met with Chairman Ed O'Mara who has assured repeatedly and in print that MIM will receive the same scrutiny as any other incoming mail.(1) This is significant because previously the mailroom staff had returned materials with notes saying "unauthorized group," and the across the board censorship did not pass through the usual review process where prisoners have a chance to counter the decision. These statements combined with recent reports from prisoners in Attica receiving MIM Notes, indicate that the Attica mailroom staff has begun to follow NYS DOCS policies again. The comrade mentioned above wrote:

"It was due to my appealing a denial to write you to the superintendent of the facility that prisoners are now permitted to write directly to you from Attica. I spoke directly to the Media Review Chairperson and wrote the Superintendent in reference to supposed



censorship of MIM publications without following supreme court dictates as set forth in ITAL Proconier vs. Martinez END. They replied to me that this isn't their policy and that MIM is treated like any other incoming publication."

In one of the recent meetings, Chairman O'Mara showed the anti-censorship postcards that we have been sending to his staff. Over the course of the campaign we have sent hundreds, if not thousands of these postcards, which can be downloaded from MIM's webpage.(1) At this time we are declaring an end to this campaign targeted at Attica. We believe we have demonstrated that we are watching and that we have support both inside and outside. And we turn our attention to other struggles in New York prisons, such as the use of the "Loaf," as well as other anti-censorship campaigns still going on across the country.

Notes: 1. Chairman O'Mara's letters, NYS DOCS Media Review policies, examples of the anti-censorship postcards and other campaign info are available on RAIL's NYC and Albany webpages: www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/albany/campaigns.html.

Film marks 16th Anniversary of the Mendiola Massacre

By RAIL and SLALA comrades.

A new video on the 1987 Mendiola Massacre in the Philippines headlined a February 10 forum on the Present Peace and Human Rights Situation in the Philippines. The video included testimony from veteran activists and survivors of the Mendiola Massacre. There were also youth performances showing the effects of landlessness caused by the government's drive to satisfy big imperialists by forcibly converting farmland into cash crops and golf courses.

A speaker introducing the film explained how the Manila government has been violently opposing the demands of Filipinos since the 1970s, when it opened fire on students protesting dictator Marcos' changes to the constitution to extend his stay in power. This was the first Mendiola massacre. The film showed how the Manila government once again spilled Filipino blood near the Mendiola bridge in 1987 when 30,000 peasants, students and workers marched to the Presidential Palace to demand that the

u.\$.-Aquino regime implement its promises for land reform. Hundreds of police and Philippine marines stopped the protestors near the Mendiola Bridge and then fired upon them for more than a minute. The police and marines shot many of the demonstrators in the back or in the head, killing 13 and wounding 105. To this day, victims and survivors have not received any apology or restitution for the murders.

The film documents disturbing aspects of the history of u.\$.-backed puppet regimes in the Philippines that fly in the face of the tale spun by the u.\$., that u.\$.-backed "Corey" Aquino was a step towards democracy. In reality the 1987 Mendiola Massacre triggered the cancellation of the peace negotiations and the 60-day cease-fire between the Manila government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines. Shortly thereafter the u.\$.-Aquino regime dropped any pretenses at peacemaking and declared "total war" against the people.

The u.\$. imperialists also claim the

current u.\$.-Arroyo regime is "democratic," yet it continues the anti-people legacy of the Mendiola Massacre. This is especially true following Macapagal-Arroyo's complete collaboration with the u.\$.-led "war on terrorism". Last year under the pretext of helping her puppet regime fight the Abu Saaaf gangsters, Macapagal-Arroyo approved the landing of U.\$. troops in southern Mindanao to participate in so-called "military exercises." (2) Recently

Macapagal-Arroyo took her toadying up a notch and allowed 3000 u.\$. troops to carry out direct combat operations.(3) Public outcry forced her to renege on this decision and "renegotiate" terms with the Pentagon (see story on p. 1).

This incursion coincides with the u.\$.-Arroyo regime's total cancellation of peace negotiations with the revolutionary forces in the Philippines. It is very probable that u.\$. troops will participate

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CORRECTION

In our report on the February 15 anti-war rally in Los Angeles (1) we wrote that that even though the governments of France, Spain and Italy oppose the U.\$. war on Iraq, their populations protested the war in more force than the Americans. This was incorrect. In fact, the French government is the only one of these three opposing the war. Spain's government has been vocal in trying to gain UN support for a war in Iraq, and Italy's leaders also support a possible war.

The countries in the European Union (EU) are split on the impending war on Iraq. France and Germany currently oppose the war, while others support it— notably Spain, Italy, and several eastern European countries whose economies are relatively more dependent on the United States and could use the money Uncle Sam is bound to give them for their support. France and Germany even dis-invited several eastern European countries from a recent EU meeting where Iraq dominated the agenda. (The eastern Europeans were originally invited to attend as a courtesy in advance of their official induction into the EU.)

This reflects both imperialist geopolitics as usual and the potential for a future re-

alignment of the imperialist powers. On the one hand, the United States can buy support for its military adventures or crush any principled opposition with economic sanctions. As the U.\$. ambassador said to a country on the security council which voted against the last Gulf War, "That's the most expensive vote you ever cast."(3)

On the other hand, as the United States overstretchs its military and economic power (from Iraq to north Korea to the Philippines to Afghanistan etc. etc.), other imperialist and wannabe imperialist powers will find it possible to stand up to the United States—and be compelled to, both by direct American insults and the need to distance themselves from an increasingly hated Amerika. Such a loss of support would further overstretch the U.\$. military and create opportunities for revolutionary anti-imperialist movements in the Third World.

Notes:

1. MIM Notes 277, 1 Mar 2003.
2. www.expatica.com/germany/main.asp?pad=190,230,&item_id=29189
3. "The Hidden Wars of Desert Storm," video, 2002.

UNITED FRONT

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Review: Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace

by Gore Vidal
NY: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2002,
160pp. paperback

reviewed by MC5,
February 2, 2003

Many of the big book review pundits tried to drag this book into the category of mediocrity. We at MIM are glad that an author of Gore Vidal's stature put out this book. Simply because he wrote it, it will be available everywhere. The critics did not like it because it was too raw, but what Gore Vidal is saying is just what Amerikkans need to start confronting.

President G. W. Bush said about the people conducting terrorism against the united States: "They hate our freedoms, our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other." (p. 5) Gore Vidal did not point out the united States is the country with the highest percentage of people in prison on the planet; nor could he point to MIM's archive of documents from censors, because it did not exist yet when Vidal wrote the book. Howard Zinn in his book "Terrorism and War" said, "Sweden is not worrying about terrorists. Denmark, Holland, New Zealand." So one could wonder if Bush meant to say that the united States and its most gung-ho allies are the only "free" countries.

Gore Vidal did not mention any of that, but he told the Amerikan public exactly what it really needed to know—that this war did not start yesterday and the United States started it, whether the public knew it or not. It took Vidal 20 pages of tables to list all the attacks Uncle Sam has carried out since World War II: "In these several hundred wars against Communism, terrorism, drugs, or sometimes nothing much, between Pearl Harbor and Tuesday, September 11, 2001, we tended to strike the first blow. But then we're the good guys, right? Right." (p. 40)

The problem with the Amerikan public is that it does not want to pay attention to politics, but it wants to condemn attacks on Amerikkans when in fact, as Vidal points out, the situation is usually a "counter-attack," not an attack. Far from attacking "freedom," the opponents are defending themselves, whether in the Middle East, Africa, Latin America or Asia.

Yet the people who do not want to know why attacks have taken place or what generates them are not serious about ending them. Simple moral fulminations devoid of context or understanding have never solved a problem. If so, the churches would have succeeded in bringing Heaven to earth a long time ago. The naive call us "traitors" for saying so, and we say we are tired of living under threat of death from terrorism, war and the fascism they provoke, because the

apathetic or greedy don't want to address political problems seriously.

Most of the book actually explores the Timothy McVeigh saga and how Clinton was killing civil liberties before Bush and the "Patriot Act." For many people of the world, the majority of the book may seem a trifle boring, because it deals with the origins of the united States and the theory behind how the public could keep its government accountable.

Gore Vidal is one of the few people around who still understands the original intent and frame of mind of the founding revolutionaries of the united States. They believed that with everyone armed or potentially armed equally with the government, the government officials would not be inclined to take advantage of their power. Even if such officials were totally corrupt and inclined to be despotic for one reason or another, the power of an armed citizenry would offset them. The arming of the citizenry would force all concerned to work out a solution to underlying problems instead of victimizing civil liberties and engaging in war—so thought the American revolutionaries of 1776. The connection between guns and political power was so clear in their minds that they suspected those government officials who wanted a standing army wanted it to deprive the citizenship of its liberties. We can just imagine what the American Revolutionaries of 1776 would say about a military so huge that it cost 9 digits a year for decades at a time and conducts so many attacks that u.s. citizens cannot even keep track of it all.

When Timothy McVeigh carried out the bombing of an Oklahoma federal building, he was taking the "American Revolution" seriously and waging a "counter-attack" (p. 100) to offset the killing by the federal government of 82 religious sect members at Waco in April 1993. Exactly two years later, McVeigh killed 168 people by blowing up the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma. The reason the public was to have the right to bear arms was to prevent Waco situations from developing, so reasoning strictly within bourgeois Liberal limits, McVeigh concluded that only a counter-attack would prevent future attacks on liberties by the federal government. For that matter, McVeigh also raised doubts about his role in the Gulf War attacking innocent people. He realized that the federal government was out-of-control globally, not just nationally. Speaking the federal government's own language, he called the suffering of children in the Murrah Building "collateral damage," a new phrase he learned from the Pentagon during the Gulf War.

Instead of concluding the federal government should back off from the public, the Los Angeles Times polled and found 58% willing to sacrifice liberties to end terrorism. (p. 116) Gore Vidal is one



who understands that the U.S. political system was not meant to work that way, and in fact cannot work that way. There is a big connection amongst war, government dishonesty and civil liberties.

The politically naive say, "if you have nothing to hide, why should you fear giving up your privacy (and other civil liberties)." What these people do not understand is that civil liberties protect against corrupt and dishonest people in government. It is not a question of hiding something. It's a matter of preventing government-sponsored terrorism. It is a matter of not trusting the government and giving it unaccountable power. This was at the core of the racist, white founding fathers' philosophy having suffered the oppression of a tyrannical government. And despite the slavery and genocide against the First Nations rampant at the time, MIM would say that that idea is still more advanced than what we hear today about the need to sacrifice freedom for safety. The founding fathers had a "theory" of

how to keep government under control of the people. We at MIM do not think that theory is exactly right, but we recognize and share concern for the question that drove that theory. Most of what we hear today on the subject is pure emotion driven by fascist agitators in the media and government.

A system of civil liberties cannot survive when people refuse to look at the causes of social problems. When social disunity is not addressed at the root, there is no hope for real society-wide civil liberties. People like Gore Vidal say that we should harken back to Amerikkans' original values. MIM would say no capitalist system ever created the conditions for civil liberties. Instead, the rulers such as Bush use rhetoric about civil liberties to justify war. That's why there is a constant cycle alternating between more freedom and more fascism—with the Third World getting most of the fascism. Currently the pendulum swings toward fascism even inside the United States, because the public refuses to address underlying problems.

It goes without saying that if Amerikkans cannot understand why they don't want Uncle Sam spying on them, sending tanks to people's houses or bombing entire neighborhoods as in the MOVE bombing in Philadelphia, they will not understand why people in the Third World also strike back against Amerikkka. This may be why Gore Vidal has latched on to the Timothy McVeigh case and the related questions of civil liberties.

What is militarism?

Militarism is war-mongering or the advocacy of war or actual carrying out of war or its preparations.

While true pacifists condemn all violence as equally repugnant, we Maoists do not consider self-defense or the violence of oppressed nations against imperialism to be militarism. Militarism is mostly caused by imperialism at this time. Imperialism is the highest stage of capitalism—seen in countries like the United States, England and France.

Under capitalism, capitalists often profit from war or its preparations. Yet, it is the proletariat that does the dying in the wars. The proletariat wants a system in which people do not have self-interest on the side of war-profiteering or war for imperialism.

Militarism is one of the most important reasons to overthrow capitalism. It even infects oppressed nations and causes them to fight each other.

It is important not to let capitalists risk our lives in their ideas about war and peace or the environment. They have already had two world wars admitted by themselves in the last 100 years and they are conducting a third right now against the Third World.

Even a one percent annual chance of nuclear war destruction caused by capitalist aggressiveness or "greed" as the people call it should not be tolerated by the proletariat. After playing Russian Roulette (in which the bullet chamber is different each time and not related at all to the one that came up in previous spins) with 100 chambers and one bullet, the chance of survival is only 60.5% after 50 turns. In other words, a seemingly small one percent annual chance of world war means eventual doom. After 100 years or turns of Russian Roulette, the chances of survival are only 36.6%. After 200 years, survival has only a 13.4% chance.

Pre-911 book: Amerikans will reap what they sow

Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire

by Chalmers Johnson
New York: Henry Holt
2000, 268 pp. pb.

Review by MC206
3 Mar 2003

Chalmers Johnson finished this book over a year before September 11, which is when most Amerikans first heard the term “blowback.” In it, he lays out the reasons why Amerika’s chickens were bound to come home to roost—as indeed they did. The book is packed full of details about what Johnson calls “imperial overstretch,” similar to something MIM talked about in its founding documents back in 1983. Thus it remains a useful read today, although Johnson is a bitter anti-Communist (more specifically: an anti-Maoist) and *Blowback* is partly an (unsuccessful) attempt to replace the Communist critique of imperialism with a bourgeois critique.

“Blowback,” of course, refers to “the unintended consequences of policies that were kept secret from the American people. What the daily press reports as the malign acts of ‘terrorists’ or ‘drug lords’ or ‘rogue states’ often turn out to be blowback from earlier American operations.”(p.8) To Johnson’s credit, he does not limit his definition of the term to Amerikans, noting that while Amerikans have not yet felt the impact of the Asian economic crisis caused by Amerikan speculators and IMF meddling, Indonesians already have.(p. 17)

Obvious cases of blowback include U.S. support for the Afghan mujahideen who bombed the World Trade Center in 1993 and then flew two airplanes into it in 2001.(p. 13) Johnson provides a service by discussing some of the lesser-known cases of blowback—or potential blowback.

Okinawa. Johnson starts his chapter on the U.S. military bases on Okinawa with a partial list of the daily wrongs Okinawans suffer at the hands of Amerikan troops, from the high rape rate (pp. 34-37, 41-44) to prostitution (p. 35) to traffic accidents (pp. 42-47) to the constant interruptions of school lessons by low-flying jet aircraft.(p. 47) He then ridicules the reasons the United States gives for basing over 200,000 troops in Japan—most of them in Okinawa. “Pentagon theorists ... are like the New Yorker who spreads elephant bane around his apartment and then extols its benefits because he encounters no elephants. The strategy ‘works’ because the threat is illusory.”(p. 63)

Arms sales. Well, sort of illusory. In fact, as Johnson outlines in a section on the immense Amerikan arms industry (pp. 85-94), the “forward deployment” of U.S. troops or sale of arms to a client state often proves a self-fulfilling prophecy. For example, Amerika “expands the NATO alliance eastward in part in order to sell

arms to the former Soviet block countries... with certain knowledge that doing so will... elicit a hostile Russian reaction. This Russian reaction then becomes justification for the expansion.”(p. 92) Or the Pentagon sells advanced missile and submarine technology to Taiwan, provoking the Chinese either consciously or unconsciously, blinded by its desire to make a buck.(p. 89)

For Johnson, the fact that “mercenary” Pentagon arms profiteers have turned the world into a powderkeg is a result of the erosion of civilian control of the military.(p. 222) (We Maoists would simply say that’s what happens when you put profit before basic survival rights.) He notes that a behemoth military with controlling economic and political powers contradicts the thinking of Amerika’s “founding fathers.”(1) “George Washington’s Farewell Address now reads more like a diagnosis than a warning: he counseled Americans to ‘avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments, which under any form of government are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to Republican Liberty.”(p. 71)

China. Unlike the many grandstanding racist nincompoops in Congress, who can always be counted upon to thump a table and prattle on about the threat from “Red China” if votes or weapons contracts are at stake, Johnson recognizes that China has been a capitalist country since Deng’s economic reforms—even if it hasn’t adopted Anglo-Saxon “laissez-faire” capitalism. As such, Johnson argues, Amerika should deal with it as any other capitalist competitor and not as an implacable ideological enemy. Saber rattling over Taiwan, bombing Chinese embassies, promising to keep troops in Korea even after reunification, etc.—all these things make war with China in the short-term more likely, not less.

Like Bruce Cumings, who sees economic cooperation between north and south Korea as the path towards peace and reunification,(2) Johnson sees economic cooperation between China and Taiwan as the best guarantor of peace and prosperity. There is some truth to this—certainly Johnson is correct that Amerikan military and economic intervention provides the biggest impetus towards war in the region.

However, again like Cumings, Johnson overestimates the ability of the south Korean or Taiwanese economic model to bring development and prosperity to larger and larger areas. Johnson correctly argues that the relative successes of the Japanese, Taiwanese, and south Korean economies depended on subsidies from the United States and access to its markets. He also correctly notes that “China’s products will never enjoy the virtually unrestricted access to the American market and its sources of technology that Japan and others enjoyed in exchange for their support during the



Cold War.”(p. 146) He does not put these two points together to reach the correct conclusion, namely, the Taiwanese path is not open to China—or just about any other “developing” Third World country. The U.S. economy, as big as it is, can only absorb a fraction of the world’s exports

Johnson admires both the Chinese revolution of 1949 and Deng’s capitalist reforms—consistent with the aspirations of the national bourgeoisie—while he despises Mao. He repeats some of the more hyperbolic slanders against the Maoists in China, which aren’t worth rebutting here. Instead, we direct readers to our critiques of “The Black Book of Communism,”(3) our classic essay

L.A. resolution

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Baghdad. She wanted to stress the importance of opposing this war to prevent Amerikan war crimes against the Iraqi people.(3)

For all this, MIM was surprised to learn the “anti-war” resolution itself is a half-assed piece of liberal twaddle and a good argument against radicals getting involved in Amerikan electoral battles. The resolution calls Saddam Hussein “a despot with aims contrary to peace,” expresses “unquestionable pride in and support for the men and women of the Armed Services,” supports all “diplomatic efforts” to avert this war including ongoing weapons inspections, and opposes only a *unilateral* Amerikan war.(4)

So even forgetting the war-mongering language in reference to Saddam Hussein and support for the inspections that have been shown to serve a dual function as intelligence-gathering missions for the Amerikan military, this resolution is hollow. Unilateral action has been off the table for months as England and a number of other European countries support a war. Resolution-sponsor Eric Garcetti effectively said that if Colin Powell had made a stronger case before the UN he wouldn’t have bothered: “we’re not necessarily opposed to any war, but we’re opposed to unilateral war, and we don’t think the case has been made.”(5) Still, a whole network of neighborhood activists has organized phone trees, letter-writing and fax campaigns around getting such resolutions passed in the name of “peace.”

“Myths about Mao,”(4) and our Tibet FAQ page.(5)

As for Johnson’s rosy perspective on capitalism in China, we’ll make two quick comments. First, an increase in GDP does not mean the standard of living for the broad masses is improving. Social problems such as unemployment, prostitution, and drug abuse, absent in socialist China, have returned. Johnson himself writes, “An estimated one hundred million people [ca. 8% of the Chinese population], more than the entire population of Mexico, are now adrift in China, largely migrants from the interior looking for work in rich coastal areas.”(p. 152) Second, capitalist economies are trapped in the boom-bust cycle. Present growth cannot be extrapolated indefinitely. Readers interested in a detailed critique of Deng’s economic reforms should check out “The Political Economy of Counterrevolution in China,” available from MIM.

Indonesia. Johnson uses Indonesia as a case study in how the Amerikan military’s “joint training” programs amount “to little more than instruction in state terrorism.”(pp. 72-84) He discusses the violence that preceded the ouster of
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MIM urges readers who think our views are correct but too far “out there” to check out the lobbying that went into getting this resolution passed, and to think about the activist-hours invested and the return our side got out of those hours. If your goals include peace, appealing to the broadest Amerikan public opinion does not matter, putting forth the most forthright anti-imperialist line with the greatest energy matters. As we argued in MIM Notes 276, we do not need to appeal to the tens of millions who pull levers for the Democrats and Republicans. If the 200,000 who marched on Washington, D.C. had been waving Little Red Books, Bush would be a lot less anxious to rush into war. From the war mongers’ perspective sending the military overseas gets a lot less attractive when half a million Maoists — a tiny minority in the u.s. population — could be strolling into DC in the meantime. If you really want to oppose this war, please leave the empty-resolution-passing work to your city council members and throw your own weight behind MIM.

Notes:

1. <http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/agitation/philippines/index.html>
2. <http://www.commondreams.org/headlines03/0222-05.htm>
3. This happened at the February 18 meeting when the resolution was first introduced.
4. <http://www.neighborsforpeaceandjustice.org/npj/id6.html>
5. www.inq7.net/brk/2003/feb/22/brkafp_8-1.htm

Imperialist drive in the Middle East

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ranging efforts undertaken by the USA around the world underscore the imperialist nature of the conflict, eliminating arguments that the war is caused by a single policy decision or an aggressive personality.

At a press conference on Nov. 30, President Bush made it clear that he was not interested in a peaceful settlement (though of course he said he was). He did say he had no intention of fighting a half-assed war.

"This will not be a Vietnam," he said. "If we get one kid that's apt to be in harm's way, I want him backed up to the hilt by American firepower."

In the same speech, Bush said he would permit high-level talks between the United States and Iraq, but was not prepared to make any deals. The point of the talks was not to negotiate, he said, but just to repeat U.S. demands to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's face.(1)

Imperialist conflicts explode

A lot of noise has been made over the small contributions to the war made by U.S. allies. These critics either ignore or don't understand that this war is not a moral crusade to end aggression or defend the people of the Middle East.

The era of imperialism—the highest stage of capitalism and the precursor to revolution—carries capitalist contradictions to their fullest extreme. In this era, which began around the beginning of this century, three conflicts are increased:

*the conflict between capital and labor, between monopoly capitalists and the international proletariat,

*between imperialists themselves, as monopolists and national powers vie for

control over world resources, and

*between imperialist nations and the oppressed nations, where increased exploitation of land and labor produce conditions favorable to revolution.(2)

In the imperialist stage, capitalism's economic basis in competition (expand-or-die) drives the capitalist powers to war to grab more land and cheap labor for themselves, to allow the export of capital into underdeveloped countries to flow freely. While force is planned to bring Iraq back into line as a U.S.- controlled resource, the current crisis also allows the USA to gain more control over vulnerable allies through diplomacy and economic pressure, gaining an edge over rival imperialists (especially European and Japanese powers) in the process. The massive war machine is the tool of choice for the economically weaker USA [after the economic expansion that followed the first war against Iraq, Amerika has gained ground economically relative to its imperialist rival/allies. This just helps to show that MIM was right at the time to attribute U.S. militarism in part to economic rivalry between the imperialist powers -MC12, 2003].

The threat of self-sufficient oil-producing countries is especially acute in an era in which the United States is afraid of losing control over Third World countries to other imperialists. Control over international oil markets—gained in this case militarily—has huge potential economic advantages for control over the underdeveloped world.

Strategically speaking, more control over the Arabian Peninsula and surrounding region is an important part of the USA's long term plans. The State Department in the 1940s called the

Arabian Peninsula "a stupendous source of strategic power, and one of the greatest material prizes in world history," and "probably the richest economic prize in the world in the field of foreign investment."(3)

Iraq's invasion threw a wrench in the works of U.S. plans for expansion into the region. In January 1990, the administration had announced the goal of increasing U.S. exports to Iraq, for which the USA had become top trading partner.(3)

Earlier, in 1988, the U.S. government had said it was a good time to get in on the Iraqi economy, due to a "wide range of economic reforms to increase productivity and encourage private sector industrial growth and import substitution," largely in the agricultural sector.

"American firms are strongly encouraged to investigate the market and introduce their products and services to Iraqi officials now," the government said.(4)

The goal of trade domination extended to Kuwait as well, which had increased its U.S. imports from 1988 to 1989 by 24%.

The USA wants to better its trade balance with these countries—to balance heavy oil imports—by increasing exports, especially of capital-intensive industries. Seizing control of oil reserves is an important part of creating and developing dependency on the United States, supplemented by increased control over markets and imports.

Economic crisis at home

Recessions and expansion are balancing forces in the imperialist march toward its own grave; they drive each other,

producing greater urgency and greater risks at every turn.

The bourgeoisie has admitted that the U.S. economy is in a recession—meaning the economy is shrinking overall. And that economic pressure is increasing the stakes for the expansionist war.

More than simply a dependent country which has gotten out of line, such as Nicaragua, Iraq represents the prize of control over oil economies with huge, capital-intensive profit-generating industries. The potential economic independence of oil-exporting countries underscores the need for military control to insure thorough and widespread domination—with all the risks that entails—while increasing the potential economic rewards in terms of expansion and stability.

The United States is putting a lot of cards on the table in this war. Its victory here would have catastrophic consequences for the people of the Middle East in particular. Its loss could mark the beginning of a truly new world order.

Notes:

1. New York Times 12/1/90, p. A4.
2. See V. I. Lenin, Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism.
3. Noam Chomsky in Z, 10/90.
4. Business America, 4/25/88.

We constantly update MIM's coverage of the U.S. war on our web site, with news and opinion, agitation materials, articles in English, Spanish, French, Chinese and Russian! Read and distribute the newspaper -- and get the latest: [www.etext.org/ Politics/MIM](http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM)

Pre-911 book: Amerikans will reap what they sow

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Suharto in some detail, arguing that "much of the violence had been organized and deliberately provoked by the armed forces, probably in order to create the enough of the look of chaos to make a military coup seem a plausible and acceptable step."(p. 76) In particular, the military covertly organized simultaneous attacks on "forty different Chinese-owned shopping malls spread around more than twenty-five kilometers... The Indonesian scholar Ariel Heryanto has observed that [these events] were not 'racially motivated mass riots' but 'racialized state terrorism.'"(pp. 81-82) This happened less than a year after Indonesian special forces "received twenty-six days of American instruction in 'military operations in urban terrain.'"(p. 78)

The Asian economic crisis of 1997 hit Indonesia hard, leaving 20% of the population unemployed and doubling the number of people living on less than a dollar a day to one hundred million.(pp.

74, 211-212) This collapse discredited Suharto and provided the impetus for the coup plans and Amerikan support for the ouster of its erstwhile puppet.

Johnson's explanation of this crisis is closer to MIM's than he might like to admit: it was due to currency speculation by First World finance capitalists and capitalist overproduction, which Johnson recognizes is *relative* overproduction. "This is not to say that all the barefoot peoples of the world might not want to wear athletic shoes or all the relatively poor people who might someday be able to afford a television set or automobile are satisfied. But for now they are too poor to be customers."(p. 197) The IMF, "essentially a covert arm of the U.S. Treasury," exacerbated the crisis through stupidity, arrogance and greed.(pp. 210-213)

To prevent future crises, Johnson proposes "fixed exchange rates and controls on the movement of capital."(p. 225) MIM supports similar reforms in its

platform, tying exchange rates to a standard basket of goods.

Johnson predicted dire consequences if the economic situation in Indonesia remained unchanged. "If Indonesia is allowed to stagnate, living off food handouts from the Americans, it is quite possible to predict that Islam, which until now has shown its tolerant and broad-minded face throughout most of the country, will turn militant and un placable. This, in turn, would guarantee the end of American influence (much as it did in Khomeini's Iran) and it would greatly complicate Australia's foreign policy."(p.84) The recent bombing in Bali proved him correct.

Johnson admits to his past as "a spear carrier for empire," specifically as a "China watcher."(pp. ix-xix) He knows the basics of communist critique of imperialism and borrows from it heavily, although he tries to give it a "back to Adam Smith" spin.(pp. 201-202) He still stubbornly insists that Amerikan

capitalism is not driven "to exploit other nations for economic gain or simply to dominate them politically or militarily,"(p. 31) perhaps out of naiveté or the "good sense" not to bite the hand that feeds him. As a result, he ends up looking backwards, much like the petty-bourgeois critics of imperialism Lenin scolded.(7)

Still, for those looking for an introduction to the contradictions facing the Amerikan empire, especially in east Asia, Johnson's book is worthwhile.

Notes:

1. Amerika's "founding fathers" had their own theory of "blowback," which Amerika's current leaders refuse to heed. See "U.S. military budget would have angered Amerikan 'founding fathers,'" MIM Notes 274, 15 Jan 2003.
2. See MIM Notes 276, 15 Feb 2003.
3. www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/agitation/blackbook/index.html
4. www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/wim/mythsofmao.html
5. www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/faq/tibet.html
6. "Imperialism," chapters III and IX.

Zinn stepped forward against war in Afghanistan

Terrorism and War
NY, NY: Seven Stories Press
2002, 157 pp.
by Howard Zinn

reviewed by MC5

This book came out against the war in Afghanistan, and most of its reasoning also applies to the war in Iraq. As the war in Iraq threatens to intensify, it is easy to forget that the United States is still at war in Afghanistan and many other places too. At the end of January, the military claimed to kill 18 Afghan fighters.

In fact, since 1991, the United States has also enforced a war on Iraq, including the “no-fly” zone over Iraq which Iraq has contested. These are just two examples of how the massive U.S. military is always at war.

Yet, despite the fact that the United States is engaged in war after war, the public busy reading *Cosmopolitan* magazine and watching *nakednews.com* acted as if the September 11th attacks were completely out-of-the-blue. For those who never looked up from their Nintendo, those attacks were completely out-of-the-blue. The benefit of more evenly matched wars as in World War II is that its participants all know they are attacking the other side. In the United States, many citizens pay so little attention to the constant warring by their government that they become extraordinarily indignant when the other side counterattacks.

Howard Zinn was an air force bomber in World War II, but he is now known as a radical historian, the one who wrote “A People’s History of the United States.” Zinn gets to the internationalist point right away: “Terrorism is an international phenomenon. American citizens are not the only victims of terrorism. You hear journalists and politicians talking about globalization and the free flow of markets. But they don’t talk about international solidarity of people. They don’t say that we should consider people everywhere as our brothers and sisters—that we should consider children all over the world as our children.” (p. 16)

We have disagreements with Zinn to be sure. The book lists the neo-Trotskyist group the ISO (International Socialist Organization) as an important one to work with. Zinn is also featured prominently fund-raising for the ISO on its web page. Along these lines, Zinn speaks of the “left” and the typical American “left.” As a result he makes the mistake of wanting to link the anti-war movement to economic demands of Amerikkans. Zinn says he wants these economic issues linked because he wants the “left” to have “a much stronger bond with the American people.” (p. 38) Historically, we have heard “jobs, not war” as a slogan. Yet the slogan implies that if jobs are forthcoming, then support for war could be purchased. Historically that’s exactly what happened in England prior to World War I. That’s not to mention that MIM

does not agree that the Amerikkkan majority today is exploited.

In any case, since the collapse of the Soviet Union perhaps no organization has benefitted more than the ISO. Like MIM, the ISO held that the “Soviet Union” and China were “state-capitalist.” Since that time, the ISO has grown where other traditional Amerikan “left” groups like the Socialist Party and Socialist Labor Party have been unable to regenerate.

We agree with Zinn’s anticipations of where politics in the USA are developing. There is going to be a Yankee-doodle resurgence of the “left” before the middle-classes try something more exotic like the MIM line. As with Zinn himself, this “left” will distance itself from the real world of socialism, because after all, knowing it or not, most of the United States is petty-bourgeois. The petty-bourgeoisie as a class cannot rule, so it tends to want the impossible—either perfect capitalist democracy (which in times like these it tends to realize is impossible, thus the Bush “election” and “Patriot Act”) or perfect violence-free socialism.

Part of what separates MIM from others talking about internationalism is that we stress how far Amerikkkans have to go before they are not enemies of the world’s people. We believe people cannot change if no one ever lays out what the goal is and how much the economic situation has to change for international solidarity to come about. While Bush has chosen not to conduct the Iraq War as just a covert war, Zinn is wrong to say that “there is a moral good sense in the American people that comes to the fore when the blanket of propaganda begins to be lifted.” (p. 120) Quite the contrary, the U.S. population supports wars around the world mostly in situations where there is almost no propaganda at all. The media said almost nothing about East Timor in 1975 for example, but the public has/had no “moral good sense” to do anything about that. We Leninists refer to Zinn’s error as two-fold: 1) “spontaneity” in believing what the U.S. public will do 2) “parasitism” for not recognizing the active enemy component of the U.S. population and why it lets the imperialist government go about its business often with hardly any propaganda effort on its part at all. It’s quite enough to take advantage of the dynamics of the gender aristocracy in the United States: with no one paying attention to anything but their Britney Spears and Marie Claire, there is no need for propaganda.

For the most part, Zinn is talking about internationalism as a moral imperative. This becomes difficult for many Amerikkkans to support. At the same time, such a moral perspective either is or is not in line with the requirements of the times. We believe it is scientifically discernible that internationalism is necessary for peace. Once we set peace—including an end to terrorism—as the goal, the means of achieving that

have to include internationalism. That is a scientific question. Howard Zinn puts it this way in connection to terrorism: “There is a reservoir of possible terrorists among all those people in the world who have suffered as a result of U.S. foreign policy.” (p. 17) Despite this statement approaching science, Zinn ends the book saying the majority of people will morally re-evaluate the Afghanistan war and then it will fall apart. (p. 118)

The golden rule of “do unto others as you would have others do unto you” applies in matters of war and peace. We cannot expect the world to have peace until all its component peoples treat each other peacefully.

We are thankful that Zinn admitted that Amerikkkans in their 90% supported war against Afghanistan. He suggested tactics to change that, but he did not deny it, as those most inclined to believe in the spontaneity of Amerikkkans would, and he did not say we should accept evil in order to get on the good side of that 90%. (p. 31-2)

Unfortunately, Zinn’s class analysis is vague enough that it supports a line which amounts to saying the Amerikkkan

majority is exploited. That’s the line of the organizations listed in the back of the book as organizations to work with and nothing contrary is to be found in the book.

At a couple points in the book Zinn raises the “Stalinism” bogeyman without detailing what it was. (pp. 75, 113) Making use of such anti-communism, Zinn veers into an assortment of unicorns such as neo-Trotskyism, pacifism and anarchism. He now points positively to the Trotskyist resistance to fighting in World War II against the Nazis [never mind Trotsky’s infamous statements supporting invasion of the Soviet Union].

We are glad that people of all persuasions, even those calling themselves “left” like Zinn made their own efforts to oppose the war. Our disagreements on Stalin and the conditions of U.S. “workers” do not invalidate our unity in opposing the war on Afghanistan. Much of what Zinn is talking about is something the public needs to chew on one way or another. We are happy this book made into many public places on many bookshelves.

Note: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,76948,00.html>



The Dawn’s Early Light

Oh say can you see by the dawn’s early light what so proudly we held has now fell into a destructive imperialist system I call hell. As I sit in this cell and yell but no help comes, so forever I’ve run, but now I stand and in my hand is my gun. At my side is my revolutionary family; together we unite. Against oppression we fight. Making political moves day and night, because no longer will I be blinded by the dawn’s early light. Everywhere I turn is the star spangled lie, but we the true few and the proud scream loud was we let out revolutionary flags fly. No longer do we say why, but together we stand all uniting in an imperialist land run by the imperialist man. Our words they try to ban, but there’s no way they can. Together we stand, divided we fall. Unite and stand together all for one cause and each individual for all. And now is the time to come together my friends. Now we unite and fight for what’s tight and stop being blinded by the dawn’s early light.

The Pledge

I pledge no allegiance to the imperialist rag of the United Imperialists of Oppression or to their corrupt government for which it stands as one capitalist group over man destroying with oppression and death for all.

Oppressed Country tis of Thee

Oppressed country tis of thee corrupt land with no liberty, for thee I see. A land where for no reason fathers die. An imperialist land that makes mothers cry. From every mountain side destruction rings.

—a North Carolina prisoner,
 August 2002

‘Encyclopedia Chomsky’ tells necessary truth about U\$. empire But his vision for an alternative is a dead-end

Power and Terror: Noam Chomsky in Our Times (2002)

Directed by John Junkerman

Noam Chomsky is a highly visible anti-imperialist figure in American politics. His analysis on U\$. foreign policy and its harm to the rest of the world’s people is right on target. But his anarchist abstinence from offering an alternative solution to the failures of capitalism leave his audience (which is quite large both in the U\$. and around the world) without direction at best, and misdirected at worst.

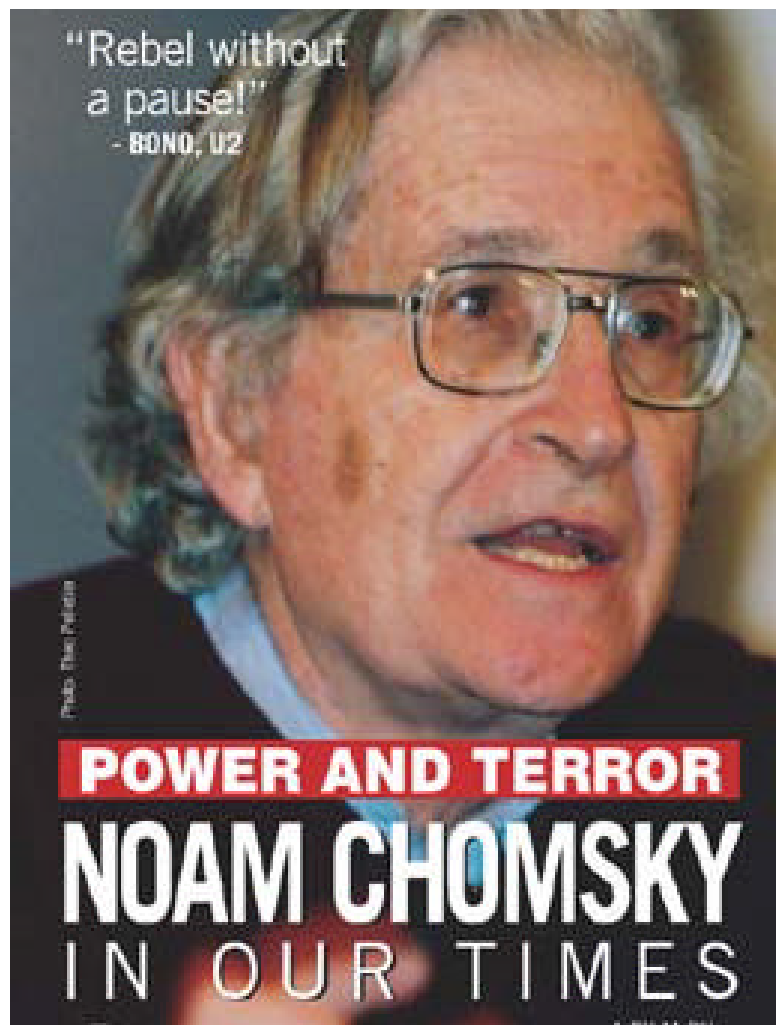
Power and Terror is a collection of speeches delivered by Chomsky after 9-11, interspersed with interview questions. Chomsky focuses on the very correct premise that if the United States really wants to end terror “there’s a really easy way: Stop participating in it.” He states that for most of the American public is it unfathomable to question the hypocrisy of the American government. People believe it is correct for America to go bomb Afghanistan for terrorist acts, but they can not even understand a question about why the U\$. gets bombed for its part in terrorism in Turkey, Israel, Nicaragua or elsewhere.

Chomsky exposes this American hypocrisy: if it is correct to bomb Afghanistan for terrorism it should be correct to bomb the U\$. for terrorism. He goes further to state that America owes reparations to Afghanistan for destroying the country (along with a long list of other countries).

The historical examples in this film of both American and British terrorism around the world are an excellent history lesson for the uninformed. As usual, Chomsky is an encyclopedia of information (as one audience member commented). And his analysis of American terrorism is much needed post 9-11.

One theme Chomsky touches on is the relative progress of the activist movement in the United States since the 1960s. He points out that in the early 60s it was impossible to mobilize people in the Boston area for a meeting about Vietnam and protesters were attacked in the streets and unable to gather much of a crowd. It took years for the protests about Vietnam to grow but now the response to American attacks on other countries receives much greater attention. Chomsky is clear that still the media is a part of corporate America and as such it supports the government and still is very much its mouthpiece. But he suggests that in present times Americans enjoy more freedoms to protest and greater influence over the mainstream media to see important news published.

Chomsky sees the activist movement having broadened to include a larger cross section of the American public. However,



MIM cautions that much popular “anti-war” sentiment reflects Americans’ concerns about wasting their money on people in other countries rather than spending it on themselves. This typical American chauvinism was exemplified in the post office recently where this reporter overheard a white man standing in line complaining about how long he had to wait: “We spend millions on bombs to send to other countries but we can’t even get good service in the post office here. You would think that as American citizens we deserve better.” As if those bombs are helping people in other countries.

Chomsky credits the activists of the 1970s and 1980s for the progress made in this country, even greater than he credits those of the 1960s. Completely ignoring the legacy of the Black Panther Party and other revolutionary organizations that forced the government to compromise with middle forces, he holds up the feminist and environmental movements of the 70s and 80s as more important. MIM disagrees with this analysis and points to the power of revolutionary communist movements to make space for the more moderate activists (like those of the 70s and 80s that Chomsky holds up as examples). Without the communists these activists would not have been in the position to even compromise with imperialism to have a seat at the table.

His willingness to ignore the important history of Maoist-influenced movements within U\$. borders misleads his audience

about the reality of historical activism. In disagreeing with communism, Chomsky downplays movements that represent what he believes to be incorrect.

In response to a question about Capitalism, Chomsky said that capitalism might be good but we don’t have real capitalism in this country. This cop-out answer implied that free market capitalism might be better for the people than the state controlled capitalism that we have. This ignores the reality of the capitalist system which is premised on the power and wealth being concentrated in the hands of the bourgeoisie which profits off of the proletariat. While he was correctly telling his audiences to fight the government and those in power, he was not giving them anything to fight for, only what to fight against. And while he is cheerleading for the dismantling of the system of power, his implication about what to fight for involves reformist movements at best.

MIM is clear that Capitalism is a failure as a system. We offer people an alternative and one that has been tested historically and proven superior to capitalism: communism.

Film marks 16th Anniversary of the Mendiola Massacre

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in operations against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the New People’s Army led by the Communist Party of the Philippines. The u\$. has labeled these groups “terrorist” despite their prior peace negotiations with the Manila government. A requirement for the resumption of peace negotiations is the removal of the “terrorist” label on Prof. Jose Ma. Sison, the chief political consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines. (4)

In a discussion following the film, a veteran organizer named Carol Almeda said that the murder of peasants and students demanding genuine social change shows that the imperialist-landlord dominated state doesn’t serve the interest of the people and is actually their enemy. She described how 70% of Filipino lawmakers are landlords and the remaining 30% are representatives of imperialist multinational corporations. Despite two popular uprisings and the removal of Marcos and Estrada there has been no change in the economic rights of the masses of Filipinos because the economic policies of Aquino and Macapagal-Arroyo are the same as those of Marcos, Ramos and Estrada: each is

driven to suppress the domestic economy by foreign imperialist investment. For example, she described an arrangement orchestrated by Macapagal-Arroyo that prohibits Filipino farmers from growing rice but requires the Philippines to import rice and sell it domestically at higher prices. Almeda blasted imperialist-inspired “agricultural conversions” as well as programs that destroy the development of the industrial sector of the economy and displace thousands to peddle goods on the streets.

A general theme in the discussion was that the massacre at Mendiola is only one of the many instances of state violence against the people. RAIL thinks that removing the “terrorist” label from Prof. Jose Ma. Sison and resuming peace negotiations is an essential step towards democracy in a region where only national liberation and genuine land reform can put an end to landlessness and state sponsored violence.

Notes:

1. MIM Notes 132, 15 February 1997.
2. Associated Press. January 23, 2002.
3. Los Angeles Times. February 21, 2003. P. A1.
4. <http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/agitation/philippines/index.html>

Pentagon to send 3,000 more U.S. troops to Philippines

From page 1...

opinion inside the Philippines.”(3)

The United States insisted on the terminology “military operation” over the tried-and-true “training exercise” favored by Arroyo and Reyes, and the deal collapsed. Apparently the Bush administration is more worried about public opinion in the United States. The Pentagon wants to take credit for any military successes while preparing Americans for the possibility of combat casualties (more about *that* later).

Filipinos—including Philippine legislators—first heard about the plans for “joint exercises” or “joint operations” or whatever you want to call them from a Pentagon official interviewed the New York Times. Given that and the Pentagon’s insistence that the Philippine military understands the plan for U.S. troops is really a duck, although they want to call it a swan, many Filipinos accuse the Arroyo regime of lying to them.(4)

Philippine senator Aquilino Pimentel went so far as to accuse Reyes of treason. “My take is that Secretary Reyes is trying to cover up for what was actually a done deal between the department of national defense and the Pentagon,” he said. “Somebody is lying, and it’s our own people.”(5)

Not that the Pentagon hasn’t told its share of lies. The Pentagon promoted the line that the 1,000 troops who arrived in the Philippines last year were engaged in “training exercises,” even though they participated in patrols and carried weapons. Indeed, American troops have already been involved in “combat” of a sort. Last July an American participated in a raid on a civilian house and shot Buyong-buyong Isnijal as he lay on his back on the floor.(6)

Of course, the rationale both the United States and the Arroyo regime have laid out for U.S. military involvement in the Philippines is a lie. According to their story, Abu Sayaaf is a formidable gang of “terrorists” with links to Al Qaeda. In truth, there is more evidence linking Abu Sayaaf to the Philippine military and the American CIA than to Al Qaeda, and Abu Sayaaf membership has dwindled to under 200.(7)

Even bourgeois mouthpieces are now too embarrassed to repeat the charge of links between Abu Sayaaf and Al Qaeda without the disclaimer, “it’s not clear whether any connection still exists.”(5) The Los Angeles Times slipped up recently and printed a story which made no reference to the supposed Al Qaeda link at all, saying simply, “The Abu Sayyaf, which once espoused a militant Islamic philosophy, degenerated into a bandit gang that makes a living from kidnapping for ransom.”(1)

Nor has the Abu Syaaf been the only—or principal—target of these “training exercises,” as the United States and the Arroyo regime claimed. Last August, declaring the Abu Sayaaf defeated (which leads one to wonder why she needs



We must stubbornly resist the chicanery of those who would make Amerika’s international war into one of self-defense.

another 3,000 American troops), President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered her newly U.S.-trained troops to move against the Communist-led New People’s Army.(8)

There are several reasons why the United States wants to send troops to the Philippines besides the “war on terrorism.” First, it wants to prop up an important ally in east Asia and strengthen its authority over its southern islands. Second, “joint exercises” pave the way for new U.S. bases, to replace the bases Filipinos closed in the early 1990s. Such bases could support U.S. military action in Korea, the Taiwan straits, southeast Asia and even Iraq. The islands of Basilan and Jolo, where Abu Sayaaf operates, are near Malaysia and the shipping lanes which supply much of the region with oil. Finally, the U.S. wants to increase its military presence to secure its access to raw materials. The islands in the Southern Philippines are rich in timber and minerals.

Progressive Philippine representative Liza Maza made internationalism a core component of her opposition to the Pentagon’s plans. “The Bayanihan military exercises can exacerbate the armed conflict in Mindanao. Moreover, the Philippines may be used as a launching pad for the US war on Iraq. It is for our people’s safety and the upholding of our nation’s sovereignty that we must push for the immediate pullout of US troops in the country.”(9)

No statute of limitations on “blowback”

One of the reasons the Pentagon is worried about U.S. casualties in the southern Philippines is lingering hatred towards the United States because of its atrocities during the Filipino-American war, over 100 years ago. It’s worth quoting from the Los Angeles Times at length on this subject.

When U.S. troops land on this forbidding jungle island in the coming weeks, they will find a proud tribal people with a historic hatred of the United States and a deep suspicion

of American motives.

They will find a land where mothers put their children to bed with lullabies telling them to become strong so they can avenge atrocities by U.S. forces a century ago...

About 95% of the island’s people are Tausug, an Islamic tribe that has fought invaders for centuries - first the Spaniards, then the Americans and the Japanese.

After the Philippines became a U.S. colony in 1898, Washington sent troops to subdue the Tausugs. They fought with traditional long knives known as bolos against soldiers who were armed with guns. The tribesmen earned a reputation for being unstoppable even when wounded.

Tausugs boast that the .45-caliber pistol was developed to stop their ancestors in their tracks.

During the American campaign, Philippine historians say, U.S. troops under Gen. John J. Pershing committed atrocities against the Tausugs. The troops massacred hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people, including women and children, they say. Photos taken at the time show American soldiers standing amid hundreds of bodies.

Now, some Tausugs welcome an opportunity to fight the Americans.

“They have been rejoicing over the news that the Americans are coming,” Parouk Hussin, a Tausug who is governor of a Muslim autonomous region that includes Jolo, said in an interview. “They say, ‘This is our chance to avenge the atrocities committed against our forefathers.’”

The Tausugs were not the only people to suffer American atrocities. “It is certain that U.S. imperialism killed between 10-15% of [the Philippine] population then of some 8 million, or from 800,000 to over a million deaths. By any account, that is a staggering amount.(3)

Americans must wake up and realize that the Filipino people have their own

national aspirations. Aside from this history of genocide and subsequential colonial exploitation, Filipinos have to bear the insult that they need Uncle Sam to help round up a small criminal gang—analogue to French troops arriving to patrol the streets of Los Angeles or Washington DC to allegedly stamp out the drug trade or catch the beltway sniper. Only when the imperialists have been driven out will the masses be able to carry out their own desires to quash banditry and all reactionary thugs.

Ultimately, the best thing people within the united snakes can do to support the Filipino people’s desire for national self-determination is build a strong anti-imperialist movement here. We must stubbornly resist the chicanery of those who would make Amerika’s international war into one of self-defense. Get in touch with MIM to lend your voice and end this madness.

Notes:

1. Los Angeles Times, 1 Mar 2003.
2. MIM Notes 251, 1 Feb 2002.
3. Los Angeles Times, 28 Feb 2003.

4. MIM does not know whether Arroyo and Reyes really cut a back-room deal with the Pentagon or whether the Pentagon just claimed they had, to put the pressure on or discredit them. Either way, the United States has no business fucking around with other countries sovereignty—especially on the key issue of whether foreign troops participate in those countries internal conflicts. Furthermore, again either way, it shows the United States is willing to use up and throw away even its most ardent bootlickers. The life of a running dog is not as easy as it looks.

5. Los Angeles Times, 24 Feb 2003.

6. “U.S. soldier shoots Filipino civilian,” MIM Notes 265, 1 Sep 2002.

7. “California forum on the Philippines builds OUT NOW! movement in the United States,” MIM Notes 254, 15 Mar 2002; MIM Notes 251, 1 Feb 2002.

8. “U.S.-Arroyo regime launches “all-out war” on communists,” MIM Notes 265, 1 Sep 2002.

9. Press release, 21 Feb 2003.

Kansas prisoners cry out for rev. ed.

Dear Reader,

I'm writing on behalf of the Rastafarian community at El Dorado Correctional Facility. We are writing in an attempt to better our situation, as well as that of our brothers and sisters across the country.

So many of our brothers have fallen victim to the seemingly endless cycle of incarceration, and have been outcast or labeled a menace to our own communities. This branding has made us seem unfit to be leaders and builders in the continuing African struggle. We often hear about brothers and sisters who are released only to reoffend, but we hear very little about brothers and sisters who become successful. Remember Malcolm X, and many others who were incarcerated but later in life did positive things for our people.

The African mind has a psychological sickness that stems from 500 years of oppression. The Rasta community here feels the only antidote to our sickness is organizing, planning and re-educating ourselves and if possible all African-based communities. Information is the cornerstone of knowledge, and to be knowledgeable is to be intelligent.

We must ask: who would you want to return to society: productive men and women, or people stuck in a criminal mind-set? We feel the recidivism rate in Kansas is so high because of the lack of educational resources. The little that is available only goes to a few. Afro-Americans are less than 7% of the Kansas population, but we are over 35% of the prison population. These numbers are alarming.

Our struggle transcends religion, for we are seeking the light of truth about our African ancestors and self. If it is possible for you to donate books or any other materials, we would greatly appreciate it.

Aluta Continua, Harambee Pomoja Tu Ta Shinda Uhuru Sasa. In Swahili that means "The Struggle Continues, Pull Together, Together we will Win, Freedom Now."

— an EDCF, Kansas prisoner, 25 January 2003

MIM responds: Disproportionate imprisonment of the internal semi-colonies is a problem throughout the united snakes. There are more Black prisoners than white prisoners in Amerika, even though Blacks are only 12% of the u.s. population and whites are nearly 70%. In 1998, those U.S. states with the highest imprisonment rates are those with the largest pockets of oppressed nation members: Louisiana (736 sentenced prisoners per 100,000 residents), Texas (724), Oklahoma (622), Mississippi (574) and South Carolina (550). The states with the lowest imprisonment rates were the whitest: Minnesota (117), Maine (125), and North Dakota (128).(1)

The criminal injustice system is an indispensable part of the state. It serves the interests of the bourgeoisie by caging those elements of the population most likely to rebel. Our task as revolutionaries is to push the righteous anger of the oppressed toward the struggle against imperialism. Prisoners can better their conditions today by fighting against censorship and for the right to read

Under Lock & Key

News from Prisons & Prisoners

MIM Notes and other revolutionary literature, or to shut down control units, or to resolve the burning issues in their states.(2)

Donate books, stamps or cash to MIM to help us get MIM Notes, MIM Theory and other revolutionary literature into the hands of prisoners. In appreciation of your donation, we will work with prisoners to analyze and report on their conditions, and to take up agitation to improve better these conditions.

Notes:

1. "Prison boom rockets despite 'crime' drop" MIM Notes 194, 15 September 1999.
2. <http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/agitation/prisons/>

IL prisoner sends \$20

Dear MIM,

Enclosed is \$20. I must commend you on the good work and statements of facts in your paper that help brothers like myself who are incarcerated and made blind. I am donating to your paper so that you will continue to send it to me and I'll pass it on to others. I'm going to represent y'all all the way.

A true supporter.

— A prisoner in Pontiac

MIM responds: We hope our readers on the outside will be inspired by the donations from our comrades behind bars. Prisoners can not get jobs that even pay minimum wage and yet they donate money, stamps and much hard work.

Oregon prisoner down for the struggle

I wrote to you for the first time about 2 months ago, asking for a subscription to MIM Notes and this letter is written in response to your reply.

To start, please let me remind you that all of us readers do appreciate the efforts that USW and MIM in general are making. It is so important to educate both "free" persyns and prisoners in regards to the inhumanity of the current injustice system; a system that is indicative of the true greed that capitalism tends to breed. As large and seemingly insurmountable hurtles present themselves, please don't let yourselves forget how important it is to keep it up.

Please be assured that I am more than willing to devote time to the battle against the exploitation of the Third World. When my own MIM notes start arriving, I'll make sure that after I read them they are passed to my friends along with a recommendation of which articles to "check out." I know that it is important to make available more information for our Spanish speaking comrades. I will be sending you translations of some of the articles in Under Lock & Key so that you can perhaps include them in future editions of Notas Rojas. And as my writing skills improve, I may start sending in some articles for Under Lock and Key. I have a lot to say about

mandatory minimum sentencing and the current definition of "violent offender."

I am interested in helping you guys out with distribution. My release date is in 2007, so please expect to see me out there in the not-too-distant future. I can't wait to bring some truth to people with closed eyes and covered ears!

— a prisoner in Oregon, February 2003

MA prison illegally creates 'gang blocks,' blackmails so-called STG members

Those convicts being illegally housed in the Security Threat Group (STG) Plymouth blocks at Walpole are kept there unless they partake in and graduate from this "Criminal Thinking Program." Even if you remain disciplinary-report free for years, the only way out of those "gang blocks" is through this program. The courts have recently made a decision that those blocks are illegal and they said the DOC has to change its racist policy in regards to putting "gang members" in those blocks. The vast majority is Latino. I will try to forward you a copy of the lawsuit, I don't know if they will make a copy for me.

[The STG renouncement program] is a 3 phase, 8-month program aimed at helping us change our criminal ways of thinking and acting. We are housed in the special management unit for the first 6 months (phase I, intensive phase). Then we are herded out to general population for phase II, which is a 2-month graduate maintenance program, which can be at any level 4 prison in MA. The phase III is called reintegration, which is about pre-release. As to the curriculum, we are supposed to attend classes Monday through Friday at least 2 to 5 hours at a minimum. I don't know exactly what they will try to indoctrinate us with. Basing my opinion on the orientation we had, their aim is to make us conform. Seeing that it is our political awareness that places us in Security Threat Group blocks, I know that "teacher" will target me. I will not compromise my political position just to graduate. So there is a big question mark as to if they will let me graduate. I asked the "teacher" if one's religious/political persuasion will be a factor come graduation and he, as expected, avoided the question by saying it comes down to morality. I intend on challenging all discrepancies I find in their brainwashing courses.

I noticed that they have something called system bashing, where blaming the system for our faults is part of our criminal thinking. I personally think an individual is partly responsible under capitalism. Because although we do have the choice of saying yes or no, one's socio-economic status is in fact what dictates our position. The proletarian/lumpen proletarian is a social outcast because of nationality and the state's

criminalization of urban males. He/she is also economically oppressed in that less opportunity is afforded him/her. This then gives rise to the neo-colonial mentality, where ignorance is supreme. Individualism, opportunism, and focoism corrode the individual. I can't wait to see how they respond to my shock wave.

—a MA prisoner, November 2002

Latin Kings repressed in Utah

Greetings from the land of the Almighty Latin King Nation in the State of UT. Screaming Almighty Nationwide!!

I recently received the MIM Notes that you sent me. I really appreciate it because the prison authorities have continued to censor all my mail. They copy each letter that I receive, including newspapers, magazines, pictures and legal mail. Then they send copies to the federal government of anything that shows a picture of a 5-point crown and return it to the sender. The prison has even deleted

MIM on Prisons & Prisoners

MIM seeks to build public opinion against Amerika's criminal injustice system, and to eventually replace the bourgeois injustice system with proletarian justice. The bourgeois injustice system imprisons and executes a disproportionately large and growing number of oppressed people while letting the biggest mass murderers — the imperialists and their lackeys — roam free. Imperialism is not opposed to murder or theft, it only insists that these crimes be committed in the interests of the bourgeoisie.

"All U.S. citizens are criminals—accomplices and accessories to the crimes of U.S. oppression globally until the day U.S. imperialism is overcome. All U.S. citizens should start from the point of view that they are reforming criminals."

MIM does not advocate that all prisoners go free today; we have a more effective program for fighting crime as was demonstrated in China prior to the restoration of capitalism there in 1976. We say that all prisoners are political prisoners because under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, all imprisonment is substantively political. It is our responsibility to exert revolutionary leadership and conduct political agitation and organization among prisoners — whose material conditions make them an overwhelmingly revolutionary group. Some prisoners should and will work on self-criticism under a future dictatorship of the proletariat in those cases in which prisoners really did do something wrong by proletarian standards.

phone numbers from my phone list per the u.s. marshals. Including my house number! If I want to call or write my house and my family I have to get approval from the warden.

This is the type of censorship I have been subject to because supposedly I am a leader of my Nation. Keep up the good work MIM.

To all my people representing Black and Gold, don't let these pigs keep oppressing our Nation. We are the Lions in the Concrete Jungle, let them hear our call. Amor the Rey!
—An ALKQN Lord in Utah

MIM Theory censored for revolutionary articles

Dear MIM:

I am writing to inform you that the literature that you sent me was not allowed and should be on its way back to you. Enclosed is a copy of the disapproval form and a copy of our California Code of Regulations Title 15. I marked the section CCR 3006(c). I am appealing the decision with a 602. I do not know what was sent and did not sign the form because it was not opened in front of me. I'll keep you up to date with the progress of the appeal 602. It's a disappointment for me because I want to educate myself but am unable to. My appeal is copied below:

On 2-16-02 I was informed that incoming mail/package "literature" was not allowed per CCR 3006(c) "material has revolutionary articles and articles based on or about violence." which was being returned to sender. This material is historical literature. The contenance is based on he forming of what is called the United States of American and the struggles of people of color. It may have violence within its pages but no more than a daily newspaper, Time or Newsweek magazine which speaks on war and murder. Racism is unfair because the institutional library here at CCI-Tehachapi is allowed to issue these types of materials...

— a prisoner in California, CCI Tehachapi, February 2003

MIM responds: There is no justification in the California mail regulations which states that revolutionary material can be rejected based on its content. The CDC is violating its own policies with this censorship. The literature censored was a copy the MIM Theory magazine, "Amerikan Prisons on Trial". We are particularly alarmed by this censorship because we are beginning a state-wide study group in the California prisons reading this theory journal. This is a clear attempt to stop prisoners from educating themselves and participating in revolutionary

education. We need help from lawyers on the outside to join the fight against censorship being waged by MIM and our comrades behind bars.

Repression in Cal. outpatient program

Sadly I must report the oppressive and very petty environment of the Pelican Bay enhanced outpatient program (EOP). On January 31, 2003 the pig in the gun tower informed a prisoner under medication that the next time he was late getting ready for chow he would not be given breakfast (the guy only took about 2 minutes). I saw and heard this personally. Yesterday the prisoner woke up disoriented from a heavy medicated induced sleep only to find his door was closing during breakfast. He hurriedly got dressed and informed control (who was the same person and was still releasing for breakfast elsewhere) to open his door for breakfast. The pig in the gun tower said "what did I tell you the other day. If you were late you weren't going to breakfast." With that he closed the window and left him in the cell. We figured that he (the pig) was going to wait until breakfast was finished and the prisoner would be given his meal. But that was not the case. The pig withheld the meal as punishment for being unable to get up on time.

The prisoner asked me to write a complaint form (called a 602) which I did. Citing the prison rule book (title 15) 3050 as well as the orientation packet you receive when you arrive which states that all staff (Correctional) are specially trained to deal with prisoners who have mental difficulties. I guess that means denying somebody their most basic human right to food.

The prisoner later on told me never mind that he isn't tripping and that it was ok. I explained to him that it was not ok. I also explained that it is a violation of his 8th amendment right not to be subjected to cruel and unusual punishment which it is. I also explained how to bypass the informal level by turning in a citizen complaint, which will put the pig under investigation (hopefully) plus the citizen complaint will stay open for 5 years.

— a prisoner in CA, February 2003

Hepatitis C and the American Prisoner

The Hepatitis C virus (HCV) has made its way deep into the American prison system. With 2 million men and women incarcerated in America, it is estimated that 20 percent to 60 percent are infected with HCV. The fact that prison systems are notorious for providing substandard medical care — whose systemic incompetence, neglect, and institutionalized disregard for human life is the premise for innumerable lawsuits — renders this national epidemic a matter of life and death.

HCV: A stealth virus

HCV is often referred to as the "Silent Epidemic." It is the most common blood-borne disease in the U.S. Since approximately half of those infected do not realize they have the disease, in too many instances, treatment doesn't begin until after the virus has progressed to the chronic stage. Hepatitis C can lay dormant for decades. One can have it from 10 to 30 years before they begin to show symptoms. By then it could already be too late.

HCV is a deadly disease. Approximately 85 percent of those infected develop chronic hepatitis C. Although there is no cure, undergoing treatment has been successful in clearing the virus from the body in about 15 percent of the time. They are the lucky ones. The end stages of chronic HCV involves a myriad of liver problems — including cirrhosis, cancer, and failure of the liver. The disintegration of a vital organ brings about an excruciating death.

Most associate HIV, the virus which causes AIDS, as being the nations' foremost blood-borne disease. Yet, HCV has surpassed it four-to-one. One million Americans are infected with HIV, while 4 million have HCV. At least 1/3 of HIV patients are also co-infected with hepatitis C. Either virus can exacerbate the other.

To make matter even worse, hepatitis C is equally fatal. In the U.S., 8,000 to 10,000 deaths a year are attributed to this silent killer, with the totals expected to reach 30,000 a year by 2010 — twice the toll AIDS claims.

Even though HCV has outpaced HIV, very few know much about this invective. Until very recently it has not received much coverage. All the intense activism associated with the AIDS movement hit a peak in the mid-90s and has subsequently subsided. Since HCV paralleled HIV, it would have been ideal if the AIDS movement had focused on both viruses.

HCV awareness is beginning to pick-up

some momentum, although relaunching another movement has been a struggle. Celebrities going public with their affliction has helped bring the far-reaching implications of the HCV to the attention of the public. Former star of "Baywatch," Pamela Anderson, brought HCV awareness to the front pages when she disclosed to the public that she had contracted the disease from her husband while getting a tattoo. One can contract such viruses through a number of ways: syringes, unprotected sex, tattoo needles, exposure to blood, to name just a few.

Co-infection and the Prison Intravenous Drug User

In 1996 a research study completed in cooperation with the California Department of Human Services uncovered how widespread are HCV and HIV within the California Department of Corrections.

Incoming male prisoners were testing positive for HCV at a rate of 39.4 percent — with 61.3 percent of them co-infected with HIV. Incoming female prisoners tested positive for HCV at a rate of 54.5 percent — with an astounding 85 percent being co-infected with HIV.

These are alarming, troubling, and eye-opening numbers. Both being blood-borne maladies and epidemic in proportions, co-infection can be traced to intravenous drug use within the community of drug addicts who lead high risk lifestyles. The sharing of needles is the unfortunate common denominator in how the virus spreads easily within the American prison system.

While the actual infection rates of those carrying either of these diseases vary from state to state, the disturbing fact of the matter are the prodigious numbers of incarcerated individuals who have one or both of these diseases. For these high risk individuals, unknowingly, diseases are passed around like a bottle of cheap wine. Being a largely uneducated and self-destructive demographic, the numbers of those affected will get much worse before they get any better.

Despite a significant body of information illustrating the dangers of exposure to blood, the message is not getting to the nation's population of hard core drug addicts who share needles — many of whom end up in prison and continue to reinforce their addiction.

Generally, if available, a drug addict will use drugs. Even for those in remission, relapse is a problem. The incarcerated addict will often go to great lengths to use drugs if they are even remotely available. Thoughts of thoroughly sanitizing a syringe, which is a rather simple process, come a distant second to the immediate desire to "get high."

Moreover, if one uses drugs intravenously while serving time — which is a rather unfortunate reality — one has volunteered to be a member of a group whose lifestyle poses the greatest danger to themselves and others. Using a syringe to get high has become a very deadly endeavor — especially while incarcerated.

Facts on U\$ imprisonment

The facts about imprisonment in the United States are that the United States has been the world's leading prison-state per capita for the last 25 years, with a brief exception during Boris Yeltsin's declaration of a state of emergency.(1)

That means that while Reagan was talking about a Soviet "evil empire" he was the head of a state that imprisoned more people per capita. In supposedly "hard-line" Bulgaria of the Soviet bloc of the 1980s, the imprisonment rate was less than half that of the United States.(2,3)

To find a comparison with U.S. imprisonment of Black people, there is no statistic in any country that compares including apartheid South Africa of the era before Mandela was president. The last situation remotely comparable to the situation today was under Stalin during war time. The majority of prisoners are non-violent offenders(4) and the U.S. Government now holds about a half million more prisoners than China; even though China is four times our population.(5)

The rednecks tell MIM that we live in a "free country." They live in an Orwellian 1984 situation where freedom is imprisonment.

Notes: 1. Marc Mauer, "Americans Behind Bars: The International Use of Incarceration 1993," The Prison Sentencing Project, 918 F. St. NW, Suite 501, Washington, DC 20004 (202) 628-0871 Reference: SRI: R8965-2, 1994

2. Ibid., 1992 report.

3. United Nations Development Programme, "Human Development Report 1994,:" Oxford University Press, p. 186.

4. Figure of 51.2 percent for state prisoners there for non-violent offenses. Abstract of the United States 1993, p. 211.

5. Atlantic Monthly December, 1998.



La inmigración: Se distinguen la aristocracia obrera y la burguesía internacionalista

Por el MIM

Traducido por Células de Estudio para la Liberación de Aztlán y América Latina

La diferencia de opinión sobre la cuestión de la inmigración entre un yanqui común y corriente y una "élite" o el círculo de poder, supera el nivel del año 1998, según una encuesta publicada el día 17 de diciembre. El presidente Bush ha puesto en práctica los reglamentos migratorios más salvajes sobre sus vecinos, México y Canadá, y ha causado molestia a los conservadores del occidente canadiense con las tarifas sobre la madera. Sin embargo, menos del 30% de los yanquis apoyan a Bush sobre sólo dos asuntos: los cambios en el clima y la inmigración. La corriente del chovinismo nacionalista que comenzó el 11 de septiembre alimenta la opinión injusta con respecto a la inmigración.

La encuesta fortalece la tesis del MIM que la aristocracia obrera está más opuesta al internacionalismo que la misma burguesía imperialista. Lenin explicó extensamente que la psicología de esta clase sostiene que apenas han logrado sus privilegios y por lo tanto son más feroces en protegerlos.

Sólo el 14% de la élite norteamericana, de "los líderes de la opinión," están de acuerdo con la posición popular según la cual se debe reducir la inmigración. El 60% del público norteamericano sostiene que la política del gobierno debe ser reducir la inmigración oficial. Y todo esto es a pesar de la retórica del "país de los inmigrantes" y de que aun la ciudad de Nueva York se adorna con la "Estatua de la Libertad." Está bien claro que los yanquis no creen en el derecho de poder viajar abiertamente y gracias a la estupidez electoral de la aristocracia obrera, el promedio de encarcelamiento en EE.UU. es el más alto en todo el mundo.

"Según la encuesta, el 70% del público norteamericano opina que reducir la inmigración ilegal es 'una meta muy importante de la política internacional de EE.UU.', mientras sólo el 22% de la élite sostiene la misma posición." (1) Esta es la razón de la victoria de Pat Buchanan sobre Bush en las elecciones preliminares de Nuevo Hampshire en 1992. En 1992, año de recesión, tanto Perot como Buchanan lanzaron sus programas con el lema "Yanquis Primero."

La propuesta aceptada casi por todos los tal llamados yanquis "marxistas" es una ilusión que postula la existencia de un proletariado explotado que propaga el internacionalismo de este lado de la frontera.

Al contrario, lo que debe quedar bien claro es que el pueblo yanqui carece del internacionalismo más que la clase con el poder estatal y que de esta manera es aún más reaccionario. No basta el chantaje de la clase dominante: la aristocracia obrera es consciente de su lucha para lograr una lucrativa división de superganancias. La aristocracia obrera no es nada indiferente hacia el tema de superganancias, y no está a punto de despojarse de una supuesta conciencia engañosa para reemplazarla con un internacionalismo revolucionario. Los

intereses de la aristocracia obrera son fáciles de identificar y ésta los persigue diligentemente, de lo cual resulta la enorme diferencia entre su posición sobre la inmigración y la posición de la clase dominante.

El pueblo yanqui no aguanta a los verdaderos representantes de la burguesía internacionalista como los Rockefeller, Jimmy Carter y Bush el mayor. El iniciar pláticas sobre el desempleo y el empeoramiento de los salarios (¡menos beneficios!) con la aristocracia obrera la llevaría a tomar el lado de Buchanan. No entender esto iguala a no entender la situación contemporánea ni la teoría leninista de la aristocracia obrera. Salvo los inmigrantes y la población de habla hispana, no hay campo para discutir lo del proletariado dentro de las fronteras de EE.UU. Esto sólo tiene como resultado que se molesten y se encierren más los chovinistas.

Entender la realidad en los países imperialistas con una población burguesa implica luchar para forjar una alianza con el lumpenproletariado y con la pequeña ala izquierdista de la burguesía internacionalista. La prensa imperialista no ignora del todo este asunto como cuando ridiculiza las protestas en contra del Fondo Monetario Internacional dirigidas por los "nenes anarquistas con fondos de inversión" quienes poseen recursos suficientes para viajar de una manifestación a otra. En los años 60 y 70, la prensa dijo lo mismo con respeto a los miembros del grupo "Weather Underground" quienes eran poderosos millonarios y abogados.

La sección de la burguesía internacionalista que posee una visión de largo plazo

no se encuentra en el poder. Esta sección ha salido en Seattle y en otras protestas a nivel mundial pero aún es muy pequeña. El ala izquierdista de la burguesía internacionalista es comparable a lo que Lenin, Stalin y Mao llamaban "burguesía nacional," una clase que podía unirse a la revolución en los países semif feudales. Por lo tanto, el ala izquierdista de la burguesía internacionalista es una amiga del proletariado. Aunque aún sobreviven, tanto la burguesía nacional como el ala izquierdista de la burguesía internacionalista están en peligro de extinción. Debemos entender que estos grupos tienen intereses distintos a los del imperialismo.

No es nuestro deber oponernos a tipos como Bush, Blair, Carter y Clinton con demandas nacionalistas en contra del Tratado de Libre Comercio (TLC) o la inmigración. Nuestro deber es demostrar que la única forma de lograr la paz y la prosperidad es nuestra estrategia para conseguir un salario mínimo mundial, un cuerpo para la protección universal del medio ambiente y, por consecuencia, una lucha de clases mundial.

Aunque el Centro para Estudios Migratorios ha llevado a cabo las encuestas, aún carece de una teoría: "No está muy claro

porqué hay ideas tan distintas sobre la inmigración entre los líderes del país y el público." También se distingue la opinión del yanqui común y corriente de la de los líderes sobre la protección del empleo para los yanquis y la competición económica con otros países. Esta diferencia indica firmemente que una de las principales razones por la cual los yanquis se preocupan por la inmigración es el temor que tienen a la competición por el empleo.

El tremendo espacio entre los imperialistas internacionalistas y la aristocracia obrera ha rendido una serie de situaciones políticas hipócritas. Mientras la aristocracia obrera se aprovecha de los negocios de los empresarios en el Tercer Mundo, a los empresarios tercermundistas que buscan hacer negocios en los países imperialistas se les echa de aviones porque tienen pinta de "terroristas." También se organizan movimientos antiinmigrantes al estilo Le Pen en Francia y Buchanan en EE.UU.

No debemos alegar que los tratados de comercio e inmigración y los convenios representan únicamente la conciencia burguesa embucando la falsa conciencia sobre el proletariado de los países imperialistas. Debemos defender estos tratados y promover su lógica.

El gobierno de Los Países Bajos le permitió entrar a José Maria Sison y firmó tratados y convenios garantizándole ciertos derechos. Los camaradas filipinos lo entienden muy bien, hacen hincapié en dichos tratados y convenios, los defienden y no permiten que el gobierno Holandés los anule. Los camaradas filipinos serían culpables de promover una conciencia falsa si sólo se la pasaran discutiendo tratados y los derechos humanos de los europeos y al mismo tiempo fuese verdad que existe algún proletariado europeo a punto de lanzarse a la revolución internacionalista. Pero las cosas no son así y todavía no se alcanza este nivel de ventaja política y, por consecuencia, lo correcto es apoyar tratados internacionales en contra de la aristocracia obrera.

Muchos de los tratados, convenios y leyes no prohíben que la aristocracia obrera europea organice protestas en contra de los inmigrantes. Así lo dijo un típico aristócrata obrero en el grupo de Usenet soc.culture.filipino: "Pobre JoMa Sison. Se queja al gobierno holandés para que le restauren los beneficios estatales. Se queja porque sólo recibe una miserable asignación de 201.93 euros y porque el gobierno no paga por su hogar. Disculpenme pero mis impuestos pagan por todo esto. Si tienes alguna molestia lárgate a las Filipinas y averigua cuánto te dan allá. Nos acusa de ser un gobierno policíaco. Sí, qué lástima. ¿Si te encuentras tan infeliz en los Países Bajos entonces qué haces aquí?" Le informamos a este imbécil que gracias a la presión política de tipos como él los Países Bajos prohíben que Sison consiga empleo. Y al mismo tiempo le acusan de no pagar impuestos.

JoMa Sison y otros comunistas están de

acuerdo con la idea de firmar un tratado para que los imperialistas saquen sus empresarios de las Filipinas. Pero la aristocracia obrera lo quiere de los dos modos. Por un lado, quiere tratados que le permiten comprar ropa de marca GAP fabricada por empresarios que visitan y llevan a cabo negocios en el Tercer Mundo y, por el otro lado, prohíbe que las personas del Tercer Mundo visiten los países imperialistas para hacer negocios.

Estos aristócratas primero deberían chocar con su propio gobierno sobre los tratados y convenios que éste ha firmado antes de lanzar su agresión contra los inmigrantes. Si la aristocracia obrera logra que su gobierno y las empresas internacionales salgan del Tercer Mundo, la gente del Tercer Mundo no tendrá razón para venir a los países imperialistas. Es raro que un pueblo busque salir de su país de origen; sólo lo hace bajo circunstancias desastrosas causadas por los imperialistas. No vale quejarse cuando el Tercer Mundo busca visitar y vivir en los países imperialistas ya que el imperialismo se ha adueñado de sus tierras.

Los marxistas falsos que nos critican buscan pretextos para torcer los resultados de la encuesta y demostrar que los "obreritos" se encuentran en peores condiciones que los imperialistas. Como no identifican la contradicción entre la aristocracia obrera y los imperialistas no logran utilizarla correctamente. No distinguen entre diversos intereses de clase.

La miopía de la aristocracia obrera tiene como resultado guerras entre naciones sobre ciertos temas de la economía doméstica. Esta miopía encontró su máxima expresión en la postura de Adolfo Hitler sobre la inmigración y el comercio internacional. Por su parte, la burguesía internacionalista cuenta sólo consigo misma y por lo tanto su opinión sobre la inmigración no es muy popular. La estrecha base social para su tipo de internacionalismo resulta en que los países imperialistas oscilen entre el facismo y la democracia liberal.

Está bien claro que los imperialistas se aprovechan del comercio internacional y de la subversión en el Tercer Mundo mientras que la aristocracia saca beneficios al punto de venta pero siente que se ponen en peligro sus empleos. Sólo el internacionalismo proletario es capaz de conseguir que teoría de la cooperación internacional económica se haga realidad. Cuando el MIM llegue al poder nos aseguraremos de que el pueblo entienda y descubra los beneficios del comercio y la cooperación económica en general.

La posición de la aristocracia obrera según la cual el mundo no saca beneficios del libre comercio, el mercado obrero y la resultante cooperación, es equivocada. Su posición es cobarde e ignorante. Precisamente son los imperialistas los que no pueden llevar a cabo el "libre comercio" y la "libertad de movimiento" porque ofrecen los derechos más básicos a una pequeña élite. Sólo la línea del MIM puede resolver esta contradicción.

Notas: (1) <http://www.cis.org/circle.html>