Iraqis’ heroic resistance deals hard blows to US imperialism

Gov. report points to more extensive parasitism

By HC116, July 31, 2005
From mimnotes.info

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics came out with its June 2005 employment situation summary on July 8th, a few weeks ago. Since then, there have been two changes of relevance: the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) passed, and the AFL-CIO split. Opposition in the United States to CAFTA has coincided with fears about declining manufacturing employment, which intersect with the AFL-CIO’s own fear of a loss of American manufacturing jobs and its fear of declining union membership of manufacturing workers. The movement of the larger labor aristocracy to retain manufacturing jobs for Americans, while it contains a demand for job security, is reactionary and expresses itself in attacks on both migrant and Third World workers, and supporting the unionization and other organizing of Third World workers only insofar as they benefit the parasitic economic interests of the labor aristocracy. The labor aristocracy is comprised of the vast majority of U.S. workers, particularly Euro-American workers. The labor-aristocrat fear-mongering has resonated with extremely reactionary imperialists. For example, Republikkkan Party Chairman Ken Mehlman last week said he backed anti-CAFTA and anti-immigrant fascist Congresspersyn Tom Tancredo, a Minutemen-supporter who has also spread fear about the loss of American manufacturing jobs, for a fifth term in Congress. “That’s a sharp change from 2002, when a spokeswoman for the party said Tancredo did not speak for mainstream Republican values.”

The Bureau of Labor Statistics’ employment situation summary for last month is interesting in this context, showing changes that are relevant to discussions of manufacturing employment, as well as whether American workers’ living standards come from and whether reactionaries actually have cause to attack Third World workers. The June BLS employment situation summary shows that while manufacturing employment decreased by 24,000 overall between May and June, the fall would have been greater were it not for an increase of 7,000 in computer and electronic products manufacturing employment. We may say that the manufacturing part of the productive sector of the United States both contracted and changed in its composition, perhaps becoming more skilled (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing,” 27 February 2004, http://www.bls.gov/occ/cg/cgs010.htm); although, there were substantial decreases, accounting for most of the decline in manufacturing employment, in transportation equipment manufacturing employment, and motor vehicles and parts manufacturing.
employment. Another indication of changes in both the size and skill of the manufacturing sector is that the third-largest decrease in the BLS selected industry detail under manufacturing was in apparel manufacturing employment, a 2,500 employees, while there was an increase of 700 employees in chemicals manufacturing employment.

Employment in goods-producing industries in general—not just manufacturing, but also natural resources and mining—declined by only 4 thousand overall between May and June (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Table B-1. Employees on nonfarm payrolls by industry sector and selected industry detail,” 8 July 2005, http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm), a tiny change in comparison to the total employment in goods-producing industries. Yet, health care employment alone increased by 25 thousand between May and June, an increase larger than the decrease in manufacturing employment.

Looking at monthly changes over the year, it is clear that there has been a decreasing trend in manufacturing employment, not just between May and June. Yet, this has been more than offset by an increase in industries that Marxists would count as being part of the “productive sector,” which is primarily involved in the production of commodities—not all jobs in the productive sector are involved in the production of commodities either, and this is partly reflected in the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ distinction between production and nonproduction workers. In contrast, the productive sector is primarily involved in the production of commodities—even if, as in the United States, the country’s productive-sector workers as a whole don’t produce any surplus value and are exploiters. The economic life of the U.S. white oppressor nation is like a great big mall where goods and services are shifted around, and finishing touches are occasionally put on goods; most of the value of the goods is created by oppressed-nation workers inside and outside the United States.

Far from signaling an impoverishment of the contemporary imperialist-country value form, the relative expansion of the unproductive sector in the United States, so-called services, and the shift away from productive labor in the form of manufacturing, indicate parasitism on a greater scale in the population. Contrary to those who view the decline of labor as the result of the reification of American workers, it is not enough to look at changes in relative income inequality to gauge the conditions of U.S. workers. We have to look at changes in the production and consumption of what Marxists call “labor value.” More precisely, we must consider the expansion of the unproductive sector and involved in the circulation and distribution of commodities, rather than their production. This implies a peculiar role in the world economy and division of labor—that of an exploder.

Moreover, while manufacturing employment has declined during the past twelve months(4), the average monthly increase in earnings of manufacturing production/non supervisory workers has increased slightly(5), even in real terms based on both CPI-U (Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers) and CPI-W (Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers), according to this writer’s calculations.(5)(6) (Martin Hart-Landsberg and Paul Burkett in a July 30th article in the MR Webzine say the real wages of U.S. manufacturing workers “have been stagnating if not declining,” which seems inaccurate.)

Regardless of these latest data, we are long past the point where we know: even if productive workers in the United States were paid absolutely nothing, zip, and were the most exploited workers on the planet, there still wouldn’t be enough surplus value for the U.S. working class to buy what any nation produces. Thus surplus value since such a large proportion of the U.S. working class consists of unproductive workers. This is the static picture. However, historically it has been the case that temporary downturns in U.S. manufacturing wages have been more than made up in both real-income and labor-value terms, by the increasing size of the unproductive sector as well as an increasing trend in manufacturing wages. Parasitism can increase despite—or, rather, because of—manufacturing employment’s falling, and even if manufacturing wages fall in the short term.

The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) was among the unions that split from the AFL-CIO. Hundreds of thousands of SEIU’s members are members of other unions who don’t produce commodities. Many oppressed-nation workers are affiliated with the SEIU, but the SEIU’s approach of agitating for the economic demands of parasitic workers, inevitably at the expense of Third World workers, plays into bourgeoisifying its members and other workers even more, and undercuts the revolutionary movement in the united Snakes. The movement to keep manufacturing jobs in the united states is characterized by Euro-American reactionary nationalism and chauvinism, but the attempts to give the increasing number of U.S. productive workers a bigger slice of the superprofit pie, made out of the sweat and blood of Third World workers, also has no progressive character. Instead of organizing to end the imperialist system, various labor aristocrats and their advocates seek a greater share of the imperialist loot.

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State governors declare states of emergency along United States-Mexico border after criticizing the Minutemen

By HC116, August 18, 2005

On Friday, August 12th, New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson declared a state of emergency along half of New Mexico’s border with Mexico. This was followed by Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano’s declaring a state of emergency along Arizona’s border with Sonora on Monday, August 15th, related to migrant and illegal drug trade concerns after hundreds of proletarian migrants were reported to have crossed into Arizona and New Mexico—again, against law enforcement, reports of which are questionable. News stories indicate Richardson was concerned with gunfire directed at Columbus Police Chief Clare May, though it is not clear from these stories whether the gunfire was related to border vigilantes or to the Minutemen.

In an interview with MSNBC’s Norah O’Donnell on “Hardball” Wednesday night, Governor Richardson said:

“I want trained law enforcement people to do the work. Many of the Minutemen are very well intentioned. They’re not trained, because they don’t have the skills and equipment to deal with illegal aliens and illegal drugs, as law enforcement does, as Border Patrol, that we’re going to have some unfortunate incidents.”(1)

Bill Richardson has criticized the Minutemen in the past, in April. And Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano was criticizing the Minutemen as early as March. Both preferred trained law enforcement to the Minutemen border vigilantes. In a June 10th article, the Associated Press quoted Governor Napolitano as saying in regard to the New Mexico Minutemen (led by ex-military, self-described ex-CIA Clifford Allford, who has openly admitted to infiltrating the ACLU): “The Minutemen should not feel that they need to come to New Mexico. We’ve got the Border Patrol. We’ve got New Mexico law enforcement,” Gov. Bill Richardson said Friday. ‘We can enforce our laws,’ Monitoring the international border, the governor said, is not a job for citizens.”(2)

So, Richardson was saying in June that the Border Patrol and New Mexico police could enforce the law, and now he’s saying there’s an emergency. The truth is that Richardson wants to increase the already harsh repression of migrants.

In March, the Associated Press reported: “Gov. Janet Napolitano said she is concerned about untrained people coming to do a law enforcement function. . . ‘People have a right to assemble—coming to do a law enforcement function. . . ‘People have a right to assemble—coming to do a law enforcement function.”(3) The Minuteman Project, founded by Jim Gilchrist and Chris Simcox, could enforce the law, and now he’s succeeding in terrorizing many migrants, not just those whom the Minutemen detained while violating their own rules. Influential politicians and prominent voices in the media have lent their support to the original Minutemen and other border vigilantes. . . . People have a right to assemble—it’s a constitutional right to assemble—but they don’t [have] a right to take the law into their own hands,” Napolitano said.”(3) The Minuteman Project, founded by Jim Gilchrist and Chris Simcox, could enforce the law, and now he’s succeeding in terrorizing many migrants, not just those whom the Minutemen detained while violating their own rules. Influential politicians and prominent voices in the media have lent their support to the original Minutemen and other border vigilantes. . . . People have a right to assemble—it’s a constitutional right to assemble—but they don’t [have] a right to take the law into their own hands,” Napolitano said. (3)

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Jim Chase’s California Minutemen plans to do more “border watches.” These are to begin on September 11th and October 9th. Andy Ramirez’s Friends of the Border Patrol plans to patrol the border beginning on September 16th. Chris Simcox’s Minuteman Civil Defense Corps, which already has operations in Arizona, plans to patrol the border in California, New Mexico, and Texas, in October. Organized border vigilante activity involving various vigilante groups is already underway in these States and others.

Following the Arizona and New Mexico governors’ declarations, there are reports that California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has considered joining the two governors and declaring a state of emergency along California’s border with Baja California. After his office apparently backedpedaled and said a declaration wasn’t necessary at the moment, Schwarzenegger has been pressured to declare a state of emergency. Today, Reuters reported:

“On Thursday, Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez called on Schwarzenegger to follow suit with an emergency declaration for the two California counties that border Mexico. . . ‘Border security is a shared responsibility,’ Nunez said. ‘We need to face the fact that a shared border between California and Mexico. People are dying. Vigilante groups are springing up.’ ”(4)

Fabian Núñez is the same politician whom the ultra-reactionary anti-migrant activist organization American Patrol called a “Mexican government puppet.” In reality, Núñez acts as a puppet of imperialist border vigilantes while using them as a justification for “further repressing and more terroristic than the untrained border vigilantes, but that hardly means we should side with the Minutemen.”

It is imperialism that creates the conditions in Latin America leading to drug smuggling, people “smuggling,” and undocumented migration. Richardson also cited concerns about violence, drug smuggling, people “smuggling,” and undocumented migration. Richardson also cited concerns about violence, drug smuggling, people “smuggling,” and undocumented migration. Richardson also cited concerns about violence, drug smuggling, people “smuggling,” and undocumented migration.

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within the ruling class are the surface appearance of a drive toward fascist repression against migrant proletarians and other oppressed people. U.S. Customs and Border Protection spokespersons Mario Villarreal has defended his agency’s record. “An enforcement drive in the Tucson sector of Arizona has forced illegal immigrants to cross the border in the counties Napolitano had declared disaster areas, he said,” according to the Los Angeles Times.(8) U.S. Customs and Border Protection is part of the Department of Homeland Security, controlled by the Bush government. The Arizona and New Mexico governors’ declarations will be seen as a criticism of Bush’s migration policy and his handling of enforcement of immigration laws. So, there is a basis for Democrats to unite with Bush’s critics on immigration against Bush and for establishing an even more reactionary migration policy than the one in place now.

The governors’ declarations provide an opportunity for more labor aristocrats to junk their phony rhetoric about supporting migrants’ rights and openly support repressing migrants, not just reducing so-called illegal immigration as if the concern were just with enforcing laws and upholding legality.

Meanwhile, foolish reactivations in Britain are saying that the “cricket test” (of cricket-team loyalty) could have been used to determine the Britishness of prospective migrants and prevented July’s bombings in London.(9) Prime Minister Tony Blair has called for reviewing whether the Britishness test already in place for citizenship is strict enough. Outrageously comparing Brits with people oppressed under apartheid in India and South Africa, some are calling “multiculturalism” apartheid against Brits, who in reality are an oppressor nation.

The British government is already planning to change the Human Rights Act to allow it to deport people whom it deems Islamic “extremists” to Islamic countries, and presumably other “extremists” since soon-to-be-unveiled legislation targets anyone who engages in “indirect incitement” to terrorism. “The government also plans to draw up a list of extremist Web sites, book shops and organizations that promote these extremists, [Tony Blair] said.”(10) In his latest media briefing, Blair said: “One other point on deportations, once the new grounds [for deportation and exclusion] take effect, there will be a list drawn up of specific extremist Web sites, book shops and organizations that promote these extremists, [Tony Blair] said.”(11) Blair wants to bar “extremists” from entering the country and even subject naturalized citizens (not born in the United Kingdom) to deportation. In the united states, a New York youth was deported to Bangladesh in May for defending the Koran’s definition of jihad, which can take different forms. Others in the United States have been targeted for deportation based on being an alleged apostle for terrorism.

Notes

Bill Richardson calls for bulldozing of populated Mexican village

By HC116, August 23, 2005

On August 12th, the same day he declared a state of emergency along New Mexico’s border with Mexico, New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson also called for bulldozing the Mexican village of Las Chepas, near Columbus, New Mexico. According to a press release by Richardson’s office, “[t]he Governor also called for bulldozing the Mexican village of Las Chepas, near Columbus, instead of destroying the village.”(8) Inevitably, some criticisms that Las Chepas should still be inhabited(6) have said that “[t]here are still some good people that live there, elderly people who have nothing else”; although, this implies that Las Chepas is “terrorized” by undocumented migrants.(8)

The media is focusing on the Israeli eviction of ultra-reactionary settlers in Gaza, often neglecting to point out that thousands of Palestinian homes have already been bulldozed. Meanwhile, U.S. troops have flattened homes in Iraq, and in the united states, a lying governor is setting sights on Las Chepas, calling for it to be destroyed when people still live there. Even Columbus farmer James Johnson has said that “[t]here are still some good people that live there, elderly people who have nothing else”; although, this implies that Las Chepas should still be bulldozed.(8) Inevitably, some criticisms of Richardson’s bulldozing proposal will turn into calls to increase pig repression in Las Chepas instead of destroying the village.

The Euro-American settler movement continues. The oppressor nation, through its fear-mongering mouthpiece Bill Richardson, moves to assert its dominance by trying to destroy the infrastructure of oppressed-nation people’s communities along the border.

Pandering to the most racist sentiments about migrants being physically and sexually violent, it uses alleged physical and sexual attacks, and theft, by migrants as a pretext. In reality, the imperialists...
Tom Cruise is right, Brooke Shields wrong

by mim3@mim.org

Hollywood movie star Tom Cruise took some good shots at capitalist psychiatry in a dust-up involving Brooke Shields. On television, Cruise laced into the culture of overprescription and medicalizing of social problems. He said Brooke Shields would be better off with vitamins, minerals and exercise than psychiatric treatment for post-partum depression.(1)

After Tom Cruise’s criticisms received air play because of his fame, the network television stations trotted out white males in laboratory coats to suggest that maybe Tom Cruise does not know what he is talking about since he is not a psychiatrist.(2) In actual fact, what Tom Cruise did was valuable and an example of how the outside world has to police the medical profession.

Tom Cruise is in excellent company with some psychiatry professionals in agreement with him and statistically trained intellectuals in various fields able to see the truth. In fact, what is often considered the leading intellectual competitor to Marxism these days called “post-modernism” has produced a leading light who not only has commonly denounced psychiatry as a flim-flam. The extreme cases where children’s discipline problems and various lives, parents concerned about their social problems. He said Brooke Shields took aim at! If no therapy is correct because the therapist has not experienced the condition in question, we are going to be doing without most advances in medicine.

Others warmed up to defending Brooke Shields in this case. Indeed, one convincing argument in the Denver Post against Cruise’s so-called ignorance: “The cause isn’t known for sure, though doctors believe it’s caused by a hormonal imbalance, an alteration in brain chemistry, stress or isolation. My hunch is that it’s all about who’s making money from the treatment.”(3) To validate a disease of unknown cause yet supposedly affecting one in ten women. It does not even occur to the author that if the cause is isolation, then the relief of the problem is also social.

In the United States, the corporations pay the full freight for the manufacture and marketing of their own drugs’ effectiveness conditions that they define with government regulation. It’s known as the fox running the chicken coop. So when something like Paxil comes along, the proof of its effectiveness comes from professionals with a self-interest in saying psychiatry is effective to begin with.

Psychiatrists are not going to go through years of graduate education and necessarily realize that their profession is ineffective relative to socially caused change. There’s no money in that.

Karl Marx commented on the phenomenon of how professions organize themselves under capitalism and create space for themselves where it did not exist before: “The great mass of so-called ‘higher grade’ workers-such as state officials, military people, artists, doctors, priests, judges, lawyers, etc.—some of whom are not only not productive but in essence destructive, but who know how to appropriate to themselves a very great part of the ‘material’ wealth partly through the sale of their ‘immaterial’ commodities and partly by forcibly imposing the latter on other people—found it not at all pleasant to be relegated economically to the same class as clowns and menial servants and to appear merely as people partaking in the consumption, parasites on the actual producers (or rather agents of production). This was a peculiar profanation precisely of those functions which had hitherto been surrounded with a halo and had enjoyed a superstitious veneration.” (4)

The self-interest of professionals not to mention capitalist corporations bribing people to see things their way is a reason why the Committee on Safety of Drugs in China points the road forward for science production. People should not have to worry that their drugs serve the self-interests of professionals and corporations, but under capitalism they do worry about that or surely play the fool.

One blogger did get it right: “Their logic goes like this: ‘Tom Cruise is an actor. Therefore, he has no right to state his beliefs about anything other than acting.’ Wow! Since I work at Guide Corp., I guess I’m limited to having viewpoints only about headlamps and hail lamps.” (5)

Psychiatry persists despite its weak record because of class structure, individualism and the belief that individuals can be treated individually is a near-religious dogma of American society. It’s rooted in the settler pioneer days of each individual having or her own farm.

The Scientology that Cruise has taken up is itself an ideology of individualism seeking to fill in for psychiatry’s inevitable demise. Scientology does damage to the struggles against racial, national and gender oppression, but on this question the Scientologists are right and their cult is much preferable to psychiatric therapy that: a) has the vast majority of class structure and b) writing our own article on the statistical ineffectiveness of psychiatry, we recommend the following link: antipsychiatry.org

Notes:
2. For a blog handling this in a typical way, see http://www.bloggingbaby.com/ entry/1234000067044838/3
3. http://celebrity.aol.com/people/ articleos/articles/0,19736,1067822,00.html

Iraq, from p. 1...

the United States “should return to the military draft at this time,” compared with 13% of the female youth; the same poll shows only 36% of the male youth were “not at all worried” that “you might be drafted.”

Military recruiters have repeatedly voiced their concerns about their inability to adequately fulfill their recruitment quotas, while the Bush administration is still playing dumb and absolutely rejecting the notion of a draft reinstatement despite the backdoor draft already underway that was responsible for deploying 5,600 members of the u.S. Army’s Individual Ready Reserve in 2004. Bush rejects the idea of an early pullout or a full retreat in any shape or form. Bush is persistent with his intention to keep u.s. troops in Iraq until “the mission” is complete. The u.S. military still has soldiers in countries such as Japan and Germany. That’s for over 60 years! To believe that the imperialists will accomplish their “mission” in Iraq within the next few years is pure naivete thinking. Even Donald Rumsfeld himself said, “We’re not going to win against the insurgency. The Iraqi people are going to win against the insurgency. That insurgency could go on for any number of years. Insurgencies tend to go on five, six, eight, 10, 12 years.” This could mean a future draft. At least it means a continued u.S. military presence in Iraq even if the United States ever withdraws a large number of its troops. There is no sign that the united Snakes will back down as sore losers in the face of the entire world. They are adamant in pursuing a huge chuck of imperialist pie and cementing their control of the Middle East for more imperialist profit. Winning the Iraq War and consolidating their puppet regime in Iraq is crucial to their strategy for consolidating u.S. imperialism in the Middle East.(4)

The u.S. Army, Amerika’s largest military branch, missed its quota in February for the first time in nearly five years and, though there have been fluctuations, that attrition gap has increased since then.(5) As MIM said in its last draft update, if dying for imperialism, lower gas prices, or security contracts, is not reason enough to go to war in your mind, or if you or someone

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A lot to agree on with Ward Churchill

**Book Review**

On the Justice of Roosting Chickens: Reflections on the Consequences of U.S. Imperialist Arrogance and Criminality


New York: Routledge, 2003, 483pp. pb

Reviewed by mim3@mim.org August 11 2005

The white supremacist movement trying to deny Americans’ own collective responsibility for September 11, 2001 is trying to fire Ward Churchill from the University of Colorado. The natural effect of this yahoo movement will be to increase readership of Ward Churchill’s books. In this review, we explain why we not only defend Ward Churchill’s “free speech,” but also agree with him on the substance of some of his political problems ethically speaking. After we beat back the attack on Ward Churchill, we will also publish a review on our disagreements with his essays on Marxism, dialectics, post-modernism and indigenism.

“Ward Churchill goes on to explain that whatever happened to Germans in 1945 is relevant as we picture the revolution of the oppressed nations over U.S. imperialism for years to come. Churchill left open California and part of Texas, although he also said that the territory claimed could be adjusted in other ways. Aztlán may want to claim these territories, so there is something to work out among the indigenous peoples and the Mexican nation in particular. Once we take out the Black nation as well, we may see a rump United States in the northeastern quadrant of what we now call the United States. Churchill only raised the idea of an indigenous owned Rocky Mountain region. He also believes there are Asian-descended nations that need a relationship to land.”

Churchill covers the corruption of the law to steal land for settlers, nuclear waste abuses of indigenous peoples, sports teams and rituals named after offensive views of the First Nations and the American Indian Movement (AIM). By itself, the “Fantasies of a Master Race: the Cinematic Colonization of American Indians” is sufficient to condemn the entire Hollywood and justify the joint dictatorship of the proletariat of the oppressed nations over U.S. imperialism for years to come. Churchill shows readers just how many poisonous movies and TV shows there are when it comes to just the so-called Indians alone. Just reading this chapter, we see how it is impossible to grow up untwisted.

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.

Iraq, from p. 5:

"you know is eligible for the draft, then you need to prepare yourself ideologically and take the politics of war much more seriously before you or someone close to you becomes cannon fodder for the Yankee imperialist war machine.

(6) 10,000 body bags to force Americans to rethink their “mission” during the Viet Nam War, which resulted in a U.S. withdrawal from Southeast Asia in 1975. Of course, the three million lives taken by the Yankee imperialist army never crossed the mind of the American chauvinists. These ruthless parasites won’t stop until their children’s caskets drop en masse. Those who are sitting in complacency hoping things will fix themselves should get up off their asses and do something to stop the imperialist war machine and its crimes against the world’s exploited and oppressed, even if they feel the same war drum as the imperialists and their lackeys. Whether it be out of narrow self-interest, such as opposing militarism to save the planet from destruction, or genuine sympathy for the international proletariat, do something. Resist imperialism!

We won’t stop until imperialist plunder is torn asunder!"
Social-fascist Internet poster expresses Amerikan so-called workers’ attitude toward migrants

By HC116, August 17, 2005

From minutemaninfo

An Internet poster identifying himself alternatively as Jeff S. and “Fletcher Christian” (after the famous English mutineer) is currently carrying out a seeming psywar on the San Diego Independent Media Center Web site (http://sandiego.indymedia.org/) to try to demobilize opposition to the Minutemen. This individual has posted multiple articles and several comments on San Diego Indymedia’s open newswire in the past two months criticizing anti-Minutemen protesters for allegedly being capitalist mouthpieces and doing nothing to organize migrant workers and include them in the American so-called labor movement. No Border Encounter - Aug 27-28 - Update! (1) (1) Jeff goes on to say: These workers from Mexico need to stay in Mexico and straighten out the labor movement there instead of coming to the US and wrecking what’s left of the labor movement here. In other words, when your house is a mess, don’t go over to your neighbor’s house and mess it up too. Stay in your own house and straighten it out.

Baiting anti-Minutemen protesters into disclosing their identities, and diverting attention away from questions of ideological and political line, Jeff in one reply to a reader of his articles paints anti-Minutemen protesters and supporters of migrant workers as “anti-Minutemen” to further his rightist “academic elitists and revolutionary romanticists who claim they are socialists yet rely on the most sickening capitalist excuses to promote immigration at the behest of the capitalists and to the detriment [sic] of working people on both sides of the US-Mexico border.” (1) (Jeff’s earlier article noted that some readers have taken the bait and described in detail their union activities and involvement in mass organizations.)

Jeff is referring to opportunists and pragmatists who argue that migrants benefit parasitic American so-called workers, which consists of using the repressive capitalist to encourage would-be workers to be exploited workers in the Third World. To illustrate, mine workers in the United States get several times more pay than mine workers in Mexico (who are themselves relatively high-paid compared with other Mexican workers)—wages differences that can’t be explained by cost-of-living differences.

The Liberal San Diego Indymedia Web site is one Web site on the Internet and is among many forums and places where people are agitating against the Minutemen and organizing opposition to the Minutemen. However, we should take this attempt to discredit anti-Minutemen posters seriously because it targets a Web site that, along with the Los Angeles Indymedia Web site, has played a discernible role in the organization of mass protests against the Minutemen and other rabid anti-migrant activists. San Diego Indymedia volunteers have said they are tolerating Jeff’s posts only because the posts are generating good responses.

Revolutionaries are opposed to the approach, which Jeff alludes to, of trying to convince American workers of the benefits of immigration and sucking up to these labor aristocrats. We should not pander to labor-aristocracy chauvinism for the sake of getting a handful of labor aristocrats to oppose the fascist repression of migrants. But this does not mean taking Jeff’s own, superficially different approach and opposing migration when it negatively impacts American workers’ living standards in the short term, in some cases. We are not oppressor-nation or imperialist-country chauvinists. Even people who do not recognize the benefits of big imperialist countries partake in the imperialist exploitation of Third World workers will be repulsed by Jeff’s utterly phony internationalism, which consists of using the repressive imperialist state machine to force migrants out of their country to carry out class struggle there, and saying that migrants, allegedly abandoning their country’s labor movement, have no role to play in the revolutionary struggle in the United States.

Most migrants are not from most-of-living workers come from Latin American countries other than Mexico, and Asian and Caribbean countries—Jeff focuses on Mexican migrants. Opposing migration in general, Jeff lumps together Mexican and other migrants even as he singles out Mexican migrants. “Unfortunately it is actually only the migrants only as workers, which is typical of profit-motivated imperialists and labor aristocrats who view migrants in terms of economic costs and benefits.

Jeff says nothing about the role of U.S. imperialism and the labor aristocracy in the corruption of Mexican unions and in concentrating on futile pursuit of migrants workers for the state of the Mexican labor movement and for allegedly harming the American labor movement. Jeff focuses on class struggle in terms of economic struggles, with primarily economic, rather than political demands. Never mind that, the fact that American workers who do not recognize that the Mexican migrant workers supposedly are more successful economic struggle will result in their radicalization.

The perceived impact of migrants on American workers’ employment and wages is indeed radicalizing Americans workers—turning them into fascists. Jeff pays lip service to socialism and opposing capitalism and imperialism. His posts sound like a caricature of social-fascism, and indeed Jeff’s writings are at the cutting edge of fascism masquerading as Liberalism and even socialism. Jeff’s posts are a concentrated expression of a tendency among labor aristocrats to either “support” or oppose migrants, even agitate for deporting them, depending on whether they are perceived as benefitting American workers. What Jeff wrongly calls “socialism in one country” is in actuality U.S.-worker chauvinism and has nothing to do with advancing the revolutionary struggle in the United States, just deeply reactionary fearmongering about migrant workers’ impact on American workers’ job security and high wages. A San Diego Indymedia reader has correctly pointed out that Jeff’s comments are similar to those of some Minutemen, who have even called for “revolution” in Mexico to change conditions there to encourage would-be migrants to stay. The point is not that Jeff is a Minuteman or even a white supremacist. Rather, the Minutemen are fundamentally a fascist movement of the labor aristocracy and inevitably attract the support of all sorts of fascists, including those who call themselves “socialist” and criticize the Minutemen only for using openly racist language. Far from being to the “left” of the Minutemen, Jeff, who calls for revolution in the United States, is
Unlock the Box

An Organizing Conference to Shut Down Prison Control Units

Unlock the Box is a product of many years of struggle to shut down the Security Housing Units in California. During this time, the United Front to Abolish the SHU was created as a forum to coordinate the actions of everyone involved in this campaign. Since its creation, the United Front has continued to expand in membership and in the number of people we reach with our message. This conference is a step in the process of building more unity with groups all over the country and the world who are engaged in the struggle to end this torture.

The goals of Unlock the Box include increasing communication between groups over a wider geographic area, coming up with plans of action that we can agree to work on as a whole to help strengthen those connections and strengthening our cause thru mass participation. The event will be a combination of presenters with vast experience in this struggle and working groups to come up with plans of action, with performances and food in between. As the date approaches we will be contacting everyone with a more specific schedule and plan. Until then, we welcome your input, help and donations to make that happen.

Saturday, October 8, 2005
9:30 am - 6 pm Cell Space
2050 Bryant Street (near 18th street)
San Francisco, CA

The United Front to Abolish the SHU includes: Maoist Internationalist Movement, Barrio Defense Committee, Justice for Palestinians, Chicano Mexicano Prison Project, Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist League, African People’s Socialist Party, Committee on Raza Rights, California Prison Focus, African People’s Solidarity Committee and other concerned individuals.

Other Endorsers of Unlock the Box include: Break The Chains prisoner-solidarity organization (Eugene, Oregon USA), Idriss Stelley Foundation, DeBug (the online magazine of the South Bay), Proyecto Common Touch, Campaign for Justice for Rudy Cardenas, Justice Action (Australia), Black August Organizing Committee, Families to Amend Three Strikes (FACTS)- San Jose, Books Not Bars, South Bay Committee in Solidarity with Cuba
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even more militant of a fascist than the Minutemen who call for “revolution” only in Mexico. Jeff aims to replace through revolution one imperialist regime in the United States with another imperialist regime, a social-imperialist regime. And both the confused Minuemen and Jeff, who obscures the flow of super-profits incorporating Latin, Middle Eastern, rock and synthesized music. Politically, M-team brings a progressive message from the perspective of the oppressed that MIM can ally with.

The most obvious difference we have with M-team is in our overall world-view based on dialectical materialism as opposed to Islam. A thorough review of their lyrics reveals more religious motivation than the scientific analysis that many of their political influences had. This is the biggest weakness of their work. While consistently standing on the sides of the oppressed in their lyrics, they provide little in terms of real solutions for the oppression and poverty that they rap about. They get into this the most towards the end, in “Action Speak.” They describe their dreams, “I wanna catch a fresh air/ watch a sunrise/spend one night with no fights and no death/ where no one’s hopeless, stressed or depressed” and “Imagine walking the streets without having beef/ Not having to deal with the pigs and police/ a day we could free our people from prison.” They start to look for solutions, “who would you die for/ who would you kill for/ who do you destroy/ who do you build for?” And then conclude, “we can make it happen if we stop the division” and go on to say, “we want change but we don’t make sense.” They’re right to recognize that we need to make sense of the world around us in order to unite around our desire for change, but that understanding comes thru the application of scientific materialism.

One thing M-team is clear on is that they are down to fight for freedom and self-determination, “revolution hasta la muerte.” They seem to be challenging others to join in their militancy in the high-energy “Dead Have Risen” by sampling Malcolm: “you haven’t got a revolution that doesn’t involve bloodshed... and you’re afraid to bleed.” Considering welcoming martyrdom, M-team takes a militant stance against “Kuffairs”, which they define as, “any person, being or system that attempt to cover the Light and Mercy of the all encompassing Divine Reality... Those who wish to subject humanity to the tyranny of their greed and thirst for worldly power... Those who wish to frustrate the unfolding of a global unity that binds together all humans under the banner of peace through submission to the Creator of all things.” Clearly, imperialism falls into this category, but M-team is never so clear, often leaving the identity of the enemy muddled in religious terminology. Lyrics like, “today is the day of retribution/ today is the day of jihad/ today is the day of martyrdom or victory,” put martyrdom and militancy above the needs of the people. We don’t need revolutionary martyrs or sacrificial lambs: we need revolutionaries who can put in the hard day to day work for the long haul.

When it comes to art, and particularly music, there is often a focus on the militant side in order to rally the troops (? or just to get the crowd jumping). We can give more leeway to song lyrics and fictional stories where taking things to the extremes is expressing the feelings and impulses of the oppressed whether or not those impulses are actually going to accomplish anything. In contrast, we would expect political polemics to be consistent in promoting effective strategies. That said, M-team has a continuous stress on militancy and martyrdom that is never really balanced out with any mention of the more time consuming aspects of revolutionary organization.

If we could drop one track from this album it would be “Blue Nile.” MIM agrees that the so-called “sexual liberation” in the Western world is an example of imperialist decadence. But we say so with the understanding that those behind it can afford to prioritize their right to sleep above around their right to eat since the latter is not threatened. Unlike M-team, we do not have any religious belief that wearing a mini-skirt demonstrates a lack of self-respect, nor that wimmin are obliged to stay true to their man. Under the patriarchy we can recommend certain practices in relation to gender and sex, but these are merely attempts to adapt to an oppressive situation. Hopefully some day, if for some reason a persyn desired to wear a mini-skirt they could do so without being subject to calls to cover up from conservative gender oppressors and take it all off from the “sexually liberated” ones.

Currently, the principal contradiction that we face in trying to move towards a better world is between imperialism and the oppressed. In that respect we can ally with anti-imperialist forces that hold religious beliefs, even if those beliefs serve to prop up other power structures such as the patriarchy. We can ally against imperialism, while struggling over gender. And when dealing with the masses, religion only becomes an issue when it is negatively affecting a group of people. Therefore, we can ally with M-team now against imperialism, but must struggle against their paternalistic views of gender in hopes of resolving that issue through comrade struggle. If it is not resolved, some other question will be sensationalistic and no religious ideas that support hierarchy between groups of people will be tolerated by the people.
Building Solidarity in NY: fighting medical neglect

I got your letter today and I’m a little tired and frustrated after just organizing these brothers to hold their food tray in their cell because these racist pigs were denying a komrade his medication. So I mobilized these misguided brothers who are stuck on oppressing each other. I made them realize that the enemy is not us but the pigs, and we all stood outside until a pig came to talk to the komrade. Then we asked the komrade if he was satisfied with what the pig was telling him. When he said “yes,” I told the brothers to give their trays back.

This is what it is about, “solidarity,” organizing brothers for our basic human rights. Instead of wasting all of that negative energy amongst each other, let’s use our energy for a righteous cause! A quote from Mao states: “The unity of our people and the unity of our various nationalities, are the basic guarantees of the sure triumph of our cause”!

Let’s fight until we overthrow this capitalist-imperialist government and free the people of the world.
—a NY prisoner, August 2005

Washington Control Units Typical of us Prisons

My brother was placed in IMU, Intensive Management Unit, which is the same as the SHU in California. You receive 3 showers a week, and 5 hours a week in the small recreation area by yourself. He’s been there since September 2004, but there are others that have been there for 2,3 and even 4 years. Our IMU holds around 110 beds and we also have two other units for overflow when IMU is full. Each of those units hold an additional 100 or so people. That is 310 segregated convicts at Walla Walla alone. We have IMU units at nearly all of our prisons here in Washington and I was recently told by a C/O that every segregation unit in the state is full.

They’ve even resorted to contracting us out to other state: Minnesota, Nevada, Colorado and Arizona. Washington State is out of control and in my opinion is a time bomb waiting to explode.
—a Washington Prisoner, July 2005

Federal lockdown in KY

The other day I woke to find the entire prison on lock-down status. They fed us bologna and cheese three times a day. They strip-searched us, no showers, recreation, commissary or calls. They shook our cells down, took little knick-knacks, and left our cells ransacked. And they talked all this greasy-tough-guy yang in the process. This lasted for over seven days. This collective punishment stemmed from a fight that occurred with a few people. This type of collective punishment in the prison system is the norm and it never fails to amaze me. How they don’t realize that they actually make the overall problem worse since they go into their collective-punishment mode.

Let’s keep it real: starving, mistreating, pushing the prisoner for something s/he was not involved in is not only unjustified and counter-productive but also harmful and can lead to volatile situations.

Repression will always breed resistance. The real problem that creates violence in all prisons is over-crowding. Racist officers, lack of education and communication, foul conditions and many other similar things are symptomatic of malaise in a prison. Instead of ameliorating those problems, overcrowding is making them worse. Administrations cover for and defend racist officers, and when fights do break out, they go on a collective-punishment spree and leave the causes of the violence intact. So I laid on my bunk, confined to my cell, stomach rumbling, eating a wish sandwich (that’s two slices of bread with I wish something was in it), and I ponder some more of the correlations between prisons and society. I note that these folks always take a tough and even obsessively brutal stance on everything. I look abroad. In Vietnam, they murdered entire villages. Men, women and children, hoping that tough stance would make the Vietnamese submit. Today in Iraq it’s the same concept: beat them into submission. It never works.

But poverty, unemployment and a lack of options aren’t the only problems. There’s an underlying problem of capitalist greed for profit at the expense of housing human beings. To the capitalist, these humans are worth more in prison than in the streets where they are doing nothing. In prison they generate $40,000/year per head. It costs more to keep a person in prison than it does to get them a university education. Noticeably, in California only one university has been built, compared to 25 prisons, since 1980. California alone has more prisoners than Japan, England, Singapore, France, Germany and the Netherlands combined. I agree with who say these capitalists just don’t want to remedy the problem. Too much money is involved.

—a Federal prisoner in Kentucky, 17 June, 2006

Whaddaya know? MIM censored in the MDOC

I recently wrote you about the Michigan Department of Corrections. I’d like to say thank you for your response, but regrettably I never got to read it. The MDOC said the letter was a Security Threat. How? I do not know. I believe it is because you people care about all the corruption that’s going on behind bars. I am not sure it is legal to hold the mail you can. The things going on in here are way worse than anything a lot of us have done to be here.

I do want to read your letters, but what can we do to get them delivered to me?
—a Michigan prisoner, June 2005

MIM responds: Censorship of MIM Notes and correspondence often boils down to disapproval of the political opinions we express. This is illegal in any state, by decision of the U.S. Supreme Court. That said, Michigan is a pretty bad state for censoring MIM (check any edition of the MDOC’s Restricted Publications List) and often the responses are nonsensical. But there are some steps you can take to fight censorship no matter what state you are in, and some of the most effective things you can do involve preparing for the event before it happens:

1. Read the mail policy for the state or federal system you’re in. If the prison you are in has its own policy, read that too. This will tell you what types of mail you are permitted to receive and how to register a complaint if your newspapers or correspondence are rejected.
2. Summarize your experience. Whether you have experienced censorship in the past, or feel you are successfully, your accrued knowledge will be useful to others. Write about censorship for Under Lock & Key. Prisoners and people on the outside need to know who censorship is directed at, whether policies are unilaterally enforced, and what types of materials are most vulnerable.

Remember: MIM is every bit as entitled to publish as Abraham Lincoln was when he said that anyone anywhere, disapproving of the government, have the right to replace it either by constitutional or revolutionary means. And prisoners have as much right to read our work as they have to read wall-to-wall coverage of U.S. war-mongering in Iraq. MIM has a guide to fighting censorship that we will send free to prisoners.

Strike urged against OR phone rules

The following is excerpted from the EOCl News:

Due to security concerns and changes in technology, later this year the Department of Corrections (DOC) plans to make changes to the inmate phone system. No changes will occur until a permanent rule is adopted. When this happens, we will turn on a security feature that will require that you maintain a list of the phone numbers you want to call...ever inmate will be limited to a list of 40 numbers, not counting attorneys and some transitional resource phone numbers.”

The DOC pigs tried this last summer while I was at OSP, and we broke the pigs with unity by a phone/commissary strike. It lasted 2 weeks and they put the supposed leaders of the strike in administrative segregation but the strike continued. We won the release of our comrades from administrative segregation plus the abandonment of this phone rule (the same one they’re trying now). We were also able to be heard on other issues, but the people, I’m sad to report, were sorely unprepared for this and made no significant demands.

As of now, the commandos of Oregon State Penitentiary are again peaceful protesting this restrictive policy and invasion of privacy by not using the phones (I haven’t heard any other positions taken). DOC is losing money and face when our comrades stand united and must listen to the cries of the oppressed within Oregon gulags. Comrades, this is a major weakness in the capitalist economy within ODOC that can be exposed, they use our slave labor to profit, they sell us their products at one price (a prison monopoly), they profit by phone service. They are at our mercy! Stand together.

—a Oregon prisoner, July 2005

California bans smoking, limits soap and cosmetics

The California prison system seems to get more oppressive with each passing year. Lately, of July 1, 2005, California has banned smoking tobacco in all California prisons. This is a great change considering I began smoking tobacco over twenty years ago, when California prisons used to give out free tobacco with supplies. At Salinas Valley State Prison there is a new policy of limiting necessary cosmetic items to be purchased at the prison store and received through packages. The new limits on each monthly prison store purchases is 4 bars of soap per prisoner and 2 each of every cosmetic item. On the quarterly packages there is a limit of 2 each of every cosmetic item. These limits do not sound severe, but consider that prisoners are placed in constant

MIM on Prisons & Prisoners

MIM seeks to build public opinion against America’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.

“Of 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.
Three strikes reform bill

I am writing in regards to the new Three Strikes Reform Bill (AB-50). This bill I've never murdered, raped, or evading arrest. And that same robbery and assault that I'm serving 25 years to life for a traffic violation through my prior convictions. And now I'm serving 25 years to life in prison for a traffic violation because of my prior convictions.

The situation had been helped by some media, such as local radio, writing letters to the editor, and calling their representatives. The local media also ran articles about the case, bringing it to the attention of the public. After this, the Governor said that 26,000 murderers, rapists, and armed robbers would be released from prison.

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 20 years. In 2005, there were more than 2 million people in prison, including 1 million African Americans and 300,000 Latinos. The cost of imprisoning someone is $30,000 per year, and the average sentence in California is 9 years. The cost of imprisoning someone in California is $70,000 per year.

The most surprising thing about these numbers is that California prisoners have a debt to society much years ago, and are now serving 25 years to life for a traffic violation.

Three Strikes Reform Bill

This bill, introduced by Assemblyman Mark Leno, who is very sincere about amending the laws, is being introduced by Assemblyman Mark Leno. The "Three Strikes Reform Bill" (AB-50) is a bill to reform the three strikes law in California. The bill would allow some non-violent third strike inmates to have prior violent convictions and would allow them to serve less time for their crimes. The bill was introduced in response to the situation in California, where the three strikes law has resulted in the imprisonment of thousands of people for crimes that would normally result in a county jail sentence.

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**ESPANA:**

**TORTURAS COMO EN LA ÉPOCA DE FRANCO**

www.eldiariointernacional.com

Agentes del instituto militar español han detenido a esta madruguada en Bizkaia a cuatro personas, a quienes relacionan con la organización armada ETA. Los arrestos se habrían realizado en Bilbo,Arrigorriaga, y Zornotza. El organismo anti-represivo, AHIAT, ha confirmado que de los detenidos es Iñaki Peña Gándara (25 años), mientras que fuentes policiales han difundido las identidades de otros tres: Sonia Marin Veiga (32 años), Arkaiz Armaitzeta Etxebarria (29) y Igor Zeaneta Gari (27).

El primer arresto se ha producido en un piso de la calle Encarnación de Bilbo y horas después una mujer ha sido detenida en una vivienda de la calle Olatxu, en Arrigorriaga, según fuentes policiales. Algunos medios de comunicación han señalado durante esta mañana que podría haber sido detenida otra persona en Zornotza, hecho que ha sido desmentido posteriormente por fuentes policiales citadas por Europa Press. A mediados se ha conocido que una cuarta persona ha sido arrestada en el marco de este operativo policial desarrollado en Bizkaia. Concretamente y según fuentes policiales, la Guardia Civil ha registrado las viviendas de todos los detenidos. Durante el registro de uno de los inmuebles en Bilbo, vecinos de la zona se han acercado para mostrar su apoyo a uno de los detenidos, que ha sido trasladado posteriormente por lo que no se descarta que en las próximas horas puedan producirse nuevos arrestos. Ya que la Guardia Civil busca a una persona que no ha sido hallada en su domicilio de Zornotza.

Así asumen después ha confirmado que los detenidos son el joven del barrio San Inazio Iñaki Peña (arrestado en Atxuri), la pareja de Inazio Iñaki Peña (arrestado en Zornotza). Según han informado testigos presenciales, el registro, iniciado a las 08:45 horas, ha concluido pasado la una de la tarde. Los agentes del Instituto armado han abandonado el lugar en posesión de un ordenador y dos cámaras. El registro se ha desarrollado en presencia de uno de los arrestados, un joven, que ha abandonado el domicilio esposado por los guardias civiles de la Guardia Civil. El organismo armado de la Guardia Civil ha registrado las viviendas de todos los detenidos. Durante el registro de uno de los inmuebles en Bilbo, vecinos de la zona se han acercado para mostrar su apoyo a uno de los detenidos, que ha sido trasladado posteriormente por lo que no se descarta que en las próximas horas puedan producirse nuevos arrestos. Ya que la Guardia Civil busca a una persona que no ha sido hallada en su domicilio de Zornotza.

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