

Update THE WORKER**April 13, 2014****Newspaper of the Workers Party, U.S.A.****Vol. 28, Number 5**

Defend Democratic Rights!

On April 4 at the E. Barrett Prettyman Federal Courthouse in Washington, D.C., U.S. District Judge Rosemary M. Collyer handed down an opinion defending the indefensible. According to the Court, the supreme political power of the executive branch and president does not even exclude the targeting and killing of civilians. Thus, the Court has affirmed, in particular, the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Terrorists (passed by Congress in a nearly unanimous vote on September 14, 2001.) According to the ruling, "Congress enacted the AUMF, authorizing the Executive to use necessary and appropriate military force against al-Qa'ida *and affiliated forces*." The ruling goes on to emphasize that the law does not specify geographical limits of any kind.

The Court's opinion tells the whole world that the U.S. government is a government of murderers. Not only is the AUMF a declaration of war against the whole world, it is another declaration that the American people have no rights which are recognized by the government. Once again, the government has made it clear that anyone who opposes it can and will be branded as an "enemy combatant." Today the U.S. government recognizes no law; it is nothing but the dictatorial, repressive power of the capitalist class, a power, based on violence, and centered in the executive branch of government.

Combat This Growing Fascism!

The rights of the people are not "gifts" or privileges bestowed on us by the government. They belong to us by virtue of our humanity and throughout our history we have claimed these rights through struggle against the arbitrary, dictatorial power of the exploiting classes. So it is today. We will continue to defend our rights. We must continue to organize ourselves and struggle against the entire government pro-

gram of war, repression, racism and exploitation. We must use every available means to demand an end to the government's repression and to win safeguards for our rights.

From the very founding of our country to the present, the American people have tenaciously opposed any interference of the military in the affairs of the country and the people. Yet, trampling the very

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Workers Memorial Day

April 28 is Workers Memorial Day. Across the country, workers will organize actions to remember the millions of workers who have either been injured, made sick, or killed on the job.

Every year, more than 2 million U.S. workers are killed by workplace injuries and occupational diseases, tens of thousands more are permanently disabled and millions are injured or made ill (3 million in 2011).

This enormous toll of death and suffering results from the systematic and conscious refusal of the capitalists to guarantee a safe work environment. For the capitalist class, it is simply not "cost effective" to guarantee the safety and health of the workers. Every dollar of capitalist profit is, indeed, bled out of the lives and limbs of the workers. In order to maximize their profits, the capitalists minimize their investments in safe work environments while maximizing the pace and intensity of work.

The government also bears responsibility for this murder and maiming of workers.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Act, killing a worker is considered only as a misdemeanor, with a maximum sentence of six months in jail. So too, penalties for a serious violation of the OSH Act (one that is known to pose a substantial probability of death or serious physical harm to the worker) are limited to \$7,000. Willful and repeated violations carry a maximum penalty of a mere \$70,000.

What is more, the government refuses to enforce the health and safety laws which do exist. At current staffing levels, it would take federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) inspectors 117 years to inspect each workplace under OSHA jurisdiction just once. When found in violation of the OSH Act, the capitalists are rarely even given a slap on the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

U.S. Delivers Critical Arms to Iraq

The following March 16 Press Release is reprinted for your information from the U.S. Embassy website (<http://iraq.usembassy.gov>).

The United States continues to accelerate delivery of weapons and ammunition to Iraq consistent with our Strategic Framework Agreement and long-term security partnership. These deliveries are made in response to specific Iraqi requests and pursuant to a holistic counter-terrorism policy that incorporates political, economic, and security measures. On the security side, it is essential that Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) are equipped with modern and effective weaponry given the serious threat the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) now poses to Iraq and the region.

The United States is determined to help the ISF respond to this threat and protect the population in coordination with local leaders and tribes. Earlier this month, the United States delivered nearly 100 Hellfire missiles together with hundreds of thousands of rounds of ammunition and M4 rifles. These deliveries addressed a critical assessment of needs conducted jointly by Iraq and U.S. security experts, and were the latest in a series of deliveries bringing critical supplies to Iraq.

Since mid-January, more than eleven million rounds of ammunition, thousands of machine guns, sniper rifles, M16s and M4 rifles, thousands of flares, grenades and other weapons have been delivered to the

ISF. Additional deliveries are scheduled in coming weeks, pursuant to the U.S. Foreign Military Sales program with attendant transparency and accountability measures.

The United States looks forward to working closely with Iraqi leaders and military commanders to determine and address additional critical equipment needs over the coming weeks. We will also continue to encourage all Iraqi leaders to work together to effectively implement the holistic counter-terrorism strategy in Anbar province, as reflected in the Council of Ministers February 18 program – with a focus on mobilizing the population against ISIL and other extremist groups.

Democratic Rights

principles of democracy into the ground, the capitalist state has continuously carried on the militarization of our country and repeatedly used troops against the popular movements of the people – against the civil rights and anti-war movements, against the strike struggles of the workers, etc.

Even according to bourgeois democratic theory such rights as the freedom of political association and the right to due legal process are supposed to be inviolable and one of the decisive guarantees retained by the people to protect themselves against the usurpation of power by the government. Furthermore, according to democratic theory, the powers of government must be precisely defined and restricted to only those powers which are expressly delegated to it by the people.

Yet the entire 200-year history

of the U.S. state shows that every right which is promised on paper is negated in 1,000,001 ways. Time and again, the government has created various pretexts and so-called national emergencies as one means to trample underfoot the inviolable rights of the people and to usurp arbitrary and unlimited power unto itself. As early as 1798, for example, Congress passed the Alien and Sedition Act to legalize widespread political repression. In recent decades, the U.S. government has hysterically preached anti-communism and used this as a pretext to outlaw political organizations, blacklist, harass, persecute and jail tens of thousands of people for such “crimes” as expressing their political views. In the 1960's and 1970's, the FBI carried out its Cointelpro operations, to harass, infiltrate and suppress a broad array of civil rights, anti-war and political orga-

nizations. Countless other examples can be given.

The fact is that today, as in the past, the government uses such terms as “national security” and “national interest” to assert that the interests of the big capitalist class are the interests of the people and country as a whole. But it is precisely because, in reality, the capitalist program is a program of aggressive, imperialist war, a program of robbery of the public treasury and of increasing the exploitation of the people, a program of racism, that the government finds it necessary to strengthen its apparatus of repression.

Today, the government tries to justify the fascistization of the state by claiming that the “war against terrorism” has created a “national crisis” and a “national emergency.” And according to the government's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

from page 1

We Must Reclaim and Modernize Our Public Schools!

From the earliest days of our country, the working people have fought for a system of education based on 3 great pillars – 1) universal public schooling; 2) the demand for equality in education; and 3) an enlightened, modern curriculum.

Today the capitalist class and the government are attacking each of these pillars.

The government is rapidly privatizing the public schools, turning billions in public funds over to private educational “entrepreneurs” and literally giving away the school infrastructure built up over generations.

The government is intensifying a dual system based on separate and unequal schools which track the poor into dead-end jobs and/or military service.

So too, the government is trampling on the freedom of conscience and inquiry. Instead of defending science and secular knowledge, it is tailoring the school curriculum to the “competitive needs” of U.S. business and poisoning our youth with the chau-

vinism and militarism of U.S. imperialism.

The important thing to understand is that the attacks on the schools are not isolated, occasional phenomenon but part of a generalized campaign. Thus, these attacks require a generalized – i.e. a political – response from the working people. All sections of the people – students and teachers, parents and concerned citizens – must come out together. We must come into the political arena not only to put a stop to the attacks on the public schools. We must take the initiative and unfold a powerful struggle for the all-around renewal and modernization of the public schools.

Modernizing our schools includes:

– increasing investments in the public schools and the extension of universal, public education to include pre-K through the university.

– fulfilling the promise of equality by guarantying full and equal funding for all the schools.

– struggling for an all-sided, modern and enlightened curriculum which assists the people in their struggle for progress and democracy.

Sectarian Violence

from page 4

trained Iraqi government death squads which systematically seek out Sunnis for torture and murder.

This tactic has been used repeatedly by the U.S. and British imperialists – in Ireland and India, in Yugoslavia and Palestine, etc.

Such sectarian violence does not arise from the life of the overwhelming majority of Iraqi people who live, work and struggle under the same conditions and who everyday are strengthening their unity through the common struggle against the colonial rule of U.S. imperialism.

It is the struggle against the U.S. occupation and against U.S. imperialism which is the path for resolving the civil conflict. Forcing the complete closure of all U.S. military bases in Iraq is not only necessary for the independence of the country, it is also the way to break the back of the internal, reactionary classes and open the path for progress.

This task will be achieved by the liberation struggle of the Iraqi people.

Democratic Rights

from page 2

logic, the “national interests” can only be interpreted and defended by the executive branch of government (i.e. the Obama administration). Thus, it is necessary for the executive to usurp unlimited and absolute power in order to insure the very survival of the American people.

This completely negates the people's democratic rights. The very concept of inalienable rights arose to give expression to the fact that the people are the real, sovereign power and to provide the people with certain guarantees

against the arbitrary usurpation of power. In other words, rights are needed, most of all, at the time of “emergencies” in order for the people to protect themselves against the government.

The only real defense is the independent organizations of the people and our capacity to struggle against the power of the rich. To win lasting guarantees for our rights, we must defeat the political power of the capitalists and create a new political power which arises from and serves the people themselves.

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U.S. Imperialism Foments Sectarian Violence

The capitalist media is filled with stories about “sectarian violence” and “civil war” in Iraq.

This propaganda is used by the capitalists to try to justify U.S. military intervention and to attack the Iraqi people as “unfit” and “unready” to rule themselves.

But the facts show that the intensification of civil war and sectarian violence are part and parcel of the U.S. colonial strategy; they are more of the deeds, the crimes, of U.S. imperialism.

From day one, the U.S. occupying authorities have fostered and strengthened the most reactionary classes and forces in Iraqi society. The U.S. armies have set up a government headed by notorious CIA agents such as Talabani, Chalabi, Allawi, etc. The U.S. is building a large, U.S.-armed and U.S.-commanded puppet army and police force. The core of this puppet army is based on former fascist generals.

On the other hand, the parties which oppose the occupation are illegal and the Iraqi people are hunted, killed, tortured, and imprisoned.

This is, of course, one of the basic tactics of imperialism. Whenever the U.S. or other imperialist powers take control of another country, they ally themselves with and give strength to the most reactionary classes inside the country. The foreign aggressors and local exploiters work together to suppress the laboring classes and other democratic sectors who struggle for independence, freedom and social progress. As in Iraq, the imperialists provide the arms while the local reactionaries round up manpower and lend “legitimacy” to the colonial regime. The foreign and local capitalists share in exploiting the people.

Thus, in every country, the presence and influence of U.S. imperialism heightens the civil conflict,

polarizing the society. Throughout Latin America, U.S. imperialism is notorious for bringing to power or propping up such fascist regimes as the Duvaliers in Haiti, Somoza and his National Guard in Nicaragua, Pinochet in Chile, etc. In Korea, U.S. imperialism continues to partition the country. In the Middle East, the U.S. has sponsored such fascist regimes as the Shah of Iran, the Saudi Arabian monarchy, Saddam Hussein, etc. Recent history provides countless examples exposing the absurd, doublespeak logic of the U.S. government when it claims to be “bringing democracy” to Iraq or any country. For the last 50 years and more, U.S. imperialism has been the main bastion and support for reaction and fascism. It is the sworn enemy of democracy and the liberation struggles of the peoples.

Indeed, the civil war in Iraq is intensifying. The U.S. occupation has polarized the entire country. On one side, the vast majority of Iraqi people – the workers, the poor and downtrodden, all who defend the independence and honor of the nation – are opposing the U.S. occupation. On the other side, the reactionary, exploiting classes have put themselves at the disposal of the occupiers and are helping to kill and subjugate their own people.

Part and parcel of the U.S. war strategy is to create sectarian violence to sap the strength of the people and justify continued U.S. military intervention. From day one, the U.S. talked about the “need” to partition Iraq along sectarian lines. The entire constitutional and political strategy pursued by the U.S. (such as doling out political privileges and building armed militias along sectarian lines) is designed to foment sectarian rivalries. For years the U.S. has been notorious for having

Workers

from page 1

wrist. For example, in FY 2010, OSHA found 1,519 violations to be willful but didn't refer the vast majority of them (1,505) to the Justice Department for criminal prosecution. Since 1972, there have been over 400,000 workers killed in workplace accidents, but the courts have handed down no more than 16 jail sentences.

Another aspect of the problem is that the states and the courts are implementing administrative, judicial and legal changes making it harder for workers to collect compensation for the injuries they sustain due to unsafe working conditions. This is part of an on-going campaign by big business to completely gut the system of worker

comp. For examples, some state legislatures are making it more difficult for workers to collect compensation for Repetitive Strain Injuries or excluding RSI's from workers compensation coverage. Other attacks include slashing the duration and level of workers comp benefits, imposing arbitrary criteria for permanent and partial disability claims, limiting employer liability for workplace injuries and denying workers the right to independent medical opinions.

The attacks on workers compensation are one part of an all-out offensive directed at erasing any and all individual and collective rights gained by the workers over decades of struggle.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3