

Update

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Against War and Imperialism

Below we print a transcript of the introductory section of the audio CD "Against War and Imperialism" by Michael Thorburn.

Over the last seven years the American people have once again been forced to come into the streets in their millions and tens of millions to fight against the aggressive wars of the U.S. government. Yet the government keeps insisting that their so-called war against international terrorism will continue for decades more. Leaders of both the Democratic and Republican parties have said that more than 60 countries are already targets in this war.

Indeed, militarism and war are part of the way of life of the U.S. capitalist class, a class whose very existence is based not only on the exploitation of the American working class, but also on the super-exploitation and enslavement of nations throughout the world. Over the last one hundred years and more, U.S. imperialism has waged hundreds of aggressive wars and armed interventions. At the dawn of the 20th century, U.S. capitalism launched the first modern imperialist war, grabbing by force of arms, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines and turning these countries into direct colonies. So too, the first years of the last century were characterized by gunboat diplomacy of U.S. imperialism which repeatedly invaded Haiti, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, and other countries across Latin America.

After the Second World War, U.S. imperialism became even more aggressive, appointing itself the world policeman and the savior of world capitalism and the colonial system. Since then, U.S. imperialism has built and used a huge arsenal of nuclear bombs and other weapons of mass destruction, trying to impose nuclear blackmail on the whole world. It has waged hundreds of armed interventions against the national liberation movements of the oppressed peoples — in Iran, in Guatemala, in Korea and Vietnam, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Yugoslavia, Iraq, etc. etc. So too U.S. imperialism has propped up and armed the most reactionary fascist regimes and built an international network of aggressive military alliances and military bases in more than 100 countries. Today, the Pentagon budget devours some \$11,000 for every American family.

Thus, a fundamental and constant part of the struggle of the American people is the struggle against war and militarism. Every generation of

Americans has come forward to oppose the aggressive wars of our "own government" and to support the just struggles of the peoples, oppressed and colonized by U.S. capitalism.

Over the last 30 years, tens and hundreds of millions of Americans have come out in struggles against the wars in Vietnam, in El Salvador, in Nicaragua, and today in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We can be sure of two things. Firstly, U.S. imperialism will remain warlike as long as it has a single tooth left in its head. Secondly, the American people will continue to oppose the aggressive imperialist wars of the capitalists. We will oppose these wars because we are the ones who pay the price in taxes and in death. We will oppose these wars because our deepest aspirations are for a world of peace and friendship in which all the peoples live together in sovereign equality.

Thus, the relentless questions are: how do we advance the struggle against war and how can we eliminate the scourge of war altogether?

To solve this problem, we must get to the root. We must expose the causes of war in today's world and see the real changes that need to be made in the structure of society to eliminate the cause of war. We must sum up and learn from the experiences of people all over the world who have been and are fighting for a world of peace. We must work out, on an objective, scientific basis, the strategy and tactics of advancing the anti-war struggle and winning the peace.

The importance of these questions of theory, these questions of what is the guiding analysis and program for our struggle, cannot be emphasized enough. For centuries the oppressed peoples have been sent to slaughter by the ruling classes

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One million people rally in Seoul in commemoration of a historic uprising against a U.S.-backed military dictatorship and against current "free trade" measures.

Mass Struggle in South Korea

On June 10, over one million people participated in protests in Seoul and in other locations across South Korea.

The protests are part of continuing candle-light demonstrations, hunger strikes, sit-ins, and other mass actions that have been going on non-stop for two months.

People from all walks of life are participating, including workers, students, homemakers, and a broad range of organizations including trade unions, political, and religious organizations.

The demands of the protesters have centered around opposition to the import of beef from the United States. South Korea, once the third largest buyer of American beef, banned its import in 2003 due to safety concerns about the risk of mad cow disease. The protest began when, on April 17, the government of Lee Myung-bak went along with U.S. conditions for talks on a U.S./South Korea "free trade"

deal ("Korea-U.S. FTA") and agreed to open the South Korean market to U.S. beef imports.

The protests are gaining in scope and breadth of demands raised. Protesters are putting forward demands including for the resignation of President Lee, against the repression of the demonstrators and for the release of those arrested, in opposition to privatization of the public domains and for the forced conclusion of the South Korea-U.S. FTA. The massive June 10 demonstrations linked the current struggle with commemorations of the June 1987 uprising — an historic uprising of the South Korean people against a U.S. backed military dictatorship. On June 13, protests were held in conjunction with memorial services commemorating the anniversary of the deaths of two children killed by a U.S. army vehicle on June 13, 2002.

The protests in South Korea are a direct result of U.S. imperialism's "free-mar-

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U.S. Rejects Treaty Banning Cluster Bombs

The U.S. has rejected an international treaty, adopted at a conference in Dublin, Ireland on May 30, which bans the production and use of most cluster bombs. The U.S. boycotted the talks. The treaty is to be signed in December and put into effect in mid-2009.

Cluster bombs are "anti-personnel" weapons used to target civilian populations. They consist of canisters that break apart to release a large number of small "bomblets" over a wide area. Many bomblets lie unexploded on the ground until something disturbs them at a later time. The unexploded munitions go off very easily and many are brightly colored, creating the impression that they are toys. U.S. forces dropped massive quantities in Vietnam, in the former Yugoslavia, in

Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan. During its 2006 invasion of Lebanon, Israel saturated southern Lebanon with cluster bombs provided by the U.S. government. Unknown numbers of unexploded "bomblets" remain in these and other areas.

By rejecting the treaty, U.S. imperialism is once again flaunting its true militaristic and hegemonist character. Pentagon officials declare that such weapons "have demonstrated military utility" and are essential for supporting U.S. troops stationed abroad.

Clearly, U.S. imperialism is intent on continuing to produce and utilize cluster bombs as part of its program of imposing "might makes right" on the peoples of the world.

South Korea

from page 1

ket" economic policies being imposed on South Korea which only benefit the economic elites in the U.S. and South Korea at the expense of the masses of people.

In these protests, the Korean workers and people are not only fighting for their immediate right to protect the public health. They are coming forward to fight for the sovereignty and independence of the country and are putting forward a pro-social agenda which puts the human rights of the people ahead of the profits of the capitalists.

The American working class and people must support the struggle of the people of South Korea against U.S. imperialism. Their struggle is not only just, it is also waged against the same forces which oppress and exploit the workers here.

Against War and Imperialism

from page 1

and for centuries the peoples have fought against these aggressive wars. While the people have won many victories, defeating the aggressors, preventing various wars, we have not won permanent victory.

Today in the U.S., who cannot see that the aspirations and energy of the anti-war struggle far exceed its consciousness and organization? Take for example the widespread experience of people who go to an anti-war demonstration and feel the tremendous spirit of struggle and unity while they're there, only to feel alienated on leaving because there's no ongoing organization, no ongoing connection, no clear direction for continuing their struggle. Even more on a day-to-day basis, in the schools, in the communities and workplaces, people do not know how to get involved and contribute to the common struggle.

Yet worse, the fact remains that the anti-war movement still finds itself prone to splits and diversions. How many times has the Democratic Party infiltrated the movement, used it only for its own ambitions, while trampling underfoot the people's demands.

These and other problems can only be overcome when the people themselves are armed with revolutionary theory, with a scientific analysis and program. Only science and an independent program can give the anti-war movement inspiration and perspective, can transform it from a spontaneous protest movement into a proactive struggle towards a definite goal — the goal of winning a real, lasting peace.

The Workers Party has mapped

out the program of anti-imperialist struggle to assist the consciousness and independent organization of the anti-war struggle.

Anti-imperialist politics zeroes in on the capitalist-imperialist system as the cause of war in the modern world, and relies on the working class and people as the motive force of the struggle against war. Anti-imperialist politics links together the many fronts of struggle against war and militarism, links them into one mighty torrent directed against the parties of war. Anti-imperialist politics puts the initiative into the hands of the people by showing clearly what changes must be made in society and by fighting for an immediate political program that demands the withdrawal of all U.S. troops stationed abroad, an end to U.S. aggression and interference everywhere, recognition of the sovereign equality of every country and the demilitarization of our country. Anti-imperialist politics shows that the fundamental guarantee for peace is socialism.

Our anti-imperialist program is based on a scientific analysis of the causes of war.

During the first world war, the first imperialist war, V.I. Lenin made a thoroughgoing analysis of war and laid bare the laws of motion of contemporary capitalism, capitalism at the stage of monopoly and imperialism, showing that present day wars arise from this system. Lenin, in his classic book, "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism," and other writings, also brought out the motive forces of the struggle against war and worked out the strategy and tactics for guiding the

struggles of the working and oppressed people.

The Workers Party, USA, has been and is immersed in the anti-war, anti-militarist struggle of the American people. As part of our work we carry on a continuous analysis of the character and features of U.S. capitalist imperialism today on the basis of the Leninist theory of war and imperialism. We continually work to summarize our experience and also to learn from the worldwide experiences of the anti-war struggles. This non-stop theoretical work forms the basis of our strategy, tactics, and program. In the following discussion I try to summarize some of the main points in the theory and tactics of our party's anti-imperialist program.

CD Available:

**Against War
and
Imperialism
by Michael Thorburn**

Make check or money
order for \$8 out to:

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