

RAY O' LIGHT NEWSLETTER

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The Thaw in Cuba-U.S. Relations *A Proletarian Revolutionary Perspective*

by RAY LIGHT

On December 17, 2014, U.S. President Obama announced “normalization” of diplomatic relations with Cuba. The U.S. imperialist government also lifted some restrictions on personal, economic and financial activities that had been in effect for fifty-four years, since the U.S. blockade of Cuba went into effect in January 1961.

What brought about this significant change in U.S. policy and why did the Cuban government agree to the new period of rapprochement? Will it, in fact, prove to be a good or a bad development for the Cuban people, for Cuban society and for the long-standing anti-imperialist and democratic Cuban government? Finally, will this change in the relationship between the Cuban government and the U.S. imperialist government represent an advance for the international proletariat and the oppressed peoples?

What brought about this change in U.S. Policy toward Cuba?

First of all, U.S. President Obama's Regime **did not** reach out to the Cuban government out of any enlightened concern for the Cuban people. U.S. imperialism has ceaselessly attacked and attempted to economically strangle Cuba for almost fifty-five years. This needs to



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WAR CONTROL is The Most Effective Gun Control

by CINDY SHEEHAN



Full disclosure: I hate guns; I always have – even before my oldest son was killed by a gunshot to the head in a foreign land that the US was/still is occupying. (By the way, Casey had a gun, armor, albeit inadequate, PLUS the First Cavalry and he was still killed by a gun – interesting). However, with my increased knowledge of

and dealings with the Empire of Death, my views have changed about the necessity of an armed citizenry. It frustrates me that anyone would think of giving up his/her human right to self defense to an entity that is mired in death and gore and has never exhibited any hesitation to commit murder on a massive scale.

After the recent mass shooting in Roseburg, OR, (as Ray Light shared in Issue #92 of the ROL, USA newsletter, 31% of mass shootings worldwide happen here in the US) the predictable blather became the recycled, boring, and ultimately useless “debate” about “gun control.” However, as profoundly devastating as is that incident, I think the discussion needs to be around “War Control.” Besides saving millions of lives (the Pentagon receives billions of your tax dollars and needs to be shoved over the Fiscal Cliff), pushing War Control could also save OUR Social

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Do you know who said it??

“Now it's just an oligarchy, with unlimited political bribery being the essence of getting the nominations for president or to elect the president. And the same thing applies to governors and U.S. senators and congress members. So now we've just seen a complete subversion of our political system as a payoff to major contributors ...”

Hint: This is no rash remark by a political “outsider” with sour grapes about his career in U.S. politics. Quite the contrary, this prominent U.S. citizen actually reached the summit of electoral politics in the USA.

–Still stumped? See page 8 for the mystery answer.

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be clearly stated because Obama, though not as popular as he was when he was first elected President, remains fairly popular in Latin America.*

Obama himself provided a bit of the truth when he stated in April 2015, “If you keep doing something for 50 years and it doesn’t work, you should try something new.” Notice that there is no Obama apology for the shameful, criminal and illegal conduct of the U.S. Empire over this long period against the Cuban nation — the Bay of Pigs invasion, the multiple attempts on the life of Fidel Castro, the outstanding and heroic Cuban leader, the crushing strangulation of the Cuban economy under the U.S. economic Embargo. The imperialist terror policy was simply ineffective, says Obama.



Indeed, Obama’s criminal admission should be cause for every genuine communist or anti-imperialist revolutionary in the world to deepen our appreciation for the courageous Cuban people, government and party under the inspiring leadership of Fidel Castro that prevailed in this

fifty year battle with the bestial bastion of world capitalism ninety miles from their shore!

The truth is that the more than fifty year-old policy had led to a situation where “... the United States arguably

*According to *Latinobarometro*, “an average of 69% of respondents in the region held a favorable view of the United States in 2013, up from 58% in 2008.” This is despite the fact that the U.S. Empire under Obama has continued Bush’s so-called “war on terror,” actually *war of terror*, against the peoples of the world, including the Afro-American people and the massive numbers of Latino immigrant workers in the USA, and especially against the oppressed peoples of the Middle East and North Africa. Given the fact that the Zelaya government in Honduras was overthrown with the connivance of the Obama Regime in 2009 and the continued U.S. imperialist attacks on the Hugo Chavez and now Maduro government in Venezuela, this statistic indicates that, unfortunately, the peoples of Latin America, for the most part, do not now feel that their destinies are linked to the workers and oppressed masses of the rest of the world, or even within Latin America itself.

has less influence now in Latin America than at any point in the last century ...” according to imperialist commentator, Michael Reid, Latin American specialist for *The Economist* magazine. (“Obama and Latin America,” *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2015)

Professor James Petras explains well that, in the early 1960’s in response to the Cuban Revolution, the Kennedy Regime began to pursue a “two track policy,” “combining ‘reformist policies’ toward some political formations, while working to overthrow other regimes by force and military intervention.” (The Alliance for Progress on one track and a large force of Green Berets to engage in counter-insurgency warfare on the other one.) (See Petras’ excellent “Washington’s ‘Two Track Policy’ to Latin America: Marines to Central America and Diplomats to Cuba,” *Global Research*, 5-28-15) Petras continues: “By the mid-1970’s the ‘two tracks’ became one — force. The US invaded the Dominican Republic in 1965. It backed a series of military coups throughout the region, effectively isolating Cuba. As a result, *Latin America’s labor force experienced nearly a quarter century of declining living standards.* ... By the turn of the new century, the cumulative grievances of thirty years of repressive rule ... had caused an explosion of mass social discontent.” (*ibid.*, ROL emphasis)*

This resulted in the emergence of petty-bourgeois nationalist and popular front governments throughout much of Latin America, including the Chavez government in Venezuela in 1999, the Lula-led Workers Party (PT) in Brazil in 2002, the Broad Front government in Uruguay in 2003, the Evo Morales government in Bolivia in 2005, the Correa Government in Ecuador in 2006. In this period, the Zelaya government in Honduras moved decisively to the left “under the sway of Chavez,” followed by the election/re-election of social-democratic governments in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

In December 2011, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) was formed, largely on the initiative of the Cuban and Venezuelan governments. CELAC linked 33 countries in the Americas, and excluded the USA and Canada. CELAC was seen as a means to assert Latin American interests and regional integration in opposition to the U.S.-led Organization of American States (OAS). In 2012, at the 6th Summit of the Americas of the OAS held in Colombia the U.S. government’s use of its veto power to exclude Cuban participation was backed by only Canada and Panama. And faced with the threat of a boycott of the 2015 7th OAS Summit by the Bolivarian Alliance (ALBA), Panama, its host, bucked its U.S. sponsor and invited Cuba to attend the Summit. All this had occurred prior to Obama’s speech promoting U.S. normalization of relations with Cuba.

(contd. on p. 3)

*In addition, U.S. imperialism was militarily tied down in the Middle East, especially by the Iraqi peoples’ resistance.

(Thaw in Cuba-U.S. Relations continued)

The growing *political* isolation of U.S. imperialism in Latin America has been encouraged by and in turn furthered the growing *economic* presence of various European imperialist powers and especially of China in the Western Hemisphere at a time when the U.S. economic position in the world has been increasingly challenged. Reid points out, "As China industrialized in the first decade of the century, its demand for raw materials rose, pushing up the prices of South American minerals, fuels, and oilseeds. From 2000 to 2013, Chinese trade with Latin America rocketed from \$12 billion to over \$275 billion. In Brazil, Chile and Peru, China has displaced the United States to become the biggest commercial partner." (*ibid.*, *Foreign Affairs*, page 47)

Clearly, U.S. imperialism had to revert to use of "the carrot" as well as "the stick" as its "one track" hardline "stick" policy has hastened its steep decline economically as well as politically in what used to be referred to as its "backyard." And this time the carrot is aimed at Cuba!

For its part, why is the Cuban government participating in this rapprochement with U.S. imperialism?

During the period when global oil and gas prices were high, oil rich Venezuela, under the charismatic, anti-imperialist and democratic leadership of Hugo Chavez, had generously sponsored a number of economic and political initiatives across Latin America. Agreements between Chavez and Fidel Castro brought advanced Cuban teachers and medical personnel to improve the lives of the masses of Venezuelans, while inexpensive fuel from Venezuela helped keep the Cuban economy afloat in the face of the U.S. embargo. The Venezuela-Cuba alliance became the very core of the Latin America-wide movement for economic and political independence from the century-long domination by U.S. imperialism.

Over the recent past, however, with the sharp drop in global oil prices, Venezuela's revenues have sharply diminished creating new vulnerability for both Venezuela and Cuba. For no other bourgeois democratic or petty bourgeois nationalist government has demonstrated as much generosity toward Cuba or Venezuela as *they* have extended to the rest of the peoples of Latin America. This is one reason for current Cuban openness to rapprochement with the USA.

Secondly, no peoples have inexhaustible strength to fight on forever without respite. For more than fifty years all the peoples of Latin America (as well as the peoples of Southern Africa where Cuban patriots fought and died for South African liberation from U.S. imperialist-backed apartheid regimes) have owed a debt of gratitude to heroic Cuba which at times has stood up virtually alone against the main bastion of world capitalism, U.S. imperialism. It is a testimony to the strength of Cuba's internationalist spirit that this island nation has persevered. It is time for other peoples to carry

more of the load. The fact that there is currently no substantial international communist movement, armed with proletarian internationalism, as there was during the period of the Stalin-led Third International leading up to World War Two, certainly limits the options open to the Cuban government today.

Third, Cuba has not been as "isolated" as U.S. monopoly capital had hoped. Even before the current rapprochement with the USA, Cuba has been "open" to three million tourists per year, many from Canada and Western Europe. The unfortunate reliance on tourism has already produced a "bipolar economy," fueled by "pesos and kooks," as *The Christian Science Monitor Weekly* (10-5-15) characterizes it.

The Monitor explains: "Local Cuban salaries are paid in pesos, which would be worth about 4 cents each if they could be exchanged. An average Cuban salary is 471 pesos a month, about \$20. But foreigners have to trade their money into a different currency, called Cuban convertible pesos, or CUCs – 'kooks' – on the street. ... Cubans who have access to foreign currency – ... catering to tourists – are reaping money in multiples of that of Cubans wedded to the local peso. Everybody wants CUC's. If they aren't in a job to get CUC's legitimately, many Cubans find other means: remittances from relatives overseas, black market trading, or more nefarious occupations."

No doubt, there is great pressure on the party and government from those with bourgeois aspirations who hope to "make a killing" in a wide-open tourism industry to open Cuba up to U.S. imperialism. Indeed, the Cuban government expects that once U.S. travel restrictions are dropped, ten million U.S. visitors could come per year.

Will this rapprochement with U.S. imperialism prove to be a good or a bad development for the Cuban people, for Cuban society and for the long-standing anti-imperialist and democratic Cuban government?

Of course, the answer somewhat depends upon the response of the Cuban masses, working class, revolutionary party and leaders. But the pressures for Cuba to revert to being a playground for the U.S. wealthy are immense.

First of all, the existence already of the "bipolar economy" brought about by the tourism of the three million per year from less unhealthy societies than the USA will be qualitatively exacerbated by the ten million from the USA. Already, for example, "Cuba's medical profession, a source of national pride and a valued Latin American export, is riddled with defections to the tourism industry." (*The Christian Science Monitor Weekly* (10-5-15) The opening up of Cuba to U.S. investments can only spread "the gospel of greed" exponentially, creating chaos and havoc in Cuban society.

(contd. on p. 4)

Secondly, as the Obama government has reached out to Raul Castro and Cuba with an olive branch, it has accelerated its military provocations against Venezuela on its border with Colombia. In fact, on December 18, 2014, the day after his statement on improving relations with Cuba, Obama signed a law that imposed sanctions on Venezuela for “violating the democratic rights of the forces opposing the government of Nicolas Maduro.” This “law” helped set the stage for more U.S. warfare against the Maduro government. Thus, no time was lost by the U.S. Empire in attempting to split Cuba and Venezuela whose alliance has been at the heart of the Latin American resistance to U.S. domination.

Certainly, Obama and U.S. imperialism hope they can conquer Cuba economically when they could never defeat Cuba on the military battlefield or the battlefield of ideas. They hope to compel the Revolutionary Cuba that never deserted its friends in the face of the open threats of U.S. monopoly capitalism and imperialism, including the threat of nuclear annihilation in 1962 during the U.S.-Soviet missile crisis, to become an accommodationist Cuba that doesn’t get involved when others are attacked. This would represent the ultimate triumph of imperialism, headed by U.S. imperialism, and the ultimate destruction of all the great achievements of the Cuban Revolution — from universal literacy and healthcare domestically to self-sacrificing internationalist solidarity with oppressed peoples from Central America to Southern Africa and around the world.*

*At the end of World War II, the Soviet Red Army was clearly the strongest land army in the world, having played the decisive role in the defeat of Nazi Germany and then the crack Japanese troops in China. Nevertheless, it was through this very period that U.S.-led imperialism was able to use a policy of Soviet “containment,” skillfully wielding the carrot and stick, setting the stage for the Soviet Union’s degeneration and demise from within.

(“Justice or Else” continued from p. 5)

or debt relief for the Afro-American community. By focusing on both “White oppression on one side and Black fraternal violence on the other,” “a war on two fronts,” Farrakhan covered up the fact that U.S. imperialism is the main enemy and oppressor of the Afro-American people.

Finally, the NOI projected the key demand for LAND — “We want our people in America whose parents or grandparents were descendants from slaves, to be allowed to establish a separate state or territory of their own.” This demand is a just demand of the Afro-American national liberation struggle and is among the “Basic Principles of Unity” of our own *Revolutionary Organization of Labor, USA*. But the demand can only be won through Afro-American working class-led national

Finally, will this change in the relationship between the Cuban government and the U.S. imperialist government represent an advance for the international proletariat and the oppressed peoples?

While current signs point to a negative answer, all revolutionary anti-imperialist and proletarian parties and organizations around the world have responsibility to our Cuban comrades and brothers and sisters to do what we can to help turn this into an advance for the international proletariat and oppressed peoples.

In defense of democratic, anti-imperialist, internationalist Cuba, let us rally around the Cuban Revolutionary Slogan:

**¡Patria o Muerte, Venceremos!
Fatherland or Death, We Shall Win!**

Let us commit to helping to build a new Communist International in the tradition of the Third International:

**Workers of the World and
Oppressed Peoples Unite!**



liberation struggle in coordination with the struggle of workers and oppressed peoples of other nationalities both within and outside the present borders of the United States directed against the U.S. imperialist class which holds power in the USA today. Neither the demand for LAND, the demand to end “poverty and want” nor the demand for “an immediate end to police brutality” or any of the other demands projected by the NOI can be won merely through an “economic boycott” of Christmas advocated by the NOI or by sending money to the NOI.

The serious and dignified Afro-American participants at the 10/10 “Justice or Else” Rally were clearly looking for a way out of the widespread economic hardship, social repression and state terror that has worsened under the Obama administration. It was encouraging to most Rally participants who had been brought together by the NOI that we were in the presence of many like-minded serious justice-loving people. The strength and unity of the Afro-American masses displayed on 10/10 is an important building block in the path forward toward Afro-American national liberation and a Socialist USA.

AFRO-AMERICAN MASSES DEMAND “JUSTICE OR ELSE” IN WASHINGTON DC

by ROSE BROWN

As many as two hundred thousand mainly Afro-American men, women and children filled the National Mall in Washington, DC on 10/10/15. They came together around the theme “Justice or Else” in response to Nation of Islam (NOI) Minister Louis Farrakhan’s call for a Rally to mark the 20th anniversary of the Million Man March at a time when police terror against the Afro-American community is rampant.

The 10/10 “Justice or Else” Rally was probably the largest protest gathering in Washington DC since the historic NOI-led march of Black men twenty years earlier. It was larger and more serious than any of the “left”-led anti-war demonstrations in DC directed against the Bush administration and many times larger than any protest directed against the Obama Administration to date. The lack of “white left” participation is noteworthy as it places the U.S. white left on the side of Obama and the Democrats and against the Black masses.

Moving statements, in rapid succession, by the father of unarmed Afro-American teenager Michael Brown executed by the police in Ferguson, Missouri in August 2014, the mother of young Trayvon Martin murdered the previous year in Florida by a wannabe cop and the sister of Afro-American anti-police brutality activist Sandra Bland who died in police custody in Texas, were a high point of the Rally. All three family members of victims of U.S. state terror urged rally participants to continue to stand up, speak out and fight together for justice.



Michael Brown Sr., Sandra Bland’s Sister, Sandra Bland’s Mother

Also positive was the NOI call for unity of the Afro-American people with the Indigenous peoples of the USA and with the oppressed Latino community as well as with poor whites suffering from economic hardship. A number of spokespeople addressed the need for such unity of the oppressed. Unfortunately, this solidarity spirit did not extend to the peoples of the Middle

East and other oppressed peoples fighting against U.S. imperialism around the world.

The featured speaker of the day was eighty-two year old Minister Louis Farrakhan. Farrakhan was clear that “integration” was not the solution to the problems of the Black community and that the Black community, old and young, men, women and children need to be united for their own advancement. Farrakhan

spoke of the importance of Black community support for Black youth. Black Nationalism clearly resonated with the crowd and indeed was an important part of the basis for this mass mobilization to DC.



In line with the NOI’s long standing bourgeois nationalist accommodation with U.S. imperialism, however, while Farrakhan spoke about the failure of the U.S.

government to represent the needs of the Afro-American masses and even suggested that the FBI was responsible for the assassination of Malcolm X, he made no criticisms of the current U.S. imperialist Obama Administration. There was no demand for the indictment and conviction of killer cops around the country or criticism of the U.S. Justice Department (under Attorney General Eric Holder and now Loretta Lynch) which has failed to prosecute these police-killers. Nor were there any NOI demands made on the government and the U.S. monopoly capitalist system for jobs, education and health benefits

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(War Control - Gun Control continued from p. 1)

Safety Nets: nets that are filled with holes and that the austerity of the 1% are trying to destroy all together.

I am personally not opposed to quick background checks and short waiting periods for gun ownership, but why is that restriction only placed on citizens? Here in Police State, USA there is also an epidemic of Killer Cops and I believe that any new applicant to any police force needs to be first subjected to the most stringent background and psychiatric screening AND, then, the hopeful cop would have to pass the screening of a citizens' personnel review board that is comprised of a diverse cross-section of community members before he/she is allowed to openly carry a weapon in society. Why are our police forces becoming so militarized anyway? Obviously, to protect the lives and interests of the 1%, and not us.

Besides the emotionally charged issue of gun control, why are few people making this point as Martin Luther King, Jr. did so eloquently in his Beyond Vietnam Speech exactly one year before he was assassinated: *"The greatest purveyor of violence in the world today is my own government."*



Why, President Barack Obama even has his very own Kill List and an entire bloated military establishment to do his filthy murdering for him. In the mass killings that are becoming too frequent in the US we rightfully mourn the

deaths of innocents, but in Yemen (and elsewhere), the ones killed in Obama's drone attacks are called "bug splat" by the drone pilots pulling the trigger thousands of miles away. Similarly, while the mentally ill murderer of students at Umpqua Community College is correctly vilified and pitied, Obama, the baby-killer by proxy, is enthusiastically welcomed and celebrated almost everywhere he goes (except, ironically, in Roseburg OR, where a large contingent of citizens opposed his visit.)

I don't get it. Presidents of the US are inherently the CEO's of a huge war machine that has momentum on its own, but why does putting one's hand on a bible and swearing an oath confer respectability upon mass murder? Here's an even stickier question? Why, in the eyes of some, is mass murder by, say, someone named George Bush (R) more horrendous than the slaughter by a couple named Barack Obama (D) or Bill Clinton (D)? I obviously think any murderer is a low-life scum and wearing an expensive suit and tie and traveling with one's own squad of heavily armed goons does not give legitimacy to murdering the innocent.

After the mass murder in Roseburg, OR, it was proven that the US intentionally bombed a hospital in Kunduz, Afghanistan that killed dozens. The hospital was staffed by *Doctors Without Borders* and exposes

the heartlessness of Empire ("oops, sorry"). Not so coincidentally, Obama also announced that troops were staying in Afghanistan indefinitely in that manifestation of the US policy of never-ending war. Then Obama took his blood-soaked hands to Roseburg to "comfort" (read, "politicize the tragedy") some of the families of victims and survivors.

Obama is paid very well to be the front-man for Murder, INC, USA. And part of the job description is making tragedies in places like Roseburg and Kunduz seem like aberrations and not an inevitable by-product of the deeply seeded violence that has infested the US since before it was the US. "Working together" to make sure tragedies like Roseburg "won't happen again," wouldn't be effective, even if Obama was serious about ending the epidemic of Killer Cops and mentally disturbed mass killers.

I used to live near Los Angeles where the LAPD regularly conducted gun "turn-ins." Private citizens bring in guns with no questions asked and then receive a grocery gift card on the value of the weapon. That's also a great strategy for War Control and I propose we pay the war machine NOT to produce implements of death and to go away and just leave the world alone.

In conclusion:

If owning a gun is wrong for Joe NRA or Ché Revolutionary, then it's wrong for Officer Not-So-Friendly.

If it's wrong to kill children in the US, then it's wrong to kill children (and others) EVERYWHERE else.

If killing is wrong for me, then it's wrong for Obama and the Empire.

I dream of (and work really hard for) the day when War Control is a reality and our priorities honor the beating of every living heart while we watch the deadly tools of war rust, breakdown, and return to the soil.

I SWEAR TO TELL THE TRUTH,
THE WHOLE TRUTH, AND NOTHING
BUT THE TRUTH, ALLOWING FOR
CONVENIENT OMISSIONS, REVISIONS,
AND REDEFINITIONS,
SO HELP ME AND MY LAWYERS.



Letters About Bernie Sanders and the 2016 Presidential Campaign

(Late September 2015)

Dear Cindy Sheehan,



I want to convey my views regarding the latest issue of the [Ray O'Light] newsletter [#92], which I have just finished reading. I thought it was overall very good, but wanted to emphasize two quotes from page 10, which raise a single potential concern:

"On the other hand, the Sanders' campaign within the Democratic Party, serves as an obstacle to Afro-American, Latino, labor, environmental and other progressive third party initiatives in the very election period following the bitter experience of the working class and oppressed nationality masses with almost seven years of the Obama Regime. Think: Black Lives Matter, Deportation of immigrants, Obama's Republican-led Fast Track Authority on the Trans Pacific Partnership."

Editor Ray Light responds:

Dear Brother Muhsin Y.,

We are happy that you responded with a positive spirit and some serious thinking to our call to hear from readers about Bernie Sanders and the 2016 Presidential Campaign. Your concerns are certainly legitimate. Before I address them in the sequence in which you raised them, let me state that we of Revolutionary Organization of Labor USA (ROL, USA) try to be guided by Marxism-Leninism. As Lenin taught, "Above everything else he (Marx) put the fact that the working class heroically, self-sacrificingly and taking the initiative itself *makes* world history." Contrary to conventional wisdom, these greatest of our leaders emphasized that it is not the enlightened vanguard but the working class and the masses who are the makers of history. It is not sufficient for a relatively small vanguard force to have seen through the Democratic Party and bourgeois elections in the USA. We cannot substitute what is obsolete for the vanguard as being obsolete for the masses. With that in mind let me turn to your concerns.

First, the Sanders' campaign *within the Democratic Party* is indeed an obstacle to progressive third party initiatives and comes on the heels of political exposure of the Democratic Obama regime as a valuable tool of the Wall Street ruling class. The timing of such a campaign is extremely bad. Especially from the perspective of our Revolutionary Organization of Labor USA. We prioritize the smashing of the political duopoly of the Democrats and Republicans, which cooperatively as the Republicrats, rule on behalf of Wall Street at the expense of Main Street.

However, there has been little effective exposure of Obama from the left among the masses of Afro-

This quote is very good and sums up why I do not think the Sanders campaign can be supported. If Sanders were a real independent (and not someone who won Vermont elections by the Democrats standing down and refusing to run against him, as a comrade told me), then things would be very different. But working within the Democratic Party, opposing cooperation with other left organizations in the US (even the Greens), even not encouraging the construction of left-wing organizations within the Democratic Party, I think there is nothing to trust in Bernie Sanders.

However: "our collective tactical decisions regarding the limits of our participation with the Sanders' candidacy." I hope that this does not mean that the Sanders campaign will be supported, wasting energy that could be better spent on any number of projects in the United States.

*In struggle,
Muhsin Y.*

Americans, Latino immigrants, workers including those in organized labor, that has stuck. In fact, the Sanders campaign, with its emphasis on "us against Wall Street and how much Wall Street has taken from us," has a strong educational component that can help vanguard and enlightened forces more effectively share and spread the exposure of Obama and the Democrats, including Sanders. But this requires persistent struggle for the hearts and minds of the people.

Your second point that "there is nothing to trust in Bernie Sanders" is beside the point from the Leninist standpoint. In the same piece you address in your letter, we cite Marx stating that, "the oppressed are allowed once every few years to decide which particular representatives of the oppressing class shall represent and repress them in parliament." Sanders is among this ilk. Comrade Lenin, the boldest of all the great leaders of scientific socialism, taught that the Leninist vanguard must go "wherever the masses are to be found" and even make compromises in order to do so. In his important pamphlet, "*Left-wing' Communism: An infantile Disorder*" Lenin makes clear that this willingness to struggle – including making compromises in order to have that opportunity among the masses – were key to the successful "storming of the heavens" by the Bolshevik Revolution. Until the masses have seen through and rejected bourgeois parliaments we have to be among them struggling to help them learn *on the basis of their own political experience* the need for revolution.

Now, let me address the issue of "tactical decisions regarding the limits of our participation with the Sanders' candidacy." While we are a small organization, we have comrades in many different circumstances. Some are heavily engaged in mass campaigns of unions, social justice organizations, etc. Sanders platform has

(contd. on p. 8)

(Letters on Sanders Campaign continued)

many fine demands that Wall Street absolutely cannot and will not concede. And, if you and we are serious, we are already involved with one or more of the struggles for reform such as \$15/hour and a union, or free public college education. Take the example of Labor for Single Payer Healthcare — Sanders has brought out hundreds or perhaps thousands of people around this health care issue. Should those of us involved in mobilizing masses around such a campaign keep our distance from the Sanders campaign support for the issue or should we tactically unite with them on this issue, call them to our meetings and go to the ones they call, to build the people power to compel the ruling class to grant single-payer health care or, in the refusal of the Wall Street ruling class and the Republicrats to grant this reform, build sufficient people power to replace the rotten monopoly capitalist and imperialist system.

Finally, in relation to the international working class and the oppressed peoples of the world, ROL,USA, in my view, cannot and will not be silent on Bernie Sanders'

vicious stand on the side of the U.S. Empire and against us. The War at Home and the War Abroad are totally interconnected. When Sanders says he is good friends with Hillary Clinton, a major architect of the violent overthrow of the Zelaya government in Honduras and the Qaddafi government in Libya, and that he will support whatever Democrat is nominated for President, he is declaring himself a war criminal defender of the U.S. Empire. But that will not automatically keep us from working with his campaign on a tactical basis. You worry about "wasting energy that could be better spent on any number of projects in the United States." And there may arise a third party effort or progressive referenda questions in the election year 2016. It would be a waste of our energy to allow Bernie Sanders and the Democrats to mobilize the dissatisfied masses for their dead-end politics, as Obama did in 2008, without our forces struggling to mobilize the people for the short term and long term struggles ahead.

In Struggle,
Ray Light

Still stumped?! See answer below to front page mystery quotation.

Jimmy Carter served as the 39th President of the United States from 1977 to 1981. The quote is from a July 2015 TV interview Carter did with Thom Hartmann. In a more recent TV interview with Oprah Winfrey that aired on her OWN Network in late September as the 2016 Presidential campaign started heating up, Jimmy Carter stated plainly, "We've become now an oligarchy instead of a democracy."



he founded to link the imperialist powers of Japan, Europe and North America. In fact, most of the senior Democratic and Republican functionaries in Carter's Regime were drawn from U.S. members of Rockefeller's Trilateral Commission.

Carter's current observation about the U.S. political "oligarchy instead of a democracy" is a healthy antidote to the massive omnipresent propaganda campaign that dominates the media, especially during presidential election season, aimed at creating **the illusion** that the Wall Street-led ruling class, the financial oligarchy, will really allow the people to determine their rulers through the ballot box.

—the Editor

* * * * *

Revolutionary Organization of Labor (ROL), USA is a revolutionary working class organization that fights for working class power and the elimination of all human exploitation. **Ray O' Light Newsletter** is the regular publication of ROL, USA. We believe, with comrade Lenin, that the working class "... needs the truth and there is nothing so harmful to its cause as plausible, respectable petty bourgeois lies." In the spirit of Karl Marx who taught that "our theory is not a dogma but a guide to action," we welcome your comments.

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