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Club Educational Study Guide: Immigrant Rights

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This educational has the goal of upgrading our understanding of the struggle for immigrant rights and against repressive immigration legislation which is taking place right now throughout the country. The goal is to place in bold relief the central problems of inequality, criminalization, and the greed of US corporations. The suggested readings which are attached include the 2006 report to the National Board on immigration, the resolution on immigration passed at the 28th National Convention, and a PWW article.

The club should invite guests to participate in this educational discussion of the immigrant rights struggle and immediately distribute the educational guide with the attached reading materials to all who will be involved. A discussion leader should be selected to facilitate the discussion. At least 45 minutes to an hour should be devoted to the full educational discussion.

Discussion Questions:

1. How have corporate and governmental policies shaped changes in the immigrant population and the challenges facing the immigrant population? How have the conditions for immigrants worsened?
2. What has been and is now the contribution of organized labor to the fight for immigrant rights?
3. What are some aspects of positive immigration reform? What can your club and district do to help advance the consciousness of the working class, nationally oppressed communities, women, and youth on the issue of immigrants rights? What are some obstacles which must be overcome? What can your club and district do to participate in this struggle?

Suggested Readings attached below:

A Report on Immigration to the National Board, January 2006 presented by Rosalio Munoz

Immigration Conference and Resolution

This report is in part a follow up on the party's conference on Immigration held in Tucson the first weekend in June 2005 and the resolution on Immigration presented and passed at our July 28th National Convention that was based on the discussions at the conference. The conference and resolution outlined our basic ideological and political approach to the question, looked at legislative and other political developments and called for greater engagement of the party at all levels in the issue, in organized immigrants rights groups, and with greater party press and club and district involvement in immigrant communities, including recruitment. The resolution also called for the development of an Immigrant Workers Bill of Rights and for the National Committee to develop or assign where continued work on the issue would be centered.

The Immediate Crisis/Threat.

The report also is in response to something of a crisis or perhaps better put the acceleration of qualitatively stronger and harsher push by right wing forces for anti immigrant policies represented most sharply in the passage of the extremely reactionary Sensenbrenner bill (HR 4437 in the House of Representatives on Dec 16

In essence, HR 4437 incorporates most of the extreme repressive measures proposed by the more right wing Republican representatives in one bill, The measures correspond to the slogans of the extremist right wing groups, popularized in the media, like the Minutemen. In a matter of days the House GOP leadership transferred what had been seen more as a sideshow of right wing anti immigrant politics into the big tent of Republican national politics with an eye towards the Nov 2006 elections.

The passage of the bill without considered debate moved legislative and media discussion of the issue to the right. While the extreme nature of its major provisions are seen as a ploy and not likely to be passed, the significance of the bill and its measures cannot be downplayed. The bill represents a political and ideological blitz to establish qualitatively more repressive immigration policies for the new demographic and economic global and national objective factors of migration and immigration Our party has noted some of these trends in key documents our new program, the main report to the 28th convention, the convention resolutions on immigration and Mexican America equality, articles in the Peoples Weekly World, Political Affairs and elsewhere.

Some Key Objective Trends in Immigration

Since the early nineties world migration and immigration to the United States has increased fairly steadily. Worldwide, as a result of neo liberal and free trade policies there is increased migration from poorer to richer nations globally and within particular countries. In the United States this means that more people, from more countries, and more economic strata, with more of them undocumented than ever before. The immigrants are going to more regions of the country, in more industries and are becoming more significant parts of the work force nationally and regionally.

Recent census and research projects [INDICATE] there are more than 35 million foreign born in the US. There are roughly 11 million naturalized citizens, permanent residents, and undocumented each. There are over 3.1 million citizen children of undocumented workers. The number of persons in households where a language other than English is primary is 50 million or more

The ten top sending countries are with per hundred thousand data are Mexico 108, China/Hong Kong/Taiwan 1.8, Philippines 1.5, India 1.4, El Salvador 1.1, Vietnam 9.9, Cuba 9.5, Dominican Rep 6.9, Canada 6.7, Korea 6.2.

The largest number of foreign born reside in a relatively small number of the largest states. In 2004 the states with the highest proportions were CA 26.2%, NY 20.4%, NJ 17.5%. HA 17.5%, FL 16.7%, NM 15.8%, TX 13.9%, DC 12.9%, ILL 12.3%.

The fastest growth per state of foreign-born shows how the immigrant population is spreading. Between 2000-2005 the 10 fastest growing by thousand were CA 931, TX 788, GA 384, NJ 339, MD 2246, NC 217, WA 193, PA 170, VA 167, AZ 159.

The greatest growth is for undocumented, since 1995 for the first time undocumented arriving outnumbered permanent residents arriving and the trend increases. The undocumented are those also spreading out the fastest. 1990 studies estimated that 88% of the undocumented resided in CA, NY, TX, FL, ILL, and NJ.

In 2004 the percentage was 61 percent. In that time the percentage of the undocumented outside the 6 largest concentrations grew from 12% to 39%. In absolute numbers the change was from 400,000 to 3.9 million.

Corporate/Government Impact

Though climate and population growth factor into these demographic changes, government and corporate policies have shaped the changes more than anything else. Though the number of people who want to and do immigrate increases, the number of visas has actually fallen slightly, so a greater proportion of immigrants are undocumented. In spite of the voracious appetite of US businesses for relatively unskilled immigrant labor, only about 5,000 permanent resident visas for workers with these limited skills are given out annually. Neo liberal and free trade policies pushed most by US government and corporate powers in the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, free trade agreements, etc. Tougher border policies particularly after more repressive measures passed in 1996 have been a factor in directing immigrant flow towards other areas, most notable to Arizona. Also the flow of immigrants is towards employment opportunities especially areas of newer investment, like the South

Since the mid 90s the government has taken an enforcement only approach rather than legalization. The ACLU points out that from 1993 to 2004 the number of Border Patrol agents increased from 4000 to 11,000 with the budget increasing by 5 times, yet the number of undocumented more than doubled.

Immigrant Workers And Allies Fight Back.

The immigrants themselves are not just objects of the changes. They are integrating themselves more and more into the working class, peoples, religious, civic and other democratic institutions. The Latino and Asian Pacific American communities have made a priority of including, integrating their immigrant populations in social, political and economic life. Unions, religious institutions, community based organizations, and small business have taken a positive, welcoming approach to immigrants. The mass participation of immigrants in California in 1994 against Proposition 186 did not stop the anti immigrant measure from passing but did become an impetus for increased Latino and Asian Pacific American political empowerment. The immigrant's rights movement has grown in size and, in some ways, sophistication. Of vital importance has been the growing leadership role of organized labor within immigrant's rights coalitions and struggles.

In 1999 the AFL CIO outlined a pro immigrant program calling for amnesty for the undocumented. The SEIU initiated Reward Work Campaign in 2002, the labor led Immigrants Workers Freedom Ride generated and consolidated greater nationwide support for immigrants rights and created the basis for large scale united front efforts in the future, behind the slogans of legalization with a clear path to citizenship and an end to repression of immigrants. The immigrants

rights groups have been pushing harder for legalization of the undocumented, the Dream Act to make college education available to undocumented immigrants, driver's licenses and other basic rights. The immigrant's rights groups have been pushing harder for Immigrant workers, documented and undocumented have become a major part of labor organizing drives and workplace struggles.

Conditions for immigrants have worsened as opportunities for legalization have closed up and more repressive policies have been put in place. Starting several years ago, the social security administration started a major crackdown on the use of social security numbers by undocumented immigrants. This has led to many thousands of immigrants being forced out of relatively good jobs and into the marginal and contingent economy. In some cases immigrant workers have been driven out of their regular jobs because management received a social security 'no match' letter, only to be re-employed as contingent labor at a much lower wage without any benefits. This situation has played into union-busting campaigns of management. Another major boon to union busters has been the Supreme Court's Hoffman plastic compounds decision of April 2002, which states that when employers illegally fire undocumented workers for union activity, they don't have to pay them back wages. This has not just let management off the hook; it has actually made it more attractive for them to hire the undocumented because they can fire them with impunity.

In early 2005 immigrants rights groups commissioned a public opinion study showing that a majority of American voters, while concerned about undocumented immigration, favored better conditions and legalization for the undocumented immigrants. After President Bush proposed an immigration policy of tougher enforcement policies and temporary worker programs, many immigrants rights groups began a strategy for support for legislation, notably the McCain Kennedy Bill with less stringent repressive features and more liberal legalization measures.

Right Wing Push For a New Policy

President Bush began his first term in 2001 speaking of working out a new immigration policy notably by working in bilaterally with Mexican President Fox. After 9/11 this bilateral talk disappeared. Rather immigration issues were increasingly projected by the administration as questions of national security, many immigration functions were transferred to the Department of Homeland Security. In 2001 the Patriot Act sharply increased repressive conditions for immigrants in many ways.

In 2003 the anti immigrant ideological assault escalated with the publication of works by Harvard professor and foreign policy pundit Samuel P Huntington, in particular his book *Who Are We*, which argued that immigration from Mexico was the biggest national security threat to the US. economically, culturally, spiritually and yes in terms of religion. Anti immigrant groups on the Internet picked up and pushed the issue on right wing talk groups and other media outlets. In the California governor recall election, Democrat Lt Gov. Cruz Bustamante was viciously targeted by the far right and the corporate media for having been a member of Chicano Campus group MECHA in his youth.

In 2004 Bush announced his guest worker centered immigration policy, in June the administration carried out inland immigration raids far from the border that terrorized immigrant communities. All throughout the country local and state legislatures took up anti immigrant proposals on drivers licenses, public services, using local police to enforce federal immigration police and other measures. In September 2004 just weeks before the national election Time Magazine had a cover featured edition on the crisis at the border giving credence to the right wing propaganda. In Arizona a potential swing state, anti immigrant proposition 200 set the political tone for the elections which Bush carried.

In 2005 the Republican Congressional leadership rushed through the Real ID act to force undocumented to identify themselves in order to have licenses and other ID. The Minutemen and other groups went beyond their web sites and

talk shows to begin demonstrating at the border, then inland, with massive media coverage. California Gov Schwarzenegger praised them, Rep Tancredo and others worked in coordination with them and built an anti immigrant caucus in the House made up of primarily right wing Republicans.

In the fall as Bush/corporate right wing Republican policies were dropping record low rating in opinion polls the administration and Congressional Republican leadership chose immigration to be a major wedge in its counter attack in legislative and upcoming electoral battles. House and Senate GOP Judiciary Committee leaders began preparing to take up major immigration proposals in early November. On Nov. 27 President Bush gave the green light to Congress to begin its anti immigrant offensive with a speech emphasizing repressive measures at an air force base near Tucson. A week later Sensenbrenner began railroading HR 4437 through the House. with the Bush Administrations approval.

The Sensenbrenner Bill HR 4437. Police State Approach

On Dec 2, 2005 Rep Sensenbrenner the Chair of the House Judiciary Committee announced he had prepared an immigration bill that would be published on Dec. 6 to be taken up by the Judiciary Committee and then the full House before the House adjourned for the holidays. On Dec. 6 immigrants rights advocates and groups were stunned by the viciousness of the bill, it was all shock and awe. It was entire enforcement, punitive oriented, there was no legalization or even temporary worker provisions. It promised a police state conditions for undocumented and documented immigrants, their communities, friends and allies

The bill has scores of repressive, persecutory measure with the primary ones including:

Making being undocumented a felony rather than a civil offense.

Expanding the definition of smuggling to include dealing with undocumented knowingly or with wanton neglect of their status.

Make felony record an automatic basis to deny legal status and citizenship.

Requiring employers, including union hiring halls to report all employers for federal examination of their eligibility to work.

Have mandatory detention for suspected undocumented not from Mexico or Canada.

Militarize the border with a wall of several hundred miles and high tech military surveillance.

Eliminate due process from many immigration procedures.

Deputize local and state police to enforce federal immigration laws.

If passed into law and applied the breaking up of communities, businesses, churches, unions, schools, small business. The arrest, detention, have millions of citizens, documented and undocumented could cost more than the war in Iraq. Racism, national biases, and other anti democratic attitudes would be increased. The ultra right hate groups would be even more emboldened.

This bill passed by a vote of 239-182. in the House. 203 Republicans voted for it and 36 Democrats. 164 Democrats and 17 Republicans opposed (many of the GOP opposers said it was too weak). The Democratic Congressional Campaign

committee advised the ten most vulnerable members to vote for HR 4437. The 160-page bill was introduced on a Tuesday and rushed through committee on the next Thursday. Then scores of amendments were added the next Wednesday and floor debate started the next day, Thursday with the vote taken late Friday night ensuring minimum press coverage.

The Battle Looms In The Senate

With the passage of HR 4437 as the major immigration project of the House, the legislative struggle moves to the Senate. The Senate Judiciary Committee chaired by Republican Arlen Specter (PA) was originally expected to take up the issue in February, now there is talk of the issue being taken up in March or Later. The committee is slated to hold the hearings for Supreme Court nominee Samuel Alito starting in mid January. It also is expected to take up the Patriot Act and perhaps the issue of presidential spying. Before it puts its full attention on immigration.

Judiciary chair Specter has issued a 'mark' on the issue indicating the general parameters of discussion he projects. He has indicated he will consider aspects of 3 Senate Bills one by Corny-Kyle, which many see, as similar to the Bush position, another by Sen. Hegel, which differs in detail from Cornyn-Kyle but has similar provisions. Then there is a bill by McCain and Kennedy, which has more generous legalization and less repressive measures.

Specter's mark, however, could also have all or some of the provisions of HR 4437 added to it. Prior to the House bill many saw the Senate debate devolving around the McCain Kennedy bill and the Presidents priorities, which are covered to a degree in the Cornyn Kyle proposal. Since the passage of 4437 the media has projected that the debate now stands between the Presidents position and the House position. This assessment is corroborated by an April 2005 position paper of the Republican Senate Policy Committee entitled Necessary Conditions For Immigration Reform that outlines an array of repressive measures needed to get the support needed for passage of temporary or guest worker programs. The Presidents endorsement of the passage of HR 4437 also indicates the pressures for more repressive policy.

Another indication of a modification of position is a partnership of Democrat Senator Barak Obama (IL) and Republican Mel Martinez (FL) who called a press conference and coauthored a Wall Street Journal op Ed piece during the House Debate on 4437 in mid December. They proposed a comprehensive approach that included a guest worker program and stronger enforcement at the border and in the interior. They signed on as cosponsors to McCain Kennedy, Hagel, and Cornyn Kyle measures. This indicates the liberal Obama is willing to go to the right of McCain Kennedy to avoid extreme approaches like the Houses 4437.

The general consensus seems to be that the Senate will pass something closer to the Bush Proposal with an even more reactionary bill possibly emerging from a conference committee of both houses it will likely contain a combination of repression with a guest worker program, with no provision for permanent legalization.

The Fight Back

Though immigrant's rights forces were caught relatively unprepared by the ferocity of the HR 4437 attack a spirited, resolute and expanding fightback started as the horrors of its scores of repressive measures came to light. Labor, civil rights, Latino, Asian Pacific American, religious, progressive and liberal groups began sharing assessments, and arguments to mobilize mass email and phone call campaigns to Congresspersons. Local coalitions began regrouping and reaching out for more fight back throughout the country. In the House Judiciary the Democrat minority led by ranking member Rep John Conyers unanimously condemned HR 4437 as so egregious as to be unamendable

Nearly labor, civil rights, faith, community, and business groups strongly opposed the bill including, the ACLU, AFL-CIO, Change To Win, National Conference of La Raza, Leadership Committee on Civil Rights, Catholic Conference of Bishops, American Jewish Committee the National Chamber of Commerce, National Immigration Lawyers Assn. The National Immigration Forum and the New Americans Opportunities Coalition were key center points for the efforts.

The protest has carried on after the passage of the bill with groups gearing up for the Senate. Many groups while preparing for the Senate are also making sure that supporters of HR 4437 in the House take heat for their votes, as the House will be called on to vote if some measure is passed in the Senate. The four major national Latino groups, the National Council of La Raza, Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, the League of United Latin American Citizens, and the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials wrote a joint letter to President Bush sharply criticizing the Bill and his support of it and urged him to withdraw his support of it.

While many immigrants rights advocacy groups are focusing their work on supporting the McCain Kennedy bill as a counter to the more repressive measures, some key groups do not support it because of its temporary worker provisions, in particular the AFL-CIO. Thus at present there is not one center of mobilization, an important tactical objective would be to try to bring the two factions of the labor movement plus the other organizations fighting for immigrants rights onto the same page for the struggle in the Senate]

Also while many groups which are opposing the Bush Agenda on all or most of its priorities have joined in opposing HR 4437 and expressed support for immigrants rights the mobilizations have not reached out to tens of millions as the struggles on social security, the Patriot Act, budget cuts and tax breaks for the rights. Much of the action appears to be centered in advocacy groups with not as much emphasis in direct action by the immigrant community. Most of the action has been on the Internet in English.

What Is To Be Done

The mass movements and the party need to strengthen their commitments on the short term, intermediate and long term basis. On the short term is the legislative struggle this session, intermediate is the anti immigrant Republican Congressional strategy in the 2006 elections. The long-term approach is to challenge the economic and political structures, which create greater migrations of workers and their super exploitation in this country. As this document argues, the giant global US corporations and their extreme right republican allies see the anti immigrant policy as key to maintain control of the government indefinitely, much as the racist Southern Strategy helped them win that control.

The immigrant's rights' forces must develop the understanding that special approaches are necessary. Most immigrants have no vote and little voice in our political processes, they are relatively unfamiliar with political practice and history, alignment of forces, there are language and cultural barriers. In a similar way there is great ignorance of the situation of immigrants and the conditions leading to their migration, and there has been systematic racist and nationalist anti immigrant ideology and institutional practices in place in this country since its inception. There must be the understanding that joining together in common struggle is the best way to overcome the biases, fears, and ignorance. The strong democratic sentiments of the US working class and people come to the fore when they first hand see the humanity of their immigrant brothers and sisters.

It is essential to appeal to the whole US working class, immigrant and non-immigrant, on two levels: on the basis of their sense of fairness, and on the basis of their self-interest. Wee have to explain that persecution of immigrant workers harms the interests of all workers, and that the liberation of immigrant workers from such persecution and, indeed, from their 'undocumented' status is in the interest of all workers.

The situation makes taking a principled stand on immigration issues even more necessary than usual. Among the most basic principles is that the immigrants are equal parts of our working class and people. That the problems related to undocumented and documented immigration stem the vulnerability of the immigrants and the oppression and super exploitation of them. That the repression is not the solution but greater democracy and equality is.

On the question of immigrant labor, Lenin pointed out that if the bosses bring in immigrant labor the duty of the class conscious workers and the working class and people is to welcome them into the workers and peoples struggle while respecting their culture and history.

The objective realities of the immigrant question must be made known. It is a fact that the oppression and super exploitation of the immigrants is bad, it allows for the pitting of immigrants against others and each other. It is not true that immigrants do jobs others won't do; others would if the wages and working conditions were appropriate. It is true that our economy runs far under its productive capacity and that unemployment and underemployment are not caused by immigrants or other workers, but [BY] the capitalists and their system.

Immediate Tasks.

The immigrant's rights coalition must be widened and deepened to include all of the sectors of the all peoples front especially labor, minorities, women and youth. We must explain that the anti immigrant measures threaten democracy for all, and that anti immigrant ideas and practices are poison for the democratic struggle. We should encourage all to embrace the immigrant issue as part of their own agendas.

The issues that draw the most support from the democratic forces must be emphasized to develop the widest unity, particularly the extreme inhumanity of the Sensenbrenner and other punitive measures as well as the need for dignity and respect and legal status for the immigrants.

The party should issue sample petition and resolution focusing against the repressive measures and the need for full legalization with special approaches to involving the immigrant communities

Districts and clubs should connect with local coalitions and efforts on the issue and join in the lobbying and direct action, and include the immigrant's communities in their areas of concentration and focus where possible.

The Organization Committee should help coordinate and focus the work of the districts, clubs and national bodies on the issue.

The PWW should seek to be the paper of the immigrant rights movement as it is for the labor, peace and civil rights movements, with more systematic approach to covering issues and discussing ideas.

The Labor, Economic, and other commissions should assist in helping develop deeper understanding of the issue.

Authors: Marilyn Bechtel and Emile Schepers People's Weekly World, 03/23/06

Months of growing grassroots pressure for immigrants' rights and against proposed harsh repressive measures are beginning to open new avenues of struggle for a fair and humane approach to immigration reform.

While Chicago's March 10 outpouring of hundreds of thousands 'the largest to date' moved the struggle to a higher level, it was preceded by many actions around the country, and more are planned for coming days.

Meanwhile, matters are coming to a head in the Senate Judiciary Committee. The committee continued its work on March 15-16. Its starting point, Sen. Arlen Specter's (R-Pa.) 'chairman's mark,' a legislative draft, greatly resembled the harshly repressive Sensenbrenner bill, HR 4437, in that it lacked an effective path to legalization and citizenship for the estimated 12 million undocumented immigrants now in the U.S.

Specter's draft also incorporated many of Sensenbrenner's concepts to criminalize the undocumented and those who help them, while limiting due process for immigrants appealing government decisions about their cases. Specter's proposal also includes an open-ended guest worker program lacking adequate labor protections.

Committee Democrats are working to make the legislation less harsh. At press time, Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), who spoke at the Chicago rally, was fighting to eliminate criminalization language while Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) got at least a few Republicans to consider a legalization-to-permanent-residency program.

However, Sen. Bill Frist (R-Tenn.) on March 17 introduced a bill including all the repressive features of HR 4437 with no legalization path or guest worker program, but more permanent resident visas. Not to be outdone, Rep. Tom Tancredo (R-Colo.), head of the House Immigration Reform Caucus, issued a letter signed by 73 congresspersons supporting the Sensenbrenner-Frist approach but criticizing Frist for proposing more legal immigrants.

The Judiciary Committee is scheduled to vote when Congress reconvenes March 27. Immigrant rights groups, the AFL-CIO, SEIU and other unions, the Conference of Catholic Bishops and others are urging continued demonstrations and lobbying to stop repressive measures and assure that whatever legislation is passed contains legalization with a clear path to citizenship. Hundreds of clergy will gather that day in Washington to pressure the Judiciary Committee, Frist and others.

'What happens on and after March 27 could be decisive for the struggle in the Senate,' said Rosalio Muoz, immigrant rights activist and Southern California district organizer for the Communist Party. 'The whole Senate could vote by April 1, so pressure needs to grow broader and deeper each day.'

Around the country:

Over 50 hunger strikers gathered at San Francisco's federal building March 21 to start a week-long fast featuring marches, rallies and candlelight vigils. Strikers and their supporters heard legendary United Farm Workers co-founder Dolores Huerta call for a new appreciation of immigrants' contributions. 'It's time we said, 'you are here, we embrace you as citizens,' Huerta told the crowd.

Sheila Chung, executive director of the Bay Area Immigrant Rights Coalition, said the strike aims 'to build legislative support for initiatives that help undocumented workers gain permanent legal residence and citizenship, provide for family reunification, assure justice on the job, and uphold immigrants' civil rights and civil liberties.'

Trenton, N.J., was the site of a large demonstration March 20, while actions were planned for March 24 in Arizona cities and towns.

A massive demonstration is slated for Los Angeles on March 25. Mobilizations are also set for Denver, Philadelphia and

other cities.

In Los Angeles on March 26, the annual labor and clergy celebration of Cesar Chavez's birthday will focus on justice for immigrants.

At the same time, labor, immigrant rights and civil rights groups like the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and People for the American Way are mobilizing e-mails, letters and phone calls urging opposition to Sensenbrenner's and Frist's bills as well as inclusion of immigrant-friendly measures in the Judiciary Committee bill.

Senators can be called through the congressional switchboard, (202) 224-3121, urging rejection of all repressive measures, support for legalization and a clear path to citizenship, and full labor and civil rights for all.

More information on demonstrations around the country is posted on the New American Opportunities Coalition's web site, .

Whereas, human migration has under conditions of advanced capitalism, imperialism and corporate-driven globalization, reached an unprecedented scale in our time. Capitalism, in its constant search for greater profits across the globe, continually changes people's ways of earning a living, causing many to seek different work in different locations: from country to town to city, peasant to worker, small business to service worker, unionized to unorganized, impoverishment is the main trend. Upward mobility is the exception for the people, and greater corporate profit is the rule; and,

Whereas, neo-liberal policies of 'free trade'?, privatization, austerity, and repression of democratic movements have increased massive economically motivated migration within countries and from the poorer countries to the wealthier. It increases the differences in wealth both between countries and within both rich and poor countries. The people of third world and former socialist states are affected disproportionately by this dynamic; and,

Whereas, U.S.-based corporations and the U.S. government have been the foremost promoters of policies that have created the increase in labor migration. While they assert the right of capital to move across borders in search of profits, they act to place the movement of labor under harsh restrictions at home and abroad. Workers who leave their home countries under these pressures are deprived of basic labor and civil rights, and subjected to discrimination, harassment and even physical attacks by the governments and worldwide neo-fascist anti-immigrant movements; and,

Whereas, restrictive, discriminatory, and punitive laws and practices are designed to make migrant labor more vulnerable to super exploitative practices, which create greater profits that first and foremost go to giant transnational corporations, particularly those of the U.S. The super exploitation of immigrant labor is used as a wedge to lower the wages, working conditions, living standards and quality of life for the people as a whole, immigrant and native born, again for the benefit primarily of giant corporations. In a parallel fashion the anti-democratic measures used to deny immigrants the ability to defend themselves, as individuals and through collective activity, work to undermine democracy for all workers and the general populace; and,

Whereas, the working-class, democratic answer to these methods of divide and conquer and super-exploitation is working-class democratic internationalism. We see all workers everywhere, with or without papers as brothers and sisters. We give solidarity to democratic people's struggles against imperialism and corporate global power. We fight against all forms of exploitation, and against discrimination on the basis of race, nationality, gender, sexual preference,

or immigration status. Workers are workers, with or without papers. No human being is illegal. We fight for full legal rights for immigrant workers here today and those who come in the future. To build multiracial unity of workers and people, citizen, documented or undocumented, is the only way to move forward for democracy, economic and social justice, and socialism. Increasingly this involves opposition to the fascist-tinged anti-immigrant movement that is being fostered by the ultra-right in the form of hate speech and vigilantism directed against immigrants, especially those of color; and,

Whereas, over the past several years a mighty mass-based labor-led coalition has been developing which has united Latinos, Asian Americans, African Americans, Caribbean Americans, whites, labor unions, churches, and community and civic groups behind a program of greater rights for immigrant workers. Immigrant workers, documented and undocumented, naturalized and non-citizen are increasingly joining in democratic struggles against rightwing polices. These developments show that the fight for the rights of immigrant workers is winnable through a program of working-class unity and coalition with other democratic forces in active struggle; and,

Whereas, the Bush Administration has sharply escalated invasion, interventionism and neo-liberal policies abroad and restrictive immigration policies at home. Indeed immigration is officially posed as a problem of 'national security'. Immigration functions have been moved from the Department of Justice to the Department of Homeland Security. Policies of second-class temporary labor and repatriation are being pushed. Greater limitations are set for documented and undocumented workers in the workplace and community, and for all services including citizenship. The corporate media has generally supported this direction and popularized rightwing anti-immigrant misinformation, stereotypes, and political personalities and groups;

Therefore be it resolved, that the Communist Party USA calls for:

Solidarity with democratic forces fighting imperialist neoliberal polices in their home countries so that mass migration from poor countries to rich becomes unnecessary.

The rapid legalization, without discrimination or onerous conditions, of all undocumented workers and their relatives living in the United States.

The creation of mechanisms whereby immigrant workers in the future can come to the United States legally and safely with full rights.

The rejection of the Bush administration's 'guest worker program'?; demand that any program of migrant labor (a) accord to migrant workers and their families all labor and other legal rights accorded to U.S.-born workers, (b) not accede to employers the ultimate control over the decision of who can come to the U.S. and who cannot, and under what circumstances workers and their families can stay in the U.S., (c) include the real possibility that the worker and his/her family become, if they so desire, permanent residents and then citizens, and (d) give migrant workers and their families full access to U.S. courts for the enforcement of their rights.

The repeal of the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, the USA PATRIOT Act, the employer sanctions component of IRCA, and the REAL ID Act, a legislative overturn of the Hoffman Plastic Compounds Decision, and the repeal of all other anti-immigrant federal, state, county and local legislation and executive orders.

The prohibition of state, local and county police from acting as immigration agents.

The U.S./Mexico border to be demilitarized and humanized

An end to discrimination against immigrants with or without papers in the issuance of drivers licenses, and no restriction on the right of immigrants to use consular ID cards or other country-of-origin IDs to open bank and credit accounts or to deal with government agencies.

All workers and their family members, with or without documents, to have full access to all public services paid for by their taxes and labor, including Social Security and Medicare and affordable higher education.

The prosecution of organizations, individuals and media outlets that foment hatred and violence toward the foreign-born, or toward specific racial and ethnic groups.

Support and development of greater anti-defamation and anti-repression efforts defending immigrants and their communities.

Stop government harassment of Native American communities in our border areas, and respect their rights to pass back and forth freely as guaranteed by treaty.

The defeat of the anti-immigrant, ultra right forces in the elections of 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 on federal, state and local levels.

An end to the appointment of repressive, anti-immigrant judges.

Labor and community forces to help to strengthen the coalition of forces united by the labor-led Immigrant Workers Freedom and work within it to advance legislation and other activities that will achieve freedom and justice for immigrant workers. In the context of this coalition, we support the positive provisions of Kennedy-McCain bill, while working to strengthen its protections of immigrant workers' rights and opposing restrictive measures; and,

Be it further resolved, that we call on Communist Party bodies and activists to increase and improve outreach to and support of immigrant communities and labor and civic organizations, including the building of our Party and press among these communities. Increased and more rapid publication of materials in Spanish and other languages are needed. More meetings, forums, rallies, seminars, studies, and assignments of responsibility are needed on the question; and,

Be it further resolved, that the incoming National Committee should establish ongoing collective effort to help coordinate greater concentration on the question including the development of an Immigrant Workers Bill of Rights taking into account previous such documents and progressive international standards such as those set out in the Declaration on the Rights of Migrants, Refugees, Displaced Peoples and their Families, adopted at the 5th World Social Forum, Porto Allegre, Brazil in 2005.

Adopted by the 28th National Convention of the Communist Party, USA, Chicago, IL; July 1-3, 2005.

***** Supplementary Resources:

Search the online for more important articles including on the issue of guest worker programs.

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