

FROM THE BELLY OF THE BEAST

On the Significance of Building ILPS in the US

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On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the League, we can all look back on a massive upsurge in the anti-imperialist and revolutionary movements of the peoples across the world. Where ILPS has always shone like a torch has been in the unity forged between these movements of the people in struggle, binding hundreds of organizations together across the world like the arms of the oppressed and exploited standing firm against the armed forces of imperialism and reaction as they wield their demands on the streets, in the fields, and on the factory floors.

As an ILPS International Coordinating Committee (ICC) officer based in the United States, I will take this opportunity to speak on the gains of the ILPS-US Country Chapter and the significant role of the exploited and oppressed in waging anti-imperialist struggle in what might be called the “belly of the beast” of US imperialism.

The US emerged as the dominant imperialist superpower following the World War 2. During the so-called “Cold War” with the Soviet Union, the US launched numerous hot wars and invasions of countries as it set up its new world order. Here inside the US, the wars against the people took the form of the “McCarthyist” psy war campaign against revolutionaries, the FBI Counter-intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) against national liberation struggles and the Civil Rights Movement, and the near-destruction of working class organization through neoliberal reforms and the co-opting of the labor movement’s leadership.

The US’s declaration of victory in the Cold War after the dissolution of the Soviet Union ushered in an intensification of the bloody onslaught of imperialist aggression against the peoples of the world. This culminated in the fateful response to the 9/11 Al-Qaeda attacks by launching the so-called “War on Terror”, demonizing and scape-goating adherents of Islam to justify the death march of imperialism’s internal logic and to assign a new target for its endless wars of aggression. This was paired with mass surveillance and assault on civil rights within the US itself in the form of the Patriot Act under Bush and the National Security Agency’s PRISM project under Obama.

Sowing confusion among the US peoples’ movements, the liberal bourgeois parties and organizations espoused solutions such as pacifism and social democracy, shunning the right of the working class and national liberation movements to wage just and militant (even armed struggle) for self-determination and social liberation. A “supra class” movement was encouraged that divided the people along identity lines instead of marking common friends and enemies by class line, ultimately dividing the US working class from the international working class.

Under this dual assault from imperialist reaction and bourgeois pacifism, there arose a need for a clear anti-imperialist analysis and strategy for building a broad anti-imperialist united front. ILPS was founded to unite the people towards this end.

The League was founded in 2001 in the Netherlands just a few months before the US launched its War on Terror, to unite the peoples of the world against their source of terror - US imperialism. From its start, ILPS included oppressed and exploited people within the US itself, affirming that people in the US not only fight a righteous struggle against imperialism and its fascist-leaning policies but also that the masses within the US have a historic role to play in frustrating the attacks of US imperialism against independent and colonized nations abroad. US delegates have been present at all six international assemblies.

Since its founding, the ILPS' ICC has released countless articles and statements on the world situation and crisis of imperialism, including on issues related to the internal US situation. For example, a 2011 statement on the Occupy Wall Street movement declared that, "Wall Street is the enemy of humanity", and that, "mass action is the only way forward". It echoed the keynote address of the fourth international assembly in stating, "The Democratic and Republican parties in the US compete as do Coca Cola and Pepsi Cola in flagrantly carrying out the policy dictates of the financial oligarchy and the military industrial complex. Both parties agree on raising the US debt ceiling. And to blunt public protests, they promise to bring down the public deficit, with the Democrats wishing to reduce the tax cuts for the corporations and upper class and the Republicans demanding the further reduction of government social spending". Such statements expose the true nature of the reactionary parties that attempt to give the ruling system a shroud of democracy as it unleashes its full-scale assault on the people to protect its plundering of public funds.

The League will continue to expand and strengthen within the US. ILPS-US is like a healthy antibody gathering strength to eradicate the virus of US imperialism from the world. The masses of workers and all oppressed peoples in the US have an internationalist duty, and ultimately that duty guides them to give support to struggles overseas while organizing for a new people-centered society within the US itself. This must be a broad mass movement and anti-imperialist united front of all peoples' struggle.

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