

To Hell With the Minutemen!

Full Rights for All Immigrants!

The Minutemen are a self-defined “citizens' neighborhood watch” group which “assists” the United States Border Patrol in “protecting” the U.S. from an allegedly grave “threat”—Latin American workers looking for a job. Other Minutemen work includes anti-immigrant lobbying, chauvinist public relations campaigns, citizens arrests of supposedly “illegal aliens”, harassment of pro-immigrant political organizations and demonstrations and, now, the creation of a website that seeks to “name and shame” employers who hire anyone suspected of being without papers (i.e., anyone who looks Latino).

Blaming immigrant workers for a whole laundry list of offenses, including unemployment and even littering, the racist Minutemen act as pawns of the U.S. capitalist ruling class' attempts to pit worker against worker and thereby drive down the wages and conditions of all. Thus, they blame immigrants for causing unemployment when unemployment is in fact an inherent feature of the capitalist system of production, a system that has never been able to provide jobs for all, anywhere, and which exists in every country in the world, no matter what its immigration laws.

The capitalists want immigrant labor, but they want it without rights so they can more profitably exploit it. Having a labor pool of millions of workers living in fear of deportation if they strike or otherwise stand up for their rights serves this purpose, as well as acting to drive down the conditions of all workers. For the working class to resist this necessitates standing up to demand full rights for immigrants no matter what their status. But this is a struggle that the working class must take up on it's own, i.e., all of the bills presently being debated in Congress have features denying immigrants the same rights as everyone else.

The Anti-Immigrant and Anti-Working Class Bills in Congress

Several bills are being debated. The U.S. House of Representatives has already passed H.R. 4437, also known as the “Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005”, or Sensenbrenner bill. This is the notorious legislation that would turn the approximately 5% of the U.S. workforce who are deemed “illegal aliens” into felons. The bill also calls for the construction of a 700+ mile fence along the U.S.-Mexico border, makes it mandatory for employers to check employees' Social Security numbers against a Federal database, increases penalties on employers who hire “illegal” immigrants, allows the government to detain undocumented immigrants without rights until they're deported, and other reactionary features. Furthermore, those who provide assistance to such immigrants could also be charged with felonies. Providing drinking water to migrants (who risk dying of thirst in the desert), offering other forms of humanitarian assistance including counseling...anything, would be a felony!

In “opposition” to this blatantly racist, anti-immigrant and anti-worker bill, the liberal wing of the capitalist ruling class has come to the rescue. Instead of opposing this hated bill and all it stands for, they merely offer a slightly different version, which is actually more in line with the needs of the U.S. bourgeoisie. Sponsored by Rep. John McCain (R-AZ) and Rep. Ted Kennedy (D-MA), the “Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act” will increase the number of border patrol agents and allow for increased coordination between different police departments, Feds, etc. This bill also contains a provision for a so-called “temporary worker” program which would charge impoverished workers a \$2000 fee for “security” background checks and registration in a Federal database. Both of these bills will institutionalize guest workers' second-class status. And, according to this “kinder, gentler” bill, immigrant workers would be subject to deportation simply for being out of work for over 60 days.

Both bills contain provisions for thousands of new immigration cops to harass and detain immigrants and their supporters. (Of course, all this costs money. While education and social services budgets are slashed, the rich capitalist ruling class always manages to dig up more money for repression and war. This says something about their priorities.)

This bill is backed by powerful capitalists who've never worked a damn day in their lives...but sadly it does not end there. Many groups who campaign for immigrant and workers rights, including trade union bureaucrats from both the AFL-CIO as well as the Change to Win Coalition, back this bill as a "lesser" evil when compared with the hated H.R. 4437. This shows that there are no solutions to be found either among the political prostitutes of the rich in Congress, or among those who trail behind these respectable ladies and gentlemen. The working class must fight for political independence from the political representatives of the capitalist bourgeoisie if it is to have a better future. As part of this, working-class militants should unite with the 500,000 to a million immigrants and others who marched in Los Angeles, 100,000 who marched in Chicago, and hundreds of thousands of others who have been marching all over the country to demand full rights for immigrants now!

While the racist Minutemen, apparently abandoning all logic, slander such manifestations of mass resistance as "racist" (!), this is exactly the kind of thing that's needed to beat back the ruling class (whether "liberal" or "conservative") anti-immigrant offensive. The Seattle Anti-Imperialist Committee in particular seeks to link the fight for immigrants rights with the broader struggle against U.S. imperialism, its wars abroad and its repression at home.

Down with all anti-immigrant legislation!

Full rights for all immigrants *now!*

Workers of all countries, unite!

Seattle Anti-Imperialist Committee

April 1, 2006

What is the Seattle Anti-Imperialist Committee?

The Seattle Anti-Imperialist Committee (SAIC) is a loose group of anti-imperialist activists in and around Seattle, Washington. We work to build genuine anti-imperialist consciousness and organization, and oppose the influence of liberal-imperialist and opportunist politics within the progressive movements, particularly the anti-war movement.

We believe that imperialism can only be eliminated through the independent political action of the masses of people and not through the "good-will" or "kindness" of various liberal-imperialist saviors.

All SAIC members are free to struggle, publicly, for their individual political lines. Many of us have various disagreements with one another, but are militantly united around the need to fight imperialism and the need to do so independently of the imperialist ruling class.

Our website at www.SeattleAIC.org gives readers the ability to publicly post comments, suggestions, questions and criticism of our work. SAIC welcomes and encourages such ideological struggle—which is crucial for the development of a mass, conscious anti-imperialist movement.