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**Communist Party
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(Marxist-Leninist)**



**'Land of
the free'
is a prison
of nations**

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The United States puts itself forward as a 'democracy'; it calls itself the 'land of the free'; it considers that it has the right to police the world, the right to label other countries as 'undemocratic' or lacking in freedom; it imposes sanctions and wages wars in the name of 'human rights'. And yet the US state, along with its fellow imperialist vultures in Britain and elsewhere, is the worst violator of human rights in the world.

By waging unjust wars for economic and geo-political advantage, the US and its allies deny millions of people the most fundamental human right: the right to life. Through its economic stranglehold over the third world, imperialism is responsible for the extraordinary poverty that leads to the death of 13 million children a year from malnutrition-related diseases.

Prison state

Despite the US government's ostensible love of 'freedom', the US increasingly resembles a fascist state, with repressive laws, political prisoners and a massive prison population.

- Over 1 percent of the adult population is incarcerated – a massive 2,319,258 people. The US leads the world both in absolute numbers and in the proportion of its population behind bars.
- The US population accounts for approximately 5 percent of the world population, but its prison population accounts for 25 percent of the world total.
- The US incarceration rate is 3.4 times higher than that of Iran and 6.3 times higher than that of China – both countries about whose 'human rights record' the imperialist media (and their liberal hangers-on) bang on incessantly.
- One in 15 black men and 1 in 36 Hispanics over the age of 18 are in prison, as opposed to 1 in 106 white males.
- Whereas African Americans comprise only 12.2 percent of the US population and 13 percent of its drug users, they make up 38 percent of those arrested for drug offences and 59 percent of those convicted of drug offences.

Why are so many US citizens in prison? Because of the dedication of its ruling class to 'freedom': the freedom to exploit and the freedom to own vast amounts of private property. Even in the richest country in the world, the system of exploitation means that while a handful of people are living in *Dallas*-style luxury, millions more live in abject poverty.

- The US is the richest country in the world, and yet, such is the disparity of wealth that almost one in eight US citizens lives in poverty.
- According to the US Department of Agriculture, about 11 million people suffer "very low food security".
- The poverty rate for blacks was 24.3 percent in 2006; for whites it was 8.2 percent.
- The unemployment rate for blacks was 8.4 percent in November 2007; for whites it was 4.2 percent.

The job of the capitalist state is to protect the private property 'earned' through exploitation, and so hundreds of thousands of victims of capitalism, driven to crime through a desperation aggravated by consumerism promoted by capitalism in the interests of enhancing the profits of the rich, are thrown into prison in order to maintain capitalist order.

Political prisoners

In addition to imprisoning petty criminals, the US is also in the habit of using the prison system in an attempt to silence

discontent. It has a long history of politically-motivated frame-ups, including those of Huey Newton, Angela Davis, Assata Shakur and Mumia Abu-Jamal.

- Mumia Abu-Jamal has been in prison since 1981 and on death row since 1983.
- There is clear evidence that Mumia was the victim of a police frame-up.
- Mumia is behind bars because he is a journalist and political activist. He was an influential member of the Black Panthers, a talented organiser and publicist. The state tried to silence him by framing and locking him up.

Much like the British state, the US state does not respect civil liberties. Under the guise of fighting against terrorism, the US has introduced laws that allow state agencies access to emails, telephone conversation recordings, medical records, financial records, etc. These laws are being used to clamp down on those who oppose the injustices of imperialism.

International human rights abuser

- The US is by far the most aggressive state in the world. Since the end of WW2, it has been involved in dozens of large-scale military actions: Vietnam, Korea, Afghanistan, Yugoslavia, Iraq, Somalia, Cuba, Congo, Panama, Dominican Republic and Lebanon, to name but a few. These are illegal, ruthless and unjust wars, fought solely for the economic benefit of the US ruling class.
- The invasion of Iraq, led by the US and fully supported by Britain, has been a disaster for the human rights of the Iraqi people: well over 1 million have been killed, over 2 million are refugees abroad, another 2 million are internal refugees. There is chronic malnutrition, minimal access to clean water and electricity, unemployment is well over 60 percent, and most schools and hospitals are defunct.
- The US has dozens of secret prisons around the world, where it tortures its victims as far away from the public eye as possible. Britain is wholly complicit in this (and, of course, has its own extensive record of prison torture).
- More than six years after the invasion of Afghanistan, the US is still holding over 350 people prisoner at the Guantanamo Bay detention camp. These men have been given no trial and have been subjected to routine torture in complete violation of international law.
- Conscientious objectors in the US are put in prison. For example, Kevin Benderman, a US Army sergeant, served 12 months for refusing to deploy to Iraq.

Nobody in their right mind could label the US as the 'land of the free'.

Only socialism will bring us real rights

Ultimately, the working class and the oppressed masses have no lasting political rights under capitalism. To the extent people enjoy democratic rights under capitalism, it is only in so far as the rule and privileges of the super-rich - the bourgeoisie - are not under threat. Only socialism will bring real human rights for all: the right to live, the right to work, the right to education, the right to health care, the right to participate in the running of society, the right to be free from exploitation, the right to develop as an individual.

Free Mumia! Free all US political prisoners!

No freedom while imperialism lives. Forward to socialism!