

Program of the People's Defense Committee

I. The International Imperialist System

The greatest enemy of the international proletariat and the oppressed peoples of the world is the modern capitalist system, also known as "imperialism". Imperialism, the highest and final stage of capitalism, is also its most vile and brutal form. Under the international imperialist system, the workers and oppressed nations who comprise the vast majority of people are exploited, oppressed and ruled over by the great imperialist powers, the massive monopolistic corporations, and global finance capital. Through their control over the means of production (the resources and tools used for production) and the State itself, the capitalists have divided the world and compete amongst themselves for the wealth produced by our labor and our natural resources. It is this system of plunder and destruction that we set our sights on, and which we hope to rid ourselves of once and for all so that a new socialist system where the working-class rules can be established in its place.

The United States, as the main imperialist power in the world, is at the head of this evil system. Vast amounts of wealth taken from workers and oppressed peoples around the world flows into the United States to fill the bank accounts and war chests of the capitalists and their political puppets. Our armies occupy dozens of nations, and our bombs and weapons fuel genocides across the world, most notably in Palestine. The imperialist system brings the Earth itself to the brink of destruction through nuclear arms races, environmental destruction, and climate change. Every day the defeat of imperialism becomes a more and more pressing task to take up and carry out with revolutionary conviction and enthusiasm.

Imperialism is referred to as the highest stage of capitalism, because it's where the fundamental contradictions of capitalism are sharpest. We see this in the fabulous, kingly wealth of a few thousand billionaires next to the obscene poverty of the great majority of billions of workers and oppressed people of the world. The monopolies of the capitalists command armies of hundreds of millions of workers. These monopolies are in turn owned by finance capitalists, who make their living on speculation in stocks. Just as they have concentrated economic power, so too do they concentrate their political power. The imperialist state, like all states, is the organized monopoly of violence of one class over another. In this case the ruling monopoly capitalists use the State to rule over and oppress the working-class. The imperialist state, (Congress, the judiciary, and chiefly the army and police), conducts the monopolists' will, in domestic and foreign policy.

Imperialism is referred to as the final stage of capitalism because it is dying, decaying. Everything has a life-cycle, a beginning and an end. When a historical class is in ascendancy it is a progressive force. The capitalists had this revolutionary era, a time when they directed all the masses' anger against feudal tyranny in capitalist democratic revolution. As a historical class goes on, its internal contradictions intensify and its reactionary qualities multiply, and its exploitation and oppression become more

severe.

International imperialism relies upon an extensive and destructive system of exploitation of oppressed nations by the imperialist powers. Not only do the monopolies relentlessly seek to acquire new sources of raw materials, new markets for their goods, and pools of cheap labor. The oppression and wars of aggression needed to maintain this system produces instability and waves of migrations toward the imperialist countries from the semi-colonial ones. The imperialists wash their hands of the brutality of this system, and through their politicians and State employ demagoguery and reactionary terror against these immigrants that allows the imperialists to drive down wages domestically. Finance capital, through the IMF and the World Bank, entrap semi-colonies into perpetual states of poverty through debts, loans, and "aid" provided by NGO's and other international capitalist institutions.

The global imperialist system grows more and more decrepit and reactionary by the day, and the masses of oppressed and exploited peoples rebel with righteous anger against this brutal inhumane system. It is within this context of international imperialism, and the historic struggle to overthrow it, that the work of the People's Defense Committee occurs.

II. Analysis of U.S. Class Forces and Conditions

Imperialism not only wreaks havoc in the foreign oppressed nations, but also exploits and oppresses within the boundaries of the imperialist nations themselves. The United States is a decaying and declining superpower. Despite having the world's wealthiest capitalist class, our society fails to provide for the needs of huge sections of the population and our every day workers are still impoverished. U.S. society is beset on all sides by crisis: the drug crisis, the housing crisis, the education crisis, the health crisis, etc. All of these crises have one thing in common: they are symptoms of the broader capitalist sickness in the United States. Capitalism thrives on chaos, instability, and suffering.

Many working people in this country are renters, forced into the exploitation of the landlord-tenant relationship at the threat of homelessness, all the while nowhere in this country can someone making minimum wage afford the average one bedroom apartment. All over the country, the largest of the imperialist monopolies like Blackrock buy up housing to act as the largest landlords in history. There are hundreds of thousands of vacant homes that no one can afford to buy, and enough empty housing to house every homeless person in this country. Tenants are faced with constant issues of pests and poor conditions of housing, alongside a lack of upkeep from landlords.

Well before Donald Trump's administrations, the state has engaged in a campaign of mass kidnapping of migrants, which has since intensified in his second term. ICE engages in mass raids of proletarian migrant neighborhoods bordering on military style attacks on our communities. Families are being torn apart and thousands are facing brutal internment in concentration camps while awaiting deportation. This is part of the broader pattern of the militarization of U.S. society and the fascistization of the capitalist democracies throughout the international imperialist system.

Within the United States there exists many oppressed nations and oppressed national minorities. The Black Belt within the U.S. South is one of the main examples of this. Basing ourselves off of the 1928 and 1930 Comintern Resolutions on the Black National Question, we affirm the following basic revolutionary principles regarding the Black/New Afrikan masses:

1. Black people in the United States constitute a nation, having a national territory and the right of self-determination up to secession;
2. The resolution of the national question, especially of the Black national question, is central to the question of socialist revolution in the United States; and
3. The Black national question has as its center its proletariat which forms the majority of the nation.

Black people in the United States suffer various forms of oppression and super-exploitation. National oppression, which in the United States is particularly organized via the reactionary concept of "race", is used to suppress the rebellious fury of the Black/New Afrikan masses and prevent them from achieving the right to self-determination or realizing their basic democratic rights. From redlining and militarized police violence, to demonization in the bourgeois media and generational poverty, working-class and poor Black people, much like all of the nationally oppressed masses in the U.S., constitute some of our lowest and deepest masses.

The U.S. of course also houses many Indigenous peoples of this continent, the majority of whom are forced to live on segregated and poor reservations or in decaying working-class neighborhoods. Their rights to their traditional lands are denied, as is their cultural and linguistic autonomy. The United States was founded and expanded upon the genocide of the Indigenous peoples. European settlers killed tens of millions in the course of the conquest of the land that the U.S. was founded on. The oppression of Indigenous peoples has never stopped, and because of that, their struggle for liberation has also never ceased. The struggle for land remains a pressing issue among the Indigenous masses, as the reactionary bourgeois State encroaches ever further on their already diminished reservation and Treaty lands.

There also is the question of the continued oppression of the many overseas colonies of the United States, such as Puerto Rico, Guam, U.S. Virgin Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa. These oppressed nations serve as external colonies of U.S. imperialism and house many U.S. military bases. Their basic democratic rights are also suppressed and their right to self-determination denied through mechanisms like the Financial Oversight and Management Board for Puerto Rico (La Junta), for example. Puerto Rico in particular has a large diaspora in the mainland U.S. that faces high levels of exploitation and state violence. The cultural and linguistic autonomy and rights of the Puerto Rican and Pacific Islander masses are also systematically undermined, their workers super-exploited by the massive monopolistic corporations, and many of the worst effects of ecological destruction caused by imperialist production are unleashed upon their homelands.

Everywhere in this country for the past decade, the ruling class and its state puppets have been waging

a tireless struggle against the rights of women and LGBT people. The refusal to codify the right to abortion into law is a testament to the fact that both sides of the ruling class are engaged in this attack. The fundamental right to abortion is a threat to the ruling class, which demands a constantly expanding workforce and consumer base to fill the needs of constantly expanding capitalist production. The gender pay gap for women workers leads to increased exploitation and poverty. Violence against women and prostitution/sexual exploitation remain incredibly common, despite the assurances of the ruling class. The ruling class upholds patriarchy and patriarchal violence as tools for the subjugation of women and LGBT people. It is a horrible fact that in U.S. society, the majority of women have experienced some form of patriarchal violence, and the same can be said for LGBT people.

Agents of the bourgeoisie and its State have been targeting the rights and safety of LGBT people through constant demonization and repressive laws against self expression, and even the right to marry someone of the same sex is under threat. In many states, the rights of transgender people to healthcare are already being attacked or taken away completely. And in some states, the government refuses to acknowledge their legal existence. LGBT people also have a much harder time finding employment in patriarchal society. LGBT people, or anyone who stands in the way of the growth of the workforce under bourgeois rule, is a target of state repression.

Under the imperialist system, the rights of disabled people, and their right to participation in society and production, is continuously undermined. Whether it is due to the failing US healthcare system, the way the owners and bosses exploit their workers to the greatest extent possible regardless of long-term damage or health concerns, or the reactionary policies of marginalization; disabled people under capitalism find themselves increasingly isolated and under attack. The fascistization of U.S. society falls particularly hard on the rights of disabled people, who are often some of the first to be attacked by the forces of reaction.

The world imperialist system, with its deepening general crisis and worsening confrontations with the rebellious working class, has developed new forms to dominate and control the workers movement. The imperialists have taken over the established organizations of the workers and turned them into toothless class-collaborationist state unions. This state unionist trends restricts the rebellion of the workers and limits their potential to organize and mobilize. The state unions also play a key role in the maintenance and support of NGOs and other mechanism used by the State to wage counter-insurgency and suppress the rebellion of the masses in the oppressed and poor neighborhoods.

The imperialists use technological innovation against the workers rather than for our benefit. They invent and impose new forms of electronic surveillance and monitoring to better control and exploit us. They use artificial intelligence to plan layoffs and re-structure the workplace to maximize their profits while minimizing our incomes. This artificial intelligence is itself emblematic of the crisis of imperialism, where greatly over-valued AI corporations have swathes of idle capital in the form of operational but unused data centers. While this industry is doomed to fail under this model, like many technologies under capitalism the underlying technology of machine learning remains one that could be

of great benefit if in the hands of the working class. Beyond technology, the capitalists and their politicians put forward new laws that erode our basic rights to freedom of assembly, trade union organization, economic action, freedom of speech, and freedom of press. They suppress all democratic decision-making and collective demands of the workers because they fear us and they fear our ability to work together as one to end their cruel and bloody system and replace it with a new democratic one in which the working class holds state power.

As a response to all of this the masses increasingly rise up, and the crisis of American capitalism grows ever more intense, such that fractions among the ruling class grow and intensify. As these crises multiply, the threat of fascism is ever-growing. The militarization and fascistization of society deepens further and further as the imperialists desperately seek to leverage and adjust the State to control and crush the exploited and oppressed masses in our country. The ever growing state repression and surveillance is constantly chipping away at the basic democratic rights of the people. Freedom of speech, especially for migrants, is being attacked daily, while the right to assembly, the right to privacy, the freedom of the press, and many other basic democratic rights have been undermined or completely destroyed under the current militarized State. Corporations and the State both monitor our lives with extreme scrutiny to sell us products, and improve their repressive measures. In every aspect, the state turns further away from bourgeois democracy, and further towards fascism.

The basic analysis for the class forces and masses that the PDCs should focus on shall be: the U.S. multinational working class as the leading and main focus, in addition to its allies the semi-proletariat (i.e. semi- and precariously employed workers) and lower petty-bourgeoisie (e.g. teachers, other low level professionals), its auxiliary forces like the youth, with a special focus on its most oppressed and exploited sections like women, nationally oppressed people, LGBT people, and immigrants. The PDCs shall struggle against American national chauvinism, and fight for the right to self-determination of oppressed peoples at home and abroad.

The basic analysis for the enemy class forces that the PDCs should organize and struggle against shall be: mainly the ruling U.S. capitalist-imperialist class (the state, the giant monopoly corporations, and its appendages in the non-profit industrial complex, the "independent" reformist political parties, etc); and the non-monopoly capitalists such as landlords, land developers, and real estate speculators, etc.; and their opportunist lackeys among the working class, the labor aristocracy.

III. For a New Society

Despite all of imperialism's weapons, and its wealth, stolen from the workers and oppressed nations, the masses of people of the world know that imperialism is a paper tiger. It is like a giant built on a foundation of sand that will, one day, come crashing down through its own internal contradictions, and the revolutionary leadership of the international working class. Every day that capitalism decays further, and the rebellions of workers advance, is a day that the dawn of the New Society draws closer.

The exploited and oppressed masses in the United States, and through-out the entire world, yearn for a society free from class divisions, from all types of oppression and exploitation. The multinational U.S. working-class has a common historic destiny, a revolutionary destiny to walk down the path of socialist revolution and national liberation.

The New State we hope to establish is one that is run directly by the working class, for the working class. It is one in which the means of production are collectively owned by those who labor upon them and in which production and distribution is planned by the workers. The New State is not a mere change in figureheads, nor is it marked by the emergence of a new electoral party; it is an expression of the will of the working class to complete their historic destiny as the last class in history, to establish a dictatorship of the workers over the capitalists (the dictatorship of the proletariat) which seeks to completely dismantle and replace the Old State -- the dictatorship of the capitalist class -- under which we currently toil. This New State shall eliminate the profit-based economy and its social-ills -- exploitation, national oppression, patriarchy, ecological destruction, alienation, etc -- and instead prioritize social production for the collective needs of all peoples.

To this cause of socialist revolution is joined the cause of national liberation, which is the struggle for the right to self-determination for all oppressed nations and national minorities on U.S. territory and its overseas colonies. The Black/New Afrikan, Indigenous, and Chicano masses, as well as the overseas colonies of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands demand the right to determine their own future, and comprise many of the lowest and deepest masses who strike blows against the U.S. imperialist system through great uprisings and constant resistance. The New Society is not only a society without class exploitation, but also a society where all nations have the right to self-determination, which implies the right to secession. In the New Society phony patriotism and “Americanism” are cast aside, and in their place the multinational U.S. proletariat constructs a new nation of workers and toilers.

Another task of the New Society is a ruthless war upon all manifestations of patriarchy. The right to abortion shall be a guaranteed right, with access to abortion included through the free and universal healthcare system of the New State. Likewise, the socialist healthcare system will ensure cost-free access to hormone replacement therapy (HRT) and all gender-affirming surgeries. The gender pay gap and hiring discrimination against women and LGBT people shall be made a thing of the past through cultural revolution. Domestic labor will be socialized and democratically planned to end the unpaid domestic labor of women. The epidemic of physical and sexual abuse of women and LGBT people will be thoroughly combated and defeated via the creation of militant women's and LGBT mass organizations -- as well as special committees at all levels of society for these sections of the masses -- to combat patriarchal agents and to defend against such violence. Moreover, the New State shall make deliberate efforts to develop revolutionary working class women and LGBT people into leading positions, so as to ensure their direct role in the creation and enforcement of laws regarding patriarchal violence.

Furthermore, the parasitic relationship of the landlord upon the worker shall be abolished with the emergence of the New Society. It was Friedrich Engels who established that the only solution to the housing question "lies in the abolition of the capitalist mode of production and the appropriation of all the means of life and labor by the working class itself." The New State shall ensure that the hoarded private property of the landlords are appropriated and converted into the collective property of the entire working class. Safe and adequate housing shall become a guaranteed right for all; which should be easy to accomplish in a country with approximately 5 times more empty homes than people without homes. This means an abolition of the structure of rent, and the socialization of housing to be democratically planned and distributed by the New State of the workers.

The abolition of the capitalist dictatorship and its replacement by the New State shall result, for the first time in our masses' history, in true democratic rights for the working class, control over their lives, neighborhoods, and workplaces, and, through continued class struggle under socialism, in the eradication of all vestiges of class exploitation and bourgeois dictatorship.

IV. A Fighting People's Movement

To achieve the New Society that we demand, the masses must forge a class-conscious, independent and militant mass movement. In this mass movement, there is a need for a sectoral movement which struggles on the streets, in the neighborhoods, and in the housing complexes and apartment buildings. This fighting movement is the strategic companion of the labor movement, which leads the fight against imperialism in the workplaces and shops, at the point of production itself.

Concretely this will begin with, and have its foundation on, the struggle for the daily demands of the masses. The popular masses must be mobilized, politicized, and organized to understand who their enemies are and what to do about them, to stand up and fight back against the imperialist system and Old State, and to build the proletarian movement in the neighborhoods in this country.

For the tenant movement, the way forward is clear for our class: we must build a powerful tenants movement aimed at combating the power and exploitation of the landlords and finance capitalists who own our most basic means of survival. Tenants unions and committees must be built in every city and every neighborhood in this country to demand better housing conditions, rent freezes, lower rent and even collective ownership of housing by the tenants themselves. The struggle to pay rent is an almost universal experience for working people, and our class understands that these are parasites that live off of their labor, both at work and in their neighborhoods.

If we want to stand up against this we must build up the deepest roots in the migrant communities in this country and mobilize the people to build independent working class defense networks free of NGO's and opportunists that would direct people towards support for the state once again. We must fight and combat ICE terror with revolution, and politicize the immigrant masses such that they become conscious of their historical and political tasks. We must do the same in the national liberation

movements: isolate and drive out the opportunists and reformists and unleash an all-powerful wave of rebellion against U.S. imperialism and national oppression.

The work of PDC then is to impose a proletarian class line within the popular movements on the level of the neighborhoods and communities, wherever the poor, exploited and oppressed masses might be.

In order to build up a combative people's movement, it is necessary to embody certain principles: to Serve the People, that it is Right to Rebel, and that the Masses Make History. To Serve the People means to put the masses first, to fight for their demands before one's own. All of our work must be done in context of and for the masses, not separate from them. That it is Right to Rebel means that struggle, particularly class struggle, is not optional but rather is a requirement of any group or organization that considers itself revolutionary. The Masses Make History means that it is the masses who determine the shape of history and society, rather than specific special individuals. The driving or motor force of social change is the struggle between classes, the struggle between the exploited and their exploiters, between the oppressed and their oppressors. It is these great historic principles that guide the goal of building a fighting people's movement, and which inspire the purpose, principles and tasks of the PDC.

V. PDC's Purpose, Principles, and Tasks

Our main objective as PDC shall be to mobilize, politicize, and organize the working and poor masses on the geographic (city, town, county, neighborhood) or street-level area of responsibility (AOR), in comparison to the shop/workplace-level (which is the AOR of labor organizations like NLOC) or the school/campus level (which is the AOR of student organizations like RSU). That this work shall be done in service of developing the basis for socialist revolution in the U.S. and its external colonies, as a part of the broader international revolutionary and anti-imperialist movement.

The PDC takes the following as its basic principles of unity:

1. **PDC Is a Class Organization:** The People's Defense Committee shall function as a basic organization of the proletariat, the oppressed masses, and their allies and auxiliaries on the street or neighborhood level. This principle of class, the recognition that the working class and the owning class are locked in perpetual warfare and have irreconcilable interests, is a fundamental truth from which all of our other tasks and ideas flow. Our organizations will uphold the principles of proletarian self-reliance and autonomy. Our organizations will uphold that the workers and oppressed masses can have no champion but themselves, must have their own leading organizations, and must primarily rely on their own strengths and the members of their own class.
2. **Anti-Imperialism:** It is necessary in the course of mass work in the neighborhoods to connect the struggle for daily demands to the need for struggle for power, namely through mobilizations

of the masses into anti-imperialist work. The root of the oppression of these different sections of the masses is the imperialist system, and this must be made explicitly clear to the masses in the course of our mass work. The struggles against U.S. interventions and military occupations, the militarization of the police and neighborhoods, and national oppression must be taken up and shown to the masses to be necessary.

3. **Anti-Reformism:** This means to move beyond the struggle for economic demands, and work to forge proletarian class-consciousness through the political struggle against the landlords, the capitalists, the U.S. imperialist state, and their agents among the masses. We must always link our struggles and organizations to the ultimate historical goal of our class, the conquest of political power for the workers. We must fight against legalist and electoralist approaches to neighborhood work, and to actively differentiate ourselves from the sell-out “community organizers” and NGO’s everyday through our methods, world outlook, and class stand.
4. **Anti-Opportunism:** The People’s Defense Committee differentiates itself from the legion of state-sanctioned NGO’s and tenant organizations, which are conducting counter-insurgency in our communities, by rejecting all forms of opportunism and revisionism. The PDC will not abide any sell-outs, traitors, abusers, serial liars, and con-artists disguised as “organizers,” “activists,” and “leaders” within their ranks. Opportunism means trading the long term interests of the proletariat for real or perceived short term gains, and it is non-negotiable that every member actively combat it in the course of their work.
5. Our area of responsibility (AOR) as PDC shall cover the following sectors of struggle:
 1. **Tenant Work:** One of the primary demands of the masses within the neighborhoods is the demand for lower rent and better housing. With the vast majority of the proletariat in this country living in housing rented from a landlord, this is a struggle that can and must be taken up in every locality. The creation of tenants unions to refuse rent and defend against evictions can be taken up in every neighborhood. Inevitably the landlords and municipal housing authorities will involve the state repressive apparatus in their attacks against the masses and this will make it abundantly clear to the masses who the state serves.
 2. **Community Sectoral Grievances and Defense:** The PDC shall, in combination with our other fraternal organizations whenever possible, take up the task of elevating and mobilizing the masses around sectoral grievances and demands. These include things like abortion and reproductive rights defense, resistance against national oppression, deportation/immigrant defense, attacks on the right of LGBT people, disabled people, linguistic and racial discrimination, etc.
 3. **Anti-Austerity/Infrastructure/Access Demands:** The PDC shall devise campaigns and organize the masses against attacks on their communities through neglect, cuts, and poor

access to necessary services. The PDC shall take care to practice an anti-opportunist and anti-reformist approach to this struggle, not tailing the local NGO's or "progressive" politicians who traffic in the legitimate grievances of the masses to maintain support for the U.S. imperialist system.

4. The PDC shall also organize campaigns on other community and neighborhood grievances like the **rising cost of living, police brutality**, restrictions on the right to assembly, protest, and other **basic democratic rights**, and **social problems** facing many working-class and poor communities such as violence, drug use, unemployment, etc.
5. On the basis of the above work the PDC shall, in the long-term, strive to form **People's Assemblies** in the neighborhoods and communities they do work in. These assemblies will provide a space for the democratic expression and decision-making of the revolutionary masses and shall help combat the influence of the Old State in our communities and neighborhoods. In the long-term, these assemblies assist in the construction of the New State as the revolutionary process in the United States advances.
6. We uphold the historical strategies and tactics of the proletariat such as the practice of living with, working with, and struggling with the masses (i.e. the Three Withs), going to the deepest and poorest masses, practicing organized and open debate to demarcate the proletarian line from the bourgeois line (i.e. two line struggle) and criticism/self-criticism, social investigation and class analysis (SICA), the mass line, maintaining a proletarian internationalist perspective, etc.
7. The work of the PDCs shall not be done in isolation, but shall be done in coordination with other revolutionary organizations nationally, and shall pay special attention to forming local and regional united fronts with organizations that unite with our principles, and on struggling to win over other organizations in our areas and sector to our class line and principles.