

ERA = Equal Right to kill & die for U.S. Imperialism in World War III

Break the Chains-- Unleash the Fury of Women as a Mighty Force for Revolution

Many of you are here today to demonstrate for equality of women. But the real purpose of this "final push to ratify the ERA" being pushed by the ruling class and their agents--the Draculas in 3-piece suits and their white-clad brides who head up NOW--is to rally women under the banner of equal rights to go into battle to defend U.S. imperialism in World War 3.

The words and plans of the forces leading this demonstration are straight up cynical war preparations: "Women are equal, put 'em in the army." This whole "struggle" to ratify the ERA capitalizes on both sides of the same coin. Phyllis Schlafly, that reactionary old battleax who fronts for "the opposition," screeches, "Yes, we want war, but don't let women fight it"--let's deliver up the boys and let the women stay home and get nuked. The promoters of the ERA--"progressives" like the union hacks, Jimmy Carter and Roz and the leaders of NOW--say, "No, we don't want war, but if there has to be one, women have to be in it." Like madams in whorehouses they trade in the bodies and flesh of women, delivering them to the U.S. war machine in exchange for a position at the top themselves--perhaps a general! They speak for the rulers and their blood-soaked system; in fact, they desire to be rulers themselves. Equal rights? Bullshit. They don't give a damn about the masses of women and never have. If they don't hoist up the red, white and blue flag of imperialism today, stick around, they surely will--and they will call you into battle to follow it. Like the latest ad for the Reserves, they will try to rally the "Molly Pritchards" to trade their colonial kitchen for a cannon to aim at workers and oppressed people in other countries. Some liberation!

Look at them and listen to their speeches today. These brides of Dracula say, "Wear white"--the color of surrender and reaction (doesn't the KKK wear white?) and the symbol of tradition's chain of "purity." Their colors are white and green--crassly decked out like dollar bills, money--exactly what their vampire class is willing to plunge the whole world into war for and incinerate millions.

The whole thrust of the movement for the ERA leads to the false conclusion that women's oppression can be abolished under capitalism. But the idea of formal, "legal equality" under today's conditions assumes hideous proportions. Equal rights to be cannonfodder; equal rights to die for the U.S. imperialists who are responsible for women's oppression and all oppression; equal rights to stab the working class and oppressed people of the world in the back by standing with U.S. imperialism--this is NOT equality. We oppose the ERA because it is a major step in U.S. war preparations, and we have no intention of supporting this. If you don't believe this is what they have in mind for women, check the words of an American general just a few months ago: "The American people are not yet prepared to see their daughters come home in body bags, and the bottom line is, will they accept VA hospitals full of paraplegic mothers in wheelchairs with their limbs blown off?" The leaders of the ERA movement are preparing public opinion to answer this question "yes."

The 1980s

Let's look at the times, the 1980s. If ever there was a decade when what's happening with women will be inseparably linked with world-shaking storms, this is it. Capitalist crisis will worsen; so will the oppression of women. And that's not the half of it. What's looming in the future is WAR--World War 3--nuclear war--as like hungry beasts of prey poised for the kill the imperialists of the U.S. and the Soviet Union square off to see who can sink their fangs into the greatest share of the world's plunder. Faced with this prospect the imperialists are driven to mobilize the masses of people behind their ragged imperialist banner, to rally the very people they exploit and oppress to carry out their criminal deeds for the sake of their empire. They must drag the masses of people into political life. And being world war, this means everybody. So up come the "reserves"--women.

The current drive for the ERA is a trap to lure women into their war machine under the phony banner of equality. Since when has this ruling class ever had an ounce of concern for the oppression of women or anybody else? Their only concern is to maintain their system that thrives off the oppression of the whole working class, women and minorities--the vast majority of the people. These are the same rulers who stagger drunkenly from D.C. whorehouses and topless bars, promoting every form of social degeneracy and sexual perversion, from dope and prostitution to child pornography. This same system of U.S. imperialism has brought about the forced sterilization of one third of the women of Puerto Rico. These hypocrites gasp in mock horror at the rapidly increasing rate of rape as they parade women around as pieces of meat and sexual playthings. They have NO RIGHT to speak of equality, for their whole rule is built on the oppression of the people here and around the world.

The bloody flag of imperialism for war--this is the road they offer us--decked out today in the cloak of the ERA, the dirty colors of green and white symbolizing the cold cash that is the driving force behind their whole system: "Everybody can be bought and sold if the price is right." Is this what women burn with desire for? HELL NO!

There is another road: the road of revolution, which is the only road out of the madness and misery of this society. On May 1st, the first steps toward revolution were taken by a class-conscious section of the working class, led by the Revolutionary Communist Party and Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the RCP. Thousands of workers of all nationalities--men and women--and their allies marched proudly and defiantly onto the political stage, raising the red flag of revolution right in the heart of this imperialist beast, linking up with millions around the world.

The chance to strike off all the chains of exploitation and oppression may well arise in this decade, as the storms of war and crisis propel the masses into political life and struggle. Never before has there been such great opportunity for the international proletariat to strike down this imperialist monster--a system so vicious and rapacious it makes Hitler look like Mary Poppins--a system whose dying gasps will call forth fiercer and more determined resistance by revolutionaries throughout the world and whose death will be met by rejoicing in every corner of the globe.

But this great day when U.S. imperialism has been struck down cannot be achieved without the active participation of women, and a society free of oppression and exploitation cannot be built without drawing women into conscious political life. This struggle between the two roads--the red, white and blue flag of plunder and the red flag of the international working class--is going on here today. What road will you take? The ruling class and their bourgeois feminist brides are trying to win you to line up and fight to defend U.S. imperialism, even as the blood sucked out of the people of the world by their vulturistic system drips from their politician's smiles as they mouth words of "equality." The imperialists are fully prepared to draft women into their army. If they have to put bayonets into their backs, they will march women off to war. They will put guns into women's hands. Then the question for women, as for all soldiers, will not be will there be bloodshed? but where will we aim the guns? Who will we be fighting for? Will we fight for the decadent and dying rulers and another generation of oppression, degradation and brutality under imperialism? Or will we stand with the international proletariat and unleash our fury as a mighty force for revolution, joining with the heroic women of Iran, El Salvador and the revolutionary masses of all countries to fight for the future, in the interests of all humanity?

Sisters and brothers here today: We cannot and will not let the capitalists use phony equality schemes to lure women into war to maintain their system of worldwide plunder. Our deepest desires to wipe oppression off the face of the earth can only be realized by revolution, by wiping the oppressors off the face of the earth. Truly, we have nothing to lose but our chains--and a world to gain.

BREAK THE CHAINS! UNLEASH THE FURY OF WOMEN AS A MIGHTY FORCE FOR REVOLUTION!

BECOME A CO-CONSPIRATOR--READ AND DISTRIBUTE THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKER.

TAKE UP THE DRAFT PROGRAMME AND CONSTITUTION OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY--THE BATTLE PLAN FOR REVOLUTION IN THE 1980s.