Trump and the Pentagon

Behind the attack on Syria

By Fred Goldstein

“You furnish the pictures. I’ll furnish the war.” Publisher William Randolph Hearst in 1898, preparing the groundwork for the U.S. war with Spain and seizure of Cuba.

The Trump administration’s attack on the Syrian air force was first directed at Russia as well as the government of Bashar al-Assad. China and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea were secondarily targeted.

The chemical weapons attack in Syria was aimed at forcing President Donald Trump to shift his political orientation away from rapprochement with Russia — and to keep military pressure focused on the long-term goal of overthrowing the Assad government. Washington not only wants to overthrow Assad, but it also aims to place a compliant government in Damascus that will oust the Russians from Syria and the Mediterranean altogether.

The U.S. imperialist military strike came five days after Trump’s U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley said, “The United States’ diplomatic policy on Syria for now is no longer focused on making the war-torn country’s president, Bashar al-Assad, leave power.” (Reuters, March 30) The publicity surrounding the alleged chemical weapons attack was designed to reverse this Trump policy.

Charges with no evidence

The accusations against the Assad government have been unanimous and thunderous in the capitalist media, Congress and the military. All this has gone on despite there being not one moment of investigation or one element of cogent proof that Damascus had any role in the alleged attack. The Syrian government has categorically denied the charges, but its denials have received no publicity in the capitalist media.

In all, this one thing is certain: The Syrian government had no reason to carry out such an attack. It has been winning the war without using chemical weapons and has the least motive of all parties involved to carry out such an attack. The attacks hurt the Syrian government and helped the imperialists and their reactionary client groupings inside Syria.

In any criminal investigation the first things to look for are motive, means and opportunity to carry out the crime. The parties with the overriding motives, means and opportunity to do such a thing are the U.S. government and the reactionaries in Syria who are losing the war. Those in the latter group have been unsuccessful trying to overthrow Assad and seek to draw the U.S. government into the military struggle.

Times neocon propagandists on the Syria case

The New York Times led the charge in instantaneously accusing the Assad government. The Times assigned their two most committed anti-Syrian-government propagandists to cover the story — Michael Gordon and Thomas Friedman.

Continued on page 8

Across U.S.: Protests expose lies about Syria

Call for actions on May Day
Athletes take social stand
Immigrants protest persecution
Latin America in the crosshairs
Budget bombs infrastructure Editorial
U.S. warships off People’s Korea
South African hero Kathrada

Honoring Dr. King — Fighting for $15/hr
RAMONA AFRICA discusses MOVE and surviving the 1985 bombing —

Former U.S. political prisoner Ramona Africa is the Minister of Communication for the MOVE Organization and a Philadelphia-based organizer with the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal. She is also the only living survivor of the 1985 MOVE bombing, when the FBI and Philadelphia police dropped two C-4 bombs on her organization’s home, killing 11 people. Read this three-part interview about the history of MOVE and what it means to be a freedom fighter.

Lamont Lilly: Ramona, thank you for sitting down and sharing your time with me. For those who may be unfamiliar, what is the MOVE Organization? Who founded MOVE, and what is the organization about?

Ramona Africa: The MOVE Organization is a revolutionary organization that John Africa founded. He is the man named John Africa. John Africa brought people together from all different backgrounds, nationalities, religions, etc., and gave us one common revolutionary belief. (tinyurl.com/malchow) That belief is in the sanctity and importance of protecting the environment — without exception. And it is that uncompromising belief and uncompromising commitment to life that has put us in direct conflict with the system that we're living under, a system that doesn't care anything about life. It's the air, the water, the soil that feeds us. They don't care. But as members of MOVE, we are committed to life.

We were animal rights activists long before that term was ever invented. We were environmentalists before that term was ever invented. Everything that John Africa taught and lived his life by is that.

Ramona Africa is led out of Philadelphia Police Department headquarters in 1998. That's a story within itself. I went to Catholic school during my high school years. I had begged my mother to transfer me to a public school, but she wouldn't do it because she wanted me to have what she perceived as a “good education.” She was also telling me to be a doctor, a lawyer, be anything you want to be. So I went with that and decided to focus on the legal system. When I graduated from West Chester High, I ended up going to Temple University and took up a pre-law curriculum. (tinyurl.com/jahrga)

It was in my last semester at Temple that I started a work-study program because I needed the money to pay for school. I got hired at Community Legal Services, a free legal aid agency. They assigned me to the housing unit. You can't work in the Philadelphia housing unit without being an advocate for the poor. That's where I first started getting active in the community. That period marked everything.

PART 3

In the U.S.

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Workers World

147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl.
New York, NY 10011.

Phone: 212.627.2994

E-mail: wwp@workers.org

Web: www.workers.org

Vol. 59, No. 13 • April 13, 2017

Closing date: April 11, 2017

Editor: Deirdre Griswold

Managing Editor: John Caltolino, LeLani Dowell, Kris Balakrishnan-Hamel, Monica Moorehead, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Web Editor Gary Wilson

Production & Design Editors: Coordinator Lila Roschi; Andy Katz, Cheryl LaBash

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Workers World is available on the Web at workers.org

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Building for May Day–
‘on the shoulders of Dr. King’

By Dave Welsh
San Francisco

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In Boston there was a spirited rally by
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The rally at the Parkman Bandstand in
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In Detroit hundreds of low-wage work-
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This location was chosen to pressure Re-
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Contributors are Abayomi Azikiwe and
Howie Rotman.

Chicago coalition unites for May Day

The coalition planning a giant march
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And yet by any measure — wages, family
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levels of incarceration — people of color
are falling further and further behind.

That is why over 50 organizations have
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Athletes speak out, act on social issues

By Monica Moorehead

Social activism among amateur and professional athletes may not have begun with National Football League quarter-
back Colin Kaepernick’s protest against racial injustice that started in the fall of 2016, but it certainly has helped to
spur it on. Take, for instance, the huge ban-
er drop at the April 3 season-opening game of the Washington Nationals, a Major League Baseball team, that stat-
ed “Impeach Trump,” which exploded on Twitter and other social media. Trump was scheduled to throw out the first-
traditional first pitch but cancelled.

The U.S. Women’s National Hockey Team that has threatened to strike during the International Ice Federa-
Federation Women’s World Championship, recently won a major contract with USA Hockey less than 70 hours before the
world games were to begin in Michigan. It was only after USA Hockey could not muster a sufficient replacement team that they
gave in to the women’s demands.

According to progressive sports writ-
er Dave Zipirin, here is what the women hockey players were: “The wages, which were a four-figure hit, now will be
$70,000 per year with bonus opportu-
tunities for Olympic and World Cham-
ionship victories. There will now be a
$950,000 ‘compensation pool’ for play-
ers (think back-pay); everyone on the

San Francisco

Police terror in a ‘Sanctuary City’

By Dave Welsh
San Francisco

April 7 marked one year since the po-
lice assassination of Luis González Pat, a
45-year-old Yucatecan Mayan immigrant
restaurant worker in the Mission Distric-
type of San Francisco.

Luis González came to the U.S. from
Mexico in 2004. He helped to support his
family by sending remittances from his earnings as
a restaurant cook and dishwasher in San Francisco.

An angered, sorrowful community
commemorated the anniversary at the
spot where González was riddled with po-
lice bullets, execution-style, as he sat on
the sidewalk near the tent he’d lately been
calling his home.

Led by Artists, musicians, and drummers, protesters marched to the Mission Police
Station. That’s where Cristina Gutiér-
rez and four others began a 17-day hun-
er strike in April 2016 to condemn the
seemingly endless string of police killings of Black and Brown people in this rapid-
ly gentrifying city. Gutiérrez decried the fact that District Attorney George Gas-
cón has not prosecuted a single one of these killer cops.

The “McCoppin Park” hunger strikers had one demand: Greg Suhr, the po-
lie chief who for five years had been cry-
ning crocodile tears while justifying every police killing of a Black or Brown person.

For five years, Suhr was vigilantly pro-
tected by the mayor, the media, the labor
leadership and the city’s ruling Demo-
cratic Party.

The de facto policy of the Democrats seems to be no prosecution for killer cops.
However, a grassroots campaign spearheaded by the Frisco Five finally did succeed in forcing out Chief

González’s family in Teabo wrote a
statement that was read on the steps of
City Hall: “Today marks a year since the
death of Luis, our beloved father, an ex-
emplary father, a great son and a great
husband, whom the San Francisco police
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dent-athletes including those at Northwestern University have been
organizing to secure collective bar-
graining rights for the labor they provide either on the field or on the
court. They want student-athletes to get paid like every other worker.

The University of Wisconsin Bad-
gerr players are not only talented — they defeated last year’s NCAA
champion Villanova during the
tournament — but some of the most
political. Nigel Hayes, who is Afri-
Can American, has been very
ocal in supporting student-athletes’
right to organize. During football season,
he can undo jamás sería viable! The
people united will never be defeated!”

— Story and photo by Anne Pruden

Bakery workers confront immigration edict

Dozens of immigrant workers at Tom Cat Bak-
ery will soon face audit-
ing by Trump’s anti-im-
migration Department of
Homeland Security. With
a history of standing up for
their rights, these
workers, who bake in
New York City’s bread, decided
to call a protest rally.

Homeland Security had flagged the workers for not having filed “the proper forms.” The bakery
owners gave workers a brutal ultimatum: if they couldn’t come up with the forms in 10 days, they
would be fired, without severance pay. Some have worked at the bakery for over 20 years.

With support from Brandworkers, a
food and retail workers’ rights organiza-
tion, the bakery workers showed up April
8 at Trump Tower in Manhattan. They were careful with “Whose City? Our City!”
Many of their signs said, “Respect our
humanity!”
The Tom Cat bakery workers are put-
ing out a call to each and every ally who is
opposed to racist scapegoating. They
ask supporters to join together to demand
justice for them and other immigrants, including at national May Day events.

The workers are connected to Brand-
workers as part of the Food Chain
Workers Alliance, a key member of Beyond
the Moment. This broad coalition is calling for
migrant worker actions on May Day 2017.
The coalition includes the Move-
ment for Black Lives and Movimiento
Cosecha, which fights for undocumented workers in Arizona, New York, and Texas.

The call for “All Out for May Day!”
echoed in the chants of the protest: “I’ll
put a unidos jamás sería viable! The
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— Story and photo by Anne Pruden
By Minnie Bruce Pratt

The New York Times and other major corporate U.S. news outlets rushed to ac-
cuse the Syrian government of President Bashar al-Assad of being responsible for
the scores of people who died from poison gas in Idlib Province in Syria on April 4.
Meanwhile, working people in the U.S. were commenting: “We’ve heard this be-
fore — weapons of mass destruction!” They were referring to the U.S. lies about
Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, which were used to justify the imperialist inva-
sion of that country in 2003.

Republicans and Democrats joined in cheering Trump’s decision to unleash
bombing raids on Syria as “reprisal” against Assad.

But as U.S. cruise missiles rained down terror, working people were posting ba-
flemon on social media about a president who says he has sympathy for the Syrian
people, and then simultaneously bombs them and denies them entrance to the
U.S. as refugees.

It turns out, not surprisingly, that peo-
ple’s skepticism is well justified.

In an April 7 Consortium column, in-
vestigative reporter Robert Parry reveals that on-the-ground intelligence sources are
“saying the preponderance of evi-
dence suggests that Al Qaeda-affiliated rebels were at fault, either by orchestrat-
ing an intentional release of a chemical agent as a provocation or by possessing
containers of poison gas that ruptured during a conventional bombing raid.”

Parry is an investigative reporter who
broke much of the 1980s Iran-Contra
scandal for the Associated Press and NewswEEK. He quotes the rejection of the As-
sad government’s responsibil-
ity by former CIA officer Philip
Girard: “I’m getting from sources on the ground in the Middle East, people who are
intimately familiar with the intelligence that is available, who are saying that the es-
sential narrative that we’re all hearing about the Syrian government or the Russians using chemical weapons on innocent civilians is a sham.”

British ambassador calls it ‘fake news’

Even the former British ambassador to Syria, Peter Ford, says President Assad’s government is not responsible for the chemical weapons deaths, that it would have no advantage in such an action. Ford considered the accusation more likely to be “fake news,” manipulated by al-Qaida-like forces to provoke a U.S. intervention and reverse the policy that the Trump administration had just announced. (Sky News, April 7)

Questions abound about the “rescue” visuals of those horribly suffering from the chemicals. Much of the video foot-
age and accompanying narrative were provided by anti-Assad forces. The most notorious of these groups is the “White
Helmets,” who have been linked to al-Qa-
sida and similar organizations cooperat-
ing with the U.S. against the Damascus
government.

Others are the Syrian-American Medi-
cal Society and the Aleppo Media Center, which have also a history of providing outright duplicitous information. Cor-
porate news reporting on Syria, such as from the BBC, CNN or Associated Press, relies exclusively on information from anti-Assad “opposition activists” and “op-
position media agencies.” (Patrick Hen-
rineser, “Reviving the Chemical Weapon Lie,” 12st-centurywire.com, April 4)

Former U.N. weapons inspector in Iraq
Scott Ritter, writing for Huffington Post on
April 9, pointed out: “Mainstream Amer-
ican media outlets have willingly and
openly embraced a narrative provided by Al Qaida affiliates whose record of using chemical weapons in Syria and distorting and manufacturing ‘evidence’ to promote anti-Assad policies in the west, including regime change, is well documented. These outlets have made a deliberate decision to endorse the view of Al Qaida over a narra-
tive provided by Russian and Syrian gov-
ernment authorities without any effort to fact check either position.”

The “chemical weapon lie” is reviv-
ing the 2013 lie holding the Assad gov-
ernment responsible for a sarin gas at-
tack that killed hundreds in Damascus.

The fact is that the Syrian Arab Army of the Assad government has been winning the war against the Islamic State group and the U.S.-backed “rebels.” There was no strategic, political or military reason for the army to mount a deadly chemical attack.

Instead, there are many reasons the Trump administration’s military ad-
visors would try this “shock and awe”
move. Trump has won praise from the ready-to-bomb Democrats and war-hawk critics. They commend him for “standing up” to Russia. And he implies that if he can bomb Syria, he can bomb Iran. Fill in the blank, but start with the Demo-
cratic People’s Republic of Korea.

Military incursions have fattened, stock values of the arms indus-
tries have soared, oil prices went up in the “uncertainty” and big business rubs its hands with glee.

Meanwhile, the good news is that the people are in the streets, shouting “We’ve been down this road before! Stop the war! Hands off Syria!”

Rahzie Seals condemns police brutality at Syracuse BLM protest, April 3.

SYRACUSE BLM Rallies for Justice

Syracuse Black Lives Mat-
ter launched another year of resis-
tion to cop abuse, rac-
tism and the criminal injus-
tice system with an April 3
“Rally for Justice.”

The most recent impetus for the BLM protest was the hit-and-run killing of a young worker by an investigator for On-
ondaga County District Attorney William Fitzpat-
rick. The DA has been quick to prof-
file a teenage neighbor. “When the
profiling of a teenage neighbor. “When the
profiling of a teenage neighbor. “When the
profiling of a teenage neighbor. “When the
cop, Chester Thompson, who is white, was shot in the hand, he received his pension and walk free after the DA charged him with a sim-
ple misdemeanor.”

Organizer Rahzie Seals spoke of her own experiences with police brutality, including the death of her cousin, John-
ny Gammage, at the hands of Pittsburgh cops. Though his death was ruled a ho-
icide, the prosecution of the killer cops ended in a mistrial.

Seals herself was injured by local Syra-
cuse cops when she objected to the racist profiling of a teenage neighbor. “When the most marginalized and oppressed among us is free, we will all be free,” Seals said.

BLM ended the rally with a recitation of names of local people who still need justice, including Sheena Jenkins, a woman sent to jail for “rioting” because she attempted to help a man shot by cops as he lay dying; mothers who have lost children to police brutality; and other as-
yet-unknown victims.

— Report by Minnie Bruce Pratt

The conference “From Abortion Rights to Social Justice: Building the Movement for Reproductive Freedom” met for the third year on April 7-9 at Hampshire Col-
lege in Massachusetts. Attending were
many parts of the country.

Resistance and intersectionality were
strong themes throughout the week-
end during two plenaries and more than
75 workshops. Topics ranged from Rep-
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Reproductive freedom conference

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Resistance and intersectionality were strong themes throughout the weekend during two plenaries and more than 75 workshops. Topics ranged from Reproductive Justice to revolutionary mothering, ending the Hyde Amendment, immigration justice, supporting mothers of color, understanding trans identities, “appropriate whiteness,” radical repro-
ductive justice and creating space for people with dis-
bility.

Marxism, Reparations and the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper. Edited by Monica Moorehead.

Racism, National Oppression & Self Determination / Amy Goodman, William B. Lewis & Larry Holmes

Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery / Mary S. Marcy

Black Youth: Repression & Resistance / Harold Williams

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Alarms and Conditions Ripe Again Today? / Monica Moorehead

1965 Watts Rebellion / J. V. Johnson

Available at major online booksellers.
The U.S. rocket attack on the sovereign nation of Syria is an aggressive and criminal action. It’s official justification — that the Syrian army used nerve gas against the population — is a lie similar to those used to justify other U.S. aggressions in the past.

For example, August 1964, the phony Gulf of Tonkin incident was used to expand the war on Vietnam until 3 million Vietnamese and 58,000 U.S. soldiers were dead — later exposed by The Pentagon Papers.

In 2003, the phony pretext of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction led to the destruction of Iraq, with millions killed and displaced — later admitted to be false.

In 2011, the Obama administration used phony charges that the Libyan government was about to slaughter the people of Benghazi to justify bombing Libya and overturning the government, leading to today’s chaotic situation there.

In the current aggression, the Trump administration reversed its April 3 position that it would live with the Assad government to Secretary of State Rex Tillerson saying on April 6 that there was “no role” for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and to opening an assault on a Syrian airfield early on April 7.

This followed the news that a chemical weapon attack had occurred in Idlib, Syria, on April 4 left dozens of people dead. Before the dust had settled, warmongers in Washington and their British and French allies, both former colonial powers in that region, blamed, with no evidence, the Syrian government and its Russian allies.

The rhetoric of imperialist politicians, the bourgeois press and the wide variety of pro-war forces immediately reeked of the same U.S. war on Syria. Within a day of the U.S. missile strike, Trump said, “My attitude toward Syria and Assad has changed very much.” You’re now talking about a whole different level.”

Those who mistakenly believed Trump would be anti-intervention may find this change of course. Yet Washington never changed its goals in Syria, only its short-term strategy.

When the U.S. government couldn’t liquidate the Syrian state directly, NATO, including Turkey, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf monarchies, armed death squads such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. These reactionary forces overshadow the U.S. goal of destroying Syria’s secular, pluralistic society with bombs.

Once these contra forces had destroyed enough of Syria in 2014, the U.S. used them as an excuse to begin bombing Syria. The U.S.-led airstrikes for the most part destroyed vital infrastructure. Often, the U.S.-led coalition struck Syrian soldiers, paying the way for IS advances.

The man at the podium may change, but the ruling class must secure its prof- its one way or another to survive.

Syria today stands at the front line, defending itself against a massive imperialist assault. It is the last truly independent Arab state.

Stop the war! U.S. out!

It is the duty of those living in the belly of the beast, in the U.S., to unequivocally demand imperialist forces leave Syria. We have to combat bourgeois propaganda until our vocal cords are worn out.

The same media that justify the police Lynchings of Black children in the U.S. are using the deaths of Syrian children to justify war.

The wars against Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya were all colonial genocides built on lies. Syria is no different. The occupations of all of those countries are ongoing.

Because Iran and Russia will not let Syria be turned into a “failed state,” U.S. “retaliation” promises to make this region even more of a world war. The liberation of the workers and oppressed peoples in the U.S. depends on our ability to unite our struggles with the independence struggles of oppressed nations.

U.S., Turkey, Saudi Arabia, NATO, Israel, contras: Out of Syria!

As U.S. rockets hit Syria

Corporate media start loving Trump

By Ava Lipatti

Within a day of the U.S. missile strike on Syria, five major U.S. newspapers — the New York Times, the Washington Post, USA Today, the Wall Street Journal and the New York Daily News — published a total of 18 opinion pieces in support of Trump’s action and zero in opposition, according to a Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) article on April 7.

Up to that point, all these corporate daily newspapers regularly published articles critical of Trump’s actions. However, after Trump ordered a missile attack on Syria, the monopoly press quickly fell into line and praised him.

Television news followed the same pattern as the press.

According to a Center foraltimore payment and attention at the opening of wars against Vietnam, Iraq (twice), Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Libya, will remember that the corporate media once again fell into the type of unanimous support for U.S. attacks, whatever the pretext.

The war on Syria — which now has four generals in Trump’s gang — launched 59 cruise missiles at a Syrian Army facility in the Homs province. According to the government’s former calls at least seven civilians were killed and nine were wounded.

Trump ordered the missile launch on April 6. He claimed it was because of an alleged al-Qaeda “chemical weapon attack a couple of days before.”

The U.S. missiles were launched with our intervention…. or proof of only a group like the White Helmets, an al-Qaeda-affiliated, pro-U.S. intervention propaganda firm (tinyurl.com/mag8y29) and the so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a major pro-interventionist operation run by one individual in Britain, claimed they had witnessed.

Capitilist media reveal their class interests

The racist, war-mongering propaganda campaign against Russia, Iran and Syria has been central, not only to the corporate media, but also to the “anti-Trump” rhetoric of liberal and pseudo-left-wing media outlets since the Democratic National Committee originally blamed the Russian government for costing Hillary Clinton the election.

The alleged use of chemical weapons by the Syrian army, just like the accusations of Russian influences, has been parroted by the capitalist press without any hint of substantiation or independent verification. Included in the pro-interventionist media coverage for the Trump administration to implement a “no-fly zone.”

While these media outlets may have opposed Trump’s previous actions in the region, even the so-called essential propaganda organs for the ruling class, including the Democratic Party and the neoliberal wing of Wall Street. Their “opposition” to Trump is a desperate effort to save the Democratic Party and dying capitalism; it has nothing to do with anti-racism or anti-imperialism.

From the beginning of Trump’s campaign, the Democrats and the Anti-Trump corporate media have attacked Trump from the right, calling him a nut job, given the huge anti-Castro media machine of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Chants included “No bombs, no registry! Fuck white supremacy!” and “From Syria to Palestine, occupation is a crime!”

The march ended at the statue of vile racist Frank Rizzo, the city’s former police commissioner, 1968 to 1971, and then mayor from 1972 to 1980. The marchers connected the imperialist war on Yemen, Venezuela and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Chants included “No bombs, no registry! Fuck white supremacy!” and “From Syria to Palestine, occupation is a crime!”

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In cities large and small throughout the United States, the response was swift and consistent condemnation of the imperialist, cruise missile attacks on Syria in the late evening hours (Eastern Daylight Time Thursday).

Many activists, a good many of whom are socialists and revolutionaries, withstood the corporate-media-spewed Big Lie that Syria allegedly utilized chemical weapons against its own people.

Although most Democrats, liberals and a good chunk of social democrats quickly sided with imperialism and the Pentagon, others took to the streets to protest this blatant intervention and warn others about the dangers of a widening war on the part of U.S. imperialism and its junior “allies.”

The protests linked the imperialist wars abroad with the war against the workers and oppressed here in the U.S., noting there is plenty of money for cruise missiles and weapons of mass destruction while basic social services and public education are slated for demolition by the Trump regime.

Following are reports from activists in several cities where demonstrations took place.

In PHILADELPHIA, Black and Brown youth, workers, Vietnam veterans and anti-imperialist activists carried out a militant march and rally in support of Syria, refusing to be intimidated by the police, who outnumbered the 100 or so protesters.

The messaging and chants connected various struggles against the U.S. and its allies, including the U.S. attacks against Yemen, Venezuela and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Chants included “No bombs, no registry! Fuck white supremacy!” and “From Syria to Palestine, occupation is a crime!”

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In NEW YORK CITY, after gathering at Union Square, hundreds took to the streets — including large numbers of
youth — where protesters were attacked by members of the New York Police Department, who arrested at least 11 people. Among those arrested was Steve Millies of Workers World Party.

Some of the arrestees were brutalized by police, including Nadeen Kiswani, a NYC Students for Justice in Palestine organizer and a leader in the march. Her head was slammed into the concrete as cops viciously tore her hijab from her head, choking her in the process. (samidoum.net, April 8)

Bayan USA and the International League of Peoples Struggle activists also played a strong role in the NYC march and rally.

‘Militant, uncompromising movement needed’

Anti-imperialist forces from DETROIT and the surrounding area joined an emergency demonstration called by Workers World Party immediately following the U.S. missile attack. Militant youth from WWP and Students for a Democratic Society at Wayne State University organized and led the rally, which was strategically held downtown at Campus Martius Park during rush hour.

Protesters raised slogans such as “Feed the hungry, not the Pentagon!” and “The only road to peace is U.S. out of the Middle East” drawing a direct link between the struggle at home and the struggle of Syrians against U.S. imperialist aggression. Syrian-American (U.S.) youth organizer Joe Mishbah of WWP told Workers World, “Students and young workers in the U.S. have nothing to gain supporting U.S. imperialist’s attacks at regime change in Syria. A militant and uncompromising anti-war movement must be ready to challenge further U.S. aggression in the region.”

In PORTLAND, ORE., an emergency hands-off Syria protest got thumbs up and supportive vehicle honks from workers during Friday’s afternoon rush hour. The protest, which was covered by KOIN television, later joined other anti-war demonstrators in the downtown area.

Demonstrators in SEATTLE marched from Capital Hill to downtown, condemning the racist U.S. war against Syria. The Friday action was energetic despite the driving rain because of the many youthful demonstrators. The protest, called by the Answer Coalition, included participation by Veterans for Peace, the Democratic Socialists of America and World Can’t Wait.

Protesters also gathered in SAN FRANCISCO in the late afternoon. The rally, organized by the Answer Coalition, included speakers from a broad range of organizations, including the International League of Peoples’ Struggle and Workers World Party.

Protests continue on weekend

On April 8 in MADISON, WIS., a diverse group of labor and community representatives came out to protest at Library Mall. Zach Gersevinger, of Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement, said, “We will remain in the streets until U.S. capitalism and imperialism are defeated.” (wbbailoutpeople.org)

Protesters turned out in BUFFALO, N.Y., on Sunday, April 9, to demand “Stop U.S. war on Syria!” and “U.S. out of the Middle East!” and to explain these demands to the many passersby who stopped to ask. The rally was called by the International Action Center and the Buffalo branch of Workers World Party and endorsed by the National Lawyers Guild Buffalo Chapter & Friends and the Sister District for Western New York, and supported and joined by many other groups.

In DURHAM, N.C., anti-war protesters gathered at CCB “People’s” Plaza on Sunday for a rally initiated by the Durham branch of Workers World Party. People attending included members of Muslims for Social Justice; Electrical Workers Local 150, the North Carolina Public Service Workers Union; and the Triangle People’s Assembly.

Protesters held a rally at 3rd and Wisconsin streets and then marched to the Federal Building in MILWAUKEE to demand no U.S. war in Syria and money for human needs not war. Youth, students and members from many labor and community groups participated in the protest, which was sponsored by the Iraq Veterans Against the War-Milwaukee, the Milwaukee Antiwar Committee and the Milwaukee Coalition Against Trump. The Wisconsin Bail Out The People Movement and other organizations supported the action.

According to reports in fightbacknews.org, demonstrations also took place in Minneapolis; Houston; Salt Lake City; Tucson, Ariz.; and Tampa and Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Protesters in Jacksonville, Fla., were viciously attacked by a small group of Trump supporters and police on April 7. Several were arrested and one protester was beaten so severely he required hospitalization.

Terri Kay, Ava Lipatti, Jim McMahan, Tom Michalak, Lyn Neeley, Tom Sc hollow and WW staff contributed to this report.
Behind the attack on Syria: Trump, Russia and the Pentagon

Continued from page 1

and Anne Barnard.

Gordon was co-author with Judith Miller of Times articles promoting the idea that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction in the build-up to the 2003 U.S.-British invasion. Miller eventually lost her job for lying about claims of the existence of these weapons in Iraq. George W. Bush used these claims to bolster the pretext for invasion. Barnard writes as a publicist for the reactionary Syrian groups.

Progressive writer and founder of Consortiumnews.com Robert Parry explained on April 5: “Gordon has been at the front lines of the necon ‘regime change’ strategies for years. He co-authored the Times’ infamous aluminum tube story of Sept. 8, 2002, which relied on U.S. government sources and Iraqi defectors to suggest Americans with images of ‘mushroom clouds’ if they didn’t support President George W. Bush’s upcoming invasion of Iraq.”

It turned out that the aluminum tubes were meant for conventional weapons.

Seymour Hersh, an investigative reporter who exposed the 1968 My Lai massacre, pointed out: “In spring 2013 U.S. intelligence learned that the Turkish government, through elements of the MIT, its national intelligence agency, and the Gendarmerie, a militarized law-enforcement organisation, was working directly with al-Nusra and its allies to develop a chemical warfare capability.”

Hersh continued: “Our small military officers have been told by the DIA [Defense Intelligence Agency] and other intelligence assets that the sarin was supplied through Turkey, that it could only have gotten there with Turkish support. The Turks also provided the training in producing the sarin and handling it.” (reported by Robert Parry, consortiumnews.com, Sept. 16, 2015.)

Following the chemical gas attack in 2013, the Times reported that experts found the sarin “not only continuing to drive down wages but are creating the material basis for future social upheaval.”

Washington not only wants to overthrow Assad, it also aims to place a compliant government in Damascus that will oust the Russians from Syria and the Mediterranean altogether.

The strike was also meant to threaten the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. To follow up the strike on Syria, the Pentagon is now sending an aircraft carrier strike force toward Korean waters. The carrier Carl Vinson, accompanied by missile ships and frigates, is steaming toward Singapore to arrive in time for the 100th birthday of historic Korean communist leader Kim Il Sung. April 15 is celebrated in the DPRK as “the day of the sun.”

Trump has given the military a long leash. He is fostering their revenue plans against the DPRK, which defeated the U.S. invasion force in the Korean War. The U.S. military has never gotten over it. The U.S. military has been sending more troops to Syria, bomb large numbers of civilians in Mosul and increase drone strikes in Yemen and Somalia — all with the aim of what is happening off on these operations. There has been a major escalation of U.S. military killing of civilians under these new rules.

By militarizing the government, Trump has given more priority to the Pentagon and U.S. imperialism’s losing battle to keep the sun from setting on U.S. imperialism. The strike was also meant to threaten the Democrats in South Korea and have them raise more than $1 trillion to pay for U.S. troops in South Korea.

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In the crosshairs of U.S. imperialism

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Latin America is in the crosshairs of imperialism, which is trying to halt and even reverse the progressive developments that have taken place in recent years in many of the region’s countries.

These developments were brought about in Latin America due to its people’s fight against the U.S. imperialists who don’t reflect the construction of society on a socialist foundation, but they have improved the overall quality of life of the poorest people, who are the heart of the capitalist system intact. Nevertheless, because they transferred a significant part of the income of the country benefiting from improving the health, education, housing, pensions and other programs of great assistance to the people, instead of increasing the private wealth of the capitalists, the new developments present an obstacle to both the national and foreign capitalist class.

Here we must clarify, however, that when the price of some national commodity — such as oil — in the world market was high, the national bourgeoisie, in Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Panama benefited from the state economic policies.

These policies also sent an important anti-imperialist message of solidarity with the people of the region and the world.

But its hostile approach to progressive governments is nothing new for the capitalist class. However, now that capitalism is in a stage of decay, it is taking a more desperate form and is trying to reverse these developments. It is trying to recovery its old imperialist methods of the working class, by taking away benefits previously acquired, increasing the cost of living, etc. Imperialism is “going for broke,” and the U.S. has shut down the governments that came into office through popular uprisings in the region.

The development of events also reflects the enormous challenge of establishing progressive measures that benefit the most deprived masses through electoral procedures within the framework of a capitalist state without, however, overturning the capitalist social relations.

Lacking a system in which the proletariat establishes and controls the means of production, these governments face the possibility that a few votes — a few people convinced by the opposition — can decide the future and smash the achievements obtained for the impoverished class.

We can see this clearly in Argentina under President Mauricio Macri, where thousands of jobs have been lost since his election and social programs greatly reduced, including one that benefits women in a country where one woman is killed every 30 hours!

Other examples are the region where anti-people governments recently have taken office are in Peru, and in Brazil with the illegitimate deposing of Dilma Rousseff’s government.

The election victory of Lenin Moreno of Alianza PAIS in Ecuador on April 2, on the other hand, was an agreement to the people of the region and the world. It was a message of defiance in the face of the wave of imperialist attacks. In defense of the 1.4 million people who represents the neoliberal agenda — Lenin Moreno safeguarded the Citizens Revolution that under the leadership of Rafael Correa and his allies of the STC — achieved the most significant reforms that benefited the country and greatly improved the lives of all Ecuadorians.

These victories have been followed with great attention, particularly by Latin American observers. Some, like Attilio Borin on his blog (www. attiliboron.com.ar), have even described it as “the Latin American Stalingrad,” because the future of Ecuador and Latin America rests upon its outcome. “Stalingrad” refers to the Soviet Red Army’s heroic defeat of Nazi Germany’s army in 1943, which changed the course of World War II.”

Venezuela and Paraguay: media’s double talk

Recent events in Venezuela and Paraguay illustrate the role the corporate media — such as the US-based media to the imperialist onslaught.

In Venezuela, the National Assembly (NA), after falling into the hands of the opposition party in 2015, has tried by different means to destabilize the government of President Nicolás Maduro in order to overthrow the Bolivarian Revolution.

The opposition tried to get a two-thirds majority to increase their powers and allow them to repeal essential laws with which they disagree, such as the laws addressing labor and education. To that end, the NA swore in three deputies from the opposition Table of Democratic Unity (MUD) coalition from the state of Amazonas, even though these three deputies were being challenged because of factual evidence of electoral fraud.

In January 2016, the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Tribunal of Justice (STJ) declared the NA to be in contempt, annulling any provision the NA issues until the disputed delegates in question are removed and new assembly elections are called, something that the NA has not yet resolved.

An impasse arose recently when the Venezuelan Petroleum Corporation S.A. requested an appeal for interpretation of the Hydrocarbons Organic Law regarding mixed companies. This decision requires approval by the NA. Acting in accord with the Venezuelan Constitution, the STJ maintained the contempt order and temporarily assumed the functions of the Congress facilities.

It is important to emphasize that a diplomatic process to place into effect the STJ decision, effectively striking down the NA’s prohibition. The purpose of the initial decision was to guarantee the rule of law, but after a disagreement between two major government branches, a special meeting was convened by President Maduro to resolve the issue.

The impasse happened after the national prosecutor, Luisa Ortega, a prominent proponent of the STJ’s decision on the grounds of an interpretation of a section of the Bolivarian Constitution, President Maduro had to hold an emergency meeting of the Council for the Defense of the Nation. This council is the highest body of consultation for planning and advising the Public Powers in matters related to the integral defense of the nation.

Then, in Paraguay

While this development was taking place, on March 31 in Paraguay, there occurred what can be described as a real coup. Behind closed doors, outside of the people’s view, the right-wing president Horacio Cartes and the deposed ex-president Fernando Lugo — who once was considered progressive and even leftist — shamelessly signed an agreement to amend the Constitution to approve the presidential re-election. This was endorsed by Lugo’s Guasú Front, which in the past was also considered progressive.

When the people found out what had happened, they took to the streets against this corrupt political class, shouting the slogan, “Get all of them out!” Thousands of peasants demanded agrarian reform and young people of different social strata also turned out by the thousands against the ruling class and their lying politicians. They demand the withdrawal of the leaders and raise the need for a new constitution.

Demonstrations spread throughout the country. In Asunción — the capital as a clear message, people burned part of the Congress facilities. The police responded violently, shoot- ing at demonstrators and killing one young man with a shot to the head.

Both the Venezuelan and the Para- guayan people are demonstrating at this moment that despite the right-wing national and foreign assault, the people will not stop until they are finally able to determine their future.

General strike keeps French Guiana shut down

By G. Dunkel

The French government has signaled recently that it wants to adopt real concessions to the demands of those on general strike in Gui- ana, a territory on the northern coast of South America, whose quarter-million population is legally French. Prime Minister Bernard Cazeneuve claimed that the demands of the coalition Pau- laivy Découlé (Let Guiana Take Off) guiding the struggle are “unrealistic.”

The PLGD, together with the trade unions movement, and the recognition of special status for French Guiana and 2.5 billion euros in emergency aid delivered immediately before the French govern- ment takes over in mid-May.

It appears that the general strike, which began March 27, will continue in- definite. While the PLGD released the roadblocks on April 9, it issued an order saying that all traffic — truck, auto, bike, foot — would be re- spected starting Monday, April 10.

Earlier on April 6, the PLGD held a press conference in Cayenne, the capital, where each of the coalition’s various com- ponents — health, education, transporta- tion, civil society — expressed their par- ticular demands and pledged to continue the struggle.

On April 8, French Guiana’s authori- ties tried to hold a meeting about resolv- ing the strike without any PLGD repre- sentation. Members of 500 Brothers, a people’s militia active in the PLGD, tried to force their way in. The government faced an emergency for the first time during the current strike. The cops’ second in command wound up in the hospital. The cops fired tear gas can- isters, which were thrown back at them.

After the confrontation died down, people brought out hammocks and chairs onto the lawn of the government building and stayed the night, showing everyone that the struggle was far from over.

LATIN AMERICA
President Donald Trump’s budget proposal exposes his administration’s real priorities: It slashes spending on necessities that millions of people depend on for transportation, water supply and electricity. Instead of fixing railroad tracks, bridges, electric grids, water pipes and other essential programs, it undermines the infrastructure that supports millions of people — including those who work in defense manufacturing — and reduces governmental departments and agencies that address these vital services.

This forms another indication that “crumbling infrastructure will be replaced with new roads, bridges, tunnels, airports and railways ‘gleaming across our beautiful land’” has evaporated. His “request to Congress to ‘approve legislation that produces a $1 trillion investment’ in the U.S.’s infrastructure has floated away (whitehouse.gov, Feb. 28).

The proposed budget cuts $2.4 billion from the Department of Transportation alone and more from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Environmental Protection Agency and other essential programs.

Whose budget grows? The Pentagon’s, of course. With generals filling White House posts, it’s no surprise that the 2018 budget adds a whopping $54 billion — of course. With generals filling White House posts, it’s no surprise that the 2018 budget adds a whopping $54 billion in new military spending.

#Infrastructure not war!

Besides New York’s programs, a light rail plan in Maryland, a subway project in Los Angeles and a bus project in Kansas City are all slated to be cut. Despite denials by Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao, a recent Treasury Department report admits that “a lack of public funding is the most common factor hindering completion of transportation and water infrastructure projects.” (cnn.com, April 6)

However, billionaire Trump could care less that tens of millions of people suffer from the infrastructure crisis. He represents the interests of Wall Street bankers and investors. They consider infrastructure “a risky investment,” so it generates nothing like the superprofits from weapons manufacturing, corporate mergers and acquisitions, stock and currency manipulations and home foreclosures.

Only the mass struggle can ensure that the wealth generated by these workers is used to better people’s lives instead of enriching corporate parasites.
**By Abayomi Azikiwe**

**Editor, Pan-African News Wire**

Nelson Mandela and Ahmed Kathrada  

Tribute to Ahmed Kathrada, the anti-apartheid leader  

*By Dolores Cox*  

Newark Mayor Baraka leads trade delegation to Cuba  

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Newark Mayor Baraka leads trade delegation to Cuba

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By Dolores Cox

Newark, N.J., mayor Ras Baraka led a seven-day trade mission to Cuba aimed at creating steps to overcome the economic, financial and commercial black hole that exists in Newark. The mission was held from March 15 to 21 at the National Conference for the Full Normalization of Cuba’s Relations held here in Fordham University School of Law. It was initiated and hosted by the New York-New Jersey Cuban solidarity working group. Baraka explained the need to lift all U.S. economic, financial and travel sanctions against Cuba; to get the U.S. out of illegally occupied territory in Guantánamo; and to bring the suffering to an end that exists in Cuba.  

Baraka announced that the next day, March 26, he would lead a delegation of elected officials, religious, educational, labor, and community leaders to Cuba. The purpose of the trip is to establish diplomatic relations between Cuba and Newark. The city, which has the largest seaport on the East Coast, is the number 2 seaport in the U.S. However, the port is in need of modernization and services. All U.S. systems have not worked for Black and Brown people. Baraka added. Hospital emergency rooms are being used because of the lack of access to health care. And hospitals are closing, replaced by unaffordable housing in Black and Brown communities.  

Gentrification is not just about building high-rise buildings out of displacement and the lives of people in existing communities. U.S. cities are overrun with homeless ness, especially poor, said Baraka. Social changes made by Cuba can benefit Newark, stated Baraka, referring to Cuba’s nearly 100 percent literacy rate, life expectancy, and low rate of crime. Social changes made by Cuba can benefit Newark, stated Baraka, referring to Cuba’s nearly 100 percent literacy rate, life expectancy, and low rate of crime. Social changes made by Cuba can benefit Newark, stated Baraka, referring to Cuba’s nearly 100 percent literacy rate, life expectancy, and low rate of crime. Social changes made by Cuba can benefit Newark, stated Baraka, referring to Cuba’s nearly 100 percent literacy rate, life expectancy, and low rate of crime. Social changes made by Cuba can benefit Newark, stated Baraka, referring to Cuba’s nearly 100 percent literacy rate, life expectancy, and low rate of crime. Social changes made by Cuba can benefit Newark, stated Baraka, referring to Cuba’s nearly 100 percent literacy rate, life expectancy, and low rate of crime.  

Mentioned at Kathrada’s memorial was an open letter he wrote to President Jacob Zuma, ANC leader, suggesting he resign in light of accusations of constitutional violations. Former interim President and then Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe praised Kathrada’s contributions, but said, “It would be dishonestous to pay tribute to the life of comrade Ahmed Kathrada and pretend that he was not deeply disturbed by the current post-apartheid failure of politics.”
Alectrona y oprimidos de todos los países unios!

¡Detengan la guerra! ¡Fuera EUA!

Deber de quienes viven en el vientre del imperio estadounidense - ha decidido destruir a su colo-

EUA es incapaz de solventar el problema de la desigualdad económica y social que afecta a sus ciudadanos, en particular a los más desfavorecidos. EUA ha gastado millones de dólares en la guerra en Oriente Medio y Siria, y ha causado la muerte de decenas de miles de personas. EUA ha invadido y ocupado una serie de países en el mundo, incluyendo Irak, Afganistán, Libia, Siria y Yemen. EUA ha financiado la guerra y la violencia en estos países a través de la venta de armas, el apoyo financiero a grupos armados y la participación militar directa.

La guerra en Siria es una de las más grandes crisis humanitarias de la actualidad. EUA ha apoyado a grupos armados en Siria que han cometido crímenes de guerra, incluyendo el uso de armas químicas. EUA ha usado la guerra en Siria como un pretexto para intervenir en el mundo y perpetuar su dominio global.

Huelga estudiantil responde a ataques de la Junta de control Fiscal en Puerto Rico

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

El pasado viernes 31 de marzo, la Junta de Control Fiscal - la agencia de cobro bajo la ley PROMESA (Puerto Rico Oversight, Management and Economic Stability Act) - anunció que el Comité estudiantil de la Junta supervisó la junta.

La situación de la Junta de Control Fiscal en Puerto Rico es una de los más graves problemas económicos que enfrenta el país. La junta se encarga de administrar la deuda pública de Puerto Rico, pero ha sido criticada por sus prácticas abusivas y su falta de transparencia. Los estudiantes de Puerto Rico han liderado numerosas protestas contra la junta en los últimos años.

En el pasado viernes, la junta anunció que habría una huelga estudiantil indefinida a partir del 1 de abril. La huelga responde a los ataques de la junta contra la universidad pública de Puerto Rico. La junta ha tomado medidas que amenazan la educación de estudiantes de Puerto Rico, incluyendo el cierre de escuelas y la reducción de la financiación de programas universitarios.

Los estudiantes de Puerto Rico han reclamado la creación de un sistema educativo público de calidad y equitativo. Han exigido la abolición de la junta de control fiscal y la creación de un nuevo sistema que garantice la educación pública de calidad y equitativa para todos los estudiantes de Puerto Rico.

La huelga estudiantil es un medio de protesta para exigir una mejor educación para los estudiantes de Puerto Rico. Los estudiantes de Puerto Rico han demostrado su compromiso con la lucha por la justicia social y la educación pública de calidad.

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