

Congress be damned

Fight for free health care

By Fred Goldstein

President Donald Trump and House Speaker Paul Ryan have led the first wave of a cruel congressional assault on the health care of the masses of people in order to transfer billions of dollars to the already rich. The second wave will begin when the Senate takes up the health care bill.

After passing the bill, the criminal gang that forced it through the House took a bus to the White House for a high-five celebration, with Trump and Ryan leading the cheers.

While health care should be a human right, the attitude of the group that passed this bill was candidly expressed by right-wing Rep. Mo Brooks (R-Ala.), who explained to CNN’s Jake Tapper that people with higher-cost conditions should “contribute more to the insurance pool” to offset the cost “to those people who lead good lives, they’re healthy, they’ve done the things to keep their bodies healthy.” This is the amorality of the ruling class spoken plainly and publicly, without shame.

Meanwhile, Democratic Party leaders, neglecting the crying need for universal health care, were preoccupied with defending the insurance-company-driven Affordable Care Act and their own narrow political prospects for 2018.

Trump and the House Republicans would not wait for the Congressional Budget Office to assess the consequences of the bill because the assessment of the previous version estimated that 24 million people would lose their health care coverage by 2024 and premiums would rise for those remaining.

Tax cut for the rich, charging sick people more

In fact, the bill is really a tax cut for the rich disguised as a health care bill. It contains over a trillion dollars in spending cuts. About \$346 billion over 10 years will go in direct tax cuts to millionaires and billionaires by eliminating taxes on investment income and the Medicare payroll deduction on high-income earners that was required under the Obama administration’s ACA. These taxes funded subsidies for low-income workers to help

pay their insurance premiums. (New York Times, May 5)

Of course, under both plans the money still ends up in the hands of the insurance companies. But with the subsidies gone, millions of people will no longer be able to afford premiums.

The bill permits states to get easy permission to waive ACA rules that prohibit insurance companies from charging sick

people larger premiums. Before the ACA, people with a medical history of heart disease or cancer — even acne, heartburn, back pain, asthma, hay fever or hives — could be declared uninsurable by insurance companies. In 2011 the Department of Health and Human Services said that up to 129 million people could be denied insurance for these “pre-existing conditions.” (Los Angeles Times, May 7) The

new Trump/Ryan bill would restore the old rules by allowing state waivers.

Attack on Medicaid

The bill converts Medicaid from an open-ended entitlement to block grants to the states, which would quickly be exhausted. That provision would strip over \$800 billion from Medicaid over 10 years.

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PHOTO: BROOKE ANDERSON

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Police repression of fare evaders

By Heather Morris
Newark, N.J.

Newark is the largest city in New Jersey, with most of the population being Black and Latinx. Many of the residents are immigrants, including those who are undocumented. Even in light of recent attempts to “revitalize” this city, which was hit by white flight after the 1967 Black rebellion, and despite being dubbed “the next Brooklyn” by the bourgeois media, nearly half of the city’s population lives below the poverty line, according to a 2013 study by the Legal Services of New Jersey.

Essex County, where Newark is located, has 14.7 percent of the state’s homeless population according to a 2016 Monarch Housing Associates’ report; yet luxury condos continue to be built. Although hundreds of thousands of people commute to Newark daily for work, 6.6 percent of Newark’s residents remain unemployed.

The Newark Light Rail is used by commuters and residents alike. Riders walk onto the train after purchasing a \$1.60 ticket, which is time-stamped as proof of payment. A few times a month, police officers stand on the train platforms checking tickets as passengers exit.

For somebody who is poor, even \$1.60 could affect their ability to put food on the table or pay bills on time. If the police rarely check for tickets, why pay every time?

As somebody who has fare evaded in the past for being unable to pay, I decided to just hop on the train one day simply because I was in a rush. The police happened to be checking tickets. Desperate to avoid paying any fines, I showed them an old ticket with an unclear time stamp, hoping they wouldn’t scrutinize it too closely.

The police ordered me to show ID, although I hadn’t committed an actual crime. They never told me whether I was being detained or under arrest. I said I did not have any ID, and they took down my name and address. They then asked for my student ID, and I gave it.

Since I refused to answer any questions, a Latinx cop started speaking to me in Spanish, even though I clearly understand English! They weren’t satisfied with the school ID, so they said they were going to search my bag for another ID. I refused to let them search without a warrant, but I gave them my ID anyway so they would stop harassing me. They asked for my Social Security number but I refused, as they had no right to ask for it.

The cops told me they would have let me go had I been



Newark, N.J., protest, 2011.

compliant. But why should I have to comply with a bullshit law that punishes people for not having \$1.60? Why do I have to comply with having my rights violated and being unlawfully searched? Imagine if they had asked an undocumented person for their Social Security number.

Fare evaders are not criminals

Not everybody is aware that they have the right to refuse to answer questions from the police. The police could be using people’s Social Security numbers to check their immigration status. This could lead to people being deported, all over a train ride.

I ended up eventually being hit with one charge, which carries a fine, and I have to appear in court.

Nobody should have to pay hundreds of dollars over a train ticket. A person who is unable to pay for a train ticket certainly can’t pay that hefty fine. How can someone who can’t even afford transportation get to court? It could also mean missing a day of work.

The police are more concerned with protecting capital than they are with protecting the people. The police kill Black and Brown folks daily with impunity, and deliberately target immigrants, which could lead to their deportation. While killer cops face no punishment, people are being punished over failing to pay a couple of dollars for something that should be free!

The people of Newark, and of every city around the world, deserve access to reliable, quality transportation,

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Workers World
147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl.
New York, NY 10011
Phone: 212.627.2994
E-mail: ww@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org
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Editor: Deirdre Griswold

Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell,
Kris Balderas Hamel, Monica Moorehead,
Minnie Bruce Pratt; Web Editor Gary Wilson

Production & Design Editors: Coordinator Lal Roohk;
Andy Katz, Cheryl LaBash

Copyediting and Proofreading: Sue Davis,
Bob McCubbin

Contributing Editors: Abayomi Azikiwe,
Greg Butterfield, G. Dunkel, K. Durkin,
Fred Goldstein, Martha Grevatt, Teresa Gutierrez,
Berta Joubert-Ceci, Terri Kay, Cheryl LaBash,
Milt Neidenberg, John Parker, Bryan G. Pfeifer,
Betsey Piette, Gloria Rubac

Mundo Obrero: Redactora Berta Joubert-Ceci;
Andrea Bañuelos, Ramiro Fúnez, Teresa Gutierrez,
Carlos Vargas

Supporter Program: Coordinator Sue Davis

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Contact a Workers World Party branch near you:

National Office
147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl.
New York, NY 10011
212.627.2994
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta
PO Box 18123
Atlanta, GA 30316
404.627.0185
atlanta@workers.org

Baltimore
c/o Solidarity Center
2011 N. Charles St.
Baltimore, MD 21218
443.221.3775
baltimore@workers.org

Chicago
312.630.2305
chicago@workers.org

Bay Area
1305 Franklin St. #411
Oakland, CA 94612
510.600.5800
bayarea@workers.org

Boston
284 Amory St.
Boston, MA 02130
617.286.6574
boston@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.
712 Main St #113B
Buffalo, NY 14202
716.883.2534
buffalo@workers.org

Cleveland
P.O. Box 5963
Cleveland, OH 44101
216.738.0320
cleveland@workers.org

Denver
denver@workers.org

Detroit
5920 Second Ave.
Detroit, MI 48202
313.459.0777
detroit@workers.org

Durham, N.C.
804 Old Fayetteville St.
Durham, NC 27701
919.322.9970
durham@workers.org

Houston
P.O. Box 3454
Houston, TX 77253-3454
713.503.2633
houston@workers.org

Huntington, W. Va.
huntingtonwv@workers.org

Lexington, Ky.
lexington@workers.org

Los Angeles
5278 W Pico Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90019
la@workers.org
323.306.6240

Milwaukee
milwaukee@workers.org

Philadelphia
P.O. Box 34249
Philadelphia, PA 19101
610.931.2615
phila@workers.org

Pittsburgh
pittsburgh@workers.org

Portland, Ore.
portland@workers.org

Rochester, N.Y.
585.436.6458
rochester@workers.org

Rockford, Ill.
rockford@workers.org

Salt Lake City
801.750.0248
SLC@Workers.org

San Diego
P.O. Box 33447
San Diego, CA 92163
sandiego@workers.org

Tucson, Ariz.
tucson@workers.org

Virginia
virginia@workers.org

Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 57300
Washington, DC 20037
dc@workers.org

Adam Jones & Boston racism at Fenway Park

By mYia X & Phebe Eckfeldt
Boston

In April, Major League Baseball celebrated the 70th anniversary of Jackie Robinson breaking the color barrier. However, on May 2, Baltimore Orioles player Adam Jones was on the receiving end of racist attacks by Red Sox fans at Fenway Park.

Jones stated that “a disrespectful person threw a bag of peanuts at me and I got called the N-word a handful of times. ... It’s unfortunate that people need to resort to those types of epithets to degrade another human being. I’m trying to make a living for myself and for my family.” (USA Today, May 2)

Once this attack was revealed, Boston Mayor Marty Walsh tweeted, “This is unacceptable” and “Not who we are as a city. These words and actions have no place in Fenway, Boston, or anywhere.”

Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker called it “shameful.” And during a press conference, Jones stated that John Henry, principal owner of the Red Sox, met with him in person.

New York Yankees pitcher C.C. Sabathia revealed that the only place he’s ever been attacked with racial slurs was in Boston. Sabathia added, “[T]here’s 62 of us. We all know. When you go to Boston,

expect it.” (www.si.com, May 5)

In solidarity with Jones, Red Sox pitcher David Price discussed various racist incidents he has endured from fans at Fenway.

On May 3, MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred issued a public statement that read in part: “The racist words and actions directed at Jones at Fenway Park last night are completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated at any of our ballparks.”

Jones returned to Fenway Park on May 3 to a standing ovation. However, moments later, Calvin Hennick, a Boston Globe writer who is white, confronted a racist Red Sox fan publicly attacking an unnamed Kenyan singer performing the national anthem.

When confronted by Hennick about the attack, the fan reportedly said, “Yeah, that’s what I said, and I stand by it.” (bet.com, May 4) The racist fan was eventually banned.

The norm, not the exception

These attacks are not isolated incidents of a few people behaving “badly.” They are indicative of structural and institutionalized racism that permeates Boston sports arenas.

On May 1, 2014, P.K. Subban, a Black National Hockey League player for the

Montreal Canadiens, was viciously attacked on Twitter by racist fans of the Boston Bruins. The online attack resulted in the N-word becoming a top trending topic. Columnist Rosie Dimanno stated in response, “If you’re black-skinned, you have to be thick-skinned.” (thestar.com, May 2)

Robert Traynham, a 1950s star player in the Negro Leagues, told Workers World, “When the Negro Leagues were broken up into clubs in the late 1950s, most of the major league teams began shunning Black players. The Red Sox were the last team to integrate. Tom Yawkey, the Red Sox owner at the time, owned a plantation in South Carolina. He did not want Blacks playing on the team and turned down Jackie Robinson, saying that even HE was not good enough!”

When racism is woven into the historic fabric of a city, how can the attack on Adam Jones be an isolated incident? In the early 1970s busing for desegregation in Boston was court-ordered. Buses carrying Black school children were stoned daily by screaming, racist, white mobs. Black families’ homes in predominantly white neighborhoods were set on fire and vandalized. Reports of people of color being beaten and abused while walk-



ing after games in the vicinity of Fenway Park were common. A Black man walking across City Hall Plaza in downtown Boston had his nose broken by racist thugs wielding a U.S. flag.

The march of 25,000 in Boston in 1974 to say NO to racism, which WWP was instrumental in organizing, stemmed the tide of this racist onslaught.

Racism is alive and well in Boston — from attacks on Black students at Boston Latin School, the country’s first public school, to the ongoing “stop and frisk” policing of Black and Brown youth, and the increased disenfranchisement of communities of color through gentrification, attacks on public education, and cuts to social programs, etc.

The rise of Trumpism emboldens diabolical racist elements all across the U.S. Banning an individual from Fenway Park will NOT eradicate racism from Fenway Park or anywhere else. Only an united mass struggle will. □

New Orleans

Mass rally confronts racists over Confederate monuments

By Quest Riggs
New Orleans

Some 1,200 people came out on May 7 for a loud and proud “second line” celebration of the demand to remove all symbols of white supremacy in New Orleans. In New Orleans parades, the second line of dancers or marchers come in behind the official first line.

For six decades anti-racist, civil rights activists in New Orleans have been demanding removal of Confederate monuments in New Orleans. Take ‘Em Down NOLA renewed this fight leading to a City Council resolution in 2015. The fight waged on, however; finally, the city took down one in the middle of the night, claiming it was unsafe to do so in daylight.

The march was led by veterans of this struggle, who walked the entire route.



PHOTO: TAKE EM DOWN NOLA

neous confrontations.

In this situation Take ‘Em Down NOLA called for an open celebration in the streets. The group decided to walk a traditional New Orleans second line, this time to “Bury white supremacy.” It was called for May 7, the last day of Jazz Fest, which is an annual giant tourist attraction, the darling of New Orleans’ tourism capitalists.

The racists responded by calling for reinforcements. Calling the confrontation “the second battle of New

Orleans,” they drew in an assortment of around 150 violent KKK and Nazis. The city blasted the threat of violence on local media to try to discourage people from coming to the celebration.

They put an equal sign between Take ‘Em Down and the racists. The media portrayed the conflict as those for or against monuments, rather than as between civil rights activists and Klan scum.

None of this stopped over 1,200 New Orleanians from taking to the streets to celebrate the people’s victory. TEDNO-LA leaders encouraged the crowd to not be intimidated, and led them to the Lee statue where the racists were posted all morning.

Intimidated by the numbers and confidence of the crowd, the racists avoided attacking the parade and instead fought among themselves. TEDNOLA claimed its territory, moving barricades up to the monument to address the crowd.

Take ‘Em Down NOLA is planning a national conference.

For more information and to support, see takeemdownnola.org.

Police repression of fare evaders

Continued from page 2

housing, food, education and health care. We don’t need excessive policing in our communities.

We don’t need more luxury condos being built that nobody can afford, while thousands remain homeless. We don’t need more expensive restaurants opening up in gentrifying communities, while people in poor communities only have access to foods from the corner store.

The police are only trying to trap people to make arrests; they are not concerned with the poverty that plagues many Black and Brown communities. □

They carried banners calling for “Power to the people” and “Bury white supremacy,” along with giant enlargements of Rev. Avery Alexander and of Capetown, South Africa, students toppling statues of 19th-century British imperialist Cecil Rhodes.

This took place May 7 despite violent threats from fascist Nazis and KKK vermin, claiming they were coming to New Orleans to do battle to keep the racist monuments, and despite the city asking Take ‘Em Down NOLA to cancel its demonstration.

Resolute and organized, the “second line,” with chanting and a brass band, marched from Congo Square through the French Quarter to the Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee monument. All along the route both Black and white residents and tourists cheered the march.

City gov’t uses violence threat as pretext

Take ‘Em Down NOLA has said the city has falsely used threats of violence to justify middle-of-the-night removal and no ceremony. The city’s statement shows that New Orleans’ white capitalist estab-

lishment wants the masses excluded so no new civil rights struggle arises.

Wesley Lynch III, a 25-year-old unemployed African American, told the May 6 New York Times that the statues are “living symbols of a social order that, from his experience, wanted people like him to rise only so far.

“They’re putting that image right in our face and saying, ‘Blacks at the bottom, whites at the top,’ That’s what they’re saying.”

The white ruling class loves the food and culture of New Orleans, but hates the masses. The last thing they want is for the people to make the connection between the white supremacy of the Confederacy and the white supremacy of New Orleans today.

After the first removal, racists and fascists were allowed into the city. Despite an ordinance that bans firearms from protests, the cops let them carry loaded machine guns and pistols for weeks as they camped out around monuments. This created a tense situation in the majority Black city, and it created several sponta-

Flint and Detroit

Tens of thousands face foreclosures, water shutoffs

By Jerry Goldberg

Over 8,000 Flint, Mich., families are facing the loss of their homes due to unpaid bills for poisoned water. The delinquent water bills, totaling \$5 million over the past two years, are now being tacked onto property taxes, subjecting the families to tax foreclosure.

It was during this two-year time period that Flint residents discovered their children had been lead-poisoned. This happened because the state-appointed “emergency manager” — a dictator — decided to stop getting city water from Detroit and draw, instead, from the Flint River. His decision to not spend money on anti-corrosive additives caused lead in aging pipes to leach into the water supply.

To this day, residents still cannot drink their water without filters, are forced to rely on bottled water, and suffer skin

rashes, hair loss and breathing issues from showering. The process of replacing lead service lines is proceeding very slowly; most of the pipes are still lead-based.

What makes this policy even more contemptuous is that \$200 million in federal dollars are sitting unspent, money that could pay these delinquent tax bills. These funds are what remain of Michigan’s allocation under the Helping Hardest Hit Homeowners Program. Of the \$750 billion bank bailout fund under the Troubled Assets Relief Program, a mere \$9 billion nationally and \$761 million for Michigan was provided to keep families in their homes.

Instead of using these federal funds for their intended purpose, however, the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, which administers the funds,



WW PHOTO

Moratorium NOW! Coalition fighting for water and housing as rights in Michigan.

the years 2014-2016. (bridgemi.com, May 2) Thirty-one thousand occupied homes occupied homes in Detroit are also subject to seizure by Wayne County for tax foreclosures this year.

In 2015, the United Nations Special Rapporteurs for Water and Housing declared the crisis in Detroit a “retrograde” crisis, meaning it is a product of a developed capitalist system moving backwards in meeting the most basic needs of the people as a result of corporate greed.

The new Coalition to Stop Tax Foreclosures is holding a town hall meeting in Detroit in June to galvanize the struggle against tax foreclosures and water shutoffs in Detroit and Flint.

For more information, visit moratorium-mi.org or join the Moratorium NOW! Coalition group on Facebook.

Fight for free health care

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Since the implementation of the ACA, which includes Medicaid expansion, nearly a quarter of the people in the United States are now covered by Medicaid and its subsidiary program, the Children’s Health Insurance Program. Medicaid covers 60 percent of children with disabilities, 30 percent of adults with disabilities and one in five Medicare recipients.

While the attack on Medicaid is an attack on the working class in general, people of color are more likely to use Medicaid, as well as have less access to health care. So the blow to Medicaid is also racist in character. (Rewire, May 1)

Essential services endangered, blow to women’s health care

States would have the opportunity to opt out of an ACA requirement that insurers cover 10 essential medical services: outpatient services; emergency services; hospitalization; maternity and newborn care; mental health and substance use disorder services; pediatric services, including oral and vision care; prescription drugs; chronic disease management; rehabilitative services; and laboratory services. They include both preventive and wellness services.

The bill defunds Planned Parenthood for one year, with guaranteed renewal each year after that. Further, it denies Medicaid payments and Title X grants to any plan that even lists abortion among its services. This means the end of coverage for cancer screening, contraception and abortion services for millions of women served by Planned Parenthood. It would also deny all subsidies to states like California and New York that require insurance policies to cover abortion.

Threat to jobs

The ACA has meant a steady flow of profits to the insurance and pharmaceutical companies. It has also been a steady jobs program for the economy. Health care now accounts for almost one-fifth of the U.S. capitalist economy and has been a leading creator of jobs in the last decade.

According to a leading business health care publication, “A report released Friday by the Commonwealth Fund and the

Milken Institute School of Public Health at the George Washington University found that repealing key provisions of the ACA, including the insurance premium tax credits and Medicaid expansion, could lead to 2.6 million people losing their jobs in 2019. By 2021, nearly 3 million jobs in healthcare and other sectors could be lost. ...

“Repealing key parts of the ACA could trigger massive job losses and a slump in consumer and business spending that would affect all sectors of state economies,” the Milken Institute’s Leighton Ku, the lead author of the study, said in a statement. ‘Cuts in federal funding would not only harm the health care industry and its employees but could lead to serious economic distress for states, including a \$1.5 trillion reduction in gross state product from 2019 to 2023.” (Modern Healthcare, Jan. 17)

The bill eliminates the ACA’s employer mandate, which required large companies employing over 50 workers to offer affordable coverage to their workers. It also pushes back enactment of a tax on high-cost employer health plans.

For-profit health care system an abomination

With or without the new reactionary health care bill, the mass of the people are constantly suffering at the hands of the

Ever since the health care system was turned over to the insurers and drug companies under the Bill Clinton administration, health care has been a public nightmare, except for the health care profiteers. Now the Trump administration is making it worse.

insurance companies, the pharmaceutical companies, the private hospital industry and a whole host of corporate parasites.

It is a fraud for the Democratic Party leadership to fight to retain a system that maintains the stranglehold of medical corporations on the health care system.

The insurance companies are always raising rates, raising deductibles, reducing coverage, threatening to pull out of health care plans and in general engaging in corporate extortion to squeeze more and more profit out of the people — especially the poor and the oppressed. This has been true under the ACA from the beginning.

There are constant complaints about the rising costs of health care, which are breaking the state budgets because the insurance industry and drug companies have virtual sovereignty over prices.

Conservative columnist Charles Krauthammer of Fox News complained about the public attitude toward health: “[T]he electorate sees health care as not just any commodity, like purchasing a steak or a car” but now has “a sense the government ought to guarantee [it].” (New York Times, May 8) In the view of the capitalist class, health care, rather than being a fundamental right of the

masses, is a commodity that must be purchased. This is a country with a \$16 trillion economy where the workers, who create all that wealth, including the wealth of the health care industry, must buy their own health care at prices set by the billionaire owners of the industry. And if they can’t afford it, too bad.

Universal health care and the socialist camp

Bernie Sanders had a favorite campaign line about how the U.S. is the only country in the “industrial” (imperialist) world that does not have some form of universal health care.

It got a lot of crowd approval. But a fundamental truth about the health care systems in Europe is left out of the discussion.

The European countries were face to face with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe for 40 years after World War II. These countries provided free, universal health care as a political right of the working class. The West European working class could see this and compare it to their own conditions under capitalism.

Furthermore, the post-war European working class was organized and engaged in the class struggle to defend and expand their rights. The European bankers and bosses were not any more humane than those in the U.S. They were colonialists who enslaved hundreds of millions of people.

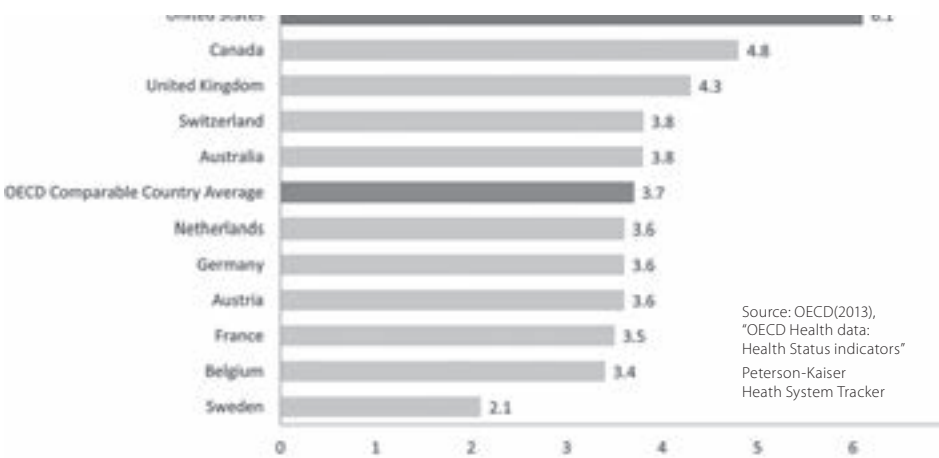
But the socialist example forced them to compete and offer all kinds of social benefits to stave off the strong tendency of the European working class toward genuine socialism.

Socialist Cuba has free, universal health care and a world-class medical system. It was only able to achieve this after it expelled the U.S. imperialists and their capitalist stooges from the island.

The answer to the health care crisis for the masses is universal, affordable health care. This would mean the expulsion of the insurers and big pharma from the process. This can be achieved by struggle, just as it was in Europe during the era of the USSR. □

The infant mortality rate is higher in the U.S. than in comparably wealthy countries

Deaths per 1,000 live births in 2011



Source: OECD(2013), "OECD Health data: Health Status Indicators" Peterson-Kaiser Health System Tracker

All global experts regard infant mortality as a general measure of the quality of healthcare in a given society.

2017 MAY DAY AROUND THE WORLD

By Kathy Durkin

May Day. Workers. Resistance.
May 1 is International Workers’ Day, officially commemorated in over 80 countries, but not in the United States where it originated in 1886 in Chicago as part of the struggle for the eight-hour workday. Its militant legacy is marked by strong protests by the multinational global working class. Importantly, it’s a day of solidarity.
The class struggle is alive and well as was shown by the millions of workers who took to the streets. From El Salvador to South Africa to Indonesia, workers — factory, service and farm workers, immigrants, women, youth, retirees and socialists — poured into the streets to assert their demands, show their strength and commemorate this historic day. Here are some highlights.

Masses support Maduro

A massive outpouring of Venezuelans turned out in Caracas to show support for President Nicolás Maduro and celebrate advances made by the government. To celebrate May Day, Maduro raised the minimum wage by 60 percent.
In an article titled “Caracas May Day, the march the media did not report,” eye-witness Jorge Martin wrote, “Hundreds of thousands marched in Caracas in defense of workers’ rights and the Bolivarian revolution.” Workers from different factories and workplaces carried their own banners; red shirts and hats were everywhere. Chants and music permeated the crowds who came from several rally sites. Bolivar Avenue was packed with a mile-long gathering of workers and poor people. (tinyurl.com/jw3kln9)
This enormous march overshadowed U.S.-backed, right-wing opposition forces. Washington seeks the ouster of Maduro and the Bolivarian Revolution.



In Sao Paolo and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, mass demonstrations protested President Michael Temer’s coup government and his anti-worker, anti-poor, austerity measures. Signs read, “Resistir!” (Resist).
Workers also marched for their rights in El Salvador, Mexico, Bolivia, Colombia, Chile and other Latin American countries. Protesters in Tegucigalpa denounced the right-wing, U.S.-backed government of Honduran President Juan Orlando Ordonez and demanded better economic and social conditions.



General strike rocks San Juan

The biggest demonstration since 2006 took place in Puerto Rico. The one-day general strike shut down the bus system and schools and closed businesses. The unity of many organizations, including la-



bor unions, was key to the strike’s success. Thousands stopped work, blocked roads and marched to vent their rage over the 10-year economic crisis and new austerity measures. The colonial regime plans to cut public and private sector workers’ benefits, close 184 schools, undermine health care and social security, raise taxes and water fees, and privatize government operations. The masses said a loud “NO” to all these attacks on workers, students and poor people.

Led by women, students, labor unionists and other groupings, thousands marched on the “Golden Mile,” San Juan’s financial district where the U.S. Congress-appointed Fiscal Control Board is headquartered. They denounced this “junta” and U.S. colonialism, and demanded an audit to find those responsible for the \$70 billion debt. The bondholders’ restructuring of Puerto Rico’s economy has devastated the country and the people have suffered. But the masses showed their anger and their power on May Day.
In Haiti, workers rallied for better working conditions in the capital city of Port-au-Prince. They chanted anti-government slogans outside an industrial park.



Fidel and Che Presente!

Some 50,000 Cuban youth led the parade of workers in Havana to celebrate May Day, which was presided over by the socialist country’s President Raul Castro. The day was dedicated to young people, who are the country’s future.
Across the island, 6 million of Cuba’s 11 million people joined in rallies to celebrate the Revolution’s advances and eagerly showed their willingness to build their society. They paid tribute to the Revolution’s late leader, Comandante Fidel Castro, and revolutionary Che Guevara whose photographs were everywhere.
All were united in defense of their nation’s sovereignty and in the demand to end the U.S. economic blockade of their country and for the return of Guantanamo Naval Base. Marchers expressed solidarity with their Venezuelan sisters and brothers in the face of U.S. hostility.

Solidarity with migrant workers; no deportations!
Tens of thousands took to the streets of Paris and other cities in France. Various groupings protested racism, capitalism, police brutality, Islamophobia and the far right National Front. Labor unionists called for workers’ rights and social equality.

Migrant workers, mainly from sub-Saharan Africa, called for an end to deportations. Pro-Palestinian groups and Marxist parties from Turkey, as well as CGT and CFDT unionists, held banners.
Demonstrations were held in 73 cities in Spain under the banner of “No excuses, into the streets,” led by labor unions UGT and CC.OO. Chants called for stable jobs, higher wages, improved pensions, social security and a rollback of anti-worker “labor reforms.” Thousands turned out in Madrid and Barcelona, with other protests in Seville, Valencia and elsewhere.



The CGTP-IN union was the main organizer of tens of thousands of workers marching in Lisbon, Portugal, under the slogan, “Value work and workers.”
Greece’s labor unions held a 24-hour general strike to protest government plans for more austerity measures demanded by global financial institutions. Thousands rallied outside the Parliament in Athens and in other cities. GSEE, the country’s largest labor union, announced a general strike for May 17 against further cutbacks.
The All Poland Alliance of Trade Unions and leftist forces organized a demonstration in Warsaw against the right-wing government.

Communists carried red flags emblazoned with hammers and sickles at marches of several thousand people in Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia.
Labor unions organized marches in Istanbul and Ankara, Turkey. The Communist Party of Turkey held large demonstrations in four cities. Police detained 165 people in Istanbul who attempted to defy a three-year ban on May Day demonstrations in historic Taksim Square. All forces denounced the repressive government of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who recently maneuvered to expand his powers.



Support BDS Campaign!

Thousands of members and supporters of the Lebanese Communist Party chanted pro-worker slogans and carried banners and flags as they marched through Beirut’s streets. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine also came out on May Day, carrying Palestinian flags.
A statement by the Palestinian Trade Union Coalition for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions began: “On May Day we Palestinian trade unions are proud to stand with the trade union movement internationally as we collectively resist attacks on our working conditions, cuts to public services and job losses.” We support rallies “uniting trade unions, immigrants and refugees, social movements, and environmentalists fighting for a better future.”
The statement emphasizes that Palestinian workers daily endure and resist “Israel’s regime of occupation, settler-co-



lonialism and apartheid,” including “Israel’s shameful prison system.” The coalition recognized labor unions’ leading role in defending Palestinians’ right to self-determination, saluted those worldwide which have implemented BDS principles, and called for more unions to join the BDS campaign. (tinyurl.com/KSK9459)

May Day in Africa

May Day rallies were held throughout the African continent. In Nairobi, Kenya, a large celebration and march were held. Former agricultural laborers have been moving to the cities to work in manufacturing and service sectors, increasing and strengthening the urban working class.
The Congress of South African Trade Unions organized rallies totaling 180,000 people throughout South Africa. Workers marched and gave lists of their demands to their employers. The newly formed South African Federation of Trade Unions turned out its members to commemorate workers’ day.
In Zimbabwe, where the president is Robert Mugabe, there were two rallies organized by labor unions, one in the capital, Harare, the other in Chinhoyi.



‘Long live the workers!’

Over 40,000 workers marched through Jakarta, Indonesia’s capital, to the Presidential Palace, chanting, “Long live the workers!” They demanded the government raise the paltry minimum wage, ban outsourcing of jobs, stop precarious (unstable, low-wage employment) contract jobs, provide free health care and improve working conditions.
About 100,000 Philippine workers, urban poor people and farm workers, led by the National Labor Center Kilusang Mayo Uno, marched through Manila to the Presidential Palace demanding a “Social Justice Package,” with a minimum living wage, free mass housing, secure jobs and an end to precarious work.

Union members confronted the U.S. Embassy in Manila, condemning U.S.-imposed policies of cheap, contract labor. Signs condemned extrajudicial killings under President Rodrigo Duterte’s “war on drugs,” while others called on him not to meet with U.S. President Trump.



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MAY DAY IN THE U.S.: MARCHING



New York City

WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

NORTHEAST

New York City

After a militant noon rally at Union Square, thousands in New York City took to the streets on May Day in a show of multinational, multigenerational and multigender strength. The rally and march were organized by the Union Square May Day Coalition, with more than 50 groups.

Workers and students from across the tristate area (New York, New Jersey and Connecticut) marched, while chanting “¡La Migra! ¡La Policía! ¡La misma porquería!” and “Black lives, they matter here! Migrant lives, they matter here!” Dozens of red flags waved in the air, joined by Puerto Rican, Venezuelan, Syrian, Filipino, Palestinian, Honduran and flags from other nations fighting against U.S. imperialism.

A host of speakers took to the mic before the march. They represented BAYAN-USA, the International League of People’s Struggle, Sparc, the Laundry Workers Center, the People’s Power Assembly, NYC Shut it Down and Workers World Party, among others.

The police commanders and borough chiefs must have received orders to crack down on the march. As activists attempted to leave Union Square, a quick barrage of arrests and a tense standoff with the police ensued. Swift action and tactical response by the coalition’s security team, including quickly changing the route, allowed the march to proceed.

At the end of the march, police once again attempted to destroy the militant action by pushing contingents into Foley Square, where NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio had just finished speaking.

Yet Union Square demonstrators continued the march, and some joined with NYC Shut It Down for People’s Monday, which honored the life of Berta Cáceres, an Indigenous and environmentalist leader killed by death squads in Honduras. Other marchers joined to greet the freed arrestees as they left 1 Police Plaza.



Syracuse, N.Y.

PHOTO: GARY WALTZ

Nikeeta Slade of the Workers’ Center-CNY rallies marchers, Syracuse, N.Y.

Syracuse, N.Y.

The call by the Workers’ Center of Central New York for ¡Huelga! (Strike!) on May Day in Syracuse, N.Y., was answered by members of Black Lives Matter, the Palestine Solidarity Collective, CNY Solidarity Coalition and other groups as hundreds marched against the detentions and deportations of immigrants and migrants. WCCNY is fighting for passage of the Liberty Act to make New York a sanctuary state, the Green Light Act to allow undocumented immigrants to obtain driver licenses, and the Dream Act to provide state financial aid for college for undocumented immigrants brought to the U.S. as children.

Rochester, N.Y.

About 75 people withstood a torrential downpour and a tornado watch during the May 1 event sponsored by Metro Justice, 1199SEIU, Local 200 United SEIU, Rochester Regional Joint Board, the Rochester Workers Center and the Worker Justice Center of New York. Workers World Party and a number of other local community and political organizations also supported the action.

Multinational workers and activists from a wide variety of struggles spoke about their efforts to resist the U.S. capitalist machine. Included were activists from Sudan, Ecuador and Palestine, as well as those from the local immigrant struggle hard hit lately by Immigration,



Rochester, N.Y.

WW PHOTO: LYDIA BAYONETA



Boston

WW PHOTO: STEVE KIRSCHBAUM

Customs and Enforcement arrests and detentions. There were also representatives of the local Fight for \$15 struggle and activists trying to organize unions for the first time. Several hip hop artists contributed very moving raps in solidarity with the spirited anti-capitalist gathering.

Downtown Boston & Harvard

Workers World Party joined forces with the Boston May Day Coalition to organize a march and rally of 1,000 people in solidarity with the city’s immigrant and worker communities. All ages and many demographics took to the streets.

Mahtowin Munro, of United American Indians of New England, began the rally with a powerful call to honor the land. Speakers and artists represented Cosecha, COMBAT (Coalition to Organize and Mobilize Boston Against Trump), the Massachusetts Art Institute and more.

Andre Francois, president of the Boston School Bus Drivers Union, United Steelworkers Local 8751, expressed the union’s commitment to fight Trump’s attacks on migrants and defend communities when needed.

Harvard University union members, students and staff went from a rally at Harvard Yard to the one in downtown Boston. Jonathan Roberts, a leader of Student/Labor Action Movement, and Ed Childs, chief shop steward of UNITE HERE Local 26 at Harvard, gave a powerful joint speech, emphasizing that Trump will not succeed in dividing workers or dismantling unions.

Noel Sanders, a WWP member coordinating rally security and logistics, said, “We’re letting Boston know: We say NO to imperialist wars, NO to ICE raids, NO to border walls and YES to immigrants’ and workers’ rights!”

Chelsea, Everett & East Boston, Mass.

Organized by the May 1st Coalition, this march combined forces from three Boston neighborhoods. Key to the coalition was Movimiento Cosecha, an organization working on behalf of undocumented immigrants.

The majority working-class Latinx residents of Chelsea and East Boston are

regularly subjected to harassment and seizure by immigration officials. Repression has intensified; Chelsea has fought against Trump’s announced withholding of federal funding for sanctuary cities. All three areas, which are located in one of the five most expensive regions for U.S. real estate, are also undergoing racist gentrification.

Early in the day, the Boston WWP Branch joined Cosecha and leaders of Team Solidarity affiliated with the Boston School Bus Union. Organizers on the union’s sound truck mobilized in Spanish, Haitian Kreol and English for over three hours throughout the three communities.

In the early afternoon, crowds gathered at Lopresti Park in East Boston and nearby churches. As community members provided food, child care, games and family activities, solidarity replaced oppression and exploitation.

Chanting slogans in Spanish, English and other languages, hundreds of marchers walked through the neighborhoods to cheers and honks, with new people joining in. The crowd gathered more steam as it approached Chelsea, where contingents from East Boston and Everett met before joining a rally at City Hall. There speakers advocated a sanctuary city, a \$15 minimum wage and other issues important to immigrants and the multinational working class.

Philadelphia

An estimated 3,000 immigrants and teachers, including Black, Brown and LGBTQ+ people, joined the fight to make Philadelphia a true sanctuary city. Several marches converged on City Hall for a multinational, multigender rally where socialists, anarchists, unionists, Black Lives Matter organizers, immigrant rights activists and others participated.

Juntos, an immigrant rights organization, and the Black and Brown Workers Collective led the major march, starting in the early morning in South Philadelphia. Declaring “A Day without immigrant, Black and Brown bodies,” immigrant workers stood up to fear and intimidation and actively forged an alliance with Black and Brown communities, once again showing they are a strong and militant force fighting capitalist exploitation.



Boston

WW PHOTO: LIZ GREEN



Philadelphia

MAY DAY IN THE U.S.: MARCHING IN SOLIDARITY



Midwest

Detroit

Progressive forces gathered downtown for the annual May Day action called by the Moratorium NOW! Coalition, the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice, the Michigan Peoples Defense Network, the Detroit Active and Retired Employees Association and WWP. These organizations have been on the frontlines of the struggle to win adequate housing, water services, education and pensions, and to end state repression and the renewed Pentagon war drive.

A rally at Grand Circus Park featured speakers from these groups and others who called for a broad united front among workers and the nationally oppressed in the U.S. and around the world. Detroit Food Not Bombs provided a meal during the dinner-time rally.

The multinational gathering then marched down Woodward Avenue. Demonstrators, including Black Youth Project 100 Detroit members, took the streets leading to the Federal Building where the crowd rallied again before proceeding past the Federal Court building and through Campus Martius Park.

Chicago

About 10,000 people participated on a rainy Chicago May Day in several rallies and a march from the Near West side to the Loop, with a majority of the multinational marchers from the Latinx community. There were significant delegations from the Service Employees and other unions.

Workers World Party participated in an anti-imperialist contingent, along with organizations representing national liberation movements in Palestine and the Philippines. Erica Anna spoke for WWP at one of the preliminary rallies, urging the crowd “to make the link between all of our struggles, to find the common thread

that flows through the oppression of us all, because once we find that, we can work to dismantle it and replace it with something better, something that truly serves the people.”

WEST

Los Angeles

Crowd estimates ranged as high as 30,000 for the May Day march in Los Angeles, which was festive as well as angry and assertive. People voiced that they would not stand by while racist policies threatened to rip their communities apart. They refused to accept ICE raids and deportations and called for an end to police violence at home and U.S. imperialist wars abroad.

The May Day Coalition, which included the County Federation of Labor and non-profit immigrant rights organizations, joined forces with the May Day General Strike Coalition, which included Workers World Party as well as the Congreso Latino, Unión del Barrio, Hermandad Mexicana, the Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Atzlan's CA for Progress, the League of United Latin American Citizens, BAYAN-USA, the National Lawyers Guild, LA for Palestine and the Freedom Socialist Party. The MDGSC joined the labor federation by City Hall after a march. The two coalitions shared speakers at start and end rallies.

The MDGSC's march and rally, with emcees Ron Gochez of Unión del Barrio and Rebecka Jackson of WWP, featured colorful flags of Latin American countries, the Black Liberation flag, and flags of other oppressed nations.

At the front of the joint rally, speakers addressed the crowd passionately, with English and Spanish translations. Speakers included one of the founders of the 2006 “Great American Boycott,” Gloria Saucedo of Hermandad Mexicana, as well as WWP members Timothy Bluitt and



John Parker, who also represented the International League of Peoples' Struggle. Angélica Salas of CHIRLA (Coalition for Humane Immigration Rights in Los Angeles) spoke for the County Federation of Labor coalition.

Dancers and drummers relentlessly performed in the scorching sun. Thousands of protesters lined up for many blocks behind large banners and chanted slogans primarily in Spanish. Most of those who gathered are struggling with on-the-ground realities of a flawed capitalist system.

San Diego

A coalition of organizations and individuals met monthly to organize the May Day rally and march in San Diego, uniting in solidarity the many groups initially planning separate actions.

Over 40 organizations endorsed International Workers' Day 2017 here, supporting all workers with the theme "Workers and Community Resist." Hundreds gathered at the downtown Fed-

eral Building for the opening rally and marched over two miles to Chicano Park for the closing rally.

Bay Area

Over 10,000 people in the Bay Area took to the streets on May Day. From Santa Rosa, San Jose, Oakland, Berkeley, Concord, Richmond and San Francisco, they demanded “Sanctuary for all, no ban, no wall” and an end to attacks on health care, education and workers’ right to organize. People stayed home from work and school. Many businesses, especially in immigrant communities, voluntarily shut down.

At 8:30 a.m., hundreds circled the ICE building in downtown San Francisco before marching to join thousands more at Chelsea Manning Plaza. At 9 a.m., the International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10 rallied at their hall near Fisherman's Wharf. Speakers there included former ILWU Local 10 Secretary-Treasurer Clarence Thomas and Lara Kiswani, director of the Arab Resource and Organizing Center. Hundreds then marched to join those at Manning Plaza.

In Oakland at 8:30 a.m., protesters arrived at the Alameda (County) Board of Supervisors office, demanding an end to the sheriff's collaboration with ICE. They called for a halt to jail expansion and the militarization of policing. Clergy chained themselves to the office door for three hours; four people were arrested.

Back in San Francisco, the rally at Chelsea Manning Plaza, organized by the Un Día Sin Inmigrantes Coalition, led into a noon march of well over 3,000 that headed to the Civic Center, site of another rally.

At 3 p.m. in Oakland, at least 3,000 people gathered at Fruitvale Plaza, shut-

Continued on the next page



French elections

Big capital tops Le Pen as many opt out

By Deirdre Griswold

The far-right, immigrant-bashing bigots in Europe and elsewhere who had hailed the election of Donald Trump in the United States didn't get a repeat of that scenario in the May 7 French election.

But the denizens of the Bourse, the French equivalent of the New York Stock Exchange, did get what they wanted, as did the capitalists oriented toward the European Union.

There are two rounds in France's presidential election process. Many parties participate in the first round; then the two with the most votes compete in the second. The election took place as the two establishment parties of the French ruling class had sunk to their lowest point in years. This time, neither the so-called Socialist Party nor the Republicans, the two parties that have dominated French politics for decades, made it to the second round.

Instead, Emmanuel Macron, a 39-year-old banker and defector from the Socialist Party, ran against Marine Le Pen, whose National Front has a long his-

tory of anti-Semitism and far-right demagoguery aimed at turning the anger and frustration of those hurting economically against French citizens of color, Muslims and all immigrants.

Jean-Luc Mélenchon, a left-social democrat who appealed to many workers, got almost as many votes as Le Pen in the first round, but not enough to put him in the runoff against Macron.

The final vote, according to the Interior Ministry, was 66.1 percent for Macron to 33.9 percent for Le Pen. Of special note is that 25 percent of the electorate did not vote, the lowest turnout in half a century. Of those who did vote, 12.3 percent deliberately cast blank ballots as a protest over the choices available — a record high.

Ruling-class support for banker Macron

There can be no doubt that the French ruling class swung behind investment banker Macron, who has never held elected office before, when it became clear the establishment party candidates had no chance. In the first round, Macron had been only two percentage points ahead of Le Pen, but his new party, En Marche!, was

then endorsed by leaders of the SP, including former Prime Minister Manuel Valls.

Le Pen was hoping that the uproar over terrorism would propel her campaign, and it undoubtedly did help win her the votes to make it to the second round. The National Front won an historic high number of votes in the second round and remains a threat. But in the end the voters rejected the National Front and its attacks on immigrants by nearly two to one.

However, the high number of abstentions and blank ballots must also be seen as a protest against both the racism of Le Pen and the pro-big-business program of Macron.

Unemployment stands at 10 percent in France. The capitalist establishment blames it on the guarantees that French workers have won over many decades of struggle, such as a 35-hour work week, long vacations and better job security than most other capitalist countries. Macron wants to cut back these gains, claiming that the economy will boom once businesses have been "unleashed."

But most workers in France don't buy that. Hence the dilemma when voting in

the second round — a choice between a rock and a hard place — and the high rate of abstentions and blank ballots.

Analysis of the election results showed that while the leftist Mélenchon got the most votes from unemployed workers in the first round, most of those voters did not come out for Le Pen in the second. Especially in the big cities, including Paris, they rejected her demagoguery that blamed unemployment on immigrants. (The Guardian, May 8)

Political struggle among various ruling-class factions for their share of the spoils is sure to continue, especially as Macron's new party has no seats in the National Assembly and will have to make deals with the other capitalist parties to get any legislation passed.

For the working class, the immediate threat from the far right is lessened, and the field is open for intensified class struggle against both the bosses in the workplace and the government that is so clearly under the control of big capital.□

May Day around the world



ting down the entire street as the Oakland Sin Fronteras Coalition held a rally. Emcees Sagnicthe Salazar of the Chicano Moratorium, Lara Kiswani of AROC, and Cat Brooks of the Anti Police-Terror Project introduced anti-imperialist representatives from South Korea, Vietnam, the Philippines, Palestine and Haiti. Demonstrators then marched to San Antonio Park, where community know-your-rights workshops were held.

The SEIU Service Workers West had called for a statewide May Day strike. Their members played a large role in supporting and organizing the marches in San Francisco and Oakland, along with other unions such as UNITE HERE and Service Workers Local 1021. Both the Alameda and San Francisco labor councils had called on their members to support all May Day events.

In San Jose, thousands more demonstrated, with buses forced to reroute and many businesses closed. People marched from the Mexican Heritage Plaza on the East Side to the downtown SAP Center.

Portland, Ore.

After months of coalition-building work, thousands of May 1 demonstrators, with an explicitly anti-capitalist message, gathered in support of immigrants, calling for no work, no school, no shopping. Union representatives, artists, housing and racial justice activists spoke. A Gabriella Portland organizer delivered a fiery speech encouraging support for national self-determination and urging that "workers of the world unite." The crowd began a permitted march led by children, families and folks with mobility issues.

To get a view of events covered in the interests of the working class with anti-racist, anti-sexist analysis, independent of the capitalist media, read *Workers World* weekly newspaper. To subscribe go to workers.org or send in the sub coupon on page 1.



Workers World Party literature table in Union Square, New York City.

When the march was well underway, the police, donning riot gear, announced they were revoking the march permit, ordering demonstrators to disperse. But the protesters refused! They persisted in marching with chants of "Keep Marching! Keep Marching!"

The police responded by attacking the rear of the march, then announced the avenue was closed. Employing flash bangs, tear gas and impact weapons, the cops attempted to kettle demonstrators. Some in the crowd retaliated against the state violence by smashing windows of businesses, lighting street fires and throwing cans of Pepsi into the ranks of the aggressors. Twenty-five workers were arrested in the crackdown, which deployed the full force of the city and county police.

Seattle

Strong protest against the anti-immigrant and anti-labor policies of the Trump regime was displayed at the Seattle May Day March for Worker and Immigrant Rights. Thousands of workers representing many labor unions, strong Latinx and Indigenous peoples' participation, and many grass-roots community, labor and political groups stretched for three miles. Nikkita Oliver, a Black Lives Matter candidate for mayor, used spoken word poetry to compare the day's call for a national general strike to the Seattle general strike of 1919 and pointed to the path forward.

A veterans' working-class, anti-war feeder march led into the May Day rally after starting from the Garden of Remembrance war memorial. Some groups represented were Veterans for Peace and Veterans Respond, which provided logistical support last fall for Indigenous resistance at Standing Rock, N.D. Andy Ribaud, of Washington Veterans Action Network, proclaimed to the crowd, "When I was at Standing Rock, it was the first time I ever felt that I was defending the people."

Abayomi Azikiwe, Gene Clancy, Sage Antonia Collins, Taryn Fivek, Terri Kay, Alex Major, Dianne Mathiowetz, Nathan Carlos Norris, Betsey Piette, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Jeff Sorel, Gloria Verdieu, WW Baltimore Bureau, WW Boston Bureau and WW Huntington, W.Va., Bureau contributed to this article.



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Thousands of Taiwanese workers marched in Taipei for higher wages and denounced worsening pensions and working conditions.

Labor unions, garment workers and their allies marched in Dhaka and other cities in Bangladesh for higher wages, better working conditions, health care, housing, and legal and union rights. The country's clothing factories supply multi-million-dollar U.S. and European transnational corporations.



The Democratic People's Republic of Korea commemorated May Day with "colorful" celebrations in its capital, Pyongyang. Art, cultural and sports exhibitions were held throughout the country. This courageous socialist country deserves international solidarity in light of increasingly bellicose threats by Washington.

In Seoul, south Korea, the 10,000-strong Korean Confederation of Trade Unions contingent within a larger march called for a decent minimum wage and chanted, "Trade union rights for all!" and "Abolish precarious work!" □



Defend Venezuela

According to a May 3 Reuters article, “An influential group of Republican and Democratic U.S. senators introduced sweeping legislation ... to address the crisis in Venezuela, including sanctioning individuals responsible for undermining democracy or involved in corruption.”

The quote cited needs translation, as it really means: **Some top Senate millionaire hawks want to grab workers’ taxes to overthrow the elected, popular government of Venezuela.**

That U.S. imperialism works to undermine the Bolivarian government in Caracas is nothing new. Washington even promoted a military coup against Hugo Chávez in 2002. The Venezuelan people smashed the coup and strengthened Venezuela’s revolution.

Earlier and much greater funding for the U.S. efforts at regime change — that is, counterrevolution — have been buried in the budgets of the CIA, AID and other organs of undercover imperialist intervention disguised as promoters of “democracy.” Now, Senate promoters of imperialist intervention like Republicans Marco Rubio and John McCain and Democrats Ben Cardin and Dick Durbin are giving the U.S. covert effort the Senate’s open blessing.

Anyone who thinks the Senate aims to save democracy should think again about its agenda. Soon, the Senate will reach some rotten compromise on the new “Health Care” Act. The millionaire senators will determine how many million

U.S. residents too poor to pay medical costs should be kicked into the nearest grave.

Does the Senate really aim to stop governmental corruption? It could start by doing something to stop the Trump family gang from profiting on everything from casinos to golf courses to stays at hotels with the presidential brand.

No, what the Senate is taking aim at is Venezuela’s sovereignty and independence. The Senate hates any attempt by Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro to better the lives of the poor people of that country at the cost of the oligarchs and imperialism.

In collusion with Venezuela’s rich and reactionaries, U.S. imperialism has disrupted the country’s economy. In collusion with the corporate media, it has exaggerated the depth of the crisis to create a pretext for intervention. In collusion with the Organization of American States — another U.S. creation — it has targeted the Venezuelan government for “regime change.”

For those who want to defend the independence of countries to the south of the United States, it is essential at this time to defend the Bolivarian government of Venezuela from this imperialist attack.

Down with the Senate plan for sanctions!
U.S. hands off Venezuela!
¡Chávez presente!
¡Maduro presidente!

The fake news about unemployment

Few workers are cheering the Labor Department’s report that the unemployment rate fell to 4.4 percent in April.

Why should they? While the jobless rate now matches the level of May 2007 — just before the latest capitalist economic crisis — it still leaves 7.1 million people “officially” unemployed.

Even the Labor Department admits that 5.3 million people who are counted as employed are forced to work part-time, even though they want and need full-time jobs. Another 1.5 million people “were not counted as unemployed because they had not searched for work in the 4 weeks preceding the survey,” according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Many people with disabilities are not included among the jobless. The 2.2 million members of the working class who are incarcerated are not even considered. Neither are the thousands who collect cans and bottles for a small deposit fee in New York and a few other states.

While the latest jobless rate for whites is 3.8 percent, the figure for Black workers is more than double that, at 7.9 percent. “Last hired, first fired” is still the racist standard for African Americans.

At the height of capitalist “prosperity,” Black workers and their families are still stuck in a recession. It’s a depression for Black teenagers, whose latest jobless rate is 29.3 percent.

Usually a drop in unemployment is accompanied by a rise in wages. Workers feel more confident in taking better-paying jobs or demanding raises.

Not this time. The average wage increase of 2.5 percent over the past 12 months was almost wiped out by inflation, which rose by 2.4 percent. For work-

ers being paid the miserable federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, inflation meant a pay cut.

All the union-busting attacks, including those against public workers, have had their effect. Over the last 40 years, thousands of union strongholds have been shut down by capitalists taking advantage of automation.

Having millions of unemployed people is a necessity for capitalist profits. Frederick Engels, the co-worker of Karl Marx, called the jobless an “industrial reserve army.”

Capitalists know this well. Samuel Insull — whose Enron-like Midwest utilities empire collapsed during the Great Depression — bragged that “the greatest aid to the efficiency of labor is a long line of men waiting at the gate.” That means women and men desperately seeking a job.

Workers put up with so much abuse because they know the boss can usually hire someone else to replace them.

While millions need a job, millions of employed are forced to work two or more jobs in order to pay the rent. “The condemnation of one part of the working class to enforced idleness by the overwork of the other part, and the converse, becomes a means of enriching the individual capitalists,” wrote Marx in “Capital.”

The labor movement needs to fight for a 30-hour workweek with no cut in pay.

The Soviet Union’s first five-year plan abolished unemployment by 1930. Socialist economic planning made holding a job a right of all Soviet workers.

We need to fight for a socialist revolution that will abolish unemployment and poverty forever. □

State escalates persecution of #J20 protesters

By Ava Lipatti

On Jan. 20, District of Columbia police cracked down on protests against Donald Trump’s inauguration by mass arresting 217 people, including protesters, legal observers, medics and journalists. Each was charged with “felony rioting,” punishable by up to 10 years in prison and a \$25,000 fine.

Since then, several have had their charges dropped, one has pleaded guilty, and another has pleaded down to a misdemeanor. But in late April, new charges were filed against the remaining defendants as well as others not arrested on Jan. 20. These included a Disrupt J20 activist whose home was raided by D.C. police on April 3.

The defendants were indicted by a grand jury on eight felony charges: five counts of property destruction, one count of rioting, one count of inciting a riot and one count of conspiracy to riot. In total, these charges carry up to 70 years in prison — essentially a life sentence.

According to the Washington Post, the #J20 demonstration was (unsurprisingly) infiltrated by undercover cops. Given this information, the persecution of over 200 people for a small amount of property damage is even more questionable.

The charges leveled against the #J20 defendants are being met with resistance. A mass movement is forming in support of the 200-some defendants, many of whom have taken a pledge not to take a plea deal. The heavy charges are meant to



Graphic for counterinaugural protests shown on the web and in the streets.

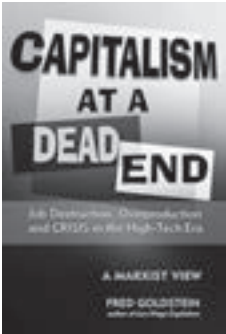
instill fear about organizing and resisting and to scare defendants into taking plea deals, but these courageous activists refuse to be intimidated.

Felony riot charges are becoming more common across the country. Nearly 300 protesters are facing felony charges in total, in cities such as New Orleans and Philadelphia.

In Jacksonville, Fla., at an April 7 protest in response to the U.S. missile strike against the Syrian government the previous day, a small group of activists and community members were met with unrelenting harassment from pro-Trump provocateurs, with support from Jacksonville police. The harassment escalated to a vicious physical attack on the protesters by both the hecklers and the cops. Five anti-war protesters were arrested and charged with felony rioting, including a deaf Black man who had to be

hospitalized due to the attack.

In addition to the new felony charges, the state is developing other means to criminalize activists and protesters. The Obama administration laid the basis by signing the Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) in December 2016. The NDAA had a stated goal to “counter foreign propaganda and disinformation,” in effect criminalizing dissent.



Capitalism at a Dead End
Job destruction, overproduction and crisis in the high-tech era

For more information on these books and other writings by the author, Fred Goldstein, go to **LowWageCapitalism.com**
Available at all major online booksellers.

GABRIELA New York

A decade of defending Filipino women

By Vijou Bryant
New York City

On April 29, 2017, 100 community members gathered to celebrate GABRIELA New York's 10-year anniversary as a mass-based women's organization committed to arousing, mobilizing and organizing local communities in New York and surrounding areas. Formerly known as Filipinas for Rights and Empowerment (FiRE), GABRIELA New York is a member organization of the national alliance GABRIELA USA, an overseas chapter of GABRIELA Philippines.

The celebratory night highlighted the early formation of FiRE, including a video message from founding members Sandy Panopio and Valerie Francisco, former chairperson of GABRIELA USA. The night continued with a comprehensive presentation of 10 years of campaign work, cultural productions, struggles and victories recapped by Jennine Ventura of GABRIELA USA, who stated, "Conducting Personal Migration discussion allows us to help Filipino women in the U.S. un-

derstand the connection between their own migration or why their families migrated here in the U.S. to the issues and conditions in the Philippines."

Zarah Viñola of the National Alliance for Filipino Concerns (NAFCON) USA highlighted the contribution of GABRIELA New York in fighting against modern day slavery under NAFCON's STOP Trafficking Our People campaign. Struggles of trafficked survivors have been the focus of the Diwang Pinay cultural program. From exposing the impact of U.S. militarization in the Philippines to canceling NBC's "Mail Order Bride" show, GABRIELA New York upholds its commitment to defend women's rights.

Interspersed throughout the program were cultural performances and recognition of key organizations and early partners like Philippine Forum with the Kabalikat Domestic Workers Network, as well as honoring longstanding solidarity allies.

Keynote speaker Monica Moorehead, 2016 U.S. presidential candidate on the Workers World Party ticket and International Women's Alliance executive com-

mittee member, stated: "When I was preparing to visit the Philippines for the first time in 2011 as a representative of the Women's Fightback Network for the First General Assembly of the International Women's Alliance, the GABRIELA sisters invited me to attend a daylong educational session at Hunter College on the historical role that women have played in the Philippines dating back to the struggle against Spanish colonialism and up to the struggle against U.S. imperialism. Not only was this informative but also extremely interactive and engaging. It really deepened my political consciousness more than any book, which really helped to prepare me for what I was about to experience in the Philippines with the GABRIELA sisters there. ... All the movements can take lessons from how GABRIELA organizes and we look forward to continuing to learn from your talents and skills to fight shoulder to shoulder with you until all forms of class rule are swept away into the dustbins of history."

As a militant women's organization



based in the U.S., GABRIELA New York continues its exposure program, designed to reveal the true current conditions and pressing issues of the Philippines through visits with different community organizations who are working to address those issues. Exposurists [as these visitors are called] have the opportunity to integrate with different sectors of Philippine society, such as the urban poor, LGBTQ people, Indigenous tribes, migrant workers and women.

Raising almost \$1,000 at the anniversary to support GABRIELA NY members' 2017 exposure trips to the Philippines, monetary contributions are encouraged to promote future "expo" programs. Go on Venmo (@GabrielaNewYork) or contact Cole Carothers (colecjcarothers@gmail.com) for more information on how to donate.

GABRIELA New York will continue to uphold the fighting legacy of Gabriela Silang, the first Filipino woman to lead a revolt against the Spanish colonization of the Philippines. In the spirit of being modern day freedom fighters, we must rise against all forms of violence, resist militarization and defend our sovereignty, and unite towards national and social liberation. Stay connected to us through social media or at www.gabrielanewyork.org

**Sulong Gabriela,
Lumaban Makibaka!
Abante Babae, Palaban Militante!
Be Gabriela!**

*The writer is the vice chair
of GABRIELA NY.*



Trump, el presidente gánster

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proyectos de infraestructura que ayudan a las antiguas colonias a superar el subdesarrollo impuesto por los imperialistas.

En un momento en que el imperialismo de EUA está fuera de balance tanto en el país como en el exterior, la clase dominante capitalista tiene que mantener a raya a su presidente gánster, para que no aumente la inestabilidad de Washington.

A pesar de todos los intentos de la clase dominante de distanciarse de Trump, el gobierno capitalista es el comité ejecutivo de la clase dominante. Karl Marx lo dijo hace mucho tiempo, y todavía es cierto hoy en día.

Hay muchas maneras en que los patronos podrían deshacerse de él, dada toda la ilegalidad de su régimen de enriquecimiento familiar. Sin embargo, la clase dominante es la responsable de mantener a Trump en el cargo y por cada acción racista y reaccionaria que éste haga. Trump es el representante de su clase, y las masas deben responsabilizar a los capitalistas por cada crimen que comete contra el pueblo. □

No war on DPRK:

People's Briefing for Korean Peace

By Terri Kay

In response to 45's (aka President Trump's) invitation to the U.S. Senate to join him at the White House for a "briefing" on Korea, a "People's Briefing for Korean Peace" was held in front of California Sen. Dianne Feinstein's office in the Financial District of San Francisco on April 27. The rally was called by Hella Organized Bay Area Koreans.

About 50 people came to demand no war on Korea. Hyejin Shim of the Korean American Coalition to End Domestic Abuse pointed out U.S. hypocrisy in calling north Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, a threat to peace: "If a volatile leader, erratic media, political suppression, massive arms buildup and nuclear bombs are the hallmark of a threat, then we must look at the U.S. as the greatest threat to countries all across the world."

Shim continued, "Since the Korean War, north Korea has not dropped a single nuclear bomb nor has it engaged in any other war or bombing. In the past few years alone, [U.S.] America has dropped bombs on seven countries, including the largest non-nuclear bomb dropped on Afghanistan just weeks ago. What is [U.S.] America's moral standing vis-à-vis north Korea when it comes to war?"



WW PHOTO: TERRI KAY

Hella Organized Bay Area Koreans demanding "No war on Korea." San Francisco, April 27.

HOBAK member Io Sunwoo said, "Feinstein claims that north Korea poses an existential threat and is the number one threat in the world." Sunwoo went on, "Ask Feinstein to sit down and have a roundtable with trans women of color about an existential crisis, because she will learn from them that every day, they face a lethal dose of policing, misogyny, a lack of opportunities for meaningful work. ... Every day, we build peace despite the state violence that shows up as overpolicing, racial profiling, police brutality, extrajudicial murders."

HOBAK's printed statement, promoting #KoreanPeace, reads in part: "From Korea to Syria to Afghanistan and beyond, we believe in a world without wars, where people can live in peace, self-

termination and dignity. ... The U.S. is rushing to deploy warships and submarines to Jeju Island and put the THAAD missile system in place in Seongju before the [May 9] election takes place. On Jeju Island, villagers have been opposing the construction of a naval base for the past decade. In Songju, people overwhelmingly oppose THAAD, and have been blockading access roads every day to stop military vehicles from entering. ... The north Korean government has expressed willingness to freeze its nuclear program and engage in talks. China has urged restraint. The U.S. is the only party that continues to refuse talks."

See the talks on video at tinyurl.com/n2zlt9p. Follow HOBAK at <https://www.facebook.com/bayareakoreans/>.

Solidarity with Palestinian prisoner hunger strike

Over 100 demonstrators picketed Chicago's Israeli Consulate on May 4 to express their solidarity with the over 1,500 Palestinian prisoners who have been on a hunger strike since April 16. They are protesting brutal conditions in Israeli jails. Speakers included Aarab Barghouti, son of Marwan Barghouti, the primary hunger strike organizer. Barghouti is serving five life sentences and has been imprisoned since 2002 for his leading role in the Second Intifada.

Detroiters also held a solidarity vigil in the neighboring city of Dearborn on May 3, called by American Muslims for

Palestine and Jewish Voice for Peace. At the close, organizer Amer Zahr drew everyone together. As the group drank a collective sip of water, Zahr asked them to think about what it means to be on hunger strike and subsist on nothing but water and salt.

—Jeff Sorel and
Martha Grevatt
contributed to
this report.

WW PHOTO: MIKE SHANE





MO/WW FOTO: JOE PIETTE

Primero de mayo de 2017, Filadelfia.

Trump, el presidente gánster

Por Fred Goldstein

De acuerdo con su papel en la sociedad capitalista, la mayoría de los altos funcionarios del gobierno, elegidos o nombrados, tienen cualidades de gánster. Estos funcionarios pasan gran parte de su tiempo conspirando esquemas con los ricos para estafar o atacar de otra manera a las masas populares. A diferencia de la mafia, deben obrar en el marco de la política capitalista.

La mafia se diferencia del establecimiento capitalista en que no está obligada a cometer sus crímenes bajo cobertura legal. Al contrario, las actividades de la mafia ocurren fuera de los límites de la legalidad burguesa con el consentimiento silencioso de la clase dominante y sus agencias policiales. Además, los crímenes de la mafia son mucho menores que los crímenes del Pentágono, la CIA y el FBI.

Dicho esto, entre los políticos burgueses con más cualidades de gánster, está Donald Trump. Él es un mimado multimillonario de bienes raíces que funciona ordenando a sus subordinadas/os, robando a contratistas y a trabajadoras/es. Cuando se ve atrapado en un error, moviliza a su ejército de abogados para que lo limpien.

Ganó la presidencia utilizando su carrera televisiva como un trampolín y aprovechando la quiebra de la dirección del Partido Demócrata. Sus estrategias de campaña también se aprovecharon de la antidemocrática institución del Colegio Electoral para conseguir una victoria electoral mientras perdían el voto popular. (Hillary Clinton ciertamente era también una enemiga del pueblo, corrupta, militarista, propiedad de Wall Street).

Presidencia como el camino hacia (más) riquezas

Trump no sólo ha rehusado desprendarse de sus multimillonarios activos, sino que ha tratado de ganar aún más al estar en la Casa Blanca. Sigue instando a líderes y asociados extranjeros a quedarse en su hotel en Washington. Ha aumentado el costo de la membresía en el club de golf de Mar-a-Lago de \$100.000 a \$200.000. Ha rehusado publicar sus declaraciones de impuestos para así cubrir sus inversiones. Tiene negocios en Turquía, Azerbaiyán y otros lugares alrededor del mundo. Ha elaborado un plan de impuestos del cual él y sus compañeros magnates inmobiliarios cosecharán cientos de millones de dólares.

Su hija, Ivanka Trump, sigue difundido su marca mundialmente. Su yerno y consejero principal Jared Kushner, mantiene su propio imperio inmobiliario. “Aunque el Sr. Kushner renunció en enero a su cargo de director ejecutivo en Kushner Companies”, informa el New York Times del 26 de abril, “sigue siendo el beneficiario de los fideicomisos que poseen el creciente negocio de bienes raíces. La firma ha participado en aproximadamente \$7 mil millones en adquisiciones durante la última década, muchas de ellas respaldadas por socios extranjeros cuyas identidades no revela”.

Ahora este bufón derechista, autoritario y fanfarrón, que no sabe nada de

política burguesa y no tiene ninguna inclinación de aprender o buscar consejo, está formalmente a cargo del imperialismo estadounidense.

Cuando Trump mete al capitalismo estadounidense en problemas con sus aliados imperialistas estadounidenses en la OTAN, o amenaza los intereses corporativos al hablar de las guerras comerciales con la República Popular China (1.3 mil millones de habitantes), Canadá y México (los dos mayores mercados comerciales de EUA), no puede conseguir que el Congreso Republicano quite asistencia de salud a 24 millones de personas, o apruebe una prohibición de viajar contra musulmanes que provoca un movimiento mundial, o amenaza con provocar una rebelión masiva diciendo que deportará a 11 millones de trabajadoras/es indocumentados, etc., todos sus subordinados, lacayos y abogados no pueden ayudarlo a salir del problema.

La clase dominante está ambivalente acerca de Trump - con razón. Por un lado, están salivando sobre su recorte de impuestos para multimillonarios y grandes corporaciones. Están extáticos por su campaña de desregulación que permite, entre otras cosas, a las compañías de carbón envenenar el agua potable, destruir las normas de emisiones de autos para ayudar a la industria automovilística y eliminar las regulaciones ambientales para ayudar a la gran industria. Y, por supuesto, les encanta sus exenciones tributarias para las compañías de seguros de salud.

Por otro lado, se sienten frustrados porque esperaban obtener grandes exenciones tributarias a partir de la revocación de la Ley de Cuidado de Salud a Bajo Precio, y querían poner sus manos en \$880 miles de millones en recortes de Medicaid para que se financiaran incentivos fiscales para los ricos. Sin embargo, aunque la clase dominante quiere aprovecharse de los recortes tributarios de Trump y las desregulaciones, no quieren que arruine su sistema. Por eso han tomado medidas contra él. Primero, lo han rodeado de generales y banqueros de Wall Street en la Casa Blanca y el Gabinete.

Limitan presupuesto de Trump y rechazan NAFTA

Pero últimamente le han dado una paliza en las negociaciones presupuestarias. En el último presupuesto de \$1,2 billones, Trump salió con las manos vacías, a pesar de toda su gritería. En las negociaciones, Trump fue rechazado por los representantes fieles de la clase dominante en el Congreso sobre cuestiones clave:

- El gasto interno aumentó, en lugar de los \$18.000 millones en recortes exigidos por Trump.
- Trump quería que el presupuesto nacional de los Institutos de Salud se redujera en \$1.2 miles de millones. En cambio, se incrementó en 2.000 millones de dólares.
- Trump pidió que el presupuesto de la Agencia de Protección Ambiental se redujera en un 33 por ciento. En cambio, se redujo en un 1 por ciento.

- Planned Parenthood continuará siendo financiado a los niveles actuales en estados que no voten para retirar la subvención.
- Trump pidió \$30.000 millones en aumento del gasto militar. Consiguió \$12.500 millones y otros \$2.500 millones cuando presente un plan para derrotar al grupo del Estado islámico.
- No hay dinero para su amado Muro de la Frontera; sólo fondos de seguridad fronteriza para nuevas tecnologías y reparaciones; de hecho, los fondos para la “seguridad fronteriza” se redujeron y no hubo dinero para una fuerza de deportación.
- Los subsidios de salud para los pobres seguirán (el dinero va a las compañías de seguros).

“El gobierno de Trump dijo que ya no estaba considerando retirarse del TLCNA, después de un día de intenso cabildeo de líderes empresariales y legisladores que se unieron para anular la discusión interna de la Casa Blanca sobre la perspectiva”, escribió el Wall Street Journal el 27 de abril. Trump se vio obligado a llamar a los presidentes de México y Canadá para decirles que había abandonado la derogación. Luego emitió un tuit diciendo que lo habían llamado, en lugar de admitir que los grandes negocios y la agroindustria lo habían obligado a retroceder.

Trump, China y la RPDC

Washington está en medio de una crisis en Corea. Aunque necesita la cooperación del régimen surcoreano para perseguir su agenda beligerante, Trump aprovechó este momento para decirle al gobierno surcoreano que quiere romper el acuerdo comercial con su país. Es un “mal acuerdo” negociado por el presidente Obama, según Trump. En realidad, fue negociado bajo George W. Bush.

Empeorando las cosas, Trump le dijo al gobierno de Corea del Sur que tendría que pagar \$1 mil millones para el sistema antimisiles THAAD del Pentágono, a pesar del acuerdo existente en que EUA pagaría el costo de su despliegue. El Asesor de Seguridad Nacional, General H. McMaster tuvo que telefonear a funcionarios surcoreanos y asegurarles que EUA pagaría. (WSJ, 30 de abril)

Trump tiene una visión excesiva de sus poderes personales. Afirma tener una buena relación con el presidente Xi Jinping de la República Popular de China. Afirma que debido a sus llamadas telefónicas con Xi, China va a ayudar al gobierno de EUA a salir de su situación con la desafiante República Popular Democrática de Corea.

Trump ha tratado de hablar suave con China y duro con la RPDC. Pero la verdad es que los líderes de la República Popular China, especialmente su ejército, el Ejército Popular de Liberación, no pueden ignorar los hechos imperantes de la crisis en la península coreana.

En una llamada telefónica el 23 de abril, el presidente Xi pidió a Trump que se abstuviera de aumentar las tensiones en la región, incluso si la RPDC anuncia-

ba pruebas de misiles o armas nucleares. Xi hizo un llamado a Trump para que no se entretenga en disputas y se mueva hacia negociaciones.

Evidentemente, no estamos de acuerdo con Xi en que la RPDC debe presionarse para que abandone su lucha por construir un elemento de disuasión nuclear. Pero, de todas formas, el jefe de la República Popular China pidió a Trump que bajara el tono.

Un día después, el 24 de abril, en plena noche, EUA desplegó en Corea del Sur el sistema anti-misiles THAAD, que está equipado con un radar de alta potencia que llega más allá de la RPDC y puede ser utilizado para espiar el Ejército chino. La República Popular China ya ha dicho que este despliegue desestabilizaría el equilibrio estratégico en la región a favor del imperialismo estadounidense.

El liderazgo chino y el EPL están conscientes de la amenaza. No puede ser coincidencia que el mismo día del despliegue, China probó su primer portaaviones de fabricación nacional. El buque se completará en 2020. “China ha lanzado su primer portaaviones construido por sí sola, en una demostración de la creciente sofisticación técnica de sus industrias de defensa y la determinación de salvaguardar sus reivindicaciones territoriales marítimas y rutas comerciales cruciales. El transportador de 50.000 toneladas fue remolcado de su astillero justo después de las 9 de la mañana del miércoles.” (Washington Post, 26 de abril)

Pero el mensaje implícito es que China tiene su propio poder naval, incluyendo un portaaviones armado y funcional construido por la ex-URRS que obtuvo de Ucrania y fue restaurado. China contuvo su respuesta a Trump y al Pentágono al no desplegar su portaaviones armado y desplegar en su lugar el aún sin terminar. Pero el mensaje fue enviado.

Lo que también queda claro de estos acontecimientos es que el imperialismo estadounidense y el Pentágono son los enemigos tanto de la RPDC como de la República Popular China. El Pentágono obra por venganza contra la RPDC porque este heroico país socialista se ha enfrentado sin temor a Washington, tan firmemente ahora como lo hizo durante la Guerra de Corea de 1950-53, cuando rechazó la poderosa máquina de guerra estadounidense.

El imperialismo estadounidense también se opone a la República Popular China porque, a pesar del crecimiento de millones y multimillonarios capitalistas dentro del país socialista, el Partido Comunista de China y el Ejército Popular de Liberación siguen siendo guardianes de las empresas estatales y de la planificación económica que son características del socialismo.

Washington se da cuenta de que mientras el imperialismo estadounidense está sumido en el estancamiento económico y crisis militares y políticas en todo el mundo, China se está fortaleciendo cada vez más, tanto económica como militarmente. Está aumentando su influencia en Asia, África y América Latina a través de

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