Venezuela resists U.S. sabotage

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Never before has the Venezuelan Bolivarian process faced such a dangerous threat as it does today. This is true even though U.S. imperialism and its collaborators in Venezuela have imposed a continuous siege on the country ever since Hugo Chávez became president in 1999. Their hostile actions included a coup d'état, which was quickly defeated, and sabotage of Venezuela's nationalized oil company.

Now that campaign has intensified and includes the possibility of direct military intervention to achieve their goal of “regime change.” For the last two months those opposing the revolutionary process, led mainly by the so-called Democratic Unity Roundtable (MUD), have committed violent actions daily.

Fascist acts of terror

These criminal acts have been directed with surgical accuracy against people identified as pro-Chavista. The reactionaries have targeted state establishments, too. The criminals have burned or destroyed everything — from entire fleets of public buses and offices of the government party, the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV), to maternity and children’s hospitals. They recently burned down Chávez’s childhood home.

These terrorists have already killed about 60 people. Their cruelty is unimaginable, as is their terrible racist character. After identifying a young Afro-Venezuelan as a Chavista, the criminals set him on fire, chased him and then stabbed him. When some women from the wealthy sector of Altamira in Caracas saw an Indigenous woman, a well-known artist, they shouted at her, insulted her, and kicked and hit her with flag poles. Paid criminal gangs and Colombian paramilitaries are also involved in these terrorist acts. The Venezuelan government denounced the use of children in these attacks to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). (Diario Octubre, May 25)

It is important to emphasize that although the corporate media present these terrorist acts as chaos at the national level, they are generally limited to the areas where the mayor’s or governor's office is in the reactionary opposition’s hands. In the neighborhoods where poor people live, they are not joining in these acts of terror. The attacks against the Bolivarian revolution have taken place not just inside Venezuela, but the country’s embassies and consulates have been targeted as well.

Continued on page 6
Victory in Baltimore
Charges dropped for May Day protesters

By Baltimore Workers World bureau

Three demonstrators who were arrested while protesting at the Immigration and Customs Enforcement office on May 1 won their cases in court on May 22.

Those whose charges were dismissed include the Rev. C.D. Witherspoon, a noted Baltimore activist and former president of the Baltimore Southern Christian Leadership Conference; Rashia Rawanpathirana, an immigrant, filmmaker and representative of Workers World Party; and Andrew Mayton, a union activist. A fourth protester, Baltimore law student Alex Summefield, is scheduled to go to trial on June 4. All four had been charged with “failure to obey.”

On May 1, after hundreds marched from downtown Baltimore, the four were arrested at Baltimore city hall as they demanded that ICE shut down. They were also demanding a $15-an-hour minimum wage and an end to racism and police terror.

Sharon Black, speaking for the Baltimore People’s Power Assembly, the organizer of the demonstration, said, “ICE is the notorious agency that has brutally separated immigrant families and deported scores of immigrants under new orders from the Trump administration.”

Black continued, “This is a victory today. Our demand to stop deportations is all the more urgent since the Trump administration is considering ending the Temporarily Protected Status on Haitian immigrants.

“The Haitians eligible for TPS, who are mainly survivors of natural disasters in Haiti that made their lives there impossible, have recently had their status extend- ed, but only for six months. The People’s Power Assembly and Workers World Party point out that if their TPS is withdrawn, it would put some 50,000 Haitian people at risk for immediate deportation.”

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When you join the Supporter Program for $75 a year, you receive a year’s subscription to WW, a monthly letter about timely issues and five free subscriptions to give to friends. For $100 a year also get a new publication or book from World View Forum. For $300 ($245 a month) or more, you get your pick of five books. Write checks to Workers World and mail them, with your name and ad- dress, to 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. Or donate online at workers.org/donate/; it’s easy to set up monthly deductions. We are grateful for your help in building Workers World — for today and for the future!

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Wages are lower than ever, and youth are saddled with seemingly insurmountable student debt, if they even make it to college. Black and Brown youth and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis. WWF fights for socialism because the working class produces all wealth in society, and this wealth should re- main in the hands of those who have stolen in the form of capital- ist profits. The wealthy workers create should be socially owned and its distribution planned to satisfy and guar- antee basic human needs.

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If you hate the class system that keeps women and people of color in low-wage jobs
If you oppose the blatant war mongering targeting Syria, North Korea and Afghanistan
If you worry that the capitalist crisis is only getting worse under the Billionaire in Chief
If you’re sick and tired of the bankers and bosses getting tax breaks while making the workers pay for the crisis they didn’t create
If you want to fight for a way of life based on economic planning, equitable distribution of wealth and justice for all in a socialist system
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**Trump: Front man for Wall St., Pentagon**

By Fred Goldstein

Donald Trump came back from his overseas trip to Saudi Arabia, Israel and Europe resuming his plans to launch full-scale attacks on the workers and the oppressed through his budget, his health care bill and tax cuts for the rich.

That being said, he has also managed to make two major foreign policy moves that push U.S. imperialist policy further to the right.

In Saudi Arabia, he formalized and weaponized an anti-Iranian alliance with the House of Saud and the royal oil puppets in the Gulf States. The U.S. has had an alliance with the Saudis for 70 years.

The reactionary monarchy has been a pillar of U.S. imperialism, the Pentagon and Big Oil, with four huge U.S. military bases in the country. This new outsourcing to the Saudis of U.S. military intervention is a further turn toward U.S. proxy war and aggression in the region.

In addition, Trump managed to do severe damage to the Washington-Berlin-Paris alliance as expressed in NATO. He went on Europe's television to denounce the European imperialist rivals for being deadbeats — i.e., not paying their NATO bills. This is a severe attack on the U.S. military-industrial complex and Pentagon.

The U.S. ruling class and the Pentagon will have to ponder this. Angela Merkel, chancellor of Germany, made a speech after Trump’s trip saying that Europe would have to rely on itself.

U.S. imperialism has relied on NATO for decades. NATO has troops in Afghanistan, which has already killed 1.5 million Afghans. NATO was used to stop the Portuguese revolution in 1974 and the French workers’ uprising in 1968. French and British imperialism held down the struggle in Africa using NATO.

The Pentagon needs NATO and they know it. Secretary of Defense Gen. James Mattis and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson have both pledged loyalty to the alliance.

From the point of view of the workers and the oppressed, anything that weakens imperialism is a positive develop ment. We should not moan over Trump’s refusal to say that he will stay with the alliance. We should be happy if the U.S. ruling class and the Pentagon needs NATO and they have both pledged loyalty to the alliance.

A further problem for big sections of the corporate ruling class is Trump’s refusal to stay on the Paris climate accord. Many of the Fortune 500 corporations, such as GM, Microsoft, Ford, Amazon, etc., are moving toward low carbon and renewable energy as a matter of policy. Almost half of the Fortune 500 companies have adopted at least one climate or clean-energy goal, with 23 of them pledging eventually to pay their carbon footprint.

Forty of the 500 corporations have adopted at least one climate or clean-energy goal, with 23 of them pledging eventually to pay their carbon footprint.

They have committed to 100% renewable energy, including Walmart, Bank of America and Google.

Whether or not these pledges are fulfilled, it represents a recognition by the bosses that climate change is a real threat to them and their profits. Even companies that are in Appalachian coal country are not using coal any more. (New York Times, May 26)

Key sections of the ruling class are finally talking seriously the climate danger, just as when Trump wants to wreck any progress in environmental protection.

These developments may intensify the challenge when Trump is opening a full-scale assault against the workers and oppressed, the anti-Russia campaign is the last thing that the movement should be thinking about when Trump’s Pentagon attack on Iran.

The Democratic Party leadership is in the vanguard of this diversionary anti-Russia campaign. He is planning to cut $800 million from Medicaid, which would destroy rural hospitals and nursing homes. He wants to cut back drug clinics, cancer research, environmental protection, job safety and student loan forgiveness, among many other things. His budget would wipe out Meals on Wheels, cut SNAP (food stamps) by billions of dollars and attack women’s health care around the world.

And this after returning from a foreign trip where he served as a front man for big business and the Pentagon war makers.

At the very moment that his administration was planning massive tax cuts for the rich and major cutbacks for the poor, Trump was in Saudi Arabia heaping praise upon one of the most reactionary monarchies in the world. He was wined and dined androyed by the royal princes of the feudal-capitalist patriarchal Saudi clan.

Women are the virtual property of men in Saudi Arabia. Trump made not even a mention of the status of Saudi women.

The princes rolled out the red carpet, gave him a sword to dance with, projected a 276-foot picture of him on the side of a building and had photo ops of him sitting surrounded by royals and luxury in the palace in Riyadh.

**Pentagon $110 billion sale**

In return, the monarchy got $110 billion worth of weapons to wage a war of aggression against the people of Yemen and raise the military threat to Iran.

The military-industrial complex, the Pentagon death machine, was able to sell Abrams tanks, combat ships, missile defense systems, radar, and communications and cyber-security technology, among other things. The Saudis are also getting a billion-dollar Thaad (Ter rital High Altitude Area Defense) system like the one the Pentagon just rushed into south Korea, as well as $500 million worth of precision-guided bombs.

Much of this military package was already approved by the Obama administration last fall. Obama offered the Saudis $135 billion in military aid (Reuters, Sept. 17, 2016), but held up on sending precision-guided bombs and other weapons.

Trump just went to Saudi Arabia to bask in the deal. Trump’s Pentagon-guided White House and cabinet, with three ranking generals, included the precision bombs even as the Saudis are escalating the massive killing of civilians in Yemen. The generals had been promised a $135 billion Thaad system.

**Big business and banking alongside Trump**

In addition to the military contracts, the Saudi sovereign wealth fund also signed contracts with U.S. corporations worth hundreds of billions of dollars.

Dozens of the biggest names in U.S. business went in Trump’s entourage. Jamie Dimon of JP Morgan Chase, Michael Corbat of Citigroup, James Gorman of Morgan Stanley, Andrew Liveris of Dow Chemical and Stephen Schwarzman of Blackstone were among the U.S. chief executives attending a business forum, along with General Electric vice chair John Rice. The heads of military contractors Lockheed, Boeing and Raytheon also went along.

The deals included agreements with Saudi Aramco, the state energy giant, and U.S. companies. They involve oil services groups Schlumberger, Halliburton and Weatherford International, drilling contractors Halliburton, Nabors Industries and Rowan Companies, and engineering and construction companies KBR, Jacobs Engineering Group and McDermott International. (New York Times, May 17)

The Saudi-U.S. CEO Forum was held on the same day that Trump met King Salman of Saudi Arabia. The Saudi chief executives attending included Amin Nasser of Saudi Aramco and Yousif Al-Benyan of Sabic, a plastics, chemicals and fertilizer group that plans to build the world’s largest ethylene plant in Texas as part of Saudi Arabia’s diversion in the struggle against U.S. imperialism.

**Al-Benyan’s former firm, ExxonMobil,**

Trump cutbacks destroy jobs

Trump and Tillerson tried to justify these deals as creating jobs. Trump made a grinning triumphant remark about his deals creating “jobs, jobs, jobs.” Actually, the Trump health care plan and his budget are job destroyers. Cutbacks in Federal employment endanger tens of thousands of government workers, in the Environmental Protection Agency and National Institutes of Health to Forest Protection Service, the Labor Department, the National Endowment for the Arts and other targeted government departments.

Trump wants to cut $354 billion in federal spending in order to make up for the increase of $54 billion to the Pentagon.

His health care cuts will not only throw 23 million people off the health care rolls but will also throw millions out of work. Health care created more jobs than any other sector in 2016, helping to drive total annual job growth to 2.2 million, according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

A report released by the Commonwealth Fund and the Milken Institute School of Public Health at George Washington University found that repeating key provisions of the Affordable Care Act, including the insurance premium tax credits and Medicaid expansion, could lead to 2.6 million people losing their jobs by 2019. By 2027, nearly 3 million jobs in health care and other sectors could be lost. (Modern Healthcare, Jan. 6)

Trump rages against China and Mexico for destroying jobs at home. He is scapegoating these countries in order to whip up workers and pander to his racist base. Trump says protectionism is the answer. Actually, the real job destroyer is technology.

Far more jobs have been destroyed by automation than by offshoring. One authoritative study says that 13 percent of job losses in the U.S. come from trade while 87 percent have been lost to automation. (New York Times, Dec. 21, 2016)

Furthermore, capitalist overproduction is destroying jobs at this very moment. The auto industry has recently preferred to shut down a plant rather than to negotiate a contract. Overproduction of mills and
ILWU Local 10 halts work to fight racism

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

In a stunning worker action against racism, about 100 members of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10 walked out May 25 at one of the largest and busiest terminals in the Port of Oakland. They suspended all operations there and brought international container traffic to a complete standstill for hours. Container trucks were backed up all around the port and on Interstate 880.

The ILWU called the shutdown to protest blatant racist acts at the job site, including the discovery that morning of a noose, a despicable symbol of white supremacy and lynching, inside a truck used by ILWU members. According to Der- rick Muhammad, the union’s secretary-treasurer, about 60 percent of the ILWU local is African American. (KPIX 7)

Muhammad noted that an unspecified number of nooses have been found at the terminal in recent weeks. They have been left on a fence, on the ground and on trucks. Another noose was found as recently as May 15. In late 2015, someone had spray painted a piece of equipment with a racist slur against African Americans. (East Bay Times, May 26)

Muhammad said that longshore work is already inherently dangerous, and all workers need to know that their co-workers “have their backs.” He stressed “that every worker has the right to work in a safe environment.” He pointed out that this fact makes the racist acts “a bonafide health and safety issue because of the history behind the noose and what it means for Black people in America.” A health and safety issue is an acceptable reason for a job walkout under standard union contracts.

The East Bay Times reported that ILWU International President Robert McEllrath issued a statement that “the ILWU is a progressive and diverse union, and we reject in the strongest possible terms racism in all its forms. The display of a hangman’s noose for the second time in two weeks at the work site is insalubrious and expressly prohibited conduct under the terms of the ILWU-PMA collective bargaining agreement. The Union is committed to securing a non-discriminatory work environment for all individuals working at the ports.”

ILWU Local 10 has a long and militant history of progressive work actions, from its leadership in the 1934 San Francisco general strike under Marxist Harry Bridges to its boycotts of South African apartheid cargo, starting in 1962.

More recently, in 2010 the local shut down the port to protest the murder of Oscar Grant, an African-American man killed by cops at Oakland’s nearby Fruitvale Station. Last year the local affirmed its support for Indigenous sovereignty at Standing Rock, N.D., and this year refused to work on Jan. 20, Inauguration Day, to protest the election of Trump and the ramping up of attacks on working and oppressed people, especially unions.

Every racist act or symbol at a workplace is significant because racism is always an attack on the solidarity and unity of workers. The recent action by Local 10 is a call to all workers to fight against racism and for solidarity at their jobs with creative and militant actions.

Trump: Front man for Wall St., Pentagon

Continued from page 3

retail stores, together with online buying, have led to tens of thousands of layoffs and tens of thousands more to come.

Trump has no answer to other bubbling crises. For example, student loans have reached $1.3 trillion. In the first quarter of 2017, consumer debt rose to $12.73 trillion, exceeding its peak in the third quarter of 2008. (New York Times, May 17)

Booming auto sales have more to do with low interest rates and getting re-elected in 2020. It is doubtful he is even aware of it, let alone trying to deal with it. His preoccupation is with making money now and getting re-elected in 2020.
A few weeks ago, a trans person of color was brutally assaulted on the street in the Chelsea district of Manhattan and, despite being brought to a hospital and treated, didn’t survive. This person, believed to be a trans woman, was dubbed Ms. Bostick by local reporters, as they were unfamiliar with their gender identity. This tragedy almost went unnoticed, as virtually no news outlets reported on it. This is precisely the trans community only re- ceived word of it well after the fact, and it took much investigation to learn any details about the victim that might give clues about who they were. Those of us who advocate for the lives of trans women of color are more than aware that this was not an isolated incident.

The number of trans women of color living in the United States who are murdered each year is not a figure that is easy to calculate. We all know that there are too many trans women who have no choice but to memorize one of their sisters. Ms. Bostick had few connections to such communities here and nearly fell through the cracks. It’s certain that others have been less lucky, and for this reason those counting deceased trans women often rely on their toll with the terribly familiar phrase “that we know of.”

Capitalist system targets trans people

Why does this happen? Why are trans women of color so frequently targeted for deadly violence, and what can we do, not just as individuals, but as an organization, to combat it?

The answer is complex, but not impenetrable. It’s not difficult to see that the ongoing cultural and political war against trans people in which they are placed, mocked, excluded, portrayed as a symptom of patriarchal society in decay, even blamed for the shortcomings of certain liberal politicians. But the social percep- tion of trans women is not the primary catalyst of this oppression; for trans oppression, like any other, including racism, goes far deeper than individual bigotry. Transphobic violence appears in many insidious, forms, including medical pathologization, legal discrimination and, ultimately, economic exploitation. Trans people face repression at the hands of the medical state apparatus, which labels “gender dysphoria” a medi- cal disorder just as it once did homonegativity. Most medical institutions are not well equipped to deal with trans patients, and access to gender-affirming therapies and procedures is still fraught with certain absurd requirements and waiting times, forcing trans patients to go without essential services simply to demonstrate their suffering is genuine. Meanwhile, similar ubiquitously job discrimination, including obstacles to applicants, harassment and firings, pre- vents trans people from finding reliable employment. The violent criminalization of the trans population often turns to, also to add to the crisis. In addition to putting trans women in harm’s way at the hands of abusive clients, the loss of long-term ramifications ultimately lead to more trans women subjected to the horrors of the prison system. Ms. Bostick was homeless at the time of their assault, and a leading theory is that their assailant met them prior to the incident in a local homeless shelter. The life of Ms. Bostick might not have been cut short had they not been homeless.

So why are so many working-class trans people, even those lucky enough to not have been rejected by their families, im- poverished and without housing?

The answer is economic exploitation, oppression, and poverty, not simply any form of oppression, because it allows us to see how its manifestations are con- nected. In addition to the crises of capital that face working-class workers and discrimination faced by people of color, the aforementioned high cost of trans medical care, along with housing and job discrimination, form a virtually unbreakable cycle of poverty and homelessness. This perspective reveals that the fault lines lie not simply with the perpetrators of these individual injustices, but with the entire capitalist system that permits them.

Socialist Cuba combats transphobia

In order to achieve trans liberation, we must achieve socialism.

As an example of the struggle for trans liberation outside of capitalism, we look in particular to the socialist nation of Cuba, which in recent years has taken major steps toward combating transphobia, providing comprehensive legal protections on behalf of trans people, and incorporating gender-affirming health care into its socialized medical care system.

This last point is perhaps the most significant difference between the standing of trans people in the U.S. and in Cuba. Hormone replacement therapy and sex reassignment surgery are provided in Cuba completely free of cost to transgen- der people upon request. This is because health care and housing are provided to all Cuban citizens. There is no medical industry to exploit transphobic patients. There are no landlords to evict trans- gender tenants, and there are widespread programs of free mental health such as literacy education and raising public awareness of the trans struggle.

Just a few weeks ago, thousands marched in Havana for the 10th annual March Against Transphobia and Homophobia. The achievements of LGBT people in revolutionary Cuba are a shining beacon that reminds us that gay and trans liberation are not only achievable, but already happening.

The tremendous obstacles faced by trans people in order to survive are not insignificant issues to be solved in the general struggle. While championing legislation that offers protections to trans people can be beneficial in the short term, this cannot be the extent of our praxis. There is too much so we can accomplish within the confines of a fundamentally unjust and exploitative system, because the root of the problem lies in the system itself. We should not view the struggle for justice as individual battles to be fought, but a war to be won. Trans liberation will not be achieved in the courts and pockets of the capital- istic ruling class. It must be fought for.

Marxism, Reparations & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper. Edited by Monica Moorehead. Racism, National Oppression and Self-Determination. Larry Holmes

Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery. Sam Mincy

Black Youth: Repression & Resistance. LaJuan Crayler

The Struggle for Socialism in Key. Marcia Hosein

Domestic Workers Demand a Bill of Rights. Sharice Williams

Black & Brown Unity. Salam Muhammad

Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior. Numa Abu-Jamal

Are Conditions Ripe Again Today? The 1965 Watts Rebellion. John Parker

Available at online booksellers.
Massive protests demand ouster of president and director

By John Catalinotto

May 20 — In one of the largest demon- strations in 20 years of existence of the Workers' Party of Brazil, some 150,000 workers, farmers, youth and members of social organiza- tions protested on May 24 the attack on Brazil's National Constituent Assembly, which is protecting workers. They demanded that unelected president Michel Temer get out, and that he be followed by direct elec- tions for that office.

The mass response to ruling-class at- tacks continues to grow in Brazil. The rul- ing class cannot stop the growing con- tention and the clamor, and the economy is in free-fall. The possibility that this struggle will go far beyond replacing an individual — Temer — is rapidly growing.

The May 24 protest was immediately met by an attack from police, who injured 49 people and killed one, using rubber bullets, tear and pepper gas, and clubs. People fought back, occupying some gov- ernment buildings.

Temer took the drastic step of order- ing 1,500 army and navy troops into the streets. Memories of Brazil's 1964-1985 military dictatorship around more resis- tance. The congressional opposition, even from his own party, forced Temer to with- draw the troops within hours.

According to the May 26-30 issue of the newspaper Trabalho, the opposition had been organized by the central unions and federations: “Metal workers, chemists, farmers, teachers, medical workers, construc- tion workers, security and service workers, students, women's movements and party leaders came from caravans from all of Brazil to join the strike, clear and with a clear tone: ‘No to government attacks on welfare programs and labor rights.’”

The Brasilia protest was a follow-up to another massive national strike, involving some 35 million to 40 million workers. The strike called for defense of public welfare programs and the CUT — the collection of laws that protect workers' rights — and the ouster of the Temer government.

A public meeting on May 28 led by musicians and other artists gathered 100,000 people in Rio de Janeiro and ended with people shouting what have become the unifying demands of the left and workers’ movements: “Temer out!” and “Direct elections now!”

Will Temer leave office?

Temer, never a popular politician, has hit a new low. According to the May 27 New York Times, polls show that 88 per- cent of the people want him to go, and another polls show only 5 percent support him. Brazil's economy shrinks by nearly 8 percent in the last two years, and unemploy- ment has reached 14 percent. (Al-Jazeera, May 28)

Even sectors of the ruling class that had earlier backed Temer are beginning to doubt his efficacy. People who would have been willing to drop the government are outraged. “Temer claimed on May 26 that he would not step down, which is no surprise to us. It is a sign that he himself should go to jail if he's no longer president. The longer he clinging to the of- fice, however, the longer a massacre

Venezuela's provokes U.S. sabotage

Contintued from page 1

including the consulate in New York City. Physical attacks or insults have been lev- elled against Venezuelans and other people who are seen as being in solidarity with Bolivarian Venezuela, such as filmmaker Oliver Stone.

Washington's hostile plans

Through the Organization of American States and its president, Luis Almagro, the U.S. has mounted an international campaign to impose the so-called "OAS Democratic Charter" on Venezuela and to campaign to impose the so-called "OAS Democratic Charter" on Venezuela and to violence, calling President Nicolás Maduro a "dictator." He listed the right- wing coup that overthrow progressive governments in Paraguay and Honduras and the ouster of Brazil's former Presi- dent Dilma Rousseff.

"And what is still missing?" he asked. "The coup d'etat of Jan. 23, 1999, in Venezuela, where they were attacking the workers and security workers,茹 protect workers’ rights — and the ouster of the Temer government.

A public meeting on May 28 led by people who have been promoting." He listed the right- wing coup that overthrow progressive governments in Paraguay and Honduras and the ouster of Brazil's former Presi- dent Dilma Rousseff.


May 29 — In one of the largest demon- strations in 20 years of existence of the Workers' Party of Brazil, some 150,000 workers, farmers, youth and members of social organiza- tions protested on May 24 the attack on Brazil's National Constituent Assembly, which is protecting workers. They demanded that unelected president Michel Temer get out, and that he be followed by direct elec- tions for that office.

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The May 24 protest was immediately met by an attack from police, who injured 49 people and killed one, using rubber bullets, tear and pepper gas, and clubs. People fought back, occupying some gov- ernment buildings.

Temer took the drastic step of order- ing 1,500 army and navy troops into the streets. Memories of Brazil's 1964-1985 military dictatorship around more resis- tance. The congressional opposition, even from his own party, forced Temer to with- draw the troops within hours.

According to the May 26-30 issue of the newspaper Trabalho, the opposition had been organized by the central unions and federations: “Metal workers, chemists, farmers, teachers, medical workers, construc- tion workers, security and service workers, students, women's movements and party leaders came from caravans from all of Brazil to join the strike, clear and with a clear tone: ‘No to government attacks on welfare programs and labor rights.’”

The Brasilia protest was a follow-up to another massive national strike, involving some 35 million to 40 million workers. The strike called for defense of public welfare programs and the CUT — the collection of laws that protect workers' rights — and the ouster of the Temer government.

A public meeting on May 28 led by people who have been promoting." He listed the right- wing coup that overthrow progressive governments in Paraguay and Honduras and the ouster of Brazil's former Presi- dent Dilma Rousseff.

"And what is still missing?" he asked. "The coup d'etat of Jan. 23, 1999, in Venezuela, where they were attacking the workers and security workers, who have been promoting." He listed the right- wing coup that overthrow progressive governments in Paraguay and Honduras and the ouster of Brazil's former Presi- }
can develop that unites the workers, landless peasants, farmers, women, youth and all the left political parties. The protest movement has shown how the last August the Brazilian ruling oligarchy conspired to oust elected President Dilma Rousseff of the Workers Party and replace her with someone who would, without hesitation, cater to the interests of imperialists and Brazil's super-rich. Their goal was an open attack on Brazilian workers and farmers, with freedom to pillage the natural resources of this vast country whatever the cost to the environment. Instead of the people, the petit-bourgeois coup against Rousseff also strengthened U.S. imperialism in Brazil and all Latin America, where Brazil's role is so important. This maneuver had the blessing of U.S. politicians and Wall Street.

Corruption and impeachment

Last year Congress impeached Rousseff, accusing her of corruption based on a technicality. She had made administrative adjustments to the national budget that violated the country's balanced budget law and normally not legal grounds for impeachment. Rousseff had already made concessions to Brazilian capital, but they were insufficient to stop its assault. These concessions, however, did weaken mass support for her and for the Workers Party. More than 200 representatives in the Congress that impeached Rousseff were themselves facing investigation for their role in actual crimes. They impeached Rousseff to try to stop the investigations.

The politician who led the impeachment battle, Eduardo Cunha, has subsequently been convicted of corruption and sentenced to 15 years in prison. A similar fate hangs over Temer. Former President Luis Ignacio da Silva (Lula) of the Workers Party is still a popular favorite for the regularly scheduled presidential elections. There is some discussion of arranging an agreement between Temer and Lula to install a parliamentarian, a conservative, to replace Temer. If the ruling class is unable to arrange a smooth political transition in Brazil, the Temer impeachment action throws out this, will open space for a bigger working-class struggle and victory.

At its 70th World Assembly in Geneva on May 26, the World Health Organization unanimously bestowed its Public Health award on Cuba's Henry Reeve Brigade.

The brigade won wide recognition and even favorable corporate news headlines from 14 countries for providing West Africa with 250 frontline fighters against the Ebola epidemic, which had threatened to spread across the globe. Dr. Félix Baez Sarría, member of the brigade, accepted the presentation with Roberto Morales, Cuba’s minister of public health. After surviving an Ebola infection, Dr. Baez Sarría voluntarily returned to the West African frontlines.

Fidel Castro, the historical leader of the Cuban Revolution, formed the Henry Reeve Brigade on Sept. 19, 2005. At that time, nearly 2,000 Cuban medical professionals had been assembled to assist the people, oil and gas price, which were strained on New Orleans rooftops and packed into the storms coliseum because of hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

But President George Bush rejected Cuba’s offer. These volunteers then became the Henry Reeve Brigade, named for a young internationalist combatant from the U.S. who died in 1876 fighting for Cuban independence from Spain. Shunned by the Bush administration, the Cuban doctors preparing to help the people of New Orleans were instead deployed to help earthquake survivors in Pakistan, high in the Himalayan mountains.

According to a May 26 Prensa Latina report, the 7,254 Cuban medical professionals honored had assisted in emergency situations in 19 countries, including twice each in Haiti and Chile. “They attended to more than 3.5 million people, saved the lives of 1,860,000 patients, according to estimates.”

U.S. spends on military, Cuba on health

The U.S., the richest imperialist country in the world, has a military budget that far exceeds the other top nine military budgets combined. President Donald Trump has just arranged to sell the Saudi kingdom, which has been slaughtering people in Yemen, $110 billion in new military hardware. Yet the budget being sent to Congress slashes domestic and international spending on health care, which impacts heavily on women.

Spending for HIV/AIDS and malaria is being reduced. Cuban doctors have point out that deaths from malaria in Africa far exceed those from HIV. But, even when Minustah, the military occupation, is gone, the vaccine and distribution be more than doubled, from 300 gourdes to 800 gourdes a day — 300 gourdes to 800 gourdes a day — 300 dollars to 800 dollars come to around $13 U.S.

High prices have continued. The government of Haiti controls the industrialization sector under U.N. command, is the highest percentage of any Latin American, Central American or Caribbean country.

Cuba’s Latin American School of Medicine also trains doctors from underserved communities around the world — including U.S. inner cities and rural areas — so they can return home to serve the people. Cuba’s international health project is a reflection of its internal commitment. Providing health care through a centralized, socialist, planned system has resulted in health statistics equal to or exceeding those in the U.S. Dr. Morales Ojeda reported that the 2016 life expectancy at birth in Cuba was 78.45 years. Cuba has an immunization program that protects against 13 diseases. It produces most of the vaccines used, providing 98 percent of the population with coverage.

In 2015, Cuba became the first country in the world to officially eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis.

“The foundations for the National Health System in Cuba were drawn up in 1959, the driving force behind which was the historic leader of the Cuban Revol ution, Fidel Castro Ruz,” Morales Ojeda told the assembly. The WHO Public Health Prize goes to Cuba

By Cheryl LaBash

Dr. Roberto Morales Ojeda, Minister of Health of Cuba, and Dr. Felix Baez, Henry Reeve International Medical Brigade, receive World Health Organization Public Health, Dr. Roberto Morales Ojeda, Minister of Health of Cuba, and Dr. Felix Baez, Henry Reeve International Medical Brigade, receive World Health Organization Public Health Prize. Cuban medical professionals mobilized for Ne. Photo: L. CIPRIANI/WHO

Homeland Security threatens to expel Haitians

By G. Dunkel

John Kelly, secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, has told the 58,000 Haitians living in the U.S. under Temporary Protective Status to get their temporary status upgraded and prepared to leave in six months. The TPS allows these Haitians to work, drive and pay taxes in the U.S.

Kelly claims that the economy and social conditions in Haiti have improved so much that this is a reasonable time limit. But even if there is a palpable improvement, justifiably short by the Haitian community. Conditions in Haiti are still dire in many parts.

While the rubble from the 2005 earthquake has finally been cleared, the tens of thousands of houses destroyed in the quake remain uninhabitable all over Haiti is in desperately short supply.

Cholera, introduced into Haiti by Unit ed Nations forces in 2010, will remain important when Minustah, the military occupation of Haiti under U.N. command, is replaced in October by a smaller “police” force. The cholera epidemic killed close to 9,000 Haitians, with hundreds of thousands sickened. All that had a consequ ently profound impact on the economy. In 2016, Hurricane Matthew devast ated Haiti’s breadbasket in the south west, its most productive agricultural area. Nine hundred people died and tens of thousands lost their homes. Roads, bridges and all kinds of economically necessary facilities were either damaged or destroyed. Food prices in Haiti spiked; high prices have continued.

The government of Haiti controls the price and distribution of gas and diesel. In May, it significantly raised the price of these items — 300 gourdes for gasoline. This will produce an additional general price rise in all manner of goods, from rice to oil and toilet paper.

Since May Day, the textile workers at the maquiladoras in the Sonapi Indust rial Park in Port-au-Prince have risen up and been joined by workers in the Caracol Industrial Park on the northeast coast near the Dominican Republic border.

These workers are demanding that the minimum wage for garment manuf acturing be more than doubled, from 300 gourdes to 800 gourdes a day — 300 dollars to 800 dollars come to around $13 U.S.

Factory owners are opposed to the increase on the grounds that it will reduce Haiti’s attractiveness to investment in “low-cost” manufactured goods. They want the so-called Superior Council of Salaries to maintain the current low wage schedule.

But the workers have taken to the streets and confronted the policies and the policy makers.

Protests have grown so intense and militant that the bosses have had to close the plants from time to time over the past three months. President Jovenel Moïse on May 23 telephoned a so-called “dialog” between the bosses and the workers.

Meanwhile, the tens of thousands of Haitian-Dominicans expelled from the Dominican Republic in the past two years are stuck in camps on the Domin ican-Haitian border. The Haitian econ omy has not been able to withstand the profound impact of the closing of the border.

For the U.S. head of Homeland Security to declare the economy of Haiti has “improved” ignores the hundreds of workers already in the streets who are protesting being paid less than $3 a day. It also ignores the fact that 25 percent of Haiti’s gross domestic product comes from money sent home from its workers in the U.S. According to the World Bank, this is the highest percentage of any Latin American, Central American or Caribbean country.

If the U.S. expels the 58,000 Haitians now living under TPS protection, it will be another act in the long line of U.S. crimes against Haiti, dating back to the first U.S. blockade imposed on the country in 1804, when Haitian people won their inde pendence from slavery and colonialism. One small act of reparation would be to grant Indefinite Temporary Protective Status in the U.S. to any Haitian who wants TPS. It is their right.
Speakers hit U.S. wars in Syria, Yemen

By D. Angelopoulos

For the past six years, the United States, Israel, NATO and the Gulf Cooperation Council have waged a proxy war against the sovereign, secular state of Syria. The U.S.-funded Free Syrian Army (FSA), Israel, the Pentagon, and the Gulf states have engaged in a decades-long fight against the Kurdish region inside Turkish boundaries against the brutally oppressive Turkish state.

In a sign of the contradictions inherent in U.S. imperialist policy toward Syria, on April 25 Turkish prisons attacked units of the YPG in northern Syria, killing as many as 79 fighters. While U.S. diplomats said they raised concerns with NATO-allied Turkey regarding this strike, nothing concrete was done to stop future Turkish attacks against the Kurdish fighters. (Reuters, April 23) This is one example in Washington’s long history of apparently backing one oppressed people and then turning on them.

The Kurdish nation

The Kurds have historically been a persecuted people, bearing the emotional weight of the actions of solidarity with our strike on May 4, in a statement hailed by the two speakers. (samidoun.net)

The most recent, dated this year, projects a geopolitical fragmentation of Syria, as well as public figures like Melkite Bishop Marwan Barghouti launched the strike on April 17, Palestinian Prisoners’ Day, it was declared, “a day of internationalization and the right of self-determination is until imperialism is defeated in the region and the right of self-determination is fully realized and respected. Anti-war and Palestinian solidarity with Syria must stand in full solidarity with the right of all nations to develop their collective liv- ings free of any interference from imperialism.

Hands off Syria! All mercenaries out of Syria! Uplift self-determination!"

After 40 days of #DignityStrike

Palestinian prisoners declare victory

The Palestinian prisoners’ movement and its supporters celebrated victory on May 4 after a historic 40-day hunger strike by Palestinian prisoners against the ills of Israel’s occupation.

By Joe Catron

In Madison, Wis., Workers World Party members Joe Mishawhadi and Randi Nord lectured on the causes and costs of the war against the Palestinian people. The speakers stressed the particular, human dimension of these U.S.-funded “shad- ow wars” for people living in the two zones, as well as the global implications of these wars for all oppressed people, including in the U.S. The talks were given at the Wil-Mar Community Center where over 2,000 people gathered for an informative, Madison meeting was part of a regional tour by the two speakers.

Among other changes, the IPS agreed to lift its ban on visits by over 140 chil- dren of prisoners, to install cooling and ventilation systems in prisons, and to provide video visits for prisoners and their families. The IPC and its partners agreed to provide access during their transportation between prisons and courts, Qaraqe said.

He added that prisoners had achieved “90 percent of the demand for a just strike. (samidoun.org)

“The IPS confirmed an agreement on visitation, but denied it had negotiated with the prisoners.”

The IPS will improve prisoners’ education, family visits, food, health care, recreational facilities, telephone access, transportation, laundering and visiting areas.

Many progressive people see the YPG, which is mostly made up of Kurdish fighters but includes other ethnic minorities as well as Western “foreign volunteers,” as a model for a new form of anti-imperialist struggle for Kurdish national liberation. Organized along democratic principles without a vertical chain of command, the forces of the Democratic Union Party (PYD) and its sister Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) have been engaged in a decades-long fight for liberation from Turkey, Washington has a cynical, opportunistic alliance with the YPG, using them is to strengthen the US-backed “moderate rebels” in the corporate-owned media, fights openly alongside forces backed by U.S. allies Saudi Arabia and Turkey. These forces, easily maneuver or contra, which include the Islamic State, Jabhat Al-Nusra (al-Qaida in Syria), Jaysh al-Islam and others, are largely constituted of foreign fighters.

There is one front in this proxy war, however, that should be included in an anti-imperialist analyses. It’s the front in the U.S.-funded Free Syrian Army (FSA), Turkey, U.S. imperialism and the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)—the last group mainly includes Kurdish forces.

The SDF's largest fighting force is the YPG (the Kurdish acronym for the People's Protection Units). The YPG is al- lied with the Democratic Union Party (PYD), and both are allied with the Kurdish Worker's Party (PKK). The PKK has been engaged in a decades-long fight for self-determination for the Kurds inside Turkish boundaries against the brutally oppressive Turkish state.

As part of the deal, the SDF, the Islamic State, Jabhat Al-Nusra (al-Qaida in Syria), Jaysh al-Islam, and others, are largely constituted of foreign fighters.

This is not just a war for the Federation of Northern Syria (SDF). It is a full-fledged war of aggression and extermination of the Kurdish people in northern Syria, as well as public figures like Melkite Bishop Marwan Barghouti launched the strike on May 4, in a statement hailed by the two speakers. (samidoun.net)

Ahmad Sa‘adat, the imprisoned gener- al secretary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, who led the strike on May 4, in a statement hailed “the collective fruit of the efforts of the Palestinian people who rallied around the strike.”

“It came through the support of Arab popular forces throughout the Arab world and the support of all of the forces of freedom in the world, including popular movements and or- ganizations, solidarity committees, par- liamentarians, and international law, confronting imperialism and global- ization, and the international boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) move- ment,” he wrote from Ramon Prison.

“To all of those who participated in the actions of solidarity with our strike to bring it to its honorable conclusion, we send all of our greetings and appre- ciation, especially to the families of the martyrs, the wounded and the prison- ers.” (freeahmadsaadat.org)

Building forward

After more than 1,500 prisoners led by imprisoned Palestinian parliamentarian Marwan Barghouti launched the strike on April 27, Palestinian Prisoners’ Day, it sparked demonstrations of support both inside Israeli occupation and throughout the world.

These words from recent protests organized by Samidoun: Palestinian Prisoners Information Commission, Solidarity Action Network to massive “days of rage” and general strikes across Palestine.

Hands off Syria! All mercenaries out of Syria! Uplift self-determination!"
What is Trump’s line toward China?

By Deirdre Griswold

The establishment news media in the U.S. that usually echo the government’s line on foreign policy – especially the New York Times and Washington Post – have been yoying over the Trump administration’s stance toward the People’s Republic of China. No wonder. The administration’s own statements and actions toward China have been all over the map.

Back in January, before and after the Inauguration, Trump and his nominee for secretary of state, former ExxonMo- bil CEO Rex Tillerson, laid out a hard line against China. At one point Tillerson even threatened a blockade of islands in the South China Sea claimed by China and reinforced by its navy. A blockade would be an act of war.

Then, as the corrupt Park regime in south Korea was being swept away by massive demonstrations, the U.S. scram- bled to put in place a THAAD missile bater- tery there, supposedly to guard against an attack from north Korea, but widely seen in Asia as an aggressive move aimed at China and Russia as well.

At the same time, the Pentagon was car- rying out huge war exercises with south Korea and Japan, simulating the “decapitation” of the DPRK leadership, the U.S. threats a cre- scendo when, on April 9, the U.S. com- mander of the Pacific Fleet announced that the aircraft carrier Carl Vinson, with its wing of fighter jets, had been diverted from a course toward Australia and was steering toward the western Pacific.

All this enormous military pressure came to a head while President Xi Jin- ping of China was meeting with Trump at Mar-a-Lago, but during which Trump announced on April 7 that “we have made tremendous progress in our relationship with China.” This prompted much me- dia speculation that China was going to help Washington in its dealings with the DPRK, which has developed nuclear weapons and the missiles to deliver them.

The DPRK knows what war is like. The U.S. sent millions of troops to invade Ko- rea from 1950 to 1953 in an effort to com- pletely destroy the socialist revolution that had liberated the northern half of the peninsula from Japanese colonial rule. After millions of deaths, this war ended in a standstill, the first real test of the seemingly all-powerful U.S. military. In that war, a million Chinese volunteers fought alongside the North Koreans.

The Korean War has never officially ended, and 28,000 U.S. troops remain stationed in the south. The North Korean leaders opted for developing a nuclear defense only after all their efforts to engage the South in a military conflict failed. This has already led to social unrest and armed conflict in Mindanao.

The new administration is making the same mistake. It would also mean freedom from U.S. counterinsurgency operations that have gone hand in hand with a proposed $9.2 billion cut in the national budget for public education, alongside cuts to other social services. We condemn the diver- sion of those funds if it will be spent on the people toward war and militarization in the Philippines and around the world.

Filipino groups condemn martial law

Bernadette Ellorin, BAYAN-USA chair- person, states: “Martial law will never lead to peace in Mindanao. It will only aggravate the roots of the armed conflict in the region and place thousands of innocent civilians in danger of violent attack.”

Irma Shahib-Bajaj, GABRIELA USA chairperson, says, “With more military operations, women and children will be even more vulnerable to rape, harass- ment and other sexual abuses.”

The organizations call on Duterte “to pursue diplomatic and peacefull means to address not only the attacks by the Maute group in Marawi, but also the roots of the armed conflict in Mindanao. This includes implementing urgent reforms outlined in the Comprehensive Agree- ment on Social and Economic Reforms.” Discussion of these reforms is part of the ongoing peace negotiations between the Philippine government and the Nation- al Democratic Front of the Philippines, “which include respecting the Moro peo- ple’s right to self-determination and re- spect for ancestral domain.”

Adrian Bonifacio, Anakbayan-USA chairperson, says, “The declaration of martial law throughout the island of Minda- noan denies the historic right of the Moro people to self-determination, and it puts those who continue to legitimately fight for self-determination at risk of self-de- fense, including the Moro people and the Lumad, at increased risk of state repression.”

“The social unrest and armed conflict in the Bangsamoro region of Mindanao must be placed within the proper socio- economic and historical context.” Lagoon del Sur, the province where the Maute group operates, has the highest poverty rate in the Philippines, yet remains one of the most resource-rich in the country, a prime attraction for foreign corporations for lucrative investments and large-scale extractive operations.”

Poverty, landlessness amidst natural wealth

A 2006 WikiLeaks cable revealed the Lusasuan March has "the largest deposits of oil and natural gas in the Philippines and in the region, worth hundreds of bil- lions in U.S. dollars.”

Ellorin explained: “The armed conflict in the Bangsamoro territory ... is essentially rooted in the Moro people’s legitimate struggle for self-determina- tion, including aspirations for genuine sustainable development that would al- low [for their] livelihood off of their own land. It would also mean freedom from over a century of U.S. counterinsurgency operations that continue until this day, designed to keep the natural resources of the region under foreign control.” Minda- noan has the largest concentration of U.S. military personnel in the Philippines.

Protest over martial law in Philippines

Several dozen people picketed the Philippines Consulate in Chicago on May 25 demanding an end to martial law in Mindanao, the second-largest island in the Philippines. President Rodrigo Dute- rte declared martial law in all of Minda- noan on May 23. This has already led to increased human rights abuses, mass detention, torture, sexual abuse and extra- judicial killings. Speakers emphasized that the weaponized violence is unleashing the Filipino people have been provided by the U.S. military, using tax dollars that rightfully should be for education and health care here in the U.S. The vigil was organized by Anakbayan Chicago.

Having abandoned its futile attempt to stifle China economically, U.S. imperialism is ratcheting up military pressure. But China is not Afghanistan or Libya or Iraq.

Filipino groups condemn martial law

Stop U.S. military intervention

Ellorin asserted: “But the U.S.-backed mainstream media and die-hard milita- rists in the Duterte administration ... oppor- tunistically distort the narrative into one of so-called Islamic extremism, so- called terrorism and drumbeat a pretext for greater militarization, especially U.S. military intervention.”

--- Report and photo by Jeff Sorel

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Both white supremacy and bigotry against Muslims and other immigrants are not just deplorable. They are murderous and must be fought. Recent weeks have seen both a tragedy and a victory in this all-important struggle.

In Portland, Ore., three white men who came to the defense of two Muslim women on a commuter train on May 26 were stabbed, two of them to death, by a white man shouting anti-Muslim hate speech. There can be no doubt that such vicious, violent behavior has been instigated and reinforced by the Bigot-in-Chief in the White House. But it also shows that there are many brave people in this country willing to stand up against the racist offensive that Trump and his ruling-class buddies have deliberately unleashed in order to divert attention from their criminal dismantling of the social safety net that millions rely on, inadequate as it is.

In the same period, a historic people’s victory against white supremacy was won on May 19 in New Orleans.

That day the statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee was hoisted from its pedestal and removed to an unknown location. Lee was the commander in chief of the armies of the 19th-century slave-owning, secessionist “Confederate States of America.” His statue was the last of four prominent CSA monuments to be removed recently in New Orleans. For the last six decades anti-racist, civil-rights activists have fought for the removal of these racist symbols. The latest struggle, led by Take ‘Em Down NOLA, began in 2015.

This coincided with a wave of actions against Confederate flags and monuments sparked by white-supremacist Dylann Roof’s mass murder of Black worshippers at a Charleston, S.C., church on June 17, 2015. Activist Bree Newsome heroically scaled the Statehouse flagpole in Columbia, S.C., 10 days later and physically removed the Confederate statue taken down in New Orleans by a heroic army of more than 200 people the governor of Alabama and the legislature pressured people are rising up as corporations cut jobs in search of greater profits and the Trump administration attempts to savage the social safety net in order to fund the imperialist war machine. Once again, big business needs on-the-ground, unionized and low-wage temp work, and other differences.

This increase in terrorist reaction comes at a time when workers and oppressed people are rising up as corporations cut jobs in search of greater profits and the Trump administration attempts to savage the social safety net in order to fund the imperialist war machine. Once again, big business needs on-the-ground, unionized and low-wage temp work, and other differences.

We are not in a struggle about “sym- bols.” We are in a fight for justice and freedom that has been waged in this land for hundreds of years — and more than just a longing version of history that delib- erately fails to remember that New Orle- ans was once the biggest U.S. “market” for the enslavement of African people.

What these right-wingers want to pre- serve is the system of intertwined racism and economic oppression the monu- ments commemorate.

Can we forget the murderous treat- ment of Black people in New Orleans during and after the Hurricane Katrina disaster? Institutionalized racism has a long history.

After the abolition of slavery and the Civil War’s end, and during the ensuing Reconstruction Era, the economic pow- ers-that-be struggled to deny legal and economic freedom to people of African descent in the U.S. South, and by exten- sion the entire country. One tactic was the infamous 1863 Plessy vs. Ferguson ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court that gave the go-ahead to racist separate-and-unequal “Jim Crow” laws. The case was original- ly brought by Homer Plessy, a free man of color arrested and convicted after he challenged segregation by deliberately sitting in a “white” railroad car in New Orleans.

It is significant that the first Confed- erate statue taken down in New Orleans celebrated the Battle of Liberty Place, when an ivory-hued Louisiana slave-owning, racist white organization attempted to topple the biracial Louisiana state gov- ernment elected by free Black people and white allies.

It is an accident that at present there is increased organizing by right-wing fascists and neo-fascists in defense of Confederate flags and monu- ments. These tactics are meant to pre- vent worker solidarity by creating divi- sions across lines of nationality, religion, unionized and low-wage temp work, and other differences.

This increase in terrorist reaction comes at a time when workers and op- pressed people are rising up as corpora- tions cut jobs in search of greater profits and the Trump administration attempts to savage the social safety net in order to fund the imperialist war machine. Once again, big business needs on-the-ground, unionized and low-wage temp work, and other differences.

We have to remember that Klan- nish “fascists” are also in suits, uniforms and judicial robes. They are present in corporate boardrooms, legis- latures, courts and police forces.

Directives and laws forbidding remov- al of CSA monuments have been OK’d by the governor of Alabama and the legis- lature of North Carolina. On a national level, the blatantly racist Trump admin- istration attacks oppressed peoples and workers, attempting to push back the gains of decades.

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The following obituary about the life of Miguel Urbano Rodrigues was published on May 27 by the editors of the Portuguese-language website ODiario. It was trans- lated by WW managing editor John Catalinotto, who participated in the three con- ferences at Serpa described below and is a contributor to the ODiario.info site.

ODiario.info informs its readers and friends of the death of its founder and publisher Miguel Urbano Rodrigues.

Born in Moura, in the Alentejo region of Portugal in 1925, the son of a journalist father and writer, in the midst of a family of well-to-do republican [anti-monarchy] farmers, he lived through the establish- ment of the Estado Novo [fascist] dicta- torship while absorbing the influence and inspiration of the people of his native soil who refused to submit.

Miguel Urbano Rodrigues attend- ed the Faculty of Letters of Lisbon. He came to be editor of Diário de Notícias (beginning in 1949) and editor-in-chief of Diário Ilustrado. A young man en- dowed with unusual intellectual curi- osity and talent, and committed to the causes of the people, he found himself constrained and threatened by the fas- cist regime that gagged and imprisoned him.

Exiled in Brazil, he was an editorial- istic of the daily newspaper O Estado de S. Paulo (1957 to 1974) and international editor of Visão magazine (1978 to 1979). During this period, he accompanied or intervened in key events weakening the fascist regime on the international arena, notably the assault on the regime’s ship “Santa Maria” and the progression of the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liber- ation of Angola) and PAIGC [liberation organization in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde] struggle against Portuguese colo- nialism. In 1962 he joined the Portuguese Communist Party.

He returned to Portugal shortly after April 25, 1974, at the height of the ex- ploration of popular power in a revolutionary transformation of society.

A tireless traveler and observer, an exceptional intellectual who neverthe- less assumed and demanded no special attention in all the latitudes in which he lived or visited, he leaves us an extensive work encompassing diverse genres, al- ways inspired by the understanding and celebration of the condition and action of the people, immersed in the revolutionary transformation of humans and society, in the supreme achievement of Justice and Happiness.

WORDS WORLD™

Portuguese revolutionary Miguel Urbano Rodrigues, 1925 - 2017

A tragedy and a victory

By Sara Flounders

“By revealing the underbelly of the empire, Flounders sheds light on how to stand up to the imperialist war machine and, in so doing, save ourselves and humanity.” — Miguel d’Escoto Brockmann, President, U.N. General Assembly, 2008-2009, Foreign Minister of Nicaragua’s Sandinista government

Available at all major online bookstores.

Pentagon Achillesheel.com
The ‘New Media’ from freelancer to mercenary

The following slightly edited talk by journalist Taryn Feck was given at a May 20 Workers World forum in New York City titled “Black Lives Matter, Trans Lives Matter, USA out of Everywhere!”

Human beings are extremely sensitive to propaganda. It’s how we make sense of the world around us — by receiving input from other people. If I’m having a hallucination that there’s a pink elephant hanging out here in the back of the room, the only way I’ll be talked down is when everyone else confirms to me that there is, indeed, no pink elephant in the room.

Sure, we can run tests, but in general this is how we orient our reality, by interacting and consulting with others, by receiving information.

With this input comes the ideology of the ruling class. It’s really clear what that is in this country. You see it every waking moment of every day on the subway, on the internet, just walking down the street: white supremacy, misogyny, LGBTQ phobia, xenophobia, dehumanization, shame, war.

As Marxists, we understand that everything happens for a reason. So why have the bourgeois media been so totally complicit, so criminally negligent about the war against our class both at home and abroad in recent times?

First, we should understand that when we speak about the media, we are not speaking of a single entity or concept. We are speaking about hundreds of thousands of people worldwide who depend on the media for their livelihood. Whether they are working in sales or, rarely, reporting from the frontlines, they need to eat, and, well, it doesn’t hurt that everyone wants to be famous nowadays.

But just as there were many who worked in the Detroit car industry, it was the bosses who cashed in on selling out the workers. A sliver of super-rich, super-powerful capitalists made the decision for the rest of us. They were driven by what always drives them: the need to maximize profit.

When the internet came around, print media got scared. When high-speed internet arrived, television media got scared. Raise your hand if you own a TV. Raise your hand if you’ve bought a magazine in the last week. That’s my point.

So these huge conglomerates got scared and have been scaring each other since to try and figure out a way not to close shop. But the news media will never go away. They are a de facto arm of the government — what’s called the fourth estate. The state and the capitalists need the media to jam all this racist, sexist, warmongering bullshit down our throats so that we’ll keep working, keep spending, keep living life in fear and anxiety.

But the media are supposed to be privately owned. Sure, we have a few public entities rolling around out there, but in general they are supposed to be independent. People turn up their noses at the idea of “state-run media,” but it doesn’t really matter all that much anymore, as no media are independent.

In 2012, a major news magazine was facing serious financial ruin. This publication had been around since 1843. It’s a seriously important organ for ruling-class ideology, even if it’s not widely read. But after the financial crisis of 2007-08 and the huge growth of the internet, even it was scrambling. Enter the internet, on television, just walking down the street. White supremacy, misogyny, LGBTQ phobia, xenophobia, dehumanization, shame, war.

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Anecdotally, a journalist I know told me of another journalist who had been approached and offered more than $10,000 a month to move to Turkey and suddenly a salaried position turned into a $200-a-population-deal. If that. Major publications were even trying to not pay a dime to journalists. And I ask, how are you supposed to do good, honest, investigative journalism on $200 a story?

Enter PR — public relations firms.

Role of ‘White Helmets’

White Helmets is a great example, which helps segue into our main subject. Shortly after the creation of the Central Intelligence Agency in 1947, the U.S. Congress passed what was called the Smith-Mundt Act, which outlined what the U.S. government was allowed to do in terms of directly propagandizing people who live in the United States. In 2003, it was partially repealed. Today, the Syrian citizens called the White Helmets was set up in London, run by a PR firm in New York. It targeted young, Occupy-era journalists who were eager to make more than $200 writing a story. Suddenly, they were given plane tickets around the world, exclusive access to people who, the PR firm said, could give them the real story.

Anecdotally, a journalist I know told me of another journalist who had been approached and offered more than $10,000 a month to move to Turkey and write press releases for the U.S.-backed “Free Syrian Army.” There are no editors to make sure such reporters disclose their sources. There are no funding inquiries these PR firms are required to answer.

If you’re a freelance journalist, you suddenly find yourself competing in a very different job market. Now you’re a mercenary, and you better stay on the bosses’ good side to keep getting paid. While journalists are supposed to ask questions, suddenly you’d better not keep your job.

Last December, before Barack Obama left office, he repealed the rest of the Smith-Mundt Act.

This is a serious challenge that needs to be tackled: How to spread socialism in this day and age when some “journalists” are too terrified to report the truth? Why do they focus more on money than integrity? Social media represent a dead end, unfortunately, as we simply create feedback loops. We are preaching to the choir when what we need are new audiences. We need to reach out to the people somehow, sidestepping this craven boorish media, new or old.

Workers World newspaper is more important than ever, as is “in your face” journalism. There is a need to agitate within people’s field of vision. We need to get people off their phones, where the science of getting and holding their attention was pushed people deeper into isolation and fear, and we need them to start paying attention to what real socialism looks like.

After 40 days of #DignityStrike

Palestinian prisoners declare victory

Continued from page 8

Atallah Hanna, launched fasts in solidarity with thousands, including 25 at New Ireland, Irish Republican political prisoners in Maghaberry Jail and Filipino political prisoners at Camp Bagong Diwa sent salt water to stay alive while fasting. Atallah Hanna, launched fasts in solidarity with thousands, including 25 at New Ireland, Irish Republican political prisoners in Maghaberry Jail and Filipino political prisoners at Camp Bagong Diwa sent salt water to stay alive while fasting.

Inside Palestine, Israeli repression of political prisoners as well as information on the hunger strike and other Palestinian prison struggles, visit Samidoun’s website at samidoun.net and activities in support of the prisoners on May 12, 18 and 23.

In the aftermath of the strike, supporters of the prisoners say continued mobilization is crucial, both to secure the gains of the May 27 agreement and to support ongoing and future struggles.

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Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Nunca antes el proceso bolivariano de Venezuela ha estado amenazado con tan
tanto peligro como ahora. Si bien desde el triunfo de Hugo Chávez en 1998,
este proceso ha enfrentado una serie de obstáculos que han llevado a un
proceso de replanteamiento y reorganización. Pero las últimas semanas ha
visto un aumento en las amenazas al proceso, en particular desde el nuevo
regimen de Estados Unidos.

En los primeros meses de 2017, el presidente Nicolás Maduro ha
extendido la represión a todo el país, incluyendo zonas rurales y comunidades
indígenas. Esta represión ha llevado a la muerte de varios líderes opositores y
a la detención de miles de personas. En estos momentos, el proceso bolivariano
está en peligro.

El proceso bolivariano controvertido a esta América Latina y el Caribe y el impe-
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En el contexto de la crisis económica y social en la región, es
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