Protests to expose NATO's inhumanity

By John Catalinotto

Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization will celebrate the 70th anniversary of NATO’s founding on April 4 in Washington, D.C.

Anti-war groups are organizing at least three actions at that date to protest U.S. aggression and the NATO military alliance’s criminal role in wars worldwide. NATO now kills people in Asia and Africa, besides in its historical European region, and threatens to intervene in South America through its Colombian “global partner” and possible future member.

On Saturday, March 16, there will be a demonstration in Washington that the Answer Coalition has called in solidarity with Venezuela and in opposition to intervention by the U.S. and its lackeys against the Bolivarian Revolution. (tinyurl.com/jyynacj3k)

On Sunday, March 24, the International Action Center is holding a rally at the U.N. headquarters in New York. The action will commemorate the 70th anniversary of the start of the U.S./NATO criminal ’68-day bombing campaign that killed 3,000 people and tore apart Yugoslavia. (iacenter.org)

And on Saturday, March 30, the United National Antiwar Coalition is holding a protest demonstration in Washington, timed for the beginning of the NATO celebrations. Given the current crisis in South America, this protest will also focus on solidarity with Bolivarian Venezuela. (unacpeace.org)

NATO: an alliance of oppressors

U.S. ruling-class politicians of both big capitalist parties and all the corporate media have always claimed NATO is an alliance of “democratic” powers with the goal of keeping peace. This is a lie worthy of the worst of the Trump administration.

NATO’s major members in 1949 were the United States, France, Britain, Italy and Canada; Germany has been a member since 1955. These six historic colonial powers and settler states, plus Japan, make up the G-7 (Group of Seven) countries that currently set economic rules and dominate most of the world.

The corporate and financial ruling classes of the major NATO powers, despite the current challenge from People’s China, control the bulk of the world’s wealth, mainly through their banks. The capital they control exploits labor and extracts resources throughout the world. Add to this their control of finance, technology, weapons and mass media.

After World War II ended, the class of plunderers and robbers ruling those countries saw that while they had been fighting each other — killing 300 million people — a third of humanity had liberated itself from their grip. In the early post-war years, armed partisans who had resisted Nazi Germany inspired hope of possible worker-led socialist revolutions in Greece, Italy and France.

In 1949 Washington, then by far the dominant imperialist power, founded NATO. This military alliance was poised to crush any incipient workers’ revolution in war-ravaged Western Europe — as the British and U.S. military did in Greece — and to confront the Soviet Union and its allies in Eastern Europe. Only in 1955 did the Soviet Union establish the Warsaw Pact with its allies in Eastern Europe to defend its area of Europe.

NATO’s reactionary history includes planning a military coup in Greece in 1967. NATO supported clandestine terrorist actions in Italy between 1968 and 1982 known as the “strategy of tension.”

In 1974-75 in Portugal, after a revolution ousted the fascist regime there, NATO sent warships to intervene to prevent the working class from opening a struggle for socialism.

World capitalist cop

Washington has always dominated NATO and set its policies. The U.S. president always chooses the NATO commander, and the general in charge is always from the Pentagon.

In 1990, during negotiations between the U.S. and Soviet leaders to end the Cold War, Washington promised not to move NATO eastward. NATO’s declared purpose up to that time was to “defend member nations from threats by communist countries.” Thus NATO

Continued on page 6
Anti-death penalty activists have been fighting for decades in an uphill battle to end the barbaric and racist practice of capital punishment. This struggle has seen slow but steady progress. Last year Washington became the 20th state to ban executions. Polls show public support for the death penalty continues to decline, with more people than ever convinced it is applied unfairly. (Death Penalty Information Center)

Workers World Party (www.workers.org) is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a multinational, multigenerational working group of oppressed people who believe that to build a socialist society because it’s the only way forward! Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the never-ending quest for ever-greater profits.

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on im/migrants, misogyny, LGBT oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness, attacks on im/migrants, misogyny, LGBTQ oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness and lack of hope for the future. No social problems can be solved under capitalism.

The U.S. is the richest country in the world, yet no one has a guaranteed right to shelter, food, water, health care, education or anything else — unless they can pay for it. Wages are lower than ever, and youth are saddled with seemingly insurmountable student debt, if the government is to college. Black, Brown and Indigenous youth and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

The ruthless ruling class today seeks to wipe out decades of gains and benefits won by working-class struggles by people's movements. The super-rich and their political representatives have intensified their attacks on the multinational, multigender and multigenerational working class. It is time to point the blame at — and challenge — the capitalist system.

WWF fights for socialism because the working class produces the wealth in society and should have a say in how that wealth is distributed. The wealth creators should be socially owned and its distribution planned to satisfy and guarantee basic human needs.

Since 1959, Workers World Party has been in the streets defending the workers and oppressed here and worldwide. If you believe in fighting for a socialist future, please contact a WWF branch near you. 🌎

By Martha Grevatt

Why now?

Although some polls show a majority of people still support capital punishment in certain cases, that majority is shrinking. One factor is the irrefutable evidence of racial disparity in sentencing. As recently as last year, nearly half of all new death sentences were imposed on people of color. Other factors include the number of people on death row with developmental disabilities and the risk of innocent people being executed, which was affirmed by the exoneration of 164 death row prisoners since 1976.

In Ohio, those wrongly convoluted of capital murder include Ronald Lamar (aka Bomani Shakur), George Skates, Namer Meaten (aka James Were) and Jason Robb. All were falsely accused in the death of a guard, and some in the killing of prisoners, during the Lucasville rebellion. Lamar recently exhausted his appeals in December and was given an execution date of Nov. 16, 2023. Public meetings, held last year around the 25th anniversary of the rebellion, increased awareness that innocent people still face execution.

In addition, recent scandals have exposed illegal conduct by several states in procuring the fatal drug cocktails. According to the Death Penalty Information Center, “States have used secrecy laws to conceal evidence of illegal and improper activity in obtaining lethal-injection drugs, including lying to pharmaceutical companies, contracting with suppliers that have histories of safety violations and swapping drugs with other states.” This has put states in conflict with Big Pharma and has resulted in several lawsuits.

Because of these and other factors, executions dropped last year to a countryside low of 54, continuing a recent trend. However, death penalty opponents will not rest. As Ben Turk, administrator for the Lucasville Amnesty website and Facebook page, told Workers World: “I support not only the suspension but also the immediate abolition of the death penalty, but I also caution against replacing it with life without the possibility of parole.

“Greg Curry, one of the Lucasville survivors who narrowly escaped the death penalty (both in court and in extra-judicial efforts of retaliatory staff) is instead serving life without the possibility of parole. If that reform becomes the widespread replacement for the death penalty, this reform will actually lead to more innocent people dying in prison because they’ll have less access to legal redress. We must oppose death by incarceration as strongly as we oppose death by lethal injection.”

By化工 Grevatt

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Ole Miss basketball players take a knee against racism
By Monica Moorehead

As the national anthem was being played on Feb. 23 in Oxford, Miss., before an Ole Miss at-home men’s college basketball game with Georgia, one-by-one seven African-American players, and one Latine player, got down on one knee, with their heads bowed until the last note was played.

Carrying forth the protest of taking a knee begun by former National Football League quarterback Colin Kaepernick in 2016, these heroic players were protesting the presence of a white supremacist march taking place on campus on the same day as the game. Taking a knee is meant to call national attention against police brutality and all forms of racist oppression.

Ole Miss has a scordid tradition of promoting pro-slavery, pro-Confederacy symbols and history since the university was founded in 1844. It wasn’t until 1997 that Confederate flags were banned at Ole Miss football games, 25 years after the first Black players were recruited. The mascot, “Colonel Reb,” was scraped in 2003. Confederate symbols, like the emblem on the Mississippi state flag and the Confederate/Civil War battle anthem “ Dixie,” wouldn’t be phased out until some 10 years later. An on-campus Confederate monument and buildings named for pro-Confederate people remain, but it’s just a matter of time until these symbols see their final days.

One of the protesting players, Breein Tyree, stated, “We’re just tired of these hate groups coming to our school and portraying our campus like we have these hate groups in our actual school.” (ESPN, March 1)

Ole Miss Coach Kermit Davis, in defense of his players, told ESPN, “Our players made an emotional decision to do what they felt was right, and we respect our players’ freedom and ability to choose that.”

25 shots: Police execute Willie McCoy
By Dave Welsh

It was late evening Feb. 9 when local African-American rapper Willie McCoy, 20, drove into a Taco Bell drive-through in Vallejo, Calif., a small river city about 30 miles from San Francisco. A few minutes later he was found “slumped over the steering wheel of his car, unconscious,” according to a claim filed against the city by McCoy’s family. McCoy performed rap music under the name “Willie Bo.”

The wrongful death claim, filed as a precursor to a lawsuit, said police arrived and “unleashed a barrage of gunfire on the man. The six-person firing squad fired at McCoy at least 25 times,” striking him in the head, ear, neck, chest, arms, shoulders, hands and back. Police later claimed they saw a handgun next to the sleeping McCoy.

They shot him 25 times, “in cold blood,” civil rights attorney John Burris told a press conference and rally of 50 who showed up to support the family on the steps of City Hall Feb. 27, “Something is rotten in the Vallejo police department,” including “a lack of concern and lack of caring for human life.” The community has also mourned Vallejo police killings of Angel Rico Ramos, Ronell Foster and Mario Romero in recent years.

McCoy’s sister, Simone Richard, was unsparing in denouncing the Vallejo Police Department. “You all executed my brother Willie. It is kids today they are killing. They say the kids are the future, but you aren’t letting us grow. You are targeting us. This isn’t the first incident.

This isn’t the first time, and it won’t be the last time.”

A cousin of McCoy’s read a poem she had written, recalling the history of lynching in the U.S.: “Now they shoot at us. If we get pulled over we might not make it til tomorrow. Is this their way of population control?”

A friend said, “My friend was shot over 25 times — for no reason. They came out like they was prepared to kill him. They came out to create a situation that will leave our hearts broken for eternity.” Several teenage girls chanted, “Indict! Convict! Send these killer cops to jail!”

WW Commentary

People of color, women make history at Hollywood awards
By Monica Moorehead

On Feb. 23, one day before the 91st Academy Awards (aka the Oscars) ceremony, Boots Riley, the African-American hip-hop artist turned film director, won the Film Independent Spirit Award for Best First Feature. In his acceptance speech, Riley described his critically acclaimed “Sorry to Bother You” as class struggle on the job, with its focus on low-wage workers in the global telemarketing industry. Riley ended his speech by coming out against the U.S.-CIA attempted coup in Venezuela. Riley also stated how much direct action movements have influenced filmmaking.

Barry Jenkins, the African-American director of the award-winning film “If Beale Street Could Talk,” who won the Spirit award for Best Feature, indirectly acknowledged the impact of the #MeToo movement’s fight against misogyny in Hollywood. He expressed regret over winning the award, out of solidarity with three of his fellow director nominees who were women, adding that Hollywood should provide more funding to encourage more women directors. Jenkins directed “Moonlight,” which won the Oscar for Best Picture two years ago.

The Spirit awards pay tribute to low-budget, independent films that in general shine a bright light on the real lives of Black, Brown, Asian and Indigenous peoples, including those in the U.S. In contrast, while there has been some progress regarding Oscar winners—not nearly enough—the general trend is still to marginalize the multinational global working class—because mainly white male studio executives still control the purse strings.

Impact of #OscarsSoWhite

Three years ago, April Reign, managing editor of BroadwayBlack.com, created #OscarsSoWhite in protest of the dreadfully lack of Black nominees in all acting categories for the 2015 movie year. This Twitter campaign helped spark some progressive changes among the Academy’s 5,000-plus overwhelmingly white male voting delegates, including the election of the Academy’s first African-American president, Cheryl Boone Isaacs, and the addition of more people of color and women members.

At this year’s Academy Awards ceremony, two Black actors won Oscars in the two Supporting Actor categories—Regina King for “If Beale Street Could Talk” and Mahershala Ali for the controversial “Green Book.” Also winning Best Original Screenplay and Best Picture Oscars, “Green Book” is the true story of a white, racist, working-class driver who becomes the chauffeur for a gay Black pianist, Dr. Don Shirley, in the Deep South. The family of Shirley denounced the filmmakers for its misportrayal of the late pianist with White familial assimilation. Film critics have crucified “Green Book” for soft pedaling the harsh reality of Jim Crow from a white protagonist’s perspective.

In an historic first, two Black women became the first to win Oscars in their categories for their behind-the-scenes work on the biggest blockbuster movie of 2018, “Black Panther.” Ruth Carter won for Best Costume Design for her stunning Afrocentric clothing and Hannah Beachler won for Best Production Design.

Mexican director Alfonso Cuaron Oronco won three Oscars for his film, “Roma.” Yalitza Aparicio is the first Indigenous American to be nominated in Best Actress category, also for “Roma,” in which she spoke her native language Mixteco.

Rami Malek is the first Egyptian-American actor to win the Best Actor award for playing Queen’s lead singer, Freddie Mercury, in “Bohemian Rhapsody.”

Spice Lee’s long overdue win

Black film director Spike Lee, wearing a purple out-fit in honor of the legendary late singer Prince, won his first Oscar in a competitive category, Best Adapted Screenplay, for “BlackKkKlansman”—based on the true story of a Black police officer who infiltrated the KKK in the 1970s. He had been nominated for Best Original Screenplay for “Do the Right Thing” in 1990 and Best
Amazon HQ2 struggle continues in Virginia

By John Steffin
New York

When Amazon announced it would build two new headquarters to “boost growth and jobs” in New York City, Washington, D.C., most people assumed that it was a done deal. This was not only because Amazon’s sway as a powerful transnational corporation, but because of the city’s campaign strategy and the captured military-industrial complex. Of course, Amazon’s executives would choose to locate near Wall Street and the Pentagon. It was all about inspiring others to take matters into their own hands.

Since Amazon reversed its decision about opening a New York headquarters, activists in Arlington County, Va.—where Amazon plans to set up HQ2—have been holding meetings and demonstrations to raise awareness about the negative impact the company would have on the community and the need to build support for a campaign to prevent its arrival.

Protesters raised issues such as gentrification and rising rents for area residents, which have accelerated since Amazon announced the new headquarters in Crystal City in northern Virginia. They have also exposed how Amazon has taken new jobs away from those who would be filled by people outside Virginia. Additionally, they oppose Amazon’s ties to Immigration, Customs and Enforcement.

Momentum is building

On Feb. 28, activists disrupted a meeting between Amazon and local leaders, which was geared toward holding a multimillion-dollar offer of public money to one of the wealthiest corporations in the world. In response to the agitation from below, politicians in the area are starting to speak up. It’s a similar cycle as occurred in New York. While Amazon has yet to release a warning that it’s reconsidering the deal, as it did in New York, the situation remains fluid. Its outcome is far from certain.

When residents of New York City went up against Amazon, activists from Seattle and Germany—who were engaged in their own battles against Amazon—came to the city to build connections and share their experience. The large acceptance of our commitments to the people of Seattle, when opening its headquarters there, made the stakes very clear. But hearing how Berlin activists had successfully beaten the police at hand in New York City seem all the more possible.

As the struggle against Amazon spreads, it’s important to note that this is just one example of struggle that is inspiring others. The victory of the West Virginia education workers in the spring of 2018 inspired a cycle of education workers’ strikes that is still playing out today. Washington, Los Angeles and Oakland, Calif., to Ohio and Kentucky.

After decades of a capitalist offensive against the working class, with its dismantling of critical social service programs, union busting, prison expansion, low wages, mass deportations of im/migrants, among many other attacks, the conditions for mass outrage exist. Under these conditions, struggles can spread like wildfire.

Fight for reproductive health: Oppose Trump’s Title X changes

By Sue Davis

March 5—President Donald Trump added another notch to his campaign promises by amending the Hyde Amendment. Planned Parenthood countered that day by filing suit against his proposed changes, which aim to defund the health provider.

February 22 was when Trump’s so-called “Health and Human Services Department” issued revised—read “reversed”—rules to the Title X program. A 1970 addendum to the 1944 Public Health Service Act under President Richard Nixon, Title X is charged with providing “comprehensive family planning and related preventive health services” to 4 million low-income women or anyone not covered by Medicaid.

Reversing Trump/Pence right-wing, anti-woman, anti-working class ideology, the new regulations won’t be “comprehensive and preventive.” If instituted, the revised regulations would deny pregnant people the right to learn anything about abortion—let alone where to get it—from the 4,000 reproductive health care providers enrolled in the program. That’s why pro-choice organizations have nicknamed it “the domestic gag rule,” distinguishing it from the international one Trump instituted in 2017.

The new rules mandate that all clinics providing reproductive care be prohibited from “promoting” or referring women and gender nonconforming people to abortion providers. Planned Parenthood annually provides 41 percent of Title X care in the country.

Though anti-choice activists contend that the Women’s Health of New York would be “compromised” if Planned Parenthood’s current patients if the organization is forced out of the Title X program, Rewire.News reported Feb. 27 that women would not want to “abandon their caseloads by an average of 70 percent.”

The Guttmacher Institute reported Feb. 27: “The Title X gag rule is a blantly coercive and unethical violation of individuals’ right to high-quality sexual and reproductive health care.”

No longer will pregnant patients “receive neutral, factual and nondirective information on all their pregnancy options, including parenting, adoption and abortion,” but the rule requires all patients to be referred for prenatal care, “regardless of their preference or level of need.”

In summary: “These restrictions flout medical ethics, dismiss clinical guidelines of leading medical organizations and undermine patients’ right to receive informed consent to their reproductive health care.”

Yet the irony is that denying low-wage women and gender nonconforming people access to free or low-cost contraception will only drive up the rate of unintended pregnancies and abortion.

Guttmacher statistics show that in 2015 Title X clinics prevented 822,300 unintended pregnancies and 277,800 abortions. Statistics from 2017 show that contraceptive use from Title X clinics led to a steep decline in unintended pregnancies and abortions: 44 percent for teenagers and nearly one-third for the entire program.

Fightback is underway

The revised Title X rules were not official until they were posted March 4 on the Federal Register, under a deliberately opaque title: Compliance with Statutory Program Integrity Requirements. They are due to go into effect after 60 days, on May 3.

But the fightback began right after the changes were first announced on June 1. All the organizations that defend abortion rights and fight for reproductive justice weighed in immediately. On June 8, Rewire.News reported that mayors representing more than 32 million people in 80 cities and counties were joining the anti-gag rule. They joined more than 200 cities wrote a letter to HHS denouncing the gag rule.

Title X doctors and nurses working with Planned Parenthood and other reproductive health care providers are riding to find “legal options to block it being implemented.” (Rewire.News, Feb. 27)

But the real fightback will be when workers, gender-nonconforming people and all their allies take to the streets, as they have for decades. The outsourcing of women all over the country demanding freedom from Trump’s racist and sexist deregulations—call it the Women’s March or “women of Daca” movement, started by women and gender-nonconforming activists, boldly and nonconforming activists, boldly about change. The Black Lives Matter movement, inspired by the #MeToo Movement

If you appreciate WW’s year-round coverage of struggles that advance women’s liberation, join the WW Supporter Program.

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**Korea, Vietnam and the U.S. war machine**

By Deirdre Griswold

The latest summit meeting between Kim Jong Un, the supreme leader of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, and U.S. President Donald Trump ended abruptly in Hanoi on Feb. 28 with no agreement.

While Trump, with his outsized ego and unpredictable behavior, had wanted to get credit for some sort of peace deal, he himself laid the basis for the meeting’s failure with his appointments of John Bolton and Mike Pompeo, both hard-liners against the DPRK.

On Feb. 28, 2018, Bolton had written a piece for the Wall Street Journal entitled, “The Legal Case for a War on North Korea.” In that piece, he declares the war to be necessary. Three weeks later, Trump appointed Bolton to be his national security advisor.

At the time of the appointment a year ago, many in the media speculated about Bolton’s possible involvement in negotiations. The war won’t end in a few weeks, however, while the hope did not end. The talks, is blaming “big egos and bad bets” on both sides. Seemingly forgotten are the U.S. threats to launch a nuclear war against the DPRK.

**Pompeo’s role**

Suppose you represented a small country that had been ravaged by the U.S. military in the early 1990s, when the U.S. Air Force bombed every single building above two stories in north Korea and millions died. When you, as a responsible person, read that a bloodthirsty warmonger is now advising the president of the U.S., wouldn’t you do everything you could to strengthen your country’s defense?

Bolton is still national security advisor to the president, but he did not accompany Trump to the meeting with Kim Jong Un. How could the Korean conflict be resolved in one room with him? Instead, it was Mike Pompeo, Trump’s secret-ary of state, whom the Times called “the steady, broad-shouldered figure who is perhaps the most powerful diplomat at the State Department.”

But what was the U.S. position put forth by Pompeo at the talks? It was that the DPRK should give up all its nuclear weapons, materials and facilities in exchange for an end to U.S. economic sanctions.

What do the Koreans want? An end to the state of war that is still official U.S. policy toward Korea. There was only a ceasefire agreement in 1953. Under the state of war that is still in effect, U.S. troops number over 28,000 and 30,000 U.S. soldiers in South Korea, and could launch an attack on the north at any time.

Who are the real war maniacs in the world? As of 2017, the U.S. possessed nearly 7,000 nuclear weapons, many of them deployed around the world, ready to be launched from planes, submarines, or other bases. Yet the rating class here, after years of threatening the DPRK

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**DASH drivers start their union engine**

After months of owner repression, DASH bus operators in Alexandria, Va., voted 97 to 13 to join Amalgamated Transit Union Local 608. The DASH bus company is a subsidiary of the Washington, D.C., suburb.

While wholly owned by the city, which elects its board and allocates the bus service to the Washington, D.C., suburb, it is heavily dependent on state subsidies. DASH is a separate entity run by contractor Transit Management of Alexandria, owned by First Transit, to keep wages down. One DASH driver told McCurry, “In these times, Feb. 27, DASH workers reported that, in the third quarter of 2017, drivers in three regional systems. It takes 20 years to reach DASH’s top pay grade of $25/hour, while it only takes 5 years for the $32/hour cap at Fairfax Connector. DASH drivers have an unpopular, employee-match 401(k) plan and do not earn a city pension.

One driver noted that he worked while on strike. The people of Vietnam and Korea are doing all they can to move forward. The question is: What are we going to do to stay the hands of war maniacs like Bolton, as well as the more deceptive but equally dangerous “adults” in the “room” like Pompeo, so that wars fought for profit in a super-rich ruling class never happen again?

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**ON THE DMZ**

A U.S. soldier learns the truth about Korea

by Paul Ahuja

Excerpt: I asked to go to Korea. I wanted to patrol the DMZ, I wanted to see “Freedom’s Frontier.” There, I was told, I would find the hottest pan of the Cold War—a country split in half by a four-mile-wide “demilitarized zone” that separated capitalism and communism.

Published: March 1, 1994. Read at www.workers.org
The key to climate change

Almost a century and a half ago, Karl Marx’s closest collaborator, Friedrich Engels, wrote about the degradation of the environment due to human activity.

In a pamphlet about the evolution of human beings from apes—a premise of Charles Darwin’s revolutionary discovery which at that time was fiercely denounced by all religions—Engels wrote: “Let us not, however, flatter ourselves overmuch on account of our human victories over nature. For each such victory, nature takes its revenge on us. Each victory, it is true, in the first place brings about the results we expected, but in the second and third places it has quite different, unforeseen effects which only too often cancel the first. . . .”

“Thus at every step we are reminded that we by no means rule over nature like a conqueror over a foreign people, like someone standing outside nature—but that we, with flesh, blood and brain, belong to nature, and exist in its midst, and that all our mastery of it consists in the fact that we have the advantage over all other creatures of being able to learn its laws and apply them correctly.”

Learning the laws of nature has progressed by leaps and bounds since Engels’ time, to the point of splitting the atom and cloning species. But the ability to apply this knowledge correctly?

The current state of the planet, which more and more each day shows alarming signs of the imminent collapse of entire ecosystems due to climate change, is a confirmation of Engels’ warning of 1876—written long before any knowledge of global warming.

Human activity has now severely disrupted the balance of nature that existed for hundreds of thousands of years. That’s a given fact. So what do we do about it? And what is the main stumbling block to turning things around?

The science of scientific socialism

Scientific socialism—known as Marxism—has been persecuted and denied by the ruling classes because it identifies the basic problem of modern-day society: This economic system of capitalism, based on private ownership of capital and the means of production, must produce a profit for its owners, regardless of human need.

What if measures to save the planet are unprofitable for the individual capitalists? Then they are abandoned, or minimized, or not even begun in the first place. How many times have companies violated every law in the book meant to protect people and the environment from corporate pollution? The environmental disaster at Love Canal in the 1970s in Niagara Falls, N.Y., was not an exception—it was the rule.

Governments are then called upon to undo the damage inflicted by private capital on the planet. There have been many international conventions and agreements in recent years attempting to deal with climate change in this way. Yet it continues at a relentless pace.

In the United States, which has been the undisputed leader of world capitalism for decades, government policies on the environment under the administrations of the greedy billionaire Donald Trump have flown in the face of everything that scientists have learned. The U.S. government has ignored its nose at the Paris climate agreement, even though that pact falls far short of being able to reverse global warming.

Trump would like to take credit for the fact that U.S. emissions of carbon dioxide—the main greenhouse gas—have fallen slightly in the past year. But the truth is that much of the manufacturing that used to be done here, which contributed to pollution, has now migrated to countries with lower wages, leaving behind a vast Rust Belt where steady jobs are hard to find.

At the same time, it is China’s huge production of solar panels that has driven down their price, making it easier for people here to convert to sustainable energy. The response of the U.S. capitalist government? Put heavy tariffs on solar panels from China.

Human need vs. corporate greed

What must replace capitalism? A system based on production for human need, not for private profit and greed. Only such a system can marshal all the forces of society to tackle climate change.

Of course, getting rid of capitalism is not simple. It means taking on the class that has become astronomically rich from this system and uses its vast wealth to control politics, the state and the corporate media.

Nevertheless, there are many people now alienated by capitalism and alarmed by the dire news about global warming who are demanding something be done about it. They exist in all the social classes. They are struggling to get more progressive laws passed to curb the rampant abuse of the environment that has even worsened under Trump’s administration. The Green New Deal is part of that and is progressive as far as it goes. But that is not far enough, not by a long shot. As long as capitalism prevails, those with capital have the upper hand and will attempt to undermine anything that threatens their profits.

There’s only one class that can actually bring this system down: the working class, whose daily activities make everything run, from the factories to the warehouses, to the corporate farms, to the means of transportation and communication. Their struggle against this system that so mercilessly exploits and then abandons them is key to social change.

Within this working class are so many millions who also suffer from additional forms of oppression—targeted because of their race, their ethnicity, their national origin, their religion, their gender, their sexual identity and often a combination of these factors. They have organized and struggled for decades against discrimination at a time when others have been quiet.

Fighting all forms of discrimination in order to unite the working class against the exploiters is the key to social change. We have reached the point where doing what is absolutely necessary for the world and all its forms is completely incompatible with capitalism.

The struggle for a sustainable world is inextricably bound up with the struggle of the working class to take over the means of production and use them to meet human needs.

To be a real environmentalist means being a fighter for workers’ power and socialism.

Protests to expose NATO’s inhumanity

Continued from page 1

should have dissolved after the Soviet Union’s impending disintegration in 1991 and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. But since 1991, far from dissolving NATO, Washington has insisted that the military pact expand, while remaining under U.S. command. Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic joined NATO at its 50th anniversary meeting in April 1999. This expansion coincided with the U.S.-NATO air war in the Balkans that destroyed the sovereign and multina-
tional country of Yugoslavia.

The former Yugoslavia—once a state representing about 20 million Balkan peoples—was broken into six ministates, along with the U.S. military outpost called Kosovo, wrenched from Serbia. All easy pickings for West European and U.S. imperialists.

U.S. policy turned NATO into a type of imperialist police force. No longer confined to Europe, NATO has become a worldwide intervention force at the service of the transnational monopolies that exploit global labor and resources.


In 2011, with the flimsiest of pretenses, NATO attacked and destroyed Libya. That same year NATO countries also subjugated and subverted the Damascus government in Syria. NATO even intervened in Iraq following the U.S.-British invasion in 2003, despite the reluctance of France and Germany to join the invasion itself. These interventions killed millions of people and displaced tens of millions.

There are now 29 NATO members, including most of the former socialist Eastern European countries, plus nine other countries that have a special relation with NATO of “global partner,” like Colombia. NATO’s role now is to reconquer those areas of the world that had gained some independence from imperialism during the existence of the Soviet Union.

Defending Venezuela: Next steps to take

By Sam Ordóñez

March 3 — According to the Juan Guaido, the self-apointed interim president of Venezuela, Feb. 23 was going to be a great victory. The National Bolivarian Armed Forces (FNAB) would split in two, let U.S. Agency for International Development trucks into the country, and deliver him to the presidential palace at Miraflores. Guaidó’s proclamations, whether it be his presidency or his plans for the country, received a great deal of attention by the media and news media. But no matter how many times CNN, Fox News, The New York Times, or anyone else, repeat a some point reality asserts itself. Reality did on Feb. 23.

The threats against Bolivarian Venezuela by U.S. imperialism and their junior partners in the Lima Group and the European Union were definitively answered by a mobilization of people power in Venezuela and abroad that supported Guaidó has refused to publicly support a military intervention. Despite the lack of international support for a military intervention, it is still possible for imperialism to intervene in more covert ways. After meeting with U.S. Vice President Mike Pence, the Lima Group and several Latin American heads of state, Guaidó was able to re-enter Venezuela on March 3. Lansing that Washington still has plans for the country. People power against imperialism It would be reasonable to wonder if Guaidó and his allies truly believed they had support among the Venezuela masses and the military. They might have surprised themselves, since their whole plan seemed to revolve around getting so-called “humanitarian aid” into the country and overthrowing the government from there. As the day’s events showed, such an action was not possible without the indispensable support of the masses.

What’s more likely is that the plan was always to put on a show, to stage a false-flag provocation as pretext for a direct military intervention. After all, the strongest argument the U.S. government has had so far is its 20 years in power has been its mass movement, which has repeatedly defeated the plans of imperialism and its pawns in the Venezuela oligarchy. In 2002, an imperialist coup attempt in Caracas that freed Chávez from jail and reversed the coup that had imprisoned him. It was also popular power that withstood the U.S. economic war. The Venezuelan people have been fighting for 20 years to build a new society, independent of imperialism and based on popular power. Without a doubt, imperialism wants to plunder Venezuelan oil, gold and rare minerals. But even more than its drive to seize natural resources, imperialism seeks to destroy the unity and organization of a people that for two decades have resisted its control.

The coup failed, the threat remains

Popular mobilization in the cities and at the borders defended the coup attempt, overthrown by the most violent sections of the Venezuelan opposition. But one victory, even one as great as this, is inadequate to end the threats from U.S. imperialism. In Venezuela, the economic war is not just global but addicted to oil and militarism. As long as imperialism exists, there is a threat to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela because imperialism’s weapons are not limited to tanks and bombs. Beyond the constant threat of military action, imperialism has relied on its economic and information weapons, and attacks continue in these areas.

Washington has failed to gather the necessary support for a military intervention, imperialism is well versed in covert wars. In the 1980s, the United States created and armed rebel groups in Nicaragua in an attempt to overthrow the government there. In fact, U.S. Special Envoy Elliott Abrams was twice convicted for using aid for his role in this very plot, the so-called Iran-Contra Affair. Guaidó’s return to Venezuela would turn Washington into a real puppet master.

There is longstanding paramilitary activity on the border between Venezuela and Colombia, and there have been rumors that a so-called “liberation army” had been assembled. The Cuban government has denounced the movement of U.S. troops throughout the Caribbean, and Russia has warned of attempts to use Ukraine as an instrument to smuggle weapons to Venezuelan opposition forces. (tinyurl.com/yyxh7r4e)

The corporate media offensive has focused on the economic one, rather than a military one. The unilateral sanctions and the financial blockade Washington imposed are the main cause of continuing economic troubles. Therefore the U.S. is actually responsible for whatever death and suffering it is using to justify its actions.

The Venezuelan people’s resistance was able to put a brake on the worst plans of the imperialists. On top of that, thousands of people across the world mobilized on Feb. 23 in solidarity demonstrations, showing the potential of the people on the front lines of the global solidarity movement. But the struggle is not over.

Hollywood awards

Continued from page 3

Documentary for the 1996 film "A Little Girls" about the 1963 Birmingham church bombing by the KKK. He won an honorary Oscar for his 30-plus years of making films.

Lee’s Feb. 24 acceptance speech read in part: “Four hundred years. Our ancestors were stolen from Mother Africa and brought to Jamestown, Virginia, enslaved. Our ancestors were, and are, the glue that holds this country together. Do the right thing!” (Washington Post, Feb. 25)

Racist Trump attack. Lee was a renowned film critic, “saying that Spike Lee could read his notes, or better yet have to use notes at all, when doing his racist hit on your President, who has done more for African Americans (Criminal Justice Reform, Lowest Unemployment numbers in History, Tax Cuts, etc.) than almost any other Pres!” Lee did not refer to Trump anywhere in his speech. In his post-Oscar remarks, Lee criticized Trump for not honoring the African American Civil Rights Movement in Charlottesville, Va. According to the Washington Post, Lee stated, “Heather Heyer, her murder was an American terrorist act. That car drove down that crowded street in Charlottesville, and the president of the United States...” The president of the United States did not refute, did not denounce the Klan, alt-right and neo-Nazis. He tightened his plans for the country, received a great deal of attention by the media and news media. But no matter how many times CNN, Fox News, The New York Times, or anyone else, repeat a some point reality asserts itself. Reality did on Feb. 23.

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El 4 de marzo, Guaidó regresó a Venezuela después de reunirse con varios jefes de estado latinoamericanos, el Grupo de Lima, y con el vicepresidente presidencial de la República Dominicana, Máximo Abdo Benítez, lo alabó a su papel que está cumpliendo el Gobierno de la revolución bolivariana. La resistencia del pueblo venezolano frente al imperialismo es la causa de la crisis económica, y por lo tanto EEUU es responsable de todos los bloqueos. En realidad ya existe una guerra contra Venezuela, sólo que es económica en vez de militar. Las sanciones ultraliberales y el bloqueo financiero de los Estados Unidos es la causa de la crisis económica, y por lo tanto EEUU es responsable de todos los muertos y hambrientos que intenta usar para justificar sus acciones.

La resistencia del pueblo venezolano puede frenar los planes imperialistas por ahora. Sumándose a esa resistencia, miles de personas en todo el mundo se movilizarán el día 23 de febrero en solidaridad con Venezuela. Pero la lucha no ha terminado, y hay que construir un movimiento de solidaridad global. Hay que seguir movilizando y organizando para romper el bloqueo contra Venezuela y para lograr que EEUU y sus aliados cesen sus amenazas de guerra militar.

Organizaciones rechazan visita de Guaidó

Por Sam Ordóñez

Tras la contundente derrota que sufrió el imperialismo en su intento por vulnerar la soberanía de Venezuela con el show de la supuesta “ayuda humanitaria”, se pronunciaron contrarios al vergonzoso papel que está cumpliendo el Gobierno de la revolución bolivariana. La resistencia del pueblo venezolano frente al imperialismo es la causa de la crisis económica, y por lo tanto EEUU es responsable de todos los bloqueos. En realidad ya existe una guerra contra Venezuela, sólo que es económica en vez de militar. Las sanciones ultraliberales y el bloqueo financiero de los Estados Unidos es la causa de la crisis económica, y por lo tanto EEUU es responsable de todos los muertos y hambrientos que intenta usar para justificar sus acciones.

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