

Say NO to abortion bans!

By Kathy Durkin

“Right to life, your name's a lie! You don't care if women die!” Those words are being chanted by pro-choice activists throughout the country against reactionaries hell-bent on eradicating legal abortions. A slogan of the 1970s movement to legalize this basic right, it is being chanted today as the people’s fightback mounts against the intensified, dangerous attack on reproductive rights and health care.

Mass movement in the streets pressured the Supreme Court to legalize abortion in 1973 in Roe v. Wade. It will take a multinational, multigender, multigenerational and multi-organizational mass struggle to push back today’s right-wing offensive.

Since the Roe decision, conservatives have tried everything to hack away at and overturn it through state legislatures and courts. Decades of concerted attacks by reactionary forces have included murders, injuries, stalking and harassment of doctors, staff and clients. Bombings and arson attacks have destroyed clinics. Racism, misogyny, anti-poor and anti-LGBTQ bigotry underlie their movement.

The current race to severely restrict or ban abortions was spurred on by Brett Kavanaugh's Supreme Court appointment in 2018, bringing to five the number of conservative justices. The right-wing’s goal is for the court to overturn Roe and criminalize abortions, empowering states to prosecute and imprison those who have the procedures and/or medical providers.

States rush to protect or restrict abortions

In preemptive actions, some states, such as New York, Virginia, Kansas and Oregon have passed laws protecting abortion rights. Similar laws are being taken up in Vermont, Rhode Island and other states.

Thirty states have passed restrictive laws, including current outright abortion bans. These will harm women, especially those of color, poor, young, gender-oppressed people, workers, immigrants, the disabled, rural residents and domestic abuse survivors. Those with economic means will be able to travel out of state to access abortions, as they did in the past.

Twenty-five white Republican men voted for an Alabama abortion ban that will have racist impact. State Sen. Linda Coleman-Madison is one of four African-American senators who vehemently argued against it. She asked male senators if they had been raped or were victims of incest, since they were banning abortions for victims of these violent acts. Of course, they said no.

Some 32,000 pregnancies result annually from rape in the U.S. Can you imagine the psychological damage to a person who must carry such a pregnancy to term and the desperate acts they might commit to end it?

Legal abortions save lives

Prior to legalization, circumstances were dire for the many thousands of women who annually had botched underground or self-induced abortions. Hospital emergency rooms were filled with those who suffered injuries and infections. Thousands of women died. More will die,

if these misogynists have their way.

Abortions have always occurred. Legalizing the procedures meant they were performed in sanitary conditions by medical professionals. This was a huge breakthrough, as pregnant people had a safe way to obtain them.

As states have restricted access to the procedure and forced abortion-providing clinics to close, pregnant individuals have resorted to desperate measures. Some states have already imprisoned women, particularly immigrants and women of color, for self-abortions or “endangering fetuses.” Even miscarriages are suspect.

When right-wing politicians claim to be “pro-life,”

they are more than hypocritical. They would deny pregnant people safe medical care, sending many to turn to harmful abortion methods. More unintended pregnancies will occur, with little to no government support for parents or children.

Where is the purported concern for children's lives? Sen. Coleman-Madison criticized Alabama’s government for already not providing adequate care for children or support services for low-income mothers, such as child care. She added an amendment to the abortion ban that would require the state to provide free prenatal care to women denied abortions and health care for their

Continued on page 7



Foley Square, New York City, one of over 400 rallies across the U.S., on May 21. More on pages 6-7.

WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

WORKERS WORLD editorial

Reproductive & gender justice now!

A new, vicious right-wing attack has been launched on access to abortion in the U.S.

The Alabama State Legislature passed the most punitive and restrictive law in the United States on May 14, placing a total ban on abortions in the state, even in cases of rape or incest. The only possible exemption, very difficult to obtain, is if a pregnancy endangers the physical or mental health of a woman. The bill makes performing or attempting to perform an abortion a felony.

Alabama joins seven other states—so far—in passing laws that defiantly flout the Constitutional protection to abortion guaranteed in the 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling by

the U.S. Supreme Court. Roe limits abortion only after a fetus is “viable” —at about 24 weeks into pregnancy.

Some of the new laws actually outlaw abortion at four weeks — earlier than most people could even suspect they were pregnant.

There has been an outpouring of outrage, protest and analysis about these violent legislative attacks. Some mainstream pundits see the campaign as a Republican ramp-up to the coming 2020 national elections.

But the reasons go far deeper — centuries deep into the foundation of power and exploitation in the U.S.

Continued on page 6

Zimbabwe & African liberation	3
Strategy for coming crisis	4
Support for Embassy protectors	9
Editorial Abolish the police!	10
U.S. threatens war on Iran	11

Venezuela	8	Finland	8
Philippines	10	Korea	11

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Malcolm X, Ho Chi Minh ipresente!

Special to Workers World

Reprinted from May 18, 2017.

We celebrate on May 19 the birthdays of two world-bending revolutionaries, Ho Chi Minh and Malcolm X.

Born in 1890 in central Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh was the Marxist-Leninist communist who forged and led a people’s movement and army that defeated the invading imperialist might of both France and the United States and ultimately liberated Vietnam from colonialism.

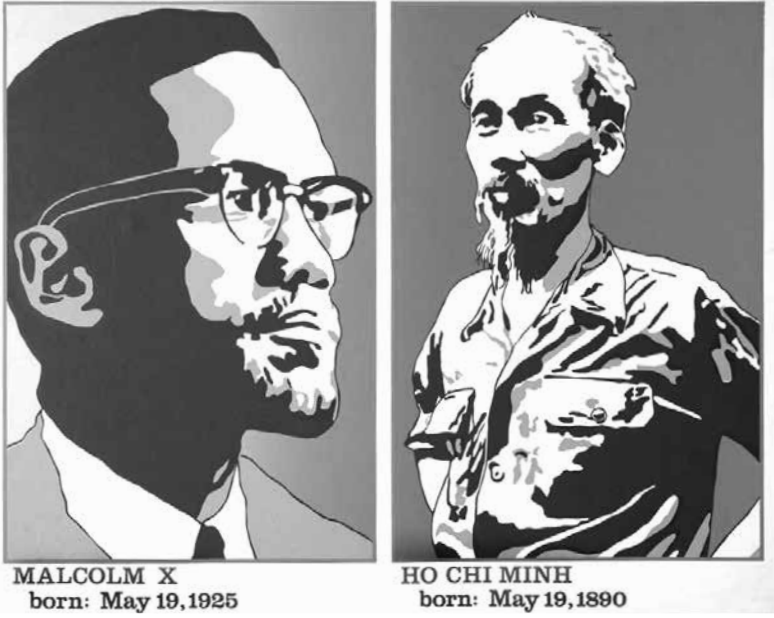
Born in 1925 in the U.S., Malcolm X was the African-American leader who raised to global attention the concepts of Black nationalism, Black self-defense and the right of self-determination of Black peoples. Malcolm X also made a major contribution to the global movement for Pan-Africanism.

Neither met the other, yet their deeds and words intertwine, and together they continue to inspire us toward revolution.

At this moment, as the U.S. ruling class fans the deadly fires of racist hatred, Malcolm X and Ho Chi Minh unite to give a profound lesson in building international solidarity with oppressed people and nations.

In 1924—the year before Malcolm X was born—at the Fifth Congress of the Communist International in Moscow, Ho Chi Minh made a presentation during a session on the “National and colonial question.” He emphasized the importance of support for the Black liberation struggle in the U.S., saying in part: “It is well-known that the Black race is the most oppressed and the most exploited of the human family. It is well-known that the spread of capitalism and the discovery of the New World had as an immediate result the rebirth of slavery. ... What everyone does not perhaps know is that after sixty-five years of so-called emancipation, [Black people in the U.S.] still endure atrocious moral and material sufferings.” (tinyurl.com/n5nlck6)

Forty years later, in 1964, Malcolm X, El-Hajj Malik



El-Shabazz, put the Black liberation struggle in a world-wide context, saying: “It is incorrect to classify the revolt of [Black people] as simply a racial conflict of Black against white, or as a purely [U.S.] American problem. Rather, we are today seeing a global rebellion of the oppressed against the oppressor, the exploited against the exploiter.” (Malcolm X Speaks)

And he acknowledged the centrality of the national liberation war led by Ho Chi Minh to that global rebellion, saying: “Viet Nam is the struggle of all third-world nations —the struggle against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism.” (1972 interview with Yuri Kochiyama, tinyurl.com/k93cq2n)

The voices of both these revolutionaries ring out with the clarion call of SOLIDARITY as the path to a future of justice and liberation.

They remind us that we of the multinational, multi-gender and multigenerational global working class have a common oppressor in imperialist capitalism.

We can resist its racism, its anti-woman and anti-LGBTQ bigotry, its anti-immigrant hatred.

We can — and must — rise up in resistance. □



Join us in the fight for socialism!

Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a multinational, multigenerational and multigendered organization that not only aims to abolish capitalism, but 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 neverending quest for ever-greater profits.

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on im/migrants, misogyny, LGBTQ oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and impoverishment 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 they even make it 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 hard-fought 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.

WWP fights for socialism because the working class produces all wealth in society, and this wealth should remain in their hands, not be stolen in the form of capitalist profits. The wealth workers create should be socially owned and its distribution planned to satisfy and guarantee basic human needs.

Since 1959, Workers World Party has been out in the streets defending the workers and oppressed here and worldwide. If you’re interested in Marxism, socialism and fighting for a socialist future, please contact a WWP branch near you. □

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WORKERS WORLD this week

♦ In the U.S.

Say no to abortion bans!	1
Malcolm X, Ho Chi Minh ipresente!	2
African Liberation Day: No Zimbabwe sanctions . . .	3
Georgia: Protest against jail conditions	3
New Jersey: Students protest fracking	3
A strategy for the coming crisis	4
An answer to attacks on abortion: Classwide fight . .	6
Alabama: Thousands protest abortion ban	7
Protesting eviction of Venezeulan embassy	9
Boston solidarity with Venezuelan embassy	9
Fraud in Philippines election protested	10

♦ Around the world

Rand Corp: Spend billions to weaken Russia	5
Daily life in Chavista bastion in Venezuela	8
Finland: Workers fight attacks on healthcare	8
Philippines: How Duterte rigged the elections	10
U.S. war threats intensify on Iran	11
Koreans protest U.S. ship seizure	11

♦ Editorial

Reproductive & gender Justice Now!	1
'Abolish the police!'	10

♦ Noticias en Español

EE.UU.: ¡Fuera de Irán!	12
Las relaciones comerciales entre EE.UU. y China .	12

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On African Liberation Day

End sanctions on Zimbabwe!

By Monica Moorehead

This May 25, which is celebrated as African Liberation Day and commemorated worldwide, marks the 56th anniversary of the founding of the Organization of African Unity in 1963. The OAU represents the independent struggles on the African continent against colonialism, neocolonialism and imperialism, and for a united Africa, both in the past and in the present.

The Brooklyn-based December 12th Movement and Friends of Zimbabwe will pay tribute to the legacy of ALD with a protest on May 25 in Washington, D.C., demanding an end to the criminal sanctions on Zimbabwe. This African nation, once known as Rhodesia after the brutal English colonizer Cecil Rhodes, fought a heroic guerrilla war for liberation for many decades. Rhodes first conquered Zimbabwe with the gun in the late 1800s.

Guerrilla fighters from the Zimbabwe African National Union and Zimbabwe African People’s Union jointly formed the ZANU-PF (Patriotic Front) to resist the colonial regime of Ian Smith. The Lancaster House Agreement, signed in December 1979 with the Smith regime, forced a compromise from the apartheid-like regime, which stated that the majority of the millions of acres of land stolen from the Indigenous people should be returned to them by the white racist

landowners. Rhodesia became the independent African state of Zimbabwe in 1980, but the settlers retained much of the land.

For over 20 years, both U.S. and British imperialists have imposed sanctions on Zimbabwe as punishment for negotiating the distribution of the land back to its rightful owners, many of whom had been guerrilla fighters in the war for independence.

Brutal impact of U.S. sanctions

The May 25 protest will begin at the African-American Civil War Museum Plaza in Washington and then march to the White House. It will highlight the impact of these sanctions — an act of war that is meant to turn the Zimbabwean people against the democratically elected government.

According to a press release from the December 12 Movement International Secretariat, these sanctions have caused:

- Shortages of medicines and medical supplies.
- Inability to purchase water treatment chemicals and mechanical parts.
- Increases in cholera and diabetes.
- Significant deterioration of Zimbabwe’s balance of payments position.
- Blockage of international access to credit markets.



- A significant buildup of external debt arrears.
 - These increased government debt arrears resulted in Zimbabwean private companies finding it difficult to access offshore lending, thus crippling their operations.
 - Lack of medical treatment of and/or screening for HIV/AIDS.
 - Declining external budgetary support (Zimbabwe's deficit has largely been financed from domestic borrowing, which has triggered high inflation).
 - A radical decrease in life expectancy.
 - An historic increase in unemployment, which ultimately hurts the overall quality of living.
 - Zimbabwe being falsely perceived as an unsafe and risky country to visit, thus drastically reducing the number of tourist arrivals.
- The press release goes on to say: “The United States’ Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 (ZIDERA) and its sanctions violate international law and the United Nations Charter in its blatant interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign nation. A land-locked, developing African nation like Zimbabwe, of 16 million people, poses no existential threat to the ‘national security interest’ of the United States. It is being punished for the example it has set for other African countries in their fight for land reform—the only road forward for development.” □

Georgia

Protesters demand: ‘End inhumane jail conditions!’



By Jimmy Raynor
Atlanta

A militant demonstration of 200 people chanted and marched from an Atlanta-area rail station to the Dekalb County Jail May 15 to protest inhumane conditions inside the jail. The demonstration marched through Memorial Drive, a major road in Dekalb County.

Protesters blocked traffic until police attacked them in the street and violently arrested four people. Although demonstrators were forced off the streets, they maintained a loud presence in front of the jail.

Prisoners and their families have been complaining about the horrible living conditions in the jail. They have told stories of inadequate and inedible food, black mold growing on cell walls and extensive use of solitary confinement. Also, access is limited for medical services for both pre-existing conditions and illnesses acquired inside the jail.

A prisoner named Darnell helped expose the horrid



WW PHOTOS: JIMMY RAYNOR

conditions in the jail when he got pictures out to the public that showed moldy food trays. Guards from the jail allegedly beat Darnell and put him in solitary confinement. Since this has happened to Darnell, his mother, Malaya Tucker, has not been able to contact her son. Darnell’s current condition is unknown.

This is the second demonstration to protest these conditions. These issues have been brought before the county commissioners, but they have not taken any action. Sheriff Jeffrey Mann has refused to meet with the prisoners in his jail. He claims no grievances have been filed, even though it is well known that prisoners will be punished for complaining about these conditions.

The demonstration was called by the Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), and was supported by many local and national groups. Organizers vow to be back in the streets to continue this struggle.

Arielle Robinson contributed to this article.

New Jersey

High School youth protest fracked-gas power plant

By Michael Kramer
Ridgefield, N.J.

May 18 — Hundreds of New Jersey high school students from Bergen and Hudson counties rallied and marched today in Ridgefield to protest the construction of the North Bergen Liberty Generating Station in neighboring North Bergen by the Japanese multinational Mitsubishi.

The estimated cost of the plant is \$1.5 billion. The amount of greenhouse gases and particulate matter that would be emitted from the plant into the air of adjacent communities would be enormous. Large numbers of Korean and Latinx people live in these communities.

The action was organized with the help of Food & Water Watch and the Sierra Club. Endorsers included the Bergen County Audubon Society, Central Jersey Coalition Against Endless War and Veterans For Peace. The featured speaker at the rally was the anti-capitalist investigative author professor Naomi Klein of Rutgers University.

But it was the high school students who gave most of the talks at the rally, and they gave them in three languages: Korean, Spanish and English.

“Today we live in a world where we have to fight for the privilege to breathe clean air. No amount of money is worth risking our lungs and our health,” said Yoon Yung Kim.

“I am committed to protesting and marching until this project is finally rejected,” added Arturo Garcia.

The action highlighted the growing activism of high school students — especially around environmental issues. □

Political organization of the working class

A STRATEGY FOR THE COMING CRISIS

By Larry Holmes

This is a slightly edited version of a document prepared for the May 11-12 Workers World Party national strategy meeting in Newark, N.J. Holmes is WWP's first secretary.

Chances are that some time before the 2020 elections, the next global capitalist economic crisis will arrive. The crisis has been coming for a long time, and managers of the capitalist system no longer have the means to stop or delay it. That crisis will be more severe than anything we've experienced, and it will change everything.

The chances of a wider imperialist war, along with the prospect of all kinds of wild political gyrations both in the U.S. and around the world will increase exponentially. The class struggle will intensify in ways that we can only imagine.

Material basis for challenges facing the working-class movement

The challenges facing the working class, both the small percentage of organized workers and the much larger unorganized working class, should not be a surprise or a mystery to revolutionaries who have a real understanding of Marxism. Some believe that the reason that organized labor has lost ground is because it's not militant enough. Of course that's true, but it is a variable within a larger problem.

The latest phase of capitalist development, including the impact of new technology on the productive forces, a more globalized organization and the even greater role of finance capital over productive capital, has objectively strengthened the hand of capital over labor.

Economic developments have rendered the working class more atomized and unable to defend its interests — that is, at least until labor transforms itself in a revolutionary direction, enabling it to turn weaknesses into strengths. The expansion of precarious or gig work and the contraction of union-wage jobs, especially in manufacturing, has made it far more difficult to organize workers through traditional unionization and collective bargaining toward the end of getting an incrementally larger portion of the wealth that workers create.

Marx's solution? Organize politically

Marx predicted the crisis that the working class is in today, and he showed the way out of the crisis. In the orientation documents that Marx prepared for the first workers' international convened in 1864, he warned that in due time the labor movement must evolve beyond merely attending to the immediate economic demands of workers in the workplace into a movement that encompasses the entire working class.

Marx advised that the labor movement must not remain static and narrowly focused on industry and geography, but become international in scope and organization, and that labor must become not just a supporter, but a leader in all the issues facing the working class. Most importantly, Marx declared that as soon as it was able to do so, the labor movement must lead the struggle to end capitalism and not merely fight capitalism over workers' demands. In essence, Marx foresaw that the only way forward for labor was to become a revolutionary political movement.

A central tenet of Marxism that even many who consider themselves Marxists tend to forget in the course of the day-to-day struggle is that while we fight for reforms, we must be able to see past them. Ultimately, there is only so much that the capitalist class can concede to the working class and still hold on to their system.

The concessions that workers force capitalism to make in the course of the class struggle are not permanent and are bound to be reversed so long as the capitalist system remains in power. This contradiction is truer as capitalism sinks into a deeper crisis.

Our opposition to the notion that capitalism can be reformed is because that notion is false. If capitalism could be reformed, then there would be no need for the class struggle or socialist revolution. Actually, the

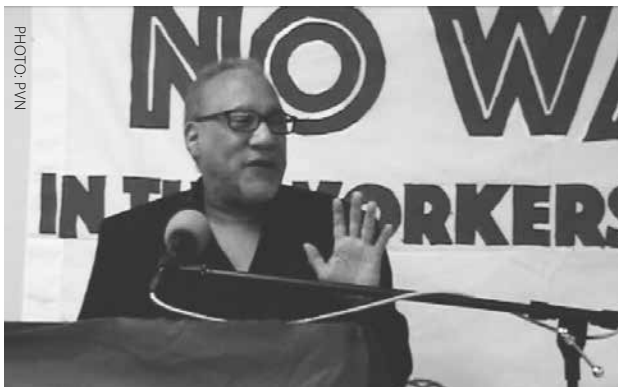


PHOTO: PEOPLES VIDEO NETWORK

We must also use solidarity days to show that all the struggles — the women's struggle, the anti-racist struggle, the LGBTQ2S struggle, the struggle against war and fascism, the struggle for accessibility and the climate change struggle — are ALL workers' struggles and that it's important that these struggles be waged in the name of the multinational, multigender and multigenerational working class.

Larry Holmes, First Secretary, Workers World Party

fundamental reason why capitalism is so unpopular right now, and the ruling class is so fearful of the working class rising up to make revolution, is precisely because after a very, very long time, the masses are realizing that capitalism can't be reformed in such a way that everyone's needs can be met. All this speaks to the urgent need to open up a new phase in the organization of workers. That phase is the organization of workers on the basis of political consciousness.

From class consciousness to revolutionary consciousness

There are several overlapping levels of organizing on the basis of political consciousness. The most basic level of political consciousness — but a nonetheless critical form of consciousness, especially now — is the understanding that most of us are workers. From that understanding, consciousness advances to the realization that we are part of a class that is not bound by geography or circumstances — and that it is essential that we support and defend our class. Such understanding reflects a more advanced form of class consciousness. A higher form of political consciousness is anti-capitalist, socialist and revolutionary consciousness.

Political consciousness, from a basic to a more advanced level, is on the rise. This rise in political consciousness is a factor in the upsurge of the workers' struggle globally, the universal unpopularity of capitalism and the growing popularity of socialism, especially in the U.S. It is why today, the super-rich are scared to death of the prospect of class struggle and revolution. The need now is for this political consciousness to be nurtured, organized and focused in a way that helps the growing class struggle and the further development of revolutionary consciousness.

If the mass growth of political consciousness can be turned into concrete solidarity with the workers' struggle, then it becomes one of the factors that can reverse the advantage that capital has over labor, due to the vast changes in capitalist development. There are recent positive and negative examples of how transforming political consciousness into solidarity affects the outcome of a struggle.

Difference between low-wage organizing campaign and education workers' revolt

Imagine if the unions involved in organizing low-wage workers for \$15 and a union would have called on the entire working class to rise up in support of these demands. There were good things about the low-wage worker organizing campaign, and concessions were won on the local level, but it never realized its potential because of the narrow orientation of most of the leadership in the organized labor movement.

Consider how turning this struggle into a truly mass militant struggle would have helped fast food workers feel more powerful. Unfortunately, the unions involved in organizing low-wage workers, for the most part, kept tight control over the campaign, limiting its militancy

Continued on page 5



Striking education workers in Charleston, West Virginia, Feb. 26, 2018

Rand Corp. tells U.S. Spend billions on weakening Russia

By Manlio Dinucci

The author is an anti-militarist activist and expert who writes for the Italian newspaper Il Manifesto. Translation by Workers World Managing Editor John Catalinotto.

May 21 — Force your opponent to stretch too far and lose his balance, then take him down. This is no judo maneuver, but the Rand Corporation's plan to combat Russia.

The Rand Corp. is the most influential U.S. think tank, with a staff of thousands of experts. It presents itself as the world's most reliable source of intelligence and political analysis for the U.S. rulers and their allies.

Rand prides itself on having contributed to the long-term strategy that enabled the United States to emerge victorious from the Cold War, forcing the Soviet Union to consume its economic resources in its strategic confrontation with the U.S.

This model inspired the new plan, "Overextending and Unbalancing Russia," published by Rand. The plan examines "options that the United States and its allies could pursue across economic, political and military areas to stress — overextend and unbalance — Russia's economy and armed forces and the regime's political standing at home and abroad." (rand.org)

According to its analysts, Russia remains a powerful competitor of the United States in some fundamental fields. For this reason, the U.S. must pursue, together with its allies, an overall longterm strategy that exploits Russia's vulnerabilities.

Rand then analyzes various ways to force Russia to lose its balance and indicates for each way the probability of success and the benefits, costs and risks for the U.S.

Rand analysts believe that Russia's greatest vulnerability is economic, due to its high dependence on oil and gas exports, whose revenues can

be reduced by increasing sanctions and increasing U.S. energy exports.

The aim is to reduce European imports of Russian natural gas, replacing them with liquefied natural gas transported by sea from other countries.

Another way to damage Russia's economy over time is to encourage the emigration of qualified personnel, especially young Russians with a high level of education.

In the ideological and propaganda field, Rand advises

encouraging internal protests, at the same time undermining the global image of Russia by expelling it from international forums and boycotting the international sporting events it organizes.

In the geopolitical field, arming Ukraine allows the U.S. to exploit Russia's greatest external vulnerability. But this needs to be fine-tuned to keep Russia under pressure without provoking a major conflict in which Russia would prevail, because it is geographically at an advantage.

In the military field the U.S. can have high dividends, with low costs and risks, from the growth of the land forces of the European NATO countries working against Russia.

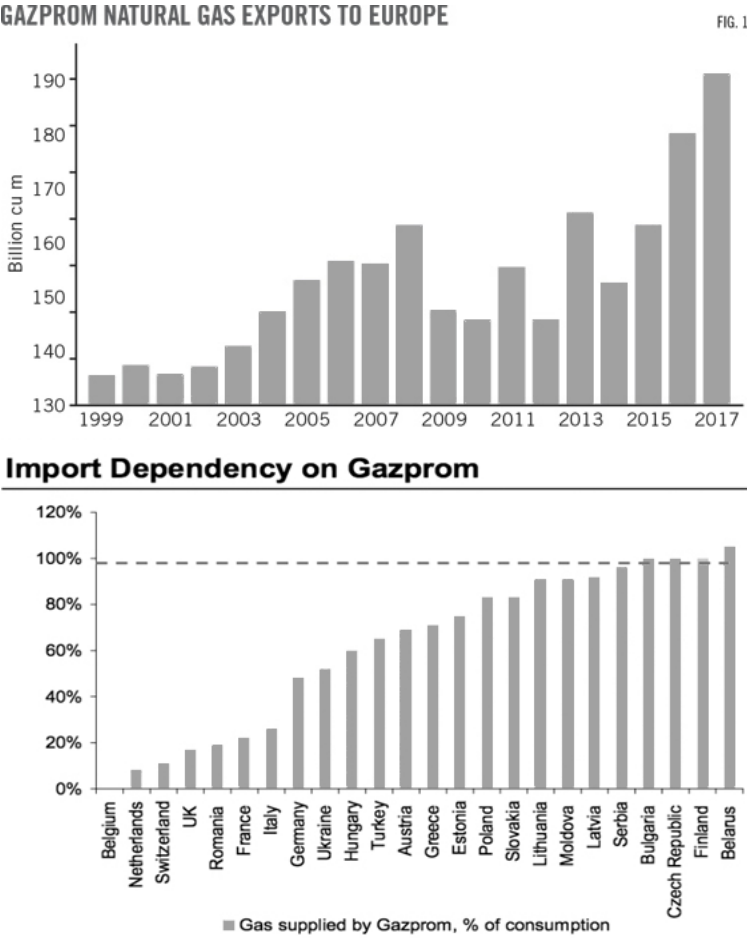
The U.S. can have high chances of success and benefits, with moderate risks, especially by investing more in strategic bombers and long-range attack missiles targeting Russia.

Exiting the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and deploying new intermediate-range nuclear missiles aimed at Russia in Europe gives the U.S. a high probability of success, but also entails high risks.

Rand analysts conclude that if the U.S. strategists calibrate each option to achieve the desired effect, Russia will end up paying a higher price than the U.S. Nevertheless, the U.S. will also have to invest large resources and subtract them from other programs. Rand predicts a further sharp increase in U.S./NATO military spending at the expense of social spending.

This is the future that the Rand Corporation, the most influential think tank of the deep state, proposes. Rand expresses the needs of the unelected center of real power held by the economic, financial and military oligarchies, presenting the strategic choices not only for the USA but for the entire West.

The "options" provided by the plan are, in reality, only variants of the war strategy itself, the price of which, in terms of sacrifices and risks, is paid by all the people. □



Rand Corp. advises U.S. imperialism to use sanctions to prevent Russia from exporting gas to Europe.

Political organization of the working class A STRATEGY FOR THE COMING CRISIS

Continued from page 4

and its expansion to wider sections of the entire working class.

Several years ago, the AFL-CIO had managed to get over 3 million people to join something called Working America, ostensibly organized for the purpose of supporting working-class struggles.

Wouldn't it be something if even a small percentage of those 3 million people were mobilized to join picket lines, support strikes and union drives? Instead, Working America was mobilized to support Democratic Party candidates and nothing more.

The more recent rebellion of teachers and education workers, which started a year ago in West Virginia, spread across the country and continues today, provides a positive example of the potential role of mass solidarity. The teachers and education workers used new communication technology to go around the conservative labor leaders and organize active participation of the community. Consequently, their strikes turned into mass revolts.

The strategy of Workers' Solidarity Days: growing mass solidarity

The proposal for Workers' Solidarity Days on a monthly basis, and the establishment of an International Workers' Solidarity Network, is an attempt to assist in pulling more workers into active solidarity with workers' struggles. It is an experiment in organizing workers based on political consciousness.

The purpose of Workers' Solidarity Days and an International Workers' Solidarity Network is neither to replace nor oppose traditional labor unions. We must be in the organized labor movement and fight on a rank-and-file basis to push organized labor in a revolutionary direction.

However, especially at a time when conditions are creating the potential for revolutionary transformation, revolutionaries can influence the trade unions from the inside as well as the outside.

The extent to which Workers' Solidarity Days will succeed is something we can't know yet. If it is flawed or premature, we may need to change our strategy, but we cannot change our direction and that is to intervene more consistently and methodically in the working-class struggle. If Workers' Solidarity Days are successful, that could create the basis for organizing Workers' Assemblies, as well as become a source of recruitment into the party.

The period that we are in is bound to give rise to calls for a mass workers' party. It is likely that the harsh lessons that many activists will learn from the outcome of their efforts to push the Democratic Party to the left in the 2020 presidential elections will become a catalyst for the formation of a mass workers' party.

This is merely speculative at this time, but the work beginning now with the International Workers' Solidarity Network could become part of a real mass movement for a mass workers' party. Such a development would reflect a higher level of organizing workers on the basis of political consciousness. For now, the approach to Workers' Solidarity Day is to take small steps, learn and adjust tactics.

The June 1 Workers' Solidarity Day will be in solidarity with migrant workers, because the war against migrant workers is by far the biggest weapon that the capitalists are wielding in order to thwart the development of the class struggle.

What are Workers' Solidarity Days? The answer to that question, at least for the moment, is that they are whatever conditions allow them to be. Workers' Solidarity Days could be something as simple as organizing a few workers to support a workers' picket line. It

could be organizing others to go to a progressive event, like a Pride march, with leaflets and placards that raise a local workers' struggle.

It could be holding a meeting, including a political meeting, to discuss the workers' struggle. Where solidarity days can be more than this, they will be. We must also use solidarity days to show that all the struggles — the women's struggle, the anti-racist struggle, the LGBTQ2S struggle, the struggle against war and fascism, the struggle for accessibility and the climate change struggle — are ALL workers' struggles and that it's important that these struggles be waged in the name of the multinational, multigender and multigenerational working class.

A global general strike this fall about climate change: What an opportunity!

Students all over the world have been walking out of classes and holding fairly militant protests to save the planet from climate change. The forces in this movement are now calling for a global general strike on Friday, Sept. 27. This could provide an extraordinary opportunity for left forces in the working-class movement.

It is interesting that forces organizing around climate change have chosen to call this global general strike in September, as the culmination of their protests this year. It reflects, at least in an incipient way, an appreciation for the potential power of the working class.

One of the weaknesses of this movement is that it seems to be indifferent to the economic and social demands of the working class, especially to those of the most oppressed. If revolutionary left forces intervene in this global general strike in a big way, perhaps through the International Workers' Solidarity Network, that weakness could possibly be rectified.

Onward to building global working-class solidarity! □

WORKERS WORLD

commentary

By Taryn Fivek

Banning abortion in the year 2019 will not result in a world that looks anything like life before 1973, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on *Roe v. Wade*, functionally making abortion legal in all 50 U.S. states and colonized Puerto Rico. Too much has changed since then. Struggles that achieve basic human rights are characteristic of periods when resistance is high, where material and historical conditions make such gains possible.

However, when basic human rights are stripped from the most vulnerable, we find ourselves in quite a different environment. Stripping rights away comes in deep periods of reaction, when our class must be militant, eager and able to combat these encroachments by any means necessary lest we face further losses.

And it is a very reactive world we live in when #MeToo crashes against the rocks of mass media collusion, liberal democracy and the U.S. Supreme Court. Donald J. Trump, a self-admitted sexual predator, says he thinks, “It’s a very scary time for young men in America,” and his son says he worries more for his sons than his daughters. (cnn.com, Oct. 2, 2018)

We should take them at their word.

The attack on liberation

It’s with the same breath that someone like Trump renews and strengthens the assault on trans people and migrants while praising the police and the military.

White supremacy and patriarchy are foundational pillars of capitalism and imperialism, which is why they are the first institutions to be reinforced when capitalism and imperialism are threatened.

As the opportunities for profit continue to dwindle, and the United States finds itself in an ever-increasing multipolar world, fascism becomes more and more appealing to the ruling class. As resistance to capitalism grows, big business and its running dogs in government will do everything in their power to ensure, as Donald Trump promised this year, that “America [sic] will never be a socialist country.” (nytimes.com, Feb. 14)

Subjugating the bodies of women and gender oppressed people is part and parcel to this devious plot against socialism and liberation. It should come as no surprise, then, that a recent wave of legislation has been passed in Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Ohio, Missouri, Arkansas and Utah to severely restrict or ban abortion outright. Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Minnesota are currently in the process of passing their own laws to either ban or severely restrict abortion.

A failed Texas bill even recommended the death penalty for people who performed or obtained abortions. This is a clear attack against our class that will have cascading ramifications for women and people of oppressed genders, especially the most vulnerable.

‘An injury to one is an injury to all’

Making abortion illegal would result in mass suffering that will be difficult to quantify. The main demographic among the dead and wounded will continue to be cis women (identifying with the sex she was born with) of color. The more recent repression and prison sentences levied against women whose fetuses died in utero or during birth have been disproportionately levied against women of color.

War criminals like George W. Bush signed into legislation plenty of laws, such as the Unborn Victims of Violence Act of 2004, to make it so. Purvi Patel, Keysheonna Reed, Bei Bei Shuai and Theresa Lee Hernandez are just a few of the women of color who have been tortured and jailed for failing to bring their respective fetuses to term.

Rich white women have always had an easier time accessing abortion, even when it was illegal. The idea that it would just be a question of traveling to another state or country, or ordering abortion medication online, assumes that one would have the means to do so in the first place.

Making abortion illegal will strengthen those engaged in patriarchal abuse. Women and other people of oppressed genders will be coerced to remain in proximity to their abusers. The idea that making abortion illegal is “pro-life” is

An answer to attacks on abortion: Classwide fightback



laughable when 40 percent of women killed in the United States are murdered by their intimate partners.

Women and gender oppressed people experience higher rates of poverty at every age than men do, and a classic symptom of domestic abuse is financial control. After banning abortion, will pregnant women and people of oppressed genders be more likely to escape their abusive relationships by living in poorly funded domestic violence shelters, going into debt when they give birth in poorly funded hospitals and then being slandered as “welfare queens” when they approach the state for financial support? The answer to this question is—obviously not.

Making abortion illegal will compel many millions of vulnerable people to stay in relationships where they face beatings, rape, psychological torture and/or murder.

The ruling class understands that an assault against our class anywhere is an assault against our class everywhere. In order to strengthen our resistance, we must deeply study and internalize this lesson ourselves.

Subjugating roughly half of the population by empowering the state to violate and control our bodily sovereignty is a move to demoralize, demobilize and exclude roughly half of the population from our common struggle for class liberation.

‘We won’t go back!’

When women and gender oppressed people say, “We won’t go back” with regards to the struggle for abortion, we must be clear. We can’t only mean that we won’t go back to giving ourselves abortions with coat hangers, as some desperate women did in a world before abortion was legal. We must also mean that we won’t go back to the hushed voices, the secret networks, the home remedies and the shameful secrets.

In order to succeed, our struggle against patriarchy needs to approach a new level of resistance. We will need to build serious, militant and strategic fightback against any attempt to force us to bear children, stay with our abusers or detransition.

We need to go on the offensive, educating our class on how this is not merely an issue that affects people who can bear children—this is about everyone. We need cis men to form “Dr. George Tiller Brigades” to support our work. We must, all of us—cis and trans, Black, Brown and white—do everything in our power to let the ruling class know: We will not go softly back into biological, cis hetero bondage. As women and gender oppressed people have been in the forefront in the battle against Nazism and white supremacy, so too will we unleash the greatest fight these men have ever seen to defend our rights and win liberation for our entire class. □

WORKERS WORLD

editorial

Continued from page 1

The laws are being passed to strengthen misogyny, white supremacy and hatred of LGBTQ people and people with disabilities.

Most of all, the laws are being passed as a brutal weapon in the ongoing and renewed attack on U.S. workers and on the growing solidarity rising in the multinational, multigender and multigenerational working class.

It is no accident that the attack on abortion access is happening as women and gender nonconforming people are leading mass, militant, rank-and-file worker actions. Over the past couple of years, millions of U.S. teachers, nurses, tech workers and fast food workers, often headed by women of color, walked out in strike actions from schools, hospitals, Google offices and McDonald’s restaurants.

These workers took gender and reproductive justice issues to the picket line as

work issues—from sexual harassment to access to contraceptives in health coverage, to family leave, to equal pay. And they tied these issues to the need for ending oppression based on race and national origin.

Dejuana Thompson, founder of Woke Vote Birmingham, exposed the deep racism in the recent laws, saying to the Birmingham News May 19: “The [Birmingham Southern] College Republicans released a statement equating the [1963] bombing of the four little [Black] girls at historic 16th Street Baptist Church with the sentencing of medical professionals who would perform abortions. ... We, as organizers, will not be silent about this kind of revisionist history and the attempted erasure of the Black woman’s experience in this country. ... [the fact that] Black women’s bodies were used as breeders and then discarded as tools.”

Since Congress ended the use of federal money for abortions in the 1976 Hyde Amendment, ongoing limits placed on

abortion access have hit poor people of color, and Black, Brown and Indigenous women, extra hard. The struggle to survive financially as family has intensified, while the new anti-abortion laws actually threaten criminal penalties for efforts to obtain relief.

Though abortion access is often phrased as an issue of women’s rights, the attack affects any person with a uterus. Devin Cole of Social Trans Initiative, on their way to a May 19 protest in Mobile, Ala., clarified this on Facebook: “Not everyone who gets pregnant is a woman, not everyone with a uterus is a woman and not every woman has a uterus. [We must] call for reproductive justice for all—women, trans men, non-binary people with a uterus and intersex people.”

Fighting for abortion access is one part of the struggle for reproductive and gender justice, for the right of people to choose when, where or whether to bear children—and also for the right to have

the resources to shelter, feed, clothe, educate and nurture their children.

The fight for abortion access is also another link in the ongoing struggle against capitalism’s treatment of people as property. As Jenny Arras said to the Birmingham News: “This law is dangerous. ... It says: ‘We will make your bodies and what they carry inside—our property.’”

As communists, we struggle always against the deadly claws of capitalism that reach into our lives. We fight for the right of workers and oppressed people to dignity, joy and self-determination, especially for people of color.

To counter the hate-filled campaign on access to abortion, we fiercely struggle for reproductive and gender justice.

Now is the chance to be part of working-class actions by organizing International Workers’ Solidarity Days (workersolidarity.net) to fight back with protests, rallies and calls for “Reproductive and gender justice now!” □

Reproductive & gender justice now!

Thousands protest Alabama working class and oppressed fight abortion ban

By Devin Cole
Mobile, Ala.

On May 15, Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey signed into law the most restrictive abortion law in the U.S. The reaction from working-class and oppressed people of Alabama has been extraordinary. In less than a week, thousands have organized, marched and rallied — from Huntsville to Mobile, from Birmingham to Montgomery — to protest the law.

The law makes providing an abortion a felony punishable by up to 99 years in prison unless it's to save a woman's life — with no consideration for pregnancy by incest or rape. This directly affects not only cis gender women, but transgender men, nonbinary people with a uterus and intersex people, all of whom are capable of getting pregnant and all of whom deserve reproductive justice.

This fascistic state law is currently unenforceable under existing federal law, but the reactionary leaders of Alabama know this. It is part of their plan.



Reproductive justice for all, at the Mobile, Ala., rally on May 18.

Their plan is for Alabama and several other states to propose and pass illegal, restrictive laws to challenge and overturn Roe v. Wade, the landmark 1973 Supreme Court decision that guarantees women a fundamental “right to privacy” that protects the freedom to get an abortion.

Georgia, Mississippi, Kentucky, Ohio and, as of a few days ago, Missouri, are among the states trailing Alabama in their attempts to have Roe v. Wade overturned with “heartbeat bills” that rely on myths, lies and reactionary patriarchal thought and practice as justification for repression.

The weekend of May 18-19, this writer, who traveled from Florida, joined hundreds of working people — trans, cis, queer, Black, white, Brown, dis/abled and other oppressed groups — at Bienville Square in downtown **Mobile, Ala.**, to chant, march and “shut it down” in protest of the violent law.

Speakers on May 18 included people of all genders, races, nationalities and dis/abilities, from youth to a former abortion provider. All these expressed anger, disgust and fear of this bill and of the rising tide of right-wing extremism that bears down closer and closer on the working class with each passing day. Most notably present was Chikesia Clemons, a Black woman brutalized in a south Alabama Waffle House by armed police last year.

A handful of reactionary, anti-abortion counterprotesters showed up but were quickly



Thousands against Alabama's recent abortion ban packed Kelly Ingram Park in Birmingham on May 19.

outmaneuvered by the organizers. The religion-spouting anti-abortionists were eventually kicked out of the park by cops surveilling the rally — for having alcohol.

After a few people spoke, including the newly formed Alabama Coalition for Reproductive Rights representative who read a manifesto against the reactionary legislature, a march started. Led by the ACRR and the Mobile Bay Green Party, about 100 people marched several blocks through the city and shut down at least one intersection for a number of minutes. Those participating included Clemons, STRIVE (Social Trans Initiative), Workers World Party and Party for Socialism and Liberation.

Along the way, people driving by

honked and raised fists in support of the march. After the march, more speakers urged recommitment to the fight for free, safe, on-demand abortion and other reproductive rights.

On the second day of Mobile protests, hundreds of people again flooded Bienville Square to chant and shout against this heinous law. On both days, protesters wore black to signify the current lack of health care and reproductive justice for working-class Black people.

About 1,000 people rallied in **Huntsville** under the slogan, “My Body, My Choice,” at Butler Green Park May 19. The rally had to be moved from its original site because so many people indicated

Continued on page 9

Say NO to abortion bans!

Continued from page 1

children up to age 13. The conservative white male majority struck it down.

Neither Georgia nor Alabama has expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act. Alabama has the country's second-highest infant mortality rate, while Georgia ranks seventh. Georgia has the highest rate of maternal mortality and the largest number of cervical cancer deaths — which disproportionately impact Black women. Alabama also rates high in number of pregnancy-related deaths.

'They say get back!'

Protests against these vile laws have taken place around the country, especially in Midwestern and Southern states where reproductive rights are under the severest attack. Momentum is building.

Activists from the Western New York Resistance Revival Chorus, Western New York Peace Center, New York Abortion Access Fund and Workers World Party gathered May 14 in Bidwell Park in **Buffalo, N.Y.** They were there in solidarity with people affected by the



Atlanta, May 21.

anti-abortion laws passed in Alabama and other states.

Over the decades, Buffalo has been the site of massive mobilizations to stop right-wing attacks on abortion access. Dr. Barnett Slepian was fatally shot there by an anti-abortion fanatic in 1998.

Rally speakers pointed out that laws criminalizing those who have and those who provide abortions are a way to disenfranchise poor people and generate more prison labor. The rally drew support from commuters and passersby — some of whom joined in.

Gov. Brian Kemp of Georgia signed a “heartbeat bill” on May 7, the first of what would become a wave of anti-abortion legislation across the South. In **Atlanta**, protesters congregated outside the Capitol minutes later and vowed to challenge the law. Jalessah Jackson, Georgia Coordinator for SisterSong, denounced it: “It is about controlling the decisions of low-income women and women of color and denying us the agency in our own reproductive lives.” (SisterSong Facebook)

This bill bans anyone who has a uterus from seeking an abortion after the sixth week of pregnancy — when many people do not even know they are pregnant. This bill would criminalize those who go out of state to seek abortions and those who assist them. There is speculation that those who suffer from miscarriages could face prison time if the state proves they caused their miscarriages.

This anti-abortion law, along with others signed in Missouri, Kentucky, Ohio, Mississippi

and Louisiana are attacks against working-class women, transgender men and non-binary people. But those impacted are asserting they will not allow these laws to be implemented.

Georgia district attorneys from Fulton, Dekalb, Cobb and Gwinnett counties have said they would not prosecute those who seek abortions.

The Feminist Women's Health Center in Atlanta, a health clinic that provides services to intersex and trans people, in addition to cisgender women, has reassured supporters that the clinic will continue to provide abortions to all who need them and fight to ensure that this bill does not go into effect in January 2020.

'We say fight back!'

Fed up with online petitions and polite lobbying, pro-choice activists took over the Louisiana State Capitol rotunda in **Baton Rouge** on May 15. Their protest followed state House and Senate committee votes in favor of an abortion ban.

Members of the New Orleans Abortion Fund, Women With a Vision, New Orleans Peoples' Assembly and the New Orleans Workers Group chanted: “Not the church, not the state! Rich men won't decide our fate!” They also demanded a hike in the hourly minimum wage, fully funded child care centers, an investigation of Black maternal deaths in Louisiana and an end to mass incarceration.



Baton Rouge, La.

PHOTO: NEW ORLEANS ABORTION FUND

Ten people were arrested and charged with criminal destruction of property for pouring “blood” on the floor. The groups vowed to send this message: “The time is now to stop business as usual. This is just the beginning.”

Once news of the action hit the news and social media, thousands of messages of support poured in. Significantly, most Louisiana legislators are puppets of the reactionary American Legislative Exchange Council, an arm of the billionaire Koch brothers.

Over 50 organizations, including Planned Parenthood, SisterSong and the Women's March have called for a National Day of Action to Stop the Bans on May 21. Over 400 demonstrations are planned. The coalition vows to “fight back against this unconstitutional attempt to gut Roe and punish women.” (stopabortionbans.org)

Nigel Bouvart, Gavrielle Gemma and Arielle Robinson contributed reports.

Daily life in a Chavista bastion in Venezuela

Endurance in the January 23rd Commune

By Marco Teruggi
Caracas

Teruggi is an Argentine journalist and political analyst living in Caracas. This article was published May 16 in pagina12.com.ar. Translation by Workers World Managing Editor John Catalinotto.

Caracas is several different cities at once. The neighborhoods turn their backs on each other, often fear each other. In the east is the hotbed of news about Juan Guaidó and the opposition; in the west is the territory of Chavista majorities, the Miraflores Palace, the centers of power. In the east, people live in foothills, while in the west they live in mountains.

One of these mountains is where you find the neighborhood of 23 de Enero, where there has been a wave of popular resistance since before the emergence of Hugo Chávez. It's there that people established several collectives, which is the name of one of the forms of Chavista organization.

The word collective has come to embody the right-wing myth meant to demonize the revolution. According to this myth, the collectives are criminal gangs dedicated to carrying out the dirty work of the state security forces, such as preventing opposition mobilizations. Republican Sen. Marco Rubio said the United States should classify the collectives as terrorist organizations.

One of the collectives is called January 23rd — that of the Alexis Vive [Alexis Lives] Patriotic Forces, named after the late Alexis Gonzalez. The organization announces its presence at the entrance to the neighborhood, where above a high arch you can read: “Welcome, Socialist Commune El Panal 2021.” Upon entering, you will find the communal bakery and follow the daily life of a popular neighborhood in Caracas with children, wearing school uniforms, news-stands, murals, motorcycles, music and people seeking

shade to avoid the Caribbean sun.

"We collectives are grassroots social organizations that work in the political, social, communal, productive construction," says Robert Longa, a representative of the Alexis Vive collective. He is sitting in Radio Arsenal, which was built in front of the communal sports court. In the January 23 Commune there are about 30 collectives, he says.

"We are a radical communal movement; we believe that we should be merged with the masses. This is a theme of the collective avant-garde, and that collective avant-garde is the commune; we are part of the insurgent force in the neighborhood," he says.

Alexis Gonzalez was assassinated at the beginning of the revolution in one of the right-wing coup attempts. Thirteen thousand people live in the communal territory, and the commune, hand in hand with the Alexis Lives Patriotic Forces, has set up organs of self-government and has focused its development on economic and social aspects of life. These include a sugar factory, a bakery, a textile factory, a collection center, a blacksmith shop, a currency of its own, a dance school, a sports school and a swimming pool for kids on weekends.

Targeted by rightists

The Alexis, like other collectives, is the target of media and political attacks from the right. "They [the reactionaries] see the collectives in the neighborhoods as the pockets of [Chavista] resistance and the retaining walls of Bolivarian government. Much like the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution in Cuba, we are the focus of media and material attacks in an attempt to implode the arteries of our communities. On Feb. 27, 1989, we came down from the mountains, and on April 11, 2002, we also came down. We played a fundamental role in the seizure of power, and I can surmise that the reactionaries see the collectives as the cornerstone to generate the



Entrance to the 23 de Enero neighborhood, one of the bastions of Chavismo on the west side of Caracas.

social explosion they seek," he says.

The sector of January 23rd that houses the Patriotic Forces and the Commune Panal 2021 is calm. The organization manages to provide answers to problems such as insecurity and tackles the daily struggle represented by the economic situation.

The picture is complex among the popular masses in Caracas and even more so in the cities far from the capital. This is a product of the economic and financial blockade declared by the United States and also of its own errors: "We make mistakes, but we think that the dirty laundry of the revolution should be washed internally; inside the revolution we should make any changes necessary, outside the revolution nothing," says Longa.

The day I visited, an activity took place in the field: The Ministry of People's Power in the Communes delivered tools for production. Communes from the west of Caracas came to the activity. The people debated about the economic situation, about the difficulties and necessities of maintaining production of goods, about prices, about the meetings between the United States and Russia — all this can take place [even] in a context of

Continued on page 9

Finland Workers resist attack on health care system

By Tommi Lievemaa
Helsinki

The author is vice chair of the Communist League (Finland). Workers World requested he write this article for U.S. readers because its central issue, the health care system, is an important issue in the United States.

In Finland the right-wing government resigned in April this year, only a few weeks before the parliamentary elections, because it failed to push through a massive health care “reform.” Health care in Finland is still largely run by the public sector.

The aim of the reform was to shift the operation of the health care system, amounting to tens of billions of euros, more and more to private companies so that they would profit from it. Many of these companies are owned by foreign investors, who often transfer their money to tax havens abroad.

The government claimed this “reform” would save some 3 billion euros of taxpayers’ money, and at the same time would improve the health care system and make it more equal. Later, its spokespeople had to admit that instead of saving 3 billion euros, it would add approximately 3 billion euros to taxpayers’ costs. [1 euro = \$1.12 as of May 12]

It’s obvious that it would cost more, since private companies must make their profit on top of the cost of actual health care. The public sector can just produce the health service without need to gain any profit from it.

Preventing this “reform” was, of course, good news for the working class here. Our party and its allies have strongly opposed this reform for many years. There have been many big demonstrations over the last four years against the right-wing government and its policies, organized by a wide coalition of anti-neoliberal forces in Finland.

We in the Communist League have been active in reminding people how important it is to fight against the health care “reform.” We see it almost as “modern-day colonialism.” Instead of conquering new continents, the capitalists conquer new sectors in society to keep their profits going up.

Recent history of Finnish health care

Our party has stated that if there should be a reform of health care, it should adopt its principles from the long forgotten 1972 legislation, the National Health Care Bill:

This includes availability of health care for all, and health care that is free of charge and offers first-class treatment and care in all parts of Finland.

In 1972 the National Health Care Bill passed during the prime time of the welfare-state period in Finnish history. Some 15 years later there were new winds blowing in Finnish and international politics. Finland’s neighbor, the Soviet Union, was undergoing changes (Perestroika started in 1986) and Margaret Thatcher became the British prime minister, with her extremely hostile attitude toward the working class, trade unions and the welfare state.

The late 1980s were regarded as the years of wild capitalism, casino capitalism. As expected, in Finland it ended with a crash into a wall, and it was followed by a great depression that left some 500,000 people unemployed (out of Finland’s total of 5.5 million inhabitants).

At the time, hundreds of businesses collapsed, leaving many people penniless. Many committed suicide. It is fair to say that since then nothing has been the same in Finland.

Since the great depression in the early 1990s, the political debate has basically circled around one question: How much must the government cut public spending and from where? It’s been full austerity since.

The profits of big capital, however, have risen to a record-breaking level at the same time. Shareholders received some 14 billion euros in dividends last year, the all-time record amount. Each year this money ends up going either abroad or to Finland’s own capitalists — away from benefiting the overall economy and our public funding.

No matter what happens, however, the right-wing rhetoric remains the same: We cannot afford the welfare state any more because “there is no money.”

‘Reform’ would benefit the private health business

In Finland and Sweden there is one peculiarity compared to many other countries: The municipalities have traditionally had much autonomy to run themselves without interference from the national government.

According to many studies, the most cost-effective size of a municipality to supply public health services is around 20,000 to 50,000 inhabitants. In bigger cities like Helsinki it is much more expensive to produce health services. In spite of this, one of the aims of the neoliberal health care reform is to create very large new



Trade unions protest government austerity at Senate Square in Helsinki, Feb. 2, 2018. Communist League banner reads: ‘Health care hijack must be stopped.’

areas in which health services would be centered in the “capital city” of the area.

Smaller municipalities especially would lose their independence and would suffer from the reform, because it would centralize the health services into the central cities and weaken the current health services in the provincial towns and villages. For this reason the reform would be undemocratic and unfair.

Even without this massive reform, health care services have been centralized during the last couple of decades, which has weakened health care in certain areas.

Some maternity hospitals, for instance, have been closed, with the pretext that in those hospitals “there have not been enough births per year.” In neoliberal thinking, these important hospitals have been “ineffective.” Now in some areas pregnant women are at risk of not receiving proper care in cases of premature birth or other problem births.

It is also typical that women’s rights are first in line to be cut when neoliberals calculate budget cuts.

The working class here must be constantly alert to stop any attack on its successful health care system. The neoliberals have already managed to cause considerable damage to it, but this massive privatization operation would seriously jeopardize our public health care system

The good news is that these right-wing parties lost the elections held on April 14. A coalition of social democratic and centrist parties — with the Left Alliance and the Greens — is likely to form the new government. □

Anti-war activists protest eviction of Venezuela embassy protectors

By John Steffin
Washington, D.C.

Around 200 people marched and then gathered at the Venezuelan embassy in Washington, D.C., on Saturday, May 18, to show solidarity with Venezuela and the last of the embassy protectors, who had been forcibly removed from the embassy by police two days earlier. For 36 days, anti-war activists and journalists in the U.S. had been staying inside the embassy to prevent the U.S. from installing agents of right-wing pretender to Venezuela's presidency Juan Guaidó.

Under the Vienna Convention, an embassy is the property of an elected government. Regardless of whether the U.S. likes that government or not, it has no right to seize its embassy. While Trump's National Security Adviser John Bolton tweeted on May 19 that Guaidó is the "democratically elected government of Venezuela," this is blatantly false. Last year, a presidential election was held and the people elected Nicolás Maduro. Guaidó, who arbitrarily declared himself the president Jan. 23 without an election, has no legal right to the embassy.

The struggle to defend the embassy, then, has been a way to expose the U.S.'s blatant disregard for international law and the sovereignty of other nations.

Over the previous week, repression and resistance at the embassy had both

escalated. On the night of May 13, the D.C. police broke into the embassy, but having no legal basis for removing the protectors, they tried to scare them out with a show of force. The activists, however, did not back down. Their lawyer, who was on the premises, asserted the legal right of the protectors to be there. No arrests were made that night.

Two days later, the Rev. Jesse Jackson visited the embassy and successfully delivered food aid to the protectors, despite attacks by opposition forces who had created a blockade around the building. Over the last few weeks, the opposition forces have physically — and illegally — prevented embassy supporters from delivering this aid. In one violent episode, they actually beat the president of Veterans for Peace, Jerry Condon. A photo of a bloodied Condon spread quickly on the internet.

That Jackson succeeded in delivering the food was no small victory and a sign that the balance of forces was shifting in favor of the embassy protectors. Jackson threatened to mobilize ministers and people from around the country to come to the embassy every day "until there's a break in the situation." (Washington Post, May 17)

But before any more attention could be brought to the struggle, the cops moved in to make arrests, this time with the pretense of a legal basis that resulted in a bogus charge. In an attempt to maneuver around



WW PHOTO: JOHN STEFFIN

Support for Venezuela unites the anti-imperialist left. Washington, D.C., May 18.

international law, the U.S. charged the four remaining activists with "interfering with a federal law enforcement agent engaged in protective functions." They avoided charging them with trespassing, which would have broken international law and set a dangerous precedent for diplomats around the world.

The charge carries a maximum of 1-year jail time and upward of \$1,000 in fines and also includes a restraining order. The four activists — Kevin Zeese, Adrienne Pine, Margaret Flowers and David Paul — were released on the order of a federal judge shortly after the arrests. On May 18 they were able to attend the

march but could not join the rally outside the embassy. Speaking at the end of the march, they affirmed their continued support for Venezuela and determination to continue the struggle, despite the arrests. Their words and actions were an inspiration for the movement.

The groups that gathered in D.C. that day included the the No War on Venezuela Coalition, Black Alliance for Peace, Veterans for Peace, Popular Resistance, International Action Center, Socialist Unity Party, Party for Socialism and Liberation, the Answer coalition, Workers World Party, U.S. Peace Council and Code Pink. □

Boston solidarity with Venezuela and embassy protectors

Activists gathered in the Boston Common May 18 to denounce the attempted U.S. coup in Venezuela and express solidarity with the recently arrested Embassy Protection Collective.

Code Pink member Trish Gallagher recounted her experience spending three nights in the embassy several weeks ago. She described the siege that the Venezuelan right wing, with the full cooperation of the Secret Service and D.C. police, had created to prevent food from entering the building.

Several speakers compared the blockade of the embassy to the sanctions applied to

Venezuela that prevent the government from importing food or medicine. Brian Shea from Workers World Party also compared the sanctions to the bureaucratic barriers put in place to limit the access of workers and oppressed in the U.S. to Medicaid and other social services.

The action, initiated by the Committee for Peace and Human Rights and the International Action Center, was attended by members of Code Pink, the Boston Venezuela Solidarity Committee, Veterans for Peace, Refuse Fascism and WWP.

— Workers World Boston bureau



WW PHOTO: MAUREEN SKEHAN

Endurance in the Jan. 23rd Commune

Continued from page 8

such instability, as long as the popular organization plays a central role within the structure of Chavismo to build and defend the country.

"We always knew that this moment would come, that sooner or later we would have to face the empire," Longa says. "We can expect everything from them; they bet on surgical operations ranging from assassination to the imprisonment of the president; they seek to generate friction in the Bolivarian National Armed Force to achieve a rupture that will lead us to a civil war; they put U.S. contractors [mercenaries] with Colombian paramilitaries to generate Syria-like scenarios."

Power of the people

Political time in Venezuela offers few moments of surface tranquility, although in this area, as in most of western Caracas, Guaidó's emergency never translated into mobilizations of support for him. Chavismo has deep roots — of identity,

cultural, organizational: "The proof that Chavismo exists is the popular rank and file and is the resistance that we have had in this period, which has consolidated Chavismo. The people are convinced that the strategic line that Chávez proposed is the correct line. The communes, the power of the people will prevail — regardless of the mistakes of some leaders who are gambling on the stagnation of the revolutionary process, which are part of the contradictions of the process," says Longa.

At any moment, time can speed up again like a gunshot. The Alexis Vive Patriotic Forces know this. Like so many forms of popular organization, Alexis Vive has been declared a target by the campaign that not only seeks to overthrow Maduro, but also to reshape society. These reactionaries would eliminate the Chavista rank and file who learned to play a leading role in politics. Longa is one of the thousands who are convinced that the reactionaries will fail: "Venezuela is a country carrying the traditions of liberation based on spilling the blood of tyrants," he says. □

Alabama working class and oppressed fight abortion ban

Continued from page 7

they would attend.

On the same day, in downtown **Birmingham**, 2,000 people joined the March for Reproductive Freedom from Kelly Ingram Park. Doctors wearing white coats expressed outrage at the ban's criminalization of physicians who perform abortions. The march ended in a rally at the park, a site of many famous protests for justice over the years, including the 1963 Children's March for Black Civil Rights and the 2011 Una Familia, Una Alabama rally against the state's "Juan Crow" anti-migrant law.

The **Montgomery** March for Reproductive Freedom began May 19 at the Court Square Fountain. The location

is historically significant as the city's main area where enslaved African people were sold. It's just a few steps from the corner where Rosa Parks challenged racist segregation in 1955 by refusing to move to the "back of the bus." One marcher protested using religious beliefs to justify condemn the abortion ban, saying: "There's separation of church and state for a reason, and [they're] bringing the church into the Legislature." (tinyurl.com/y3hfc6nt)

A popular chant from the people fighting for reproductive rights and justice for all in Mobile was "One voice! Pro-choice!"

The call signifies a growing unity among the working class against the repression that we are fighting to eradicate. There's no doubt that this struggle for reproductive justice will continue!s. □

‘Abolish the police!’

Does the slogan “Abolish the police!” have relevance today, or is it merely wishful thinking?

This slogan has been passionately chanted and emblazoned on placards and banners for many years. But it has had special relevance since the police killings of Oscar Grant in Oakland, Calif., in 2009, as well as Eric Garner in Staten Island, N.Y., and Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo., both in 2014.

The shooting down of Michael Brown was the final straw, the spark that ignited an uprising in that city that received international solidarity, including from the Palestinian people.

While Black Lives Matter first sprung up in response to the vigilante murder of 17-year-old Black youth Trayvon Martin in Florida, it received an extra shot in the arm from the Garner and Brown murders.

Police killings of unarmed Black, Latinx and Native people in the U.S. are not an aberration. They are a tactic employed in the occupation of oppressed

communities, just as much as the violence inflicted by white police on the Indigenous peoples of South Africa during the long years of apartheid.

Nor can these acts of genocide be laid at the door of “rogue” cops or inexperienced, “rookie” cops. The brutal and callous attitude taken by the armed agents of the state toward the lives of people of oppressed nations reaches all the way to the top.

This was vividly revealed in a court hearing May 16 during the departmental trial of officer Daniel Pantaleo, the white cop who held Eric Garner in a chokehold long and hard enough to kill him. Pantaleo has never been charged with Garner’s murder and, at most, faces being fired from his job.

What inflamed people in the audience during the court hearing was the revelation that, when informed by text message that Garner was “most likely DOA — he has no pulse,” the officer superior to Pantaleo, Lt. Christopher Bannon, had

replied, also by text, “No big deal.”

It is hard to imagine a more callous and cruel response to a person’s death. Only a bigot used to treating Black people as less than human could say such a thing. That this came from a police lieutenant, not just the cop under him, says volumes about the racism and brutality ingrained in the police force at all levels.

When this information was read out during the trial, people in the audience gasped and cried out.

The lieutenant had added to his text, “We were effecting a lawful arrest,” no doubt as an afterthought to cover what he had just written.

A lawful arrest. And what was Eric Garner’s “crime”? Selling loose cigarettes on the street. In other words, he was an indigent person who had no other recourse but to try and get a little change this way to support his family. And for that he was killed.

He had already been arrested three times for this. The cops knew him. They

probably also knew he was in poor health, an asthmatic, and had heard him say, “I can’t breathe” 11 times before his death. (It was all caught on camera.) But they didn’t care.

Whether it’s arresting and brutalizing people of color at a rate much greater than whites, mobilizing against progressive demonstrations and striking workers or shaking down small businesses for Christmas “donations,” the police are the first line of defense for a brutal, racist, exploiting social order dominated by the billionaire ruling class.

Yes, police killings ARE a “big deal.” Workers on strike, people on demonstrations and many organizations of the oppressed have all learned to set up their own marshals to keep order. Ways must be found to defend the people without relying on the police.

“Abolish the police” is a timely slogan, and will become even more so as the progressive movements for social justice and people’s power gain strength. □

How Duterte rigged the elections

May 14 statement by Jose Maria Sison, chief political consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines.



Jose Maria Sison PHOTO: JOSEMARIASISON.ORG

As I have predicted, Duterte was successful in rigging the May 13 elections to deliver to his candidates a false victory in the crucial senatorial race. As I have pointed out, he has to rig the elections because he has the power and the criminal personality and motivation to do so because clean and honest elections would have allowed the opposition senatorial candidates to win and frustrate his greed for power and plunder.

The rigging included the deployment of huge amounts of public and private funds to generate propaganda in various forms in favor of the regime and against the opposition, the use of the military and police for red-tagging, mass intimidation, selective murders and splitting the opposition, prolongation of martial law in Mindanao and declaration of trouble spots in Luzon and the Visayas and, most important of all, complete control of the

Comelec [Commission on Elections] and the deputization of military and police personnel for electoral functions.

Duterte is driven like crazy to rig the elections by all means within his power because of his scheme to establish a full-blown fascist dictatorship by scrapping the 1987 constitution under the pretext of shifting to federalism and to prevent impeachment and indefinitely his possible arrest and prosecution before the International Criminal Court for his gross and systematic human rights violations, especially the mass murder of suspects in his bogus war on drugs as well as in his war on the people’s revolutionary movement.

We can therefore expect that Duterte will use his false electoral victory to adopt and implement more draconian measures to suppress the legal democratic opposition as well as the people’s revolutionary

movement. He gives no choice to the broad masses of the people but to unite and raise the level of their resistance. The certain worsening of the socio-economic and political crisis will further drive the Duterte regime to commit crimes against the people and will at the same time incite the people, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants, to fight back.

Duterte’s policies and acts of tyranny, treason, mass murder, plunder and swindling will eventually bring about the people’s resistance that is strong enough to end his rule. Elections are insufficient and ineffective in overthrowing a despotic monster like Duterte. By rigging the elections and continuing his tyrannical rule, Duterte has brought about the conditions favorable for the rise of the legal mass protest movement as well as of the more potent armed revolutionary mass movement. □

Fraud in Philippine election protested

**By Nathaniel Chase
New York**

Activists representing many sectors of Philippine society and the movement for national democracy in the Philippines gathered at the Philippine consulate here May 17 to condemn widespread fraud in recent Philippine elections.

The protest was part of a coordinated national day of action called by the Malaya Movement, a U.S. Movement Against Killings and Dictatorship and for Democracy in the Philippines, which also saw actions in San Francisco, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, Jersey City, Portland, Ore., and other cities to coincide with mass demonstrations in the Philippines.

Kontra Daya (Against Fraud, a Philippine election watchdog) reported numerous instances of fraud in the national general election that took place May 13, including failing vote-counting machines, vote buying and voter harassment. (kontraday.org)

Under these fraudulent conditions, allies of U.S. puppet President Rodrigo Duterte won all 12 Senate seats up for election, according to unofficial results. Before the election, the Senate was the

only remaining branch of the Philippine national government not entirely under Duterte’s control.

Since his 2016 election, Duterte has used his position to further U.S. imperial dominance of the Philippines, launch a drug war that has killed nearly 30,000 people (anakbayanusa.org), invoke martial law in the southern island of Mindanao and carry out numerous other anti-people policies.

Speakers giving militant remarks in Tagalog and English condemning the recent election fraud and Duterte’s anti-people policies were represented by the Malaya Movement, Migrante New York, GABRIELA NY, ANAKBAYAN, the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines, the National Lawyers Guild, BAYAN USA, the International Action

Center, SPARC, and Harlem Solidarity and Defense.

They called for vigilance against Duterte’s next political moves, including Charter Change, which would remove presidential term limits to cement Duterte’s dictatorship and allow 100

percent foreign ownership of Philippine utilities and other institutions. The rally ended with a performance of Bayan Ko, a Philippine national song banned during a previous period of martial law in the Philippines imposed by Ferdinand Marcos in 1972. □



New York, May 17

U.S. war threats intensify on Iran

By Sara Flounders

May 20—Another U.S.-initiated crisis reached an ominous level this past week with President Trump’s announcement that Iran suddenly presented a new, unspecified threat, serious enough to send a U.S. Naval aircraft carrier battle group churning toward the Persian Gulf, along with U.S. B-52 Stratofortress bombers and plans for 120,000 troops to the surrounding region.

No evidence or information was provided regarding the supposed looming threat.

The latest “maximum pressure” threats against Iran follow weeks of military threats and extreme sanctions against Venezuela, an escalating trade war with China, ratcheting up a harsher level of sanctions against Cuba, firing an intercontinental ballistic missile across People’s Korea and confiscating a Korean freighter.

In an effort to mask the growing capitalist economic instability, Trump’s strategy seems to be lurching from one manufactured crisis to another in order to keep whole regions of the world locked in apprehension, as new demands are raised on them.

Washington suddenly demanded that even such countries as China, Japan and India, who had a temporary U.S. waiver on Iranian oil purchases, immediately stop importing any Iranian oil, despite signed contracts, or face U.S. sanctions against their economies.

Imperialist allies of U.S. corporate power sharply cautioned against the latest wild moves. The opposition of these European allies, who are also rivals, was based on the impact that cutting Iranian oil has on their own economies.

On May 15, British Major General Chris Ghika, the deputy commander of the U.S.-led coalition fighting the so-called Islamic State group, publicly challenged the wild claims of the Trump-Bolton-Pompeo White House.

“There has been no increased threat from Iranian backed forces in Iraq and Syria,” Ghika told Pentagon reporters. (cnn.com, May 14)

Germany’s Foreign Minister Heiko Maas called the U.S. threats “ill advised,” unilateral and an additional fuse. “Maximum pressure always carries the risk of an unintended escalation.” (nbc-news.com, May 16)

Austrian President Alexander Van der Bellen warned: “No one in Europe’ wants a second Iraq.” (nytimes.com, May 19)

He said it is particularly provocative that the U.S. re-imposed sanctions against Iran after pulling out of the signed agreement with Iran and that it has threatened companies which continue to work with Iran.

The U.S. decision to recall all nonessential personnel from its embassy in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad and a consulate in Iraq’s northern town of Erbil drew an immediate warning from Iraq. Iraqi officials warned the Pentagon that Iraq won’t let Washington use its territory in a war

against Iran.

The totally fraudulent claims that Iraq was a threat to the U.S. were the basis for the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq.

Even the compliant Gulf State monarchies voiced apprehension. Anwar Gargash, the foreign minister for the United Arab Emirates, said, “I don’t think it’s in anybody’s interest to see a flare up, a confrontation, with Iran.” (cbsnews.com, May 16)

U.S. Congressional members, usually compliant on U.S. military moves from both Democrats and Republicans, demanded more information. Many raised the disaster of the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq and the false information in 2003.

Threats escalate

U.S. hostility toward Iran and Pentagon war threats are hardly a new development. They are rooted in the 1979 revolution that overthrew the Shah and the whole corrupt Pahlavi royal family, who were compliant U.S. puppets and enforcers of U.S. corporate interests in the oil-rich region.

The radical demands and mass participation of the Iranian revolution and the use of nationalized oil revenue for development made a dramatic improvement in the standards of health, education, housing and infrastructure in Iran.

After decades of U.S. and Western pressure to halt Iran’s economic development, Iran negotiated and signed an agreement in 2015 to halt its programs to develop nuclear energy. Iran never had nuclear weapons. But just like every industrialized country, Iran needed nuclear energy for industrial and medical use.

The long-term deal on Iran’s nuclear program with a group of world powers—the U.S., Britain, France, China, Russia and Germany—was known as the P5+1 Accord. Five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, plus Germany, signed the agreement with Iran.

It was hoped that the signature among six powerful nations would bind the U.S. to honor the agreement.

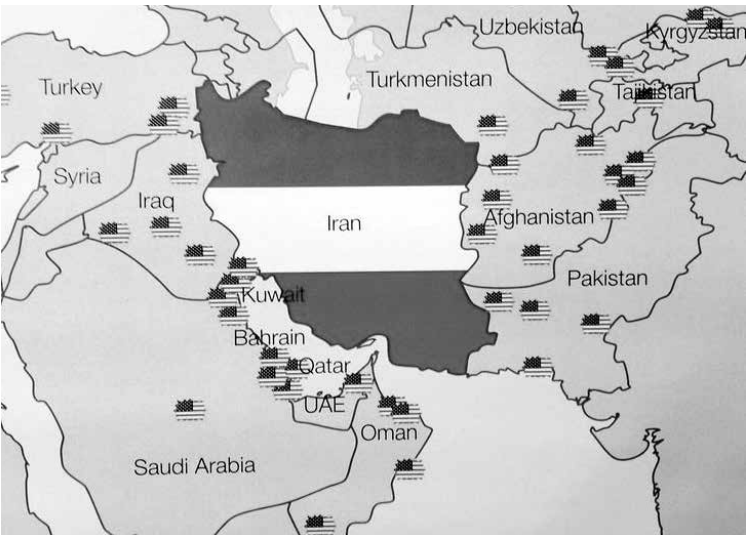
Under the accord, Iran agreed to give access to international inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency to any and every site connected to the possible development of nuclear energy.

Under the agreement, Iran’s uranium stockpile of low-enriched uranium was reduced by 98 percent and shipped to Russia.

Iran abided by every clause in this onerous international agreement.

In return the debilitating economic sanctions were to be lifted and Iran was to regain access to \$100 billion in frozen funds. The key part of the agreement was that Iran could resume selling oil on international markets and use the global financial system for trade.

Now the U. S. government has violated



U.S. bases, marked by flags, show how U.S. poses a constant military menace to the Iranian people.

these key provisions on Iran’s ability to sell its oil. Besides military threats, the U.S. has also attempted to stop Iran from exporting any oil to its customers. These exports are necessary for the Iranian economy.

Just as with U.S. sanctions against Venezuela, Zimbabwe and other countries, the sanctions are collective punishment—outlawed by international law—that hurt the population in general in these countries. Sanctions against Iraq in the 1990s killed 1.5 million people, including half a million children under five years of age.

U.S. broken treaties

However, just three years after signing the accord, in May 2018, Trump arrogantly abandoned the long-term, legally binding international agreement. In November 2018 Trump went even further. He reinstated sanctions targeting not only Iran but any country trading with Iran.

This unilateral breach led to a sharp

downturn in Iran’s economy. Iranian currency lost 80 percent of its value. The annual inflation rate quadrupled, driving away foreign investors and triggering protests against shortages.

Initially the five other signers opposed the U.S.-imposed sanctions and attempted to set up an alternative payment mechanism aimed at helping international companies trade with Iran without facing U.S. penalties. The latest dire threats of war are an all-out effort by the Trump administration to

break up any support for Iran and block any form of exchange.

U.S. imperialism has never honored any of the more than 500 treaties it signed with the Indigenous Nations, many of which were ratified.

Just some of the most recent example of agreements it has pulled out of include the forced revision of the NAFTA Free Trade Agreement signed with Mexico and Canada and sabotage of the Paris Agreement on climate change. Its refusal to sign international treaties on human rights, child labor, rights of labor, rights of women and against landmines confirms its lawless status.

But while refusing to abide by any international agreements, U.S. imperialism’s new demand that every country must abide by U.S. laws and participate in strangulation sanctions on Iran, Venezuela, Cuba and north Korea is a dangerous new step in its piracy and gangster politics. □

Koreans protest outrageous U.S. seizure of ship

Workers World reprints below in full a statement from the Foreign Ministry of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea on the seizure by the U.S. of a Korean cargo ship. We totally agree that the U.S. has absolutely no right to carry out such an act of piracy against the DPRK. U.S. hostility to the DPRK stems from the Korean people’s courageous

history of choosing socialism and defending their system, despite decades of not just threats but horrendous attacks by the imperialist U.S. government and the capitalist ruling class it serves. The DPRK deserves the support of all those who cherish self-determination and the right of every country to decide its own destiny.

DPRK Foreign Ministry spokesperson hits out at outrageous act of U.S.

Pyongyang, May 14 (KCNA) — A spokesperson for the Foreign Ministry of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea made the following statement on Tuesday:

The United States committed an unlawful and outrageous act of dispossessing our cargo ship by forcibly taking it to Samoa (U.S.), linking the ship to the “sanctions resolutions” of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and its domestic “sanctions acts,” all being imposed against the DPRK.

The UNSC “sanctions resolutions” on the DPRK, which the U.S. has employed as one of the grounds for its dispossession of our cargo ship, have flagrantly infringed upon the sovereignty of our state, and therefore, we have categorically rejected and condemned the whole of them all along.

Moreover, the United States’ impudent act of forcing other countries into observance of its domestic law is indeed a wanton

violation of the universally accepted international laws which make clear that in no case can a sovereign state be an object of jurisdiction of other countries.

The latest U.S. act constitutes an extension of the American method of calculation for bringing the DPRK to its knees by means of “maximum pressure” and an outright denial of the underlying spirit of the June 12 DPRK-U.S. Joint Statement that has committed to establish new bilateral relations.

The U.S. should ponder over the consequences its heinous act might have on the future developments and immediately return our ship.

The time when the U.S. held sway over the world at its own free will is gone long ago, and it would be a biggest miscalculation if the U.S. thought that the DPRK is among the countries where the American-style logic of “strength” might work for.

We will carefully watch every move of the United States hereafter. □



WAR WITHOUT VICTORY

by Sara Flounders

“By revealing the underbelly of the empire, Flounders sheds insight 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.

Read at workers.org/books | PentagonAchillesHeel.com



FOTO: VENEZUELANALYSIS

El 15 de mayo: Venezuela recibe cargamento de China -- 1.525.400 unidades de medicamentos y 450.000 pares de insumos médicos quirúrgicos.

EE.UU.: ¡Fuera de Irán!

WORKERS WORLD MUNDO OBRERO *editorial*

Como si la pandilla de la Casa Blanca se sintiera incompleta simplemente nivelando las amenazas económicas contra China, haciendo comentarios hostiles sobre Rusia e imponiendo sanciones ilegales —ilegales porque equivalen a un castigo colectivo de las poblaciones— sobre Venezuela, Cuba y Corea del Norte, una vez más han puesto la República Islámica de Irán en la mira de armas del imperialismo estadounidense.

La pandilla Trump, en una demostración de fuerza, ha enviado un portaaviones y bombarderos B-52 al Golfo Pérsico, cerca de la costa de Irán. Le pidieron al Pentágono que proporcionara un plan para enviar 120.000 tropas de los Estados Unidos para preparar una invasión. También intentaron impedir que Irán exportara petróleo a sus clientes. Estas exportaciones son necesarias para la economía iraní. Detenerlos aumenta el precio que otros vendedores de petróleo pueden demandar, algo importante para las compañías petroleras estadounidenses que intentan aumentar las exportaciones de petróleo fracturado.

En mayo de 2018, Trump sacó a Estados Unidos del acuerdo nuclear con Irán firmado por la administración

de Barack Obama. Eso había abierto el comercio con Irán tanto de los Estados Unidos como de los países de la Unión Europea a cambio de que Irán detuviera su programa nuclear.

Los funcionarios estadounidenses afirman, sin presentar pruebas, que Irán representa una amenaza para las tropas estadounidenses en la región. Incluso algunos aliados de los EE.UU. Han señalado que este tipo de reclamo se parece mucho a los reclamos de George W. Bush en 2002-03 de que Irak poseía "armas de destrucción masiva".

La propagación de la "Gran Mentira" de Bush llevó a la invasión y ocupación de Irak en marzo de 2003. Lo que siguió fue la resistencia iraquí a la ocupación estadounidense que amenazó con expulsar a las tropas. Solo una guerra civil instigada por los Estados Unidos que dividió y destruyó gran parte de Irak impidió una derrota de los Estados Unidos.

Antes de una reunión en Bruselas, el 13 de mayo, a la que asistió el secretario de Estado de EE. UU., Mike Pompeo, el secretario de Relaciones Exteriores británico, Jeremy Hunt, dijo que su gobierno estaba preocupado por un conflicto y una escalada involuntaria. La ministra de Relaciones Exteriores de Alemania, Heiko Maas, le dijo a Pompeo que su país no quiere ver un conflicto. Y el ministro de Relaciones Exteriores de Francia, Jean-Yves Le Drian, instó a los europeos a permanecer unidos en apoyo del acuerdo nuclear de Irán. (New York Times, 13 de mayo)

Si bien no se puede esperar una resistencia seria de

los imperialistas europeos a la agresión de los Estados Unidos, era obvio que ninguno de los gobiernos vio los movimientos de los Estados Unidos como algo a lo que podían adherirse abiertamente. En su lugar, están intentando establecer un camino para que Irán realice acuerdos comerciales mientras evita el sistema financiero global controlado por los Estados Unidos.

Los propios iraníes están en una posición mucho más fuerte de lo que lo fue Irak en 2003 para resistir un ataque de los Estados Unidos y hacerlo costoso. Un comandante de la Guardia Revolucionaria iraní comentó sobre la creciente fuerza de las fuerzas de defensa de su país, diciendo que la presencia militar de los Estados Unidos en el Golfo solía ser una amenaza grave, pero ahora representa un objetivo. (reuters.com, 12 de mayo)

Si la pandilla Pompeo-Bolton-Abrams piensa en algunos tuits de Trump y el movimiento de los buques de guerra hará que el resto del mundo se arrodille, deben enfrentar una nueva realidad. Los cubanos están organizando el racionamiento para soportar tiempos económicos difíciles; Venezuela ya aplastó tres intentos de golpe; la RPDC dijo que continuaría defendiéndose; y los iraníes se mantienen fuertes.

Esta resistencia de todo el mundo también debería alentar a los antiimperialistas dentro de los Estados Unidos a mantenerse fuertes y oponerse a cualquier nuevo movimiento agresivo tanto de la pandilla de la Casa Blanca como de los líderes del Partido Demócrata que están de acuerdo con esta agresión.

¡U.S. manos fuera de Irán! □

Lo que revelan las relaciones comerciales entre EE.UU. y China

Mucho se ha revelado acerca de las dos economías más grandes del mundo a raíz de los aranceles impuestos por el gobierno de los Estados Unidos a los productos de China — y la respuesta de ese país.

Cuando el gobierno de Trump anunció el 10 de mayo que imponía un nuevo arancel del 25 por ciento a los bienes importados de China por un valor de \$200 mil millones, no sucedió nada dramático en los mercados bursátiles de los dos países. El índice de acciones compuesto de Shanghai bajó solo ligeramente y sigue subiendo un 15 por ciento por el año.

Trump luego tuiteó una advertencia: "China no debería tomar represalias, solo empeorará!"

Su arrogancia imperialista no tuvo efecto.

En menos de dos horas, China tomó represalias, pero con cuidado. Anunció que impondría aranceles de hasta el 25 por ciento en bienes de Estados Unidos por un valor de \$60 mil millones.

Eso fue más tarde el mismo día, 10 de mayo. Como reacción a esta noticia, el mercado de valores de EE. UU. luego cayó 617 puntos el lunes 13 de mayo, la mayor caída hasta el momento en 2019.

Entonces, ¿qué economía es más frágil e inestable? ¿El de los Estados Unidos imperialistas ricos o el de China popular?

¿Por qué se rompieron las conversaciones?

El movimiento de Washington para imponer nuevos aranceles a los productos chinos se produjo después de una ruptura

en las conversaciones comerciales. Según el New York Times: "Estados Unidos y China se acercaban a un acuerdo comercial que elevaría los aranceles, abriría el mercado chino a las empresas estadounidenses y fortalecería las protecciones de propiedad intelectual de China. Pero las discusiones se desmoronaron el fin de semana pasado, cuando China pidió cambios sustanciales en el texto de negociación que ambos países habían estado utilizando como modelo para un pacto comercial de gran alcance. Los funcionarios estadounidenses dijeron que China afirmó que las disposiciones del acuerdo violarían las leyes chinas, que no se podrían cambiar fácilmente, y que Estados Unidos exigía demasiado y daba demasiado poco". (10 de mayo)

Si esta interpretación es correcta, muestra varias cosas:

Las incursiones del mercado capitalista en China han producido una clase de negociadores comerciales que estaban dispuestos a hacer concesiones importantes a los Estados Unidos para promover negocios chinos.

Los Estados Unidos estaban presionando para que se introdujeran cambios en las leyes de China que debilitarían el papel del estado en la propiedad y el control de la economía.

Cuando los líderes del gobierno y el Partido Comunista revisaron estas concesiones, las vieron como incompatibles con las raíces socialistas de China y un ataque a sus industrias estatales e instituciones financieras. Retiraron el acuerdo.

Las raíces socialistas de China

China es la economía de mayor crecimiento del mundo, que superará a los EE. UU. en pocos años. Se ha desarrollado desde un momento de pobreza desgarradora para la gran masa de su gente hacia la prosperidad para la mayoría en el lapso de solo dos generaciones. De hecho, China planea haber eliminado completamente la pobreza para 2020, el próximo año!

Los elementos básicos de su economía desde su revolución en 1949 han sido estatales e integrados en un amplio plan para el desarrollo social. Sin embargo, después de una gran lucha interna, el gobernante Partido Comunista decidió a fines de la década de 1970 permitir la propiedad y la inversión capitalistas para estimular el crecimiento económico.

Los resultados han sido mixtos y contradictorios, con grandes éxitos y grandes peligros. Una clase de multimillonarios ahora existe en China. Su apetito por el lujo y el exceso tienen una influencia corrosiva sobre la solidaridad socialista y el igualitarismo.

Al mismo tiempo, el espectacular crecimiento de la economía china ha sacado a 800 millones de personas de la gran pobreza, lo que representa el 70 por ciento del progreso mundial en este período.

Aquellos que atribuyen los tremendos logros de China únicamente al mercado capitalista, y por lo tanto descuentan su gran revolución socialista contra el imperialismo mundial y las clases parásitas internas de los terratenientes y los capitalistas compradores, deberían preguntarse

esto: ¿por qué China es tan diferente de India o Indonesia o Brasil?

¿Por qué han mejorado tanto las vidas de los trabajadores y campesinos chinos, mientras que aquellos en países verdaderamente capitalistas están sumidos en la pobreza?

China — y los trabajadores de Estados Unidos — adelante

La clase dominante imperialista de los Estados Unidos no está acostumbrada a ser resistida por los líderes de un país en desarrollo. Su poderoso arsenal militar y su fuerte desarrollo industrial han colocado a esta clase de depredadores estadounidenses en la cima del mundo durante varias generaciones.

Pero los tiempos están cambiando. La China popular no solo ha aumentado, sino que las condiciones para los trabajadores en los Estados Unidos se han deteriorado, lo que ha llevado a una mayor lucha de clases en el país.

El gobierno de EE. UU. ha acumulado una enorme deuda luego de años de donaciones a corporaciones y bancos, más el gran costo de mantener las fuerzas militares de EE. UU. en bases en todo el mundo. Los EE. UU. usan muchas de estas bases para participar activamente en el apuntalamiento de regímenes represivos que de otra manera habrían sido derrocados por la gente hace mucho tiempo.

La deuda pesa sobre la economía de los EE. UU., incluso cuando la tecnología cambiante está borrando los empleos de los trabajadores. □