

Trump Kills DACA, Democrats Push Border Security No Deportations!

The lives of some 800,000 younger immigrants, their families and communities were thrown into chaos earlier this month when the Trump administration pulled the plug on the Obama-initiated Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. The repeal of DACA, which granted a temporary reprieve to a small layer of undocumented immigrants brought into this country as children, puts “Dreamers” at the mercy of immigration authorities and threatens their livelihoods and those of the extended families they financially support. Wasting no time, the Department of Homeland Security issued a memo encouraging DACA recipients to pack their bags and leave by next March, when DACA permits begin to expire. Already, there are reports of detentions at the border and racist attacks on DACA students in colleges.

By launching this latest anti-immigrant attack, which has sparked protests nationwide, Trump was playing to his nativist base. Coming on top of the recent presidential pardon of arch-racist Sheriff Joe Arpaio and the decision by the Supreme Court to temporarily allow partial enforcement of the anti-Muslim travel ban, the demise of DACA has the forces of reaction riding high. In their crosshairs are not only immigrants and Muslims but black people and the working class as a whole. The same racist invective that emboldens the border vigilantes and immigrant-bashers emboldens fascist killers like those who mobilized in Charlottesville in defense of the former slavocracy.

The move to scrap DACA predictably afforded Democratic Party politicians a cheap opportunity for some theatrical grandstanding. First and foremost among them was Barack Obama, who pronounced Trump “cruel” for rescinding the 2012 executive order that established DACA. The previous president certainly knows a thing or two about cruelty. Among his many crimes as CEO of American capitalism, Obama deported more people than any previous president in U.S. history. In fact, despite a spike in arrests, the rate of deportations under Trump to date does not match even Obama’s slowest year.

Obama prepared a very well-equipped deportation machine that Trump wants to kick into even higher gear. DACA provides a tool to that end. Central to DACA, which was introduced by Obama during the 2012 election as a cynical ploy to shore up the Latino vote, was the provision that applicants would hand over all their information to *la migra*: fingerprints, photographs, bank accounts, school and job records, even the addresses of parents (the overwhelming majority of whom are themselves undocumented). In short, everything the government needs to hunt them down.

Obama was clear from the outset about DACA: “This is not amnesty. This is not immunity. This is not a path to citizenship.” DACA deferred deportation for those who had lived virtually their whole lives in the U.S. and who met certain criteria (e.g., having graduated from high



Polaris

September 9: NYC protest against Trump’s repeal of DACA.

school and no criminal record). Today, cases abound of immigrants who lost their DACA status—whether it was stripped from them under some flimsy pretext like supposed gang affiliation or it lapsed due to their inability to pay the \$500 renewal fee every two years—only to be rounded up and thrown out of the country. DACA was a deferral, and that was all it was.

A week after the program was rescinded, leading Democratic Party lawmakers Nancy Pelosi and Chuck Schumer began negotiations with the Trump White House: a restoration of DACA in some form linked to a package of enhanced border security measures. While the reality of a deal remains in question, the enthusiasm of the Democrats for *both* its components is not, with Schumer bragging on the Senate floor about the “great sensory equipment” manufactured in his home state of New York. More Border Patrol agents, more ground sensors, more drones, more manned flights, more border infrastructure—there is a lot of common ground for bipartisan immigration enforcement. It’s the Democrats’ version of Trump’s wall.

At a September 18 press conference in San Francisco on DACA, Pelosi was shouted down by undocumented protesters carrying signs reading, “Democrats are Deporters” and chanting, “We are not your bargaining chip.” While DACA recipients are often referred to as “Dreamers,” it was the failure of the Dream Act to pass through Congress that provided the backdrop to Obama’s 2012 DACA executive order. The Dream Act would have allowed immigrant youth to petition for permanent residency after completing two years of college or military service. But with the costs of college prohibitive and immigrants barred from Pell Grants, it was clear the bill would have mainly provided a huge pool of potential military recruits. The Pentagon enthusiastically supported it. We opposed the Dream Act because it was a trap for immigrant youth, who would be signed up as cannon fodder for the U.S. military.

No less than the Republicans, the Democrats represent and serve the American capitalist order, which is based on the exploitation of the workers and rooted in chattel

slavery and the continued racial oppression of black people. DACA recipients represent a wide range of social backgrounds—from college students and low-wage service workers to those in relatively well-paying tech jobs. It is their bottom line, not benevolence, that has Silicon Valley and major corporations rallying behind DACA, which offers no job protection, no assured immigration status and no right to any kind of welfare. With DACA holders overwhelmingly Mexican-born and concentrated in Texas and California, some construction outfits are bemoaning Trump’s decision for casting uncertainty over their low-wage labor options in the profit-driven rebuilding frenzy after Hurricane Harvey.

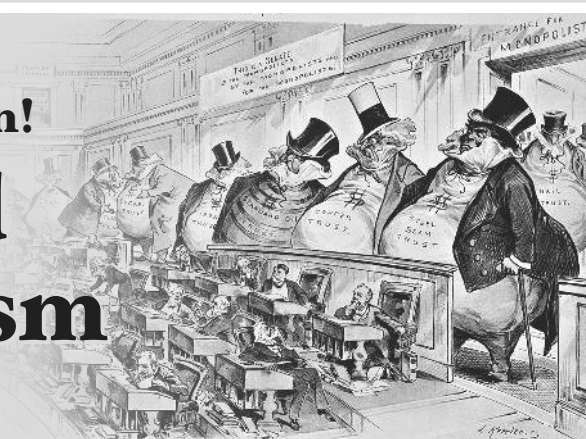
DACA is based on the premise that its recipients are “deserving” immigrants who entered the U.S. through “no fault of their own.” The notion promoted by the Democrats of “good” versus “bad” immigrants or in the words of Obama, “families, not felons,” is a set-up for greater state repression against all immigrants. In urban centers across the country, cop

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**For Black Liberation
Through Socialist Revolution!**

**Race, Class and
American Populism**

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DACA...

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terror against black people and Latinos is a daily reality. Those youth who get ensnared in the criminal “justice” system are for all intents and purposes branded for life, and undocumented immigrants become prime targets for deportation.

Labor Must Fight for Immigrant Rights!

The integrated trade unions should be in the forefront of the struggle in defense of immigrant rights. But the labor movement is crippled by its flag-waving leadership, whose fundamental loyalty is not to the workers but to the profitability of American capitalism. When Trump decided to kill DACA, he had his notoriously racist attorney general Jeff Sessions make the announcement. In his remarks, Sessions recycled the old racist canard of “job stealing” immigrants, claiming DACA “denied jobs to hundreds of thousands of Americans.”

Such lies have long been echoed by sections of the trade-union bureaucracy that promote “America first” protectionism, which reinforces anti-immigrant bigotry. While today AFL-CIO president Richard Trumka denounces the repeal



Immigrants await deportation by I.C.E., May 2010. Under Barack Obama, more than 2.5 million immigrants were deported.

of DACA and says that immigrant labor should be “celebrated,” earlier this year he applauded a speech by Trump for having “talked about legal immigration being used to drive down wages.” It is the capitalist bosses, not any sector of the working class, who drive down wages in order

to ratchet up the exploitation of *all* workers. And it is the labor tops’ class collaborationism, politically expressed mainly through their ties to the Democrats, that has disarmed workers in the face of the bosses’ relentless anti-union attacks.

Take the SEIU service employees union, which has a significant immigrant membership and has engaged in protests against deportations. In response to DACA’s elimination, its International executive vice president Rocio Sáenz issued a statement vowing to “mobilize on an unprecedented scale to resist these racist attacks.” Their answer to Trump? “Drive a turnaround in 2018”—that is, get the Democrats into office in the upcoming midterm elections.

What’s needed is militant class struggle based on the understanding that the capitalist bosses and the workers share no common interests. Defense of the rights of immigrants, black people and all the oppressed is vital to the defense of the labor movement itself. Key to this perspective is the forging of a class-struggle leadership in the unions committed to mobilizing the power of labor in a fight to stop deportations and for full citizenship rights for all immigrants.

This is decidedly not the perspective of reformist groups like the International Socialist Organization (ISO). Following DACA’s repeal, the ISO called to “revitalize the fighting movement that stopped mass criminalization of the undocumented in 2006 with its incredible ‘mega-marches’ and that won DACA in 2012 by relentlessly pressuring politicians of both parties, including Barack Obama” (*Socialist Worker*, 7 September). In 2006, one of the main demo slogans was “Today we march, tomorrow we vote”; six years later, it was Obama who used the “Dreamers,” not the other way around. Despite the ISO’s caveat that the movement should not be “one that subordinates our demands to

getting Democrats to take over Congress and the White House,” that is exactly what their “movement” building is all about. They admitted as much at the time of the 2006 demonstrations during Bush Jr.’s presidency: “Potentially, the movement can break the logjam of U.S. politics, in which the Republicans launch attack after attack with little or no response from the Democrats” (*Socialist Worker*, 31 March 2006).

For a Workers America!

The driving force behind the desperate efforts of so many people to get into the U.S. is the imperialist subjugation of the neocolonial world. With their systematic looting of wide swaths of the planet, not to mention their plunging sections of it into the devastation of war, the advanced capitalist powers impose inhuman conditions on the vast majority of mankind. The 1994 NAFTA agreement brokered by the Democrat Clinton was a free-trade rape of Mexico that wiped out the livelihoods of a great mass of poor rural workers, peasants and others, compelling them to attempt the dangerous border crossing to the North in order to eke out a basic existence. Everything from the U.S.-engineered dirty wars of the 1980s to Washington’s economic plunder has torn apart multiple Central American countries and sent refugees into the U.S., where they have faced large-scale detention.

The U.S. capitalists view Mexico and Latin America as destinations for capital export and a vast reservoir of cheap, vulnerable labor to be tapped or returned as dictated by the demands of the economy. At the same time, immigrant workers play a vital role in the U.S. economy, including by filling some of the most dangerous and lowest-paying jobs. Today, these jobs are overwhelmingly non-union. To keep it so, the bosses fan the flames of anti-immigrant chauvinism and racial hostility. Whipping up racial and ethnic hatred—pitting white workers against black workers; native-born against immigrant—has long served America’s capitalist rulers.

We fight for the unity and integrity of the multiracial working class against chauvinism and racism. The starting point for defending immigrant rights must be opposition to all the political parties and state agencies of the capitalist rulers. Our aim is to win the working class to the understanding that it must oppose the whole capitalist system. It is only through the victory of world socialist revolution that material scarcity can be abolished for good, laying the basis for the withering away of the state and therefore of borders. Only an egalitarian socialist society can provide a decent life for those who now live in the teeming slums and rural villages of the neocolonial world, as well as for the black, Latino and white working masses of this country. The Spartacist League seeks to forge the revolutionary workers party that is necessary to lead all the exploited and oppressed in sweeping away the U.S. imperialist behemoth. ■



TROTSKY

had become ripe for the seizure of power by the proletariat in Russia. The Bolsheviks had widespread support within the working class in the cities as well as growing support in the countryside, where peasants were seizing land. That month, the Bolsheviks had obtained a majority in the Petrograd and Moscow Workers’ and Soldiers’ Soviets (councils). These councils were organs of proletarian power that had arisen alongside the capitalist Provisional Government after the February Revolution that had overthrown the tsarist monarchy. As Petrograd faced the threat of a bloodbath by German imperialism in the First World War and the suppression of the revolution, Lenin initiated the fight in the Bolshevik leadership to put workers insurrection on the order of the day.

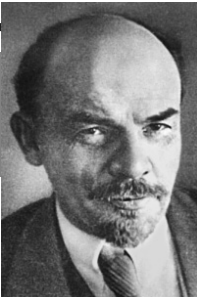
To be successful, insurrection must rely not upon conspiracy and not upon a party, but upon the advanced class. That is the first point. Insurrection must rely upon a *revolutionary upsurge of the people*. That is the second point. Insurrection must rely upon that *turning-point* in the history of the growing revolution when the activity of the advanced ranks of the people is at its height, and when the *vacillations* in the ranks of the enemy and *in the ranks of the weak, half-hearted and irresolute friends of the revolution* are strongest. That is the third point....

All the objective conditions exist for a successful insurrection. We have the exceptional advantage of a situation in which *only* our victory in the insurrection can put an end to that most painful thing on earth, vacillation, which has worn the people out; in which only our victory in the insurrection will give the peasants land immediately; a situation in which *only our* victory in the insurrection can *foil* the game of a separate peace directed against the revolution—foil it by publicly proposing a fuller, juster and earlier peace, a peace that will *benefit* the revolution.

Finally, our Party alone *can*, by a victorious insurrection, save Petrograd; for if our proposal for peace is rejected, if we do not secure even an armistice, then *we* shall become “defencists,” we shall place ourselves *at the head of the war parties*, we shall be the *war party par excellence*, and we shall conduct the war in a truly revolutionary manner. We shall take away all the bread and boots from the capitalists. We shall leave them only crusts and dress them in bast shoes. We shall send all the bread and footwear to the front.

And then we shall save Petrograd.

—V.I. Lenin, “Marxism and Insurrection” (September 1917)



LENIN



Marxism and Insurrection

In a letter written in mid September 1917 to the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, V.I. Lenin underlined that conditions

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For a Socialist United States of Europe!

Italian Trotskyists Say: Italy Out of the European Union!

The following is a translation of a 25 March supplement to Spartaco, newspaper of our comrades of the Lega trotskista d'Italia.



The leaders of the European Union (EU) are meeting in Rome to celebrate the anniversary of the 1957 treaty that established the European Economic Community (EEC). Heads of state and EU rulers responsible for the misery of entire populations, for destruction in Africa and the Near East and for the ceaseless drownings of immigrants in the Mediterranean Sea will discuss how to “strengthen common security and defense” through “a better integrated defense industry” and “a stable and ultimately stronger common currency.”

We went on record as far back as 1973 in our article “Capitalist Conspiracy in Europe—Labor and the Common Market” (WV No. 15, January 1973), where we explained: “The destruction of the Common Market should be a major goal of the European labor and socialist movements.” We knew that the existence of the EU was “based on agreement between the parties to undertake their plunder and exploitation jointly as long as the current expansionary wave lasts” but that as soon as one or more of the capitalist regimes belonging to it “begins to suffer from the effects of free trade competition with the others, however, the entire edifice will collapse and protectionist nationalism will re-emerge.” We emphasized that “the struggle against the bosses’ Common Market, for a united socialist Europe, is at the same time a determined battle against these treacherous misleaders of the working class” who support the EU today just as they did yesterday.

The EEC was created by the 1957 Treaty of Rome as an economic adjunct to NATO, the military alliance formed after World War II as part of the imperialist crusade to roll back Communism. The American ruling class hoped the EEC would serve to dampen conflicts between the European imperialist bourgeoisies that jeopardized the common alliance against the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union, born out of the

1917 October Revolution, was a workers state (based on expropriation of the capitalist class and collectivization of the means of production) despite its degeneration under the rule of a bureaucratic caste headed by J.V. Stalin. The Red Army’s victory over Nazi Germany in 1945 rescued East Europe from capitalist exploitation. It was in this context that West European capitalist governments conceded benefits otherwise known as the “welfare state.”



Rome: Banner at March 25 Eurostop protest reads: “No to the European Union of Banks, Bosses, Wars.”

We of the International Communist League fought till the end for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union and the bureaucratically deformed workers states of eastern and central Europe, which were based on the Soviet model. Our struggle was linked to the perspective of preserving the revolutionary gains of the working class and extending them through a proletarian political revolution to drive out the Stalinist bureaucracy and bring the USSR back to the internationalist road of Lenin and Trotsky’s Bolsheviks.

Today’s imperialist order was shaped by the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, a historic defeat for the working masses of the entire world. From a NATO auxiliary, the EU has increasingly become an instrument of the European imperialists, particularly Germany, in competition with their American imperialist rival. But the EU’s role is as reactionary as it was during the Cold War.

The EU is a reactionary bloc of European imperialists, headed by Germany, which serves as the instrument for plundering dependent countries in southern and eastern Europe, ramping up exploitation of the European working classes, and controlling the flow of immigrant labor. Even in the capitalist economies that have benefited from the common currency, such as Germany, it is workers who pay the bill. Thanks to the [wage- and benefit-slashing] Hartz IV “reforms” imposed by the German Social Democratic Party [SPD] in 2005, the number of workers in Germany who cannot live on their salaries has increased by 25 percent, i.e., more than three million people.

The ICL has *always* opposed NATO, the EEC and the European Union *on principle*. We opposed the introduction of the euro, a financial and economic tool with which the German imperialists (and to a lesser degree the French and Italian imperialists) have plundered and subjugated economi-

cally weaker countries, reducing the Greek people to starvation. We also opposed the extension of the EU to East Europe because it was clear that it would increase the exploitation of East European workers. We fight against the chauvinist discrimination directed at them in various EU countries.

The devastating effects of EU austerity inflicted on the workers and peoples of Europe are clear for all to see. The weaker capitalist economies of Portugal, Italy, Ire-

tions that slashed hundreds of thousands of jobs, especially in the south, and weakened the unions. Millions of workers toil under temporary contracts, are paid with vouchers, or work with the noose of labor brokers slipped around their necks. Health care, education and pensions have been progressively gutted. Industrial production has fallen by 23 percent since 2008.

The working class must fight for *Italy out of the EU and the euro*. An Italian exit could precipitate the collapse of the EU. This would be in the interest of all workers and the oppressed and strike a hard blow against the bosses. The end of the EU would not mean the end of international capitalism, or of the exploitation and racism that are intrinsic to this system of production, but it would facilitate workers struggles across Europe and more sharply expose that the main enemy to combat is one’s “own” national exploiter.

Our opposition to the EU is integral to our revolutionary Marxist perspective: the overthrow of capitalism worldwide by the working class and the building of an internationally planned and collectivized economy. This would allow for a qualitative development of the productive forces and the overcoming of class divisions in society—the starting point for a world communist order.

A workers party guided by an internationalist program is required to lead this struggle. To defeat the EU and NATO imperialists requires international working-class solidarity. Correspondingly, victorious revolutions in Europe will strive to integrate European economies on a voluntary basis within a Socialist United States of Europe. Only when the working class seizes control of the means of production will the latter be transformed from the proletariat’s ball

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Spartacist League Forums



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Saturday, October 7, 3 p.m.
322 West 48th Street, Manhattan
First Floor
(Between 8th and 9th Avenues—
Take A, C or E to 42nd Street)
Information: (212) 267-1025 nysl@tiac.net

BAY AREA
Saturday, October 21, 2 p.m.
First Presbyterian Church of Oakland
2619 Broadway, Oakland
(Entrance on 27th St.)
Information: (510) 839-0851
slbayarea@fastmail.net

LOS ANGELES
Saturday, October 14, 5 p.m.
Immanuel Presbyterian Church*
3300 Wilshire Boulevard
(At Berendo St., 2 blocks west of Wilshire/
Vermont stop on Red/Purple Line.)
Information: (213) 380-8239
slsyla@sbcglobal.net
*The views expressed by the participants are not necessarily those of the Immanuel Presbyterian Church.

CHICAGO
Saturday, November 4
Time and location to be announced
Information: (312) 563-0441
chicagospartacist@sbcglobal.net

LE BOLCHEVIK
**Indipendència
per Catalunya i el País Basc!
Per unes repúbliques obreres!**

El Govern català de Barcelona ha convocat un referèndum per l'1 d'octubre amb la premissa: «Votem que Catalunya sigui un estat independent en forma de república o bé que continuï a estar sota el domini de l'Estat». La Llei del Referèndum és una clara violació de la Constitució i, per tant, és nul·la i no té cap validesa jurídica. El Govern català ha declarat que aquest votació és constitucional i està obligat a respectar el resultat per evitar l'escissió de Catalunya. Els seus membres han jurat que no permetran la independència de Catalunya. La Llei del Referèndum és una clara violació de la Constitució i, per tant, és nul·la i no té cap validesa jurídica. El Govern català ha declarat que aquest votació és constitucional i està obligat a respectar el resultat per evitar l'escissió de Catalunya. Els seus membres han jurat que no permetran la independència de Catalunya. La Llei del Referèndum és una clara violació de la Constitució i, per tant, és nul·la i no té cap validesa jurídica.

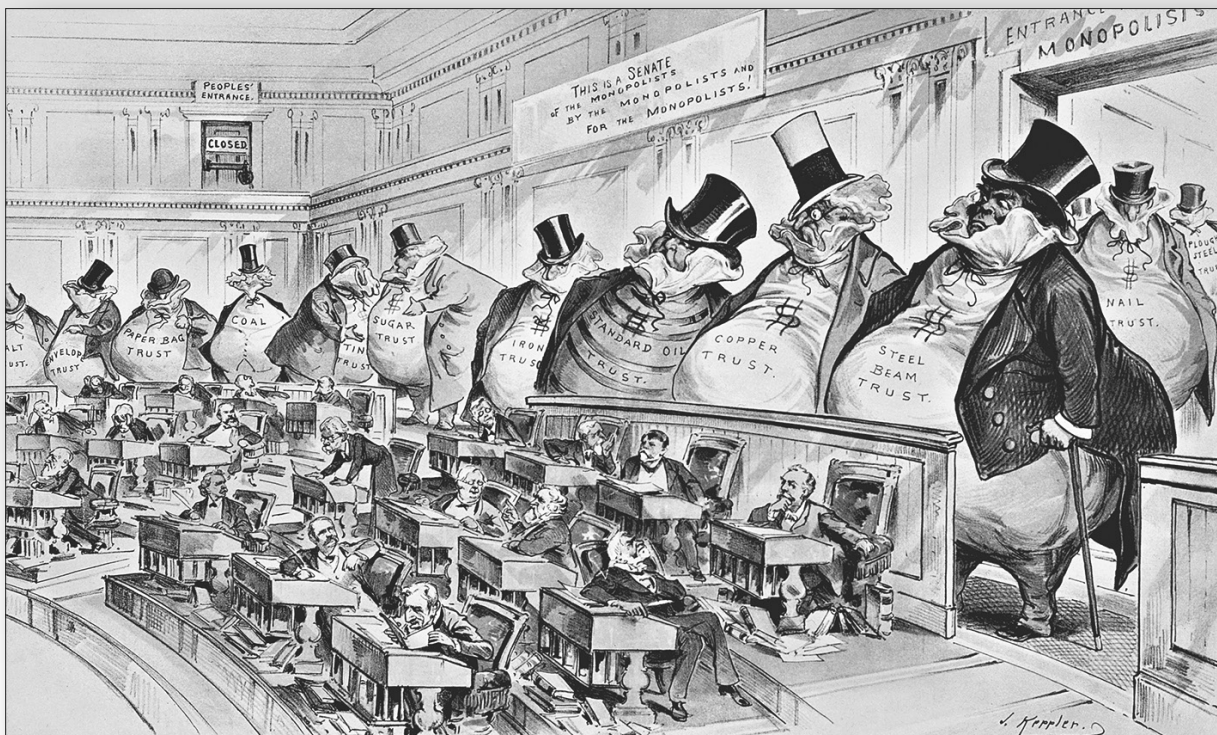
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For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution! Race, Class and American Populism



“The Bosses of the Senate” cartoon from 1889 depicts corporate monopolists in control of Senators.

We print below the first part of an article based on a March 5 Spartacist League Black History forum presentation by Brian Manning in Oakland.

PART ONE

The term “populism” commonly means hostility to elites and the status quo. Taking issue with income distribution, populists protest against economic privilege, looking to “the people”—that is, the petty bourgeoisie, or so-called middle class. Populism, which rejects the mobilization of workers as a class, has always gotten a lot of play in the U.S. This is due in large part to the historic lack of class consciousness among workers, which is a product of the racial and other divisions sown by the capitalist rulers in order to divide and weaken the working class.

A few years ago, you had the populist Occupy movement. Its ubiquitous slogan, “We are the 99 percent,” was based on a notion of “the people” against the “1 percent.” According to this outlook, workers and the oppressed supposedly share common interests with managers who fire their employees, cops who gun down black people, and religious leaders who preach obedience and docility in the face of authority. Last year, the Bernie Sanders campaign drew on widespread anger against economic inequality in America with its rallying cry for “political revolution against the billionaire class.” Sanders is in fact a capitalist Democratic Party politician who has long served the interests of the ruling class, particularly with his support to the bloody wars, occupations and other adventures of U.S. imperialism.

That Bernie Sanders is not a socialist of any stripe has not stopped reformist organizations like the International Socialist Organization and Socialist Alternative from fawning over him. Sanders promoted the fraudulent idea that the people can vote into office a benevolent capitalist government that will defend their interests against the big corporations and robber barons of Wall Street. Such illusions, which have long been promoted by the pro-capitalist trade-union misleaders, have served to tie the working class to the rule of the exploiters.

Then there’s Trump, who ran a campaign of right-wing populism. Populism isn’t inherently right-wing or left-wing; it can span the bourgeois political spectrum and is conditioned by the level of class struggle. In his inauguration address, Trump said, “For too long, a small group in our nation’s capital has reaped the rewards of government while the people have borne the cost. Washington flourished—but the people did not share in its wealth.” Playing on economic insecurities, Trump sometimes postured as a defender of the “little man.” Of course, Trump is an open representative of big capital and racist, union-busting reaction. His brand of right-wing populism represents a direct attack on black people, immigrants and the working class as a whole.

As Marxists, we struggle to impart the understanding that the barbaric capitalist system cannot be reformed to benefit working people and the oppressed but must be overthrown. The only way to ensure jobs and decent living standards, including free, quality health care and education for all, is by seizing the wealth from the capitalist class through socialist revolution and putting it in the hands of those whose labor makes society run—that is, the working class. This is also the only way to put an end to the racial oppression of black people, which is the bedrock of American capitalism. The multiracial working class cannot liberate itself from wage slavery if it does not take up the fight for black liberation. Our aim is to forge the revolutionary multiracial workers party that will fight to realize the goals of black freedom and equality. Black workers are slated to play a leading role in such a party.

The fundamental class division in capitalist society is between the working class, which sells its labor power to survive, and the capitalist class, which owns the banks and the means of production, such as the factories and the mines. The bourgeoisie is a very small fraction of the “1 percent.” The interests of the working class and the bourgeoisie are irreconcilable. The international working class

uniquely possesses the social power to overturn capitalism, deriving from workers’ ability to shut off the flow of profit by withholding their labor. The workers have an objective interest in expropriating the bourgeoisie and reorganizing society on a socialist basis internationally.

The heterogeneous, intermediate social layers between the workers and the capitalists constitute the petty bourgeoisie, which encompasses students, professionals and shopkeepers, among others. These layers have no direct relationship to the means of production. Lacking social power and a common class interest, the petty bourgeoisie cannot provide an alternative to capitalism. If the working class, under a revolutionary leadership and program, shows that it has the resolve to lead society out of its economic and social crises, sections of the petty bourgeoisie will line up behind the workers in struggle. The upper layers of the petty bourgeois-

sie will gravitate toward the capitalists against the workers.

Early Populism and Black Oppression

The best-known populist movement is the one that emerged in the late 19th century, centered on poor farmers in the South. American populism, however, goes back to the slaveowner Thomas Jefferson and his glorification of the yeoman farmer. Shays’ Rebellion of 1787, a revolt by debt-ridden farmers in western Massachusetts against taxes, prefigured later battles fought in the populist tradition. At the time, Thomas Jefferson said, “I hold it that a little rebellion now and then is a good thing and is as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical.” Of course, when it came to black slaves rebelling, as in the Haitian Revolution, which began in 1791, the prospect of slave masters losing their heads to the slaves was a little too close to Monticello for Jefferson. He opposed the new black republic established in Haiti in 1804.

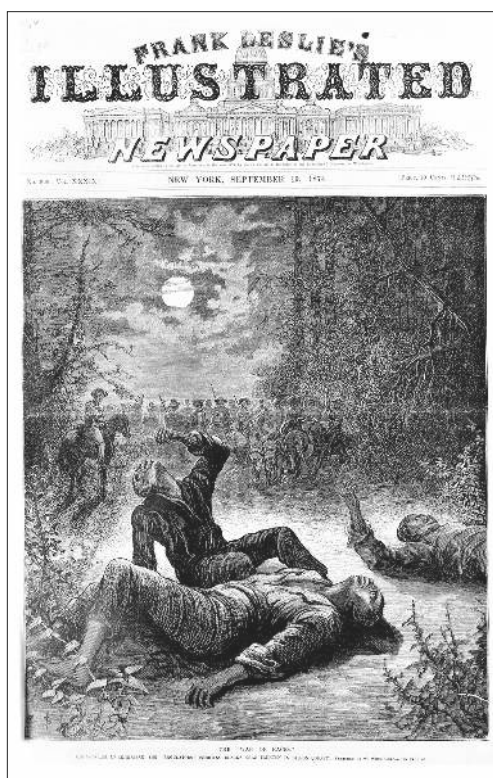
Andrew Jackson is also viewed as an early populist because he warred with banking and business elites in the name of “the people,” that is, white people. Like Jefferson, Jackson was a wealthy slaveowner who held hundreds of human beings as chattel on his cotton plantation. He also slaughtered Native Americans and orchestrated their forcible removal from the southeastern United States, such as the horrific 1838-39 Trail of Tears from Georgia to present-day Oklahoma. It’s entirely fitting that Trump admires Jackson.

Later expressions of American populism were conditioned by the outcome of the Civil War of 1861-65. Waged by the Northern Union Army against the slaveowners’ Confederacy in the South, the Civil War was a bourgeois revolution, with all its inherent contradictions. It was one of the most progressive wars in modern history in that it smashed black chattel slavery. The Northern capitalists overthrew and abolished a barbaric and archaic social system of exploitation, paving the way for the full development of capitalism in the United States.

During the period of Radical Reconstruction beginning in 1867, the federal government for the first time extended the rights of citizenship to black people through the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. For a time, it used the power of Union Army troops in the South to protect the former slaves. In 1865, the federal government also established the Freedmen’s Bureau, which oversaw the establishment of public education for black people (as well as poor whites) in the South, where previously it had been a crime to teach black people to read and write. Some Radical Republicans even mooted land reform.

But the Northern bourgeoisie was not committed to fulfilling Reconstruction’s promise of social equality for the former slaves. The temporary alliance of the Northern bourgeoisie with the black slaves in the South against the slaveholders was just that—temporary. By the 1870s, it was no longer in the bourgeoisie’s interest to maintain that alliance. The Northern capitalists eyed the devastated South not as a laboratory for a radical, interracial democratic experiment but as an opportunity to profitably exploit Southern resources and cheap labor. The 1871 Paris Commune, in which the working class briefly held power, helped to cohere the class consciousness of the U.S. bourgeoisie, whose prewar ideology of “free labor,” premised on an identity of interest between labor and capital, had quickly dissipated after the Civil War. The bourgeoisie began to see—and fear—the intertwining of the fate of the freedmen in the South with that of the overwhelmingly white working class in the North.

Men from mercantile, banking and industrial backgrounds as well as some from the old planter families became the new rulers in the South. The Union Army’s practice during the last year of the Civil War of turning over “40 acres and a mule” to freed slaves in some parts of South Carolina and Georgia had nur-



Suppression of black rights after Civil War: 1874 drawing titled “The ‘War of Races” shows the murder of three black men in Tennessee.

At the same time, Reconstruction faced a sustained, bloody offensive by Southern white-supremacists. The federal government increasingly gave these racists a free hand in terrorizing black people and whites who supported the Republican Party and Reconstruction. With the Compromise of 1877, the new president, Rutherford B. Hayes, ordered the last of a dwindling number of federal troops in the South to remain in their barracks, ending their role in Southern political affairs. With this act, the American bourgeoisie killed what remained of Reconstruction.

With the defeat of Reconstruction, the former slaveowners and other supporters of the Confederacy, organized by the white-supremacist Democratic Party, took control of local and state governments, the courts, militias, sheriffs and newspapers. The pro-slavery forces had, from the

State militia fires on workers in Baltimore during Great Rail Strike of 1877.

Another trap for former slaves was the system of convict labor. The Thirteenth Amendment, which codified emancipation of the slaves, also contained an exception that served to forge new chains for freed blacks: “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, *except* as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States” (emphasis added). To undermine the new citizenship rights won by black people, every former slave state passed a plethora of laws that criminalized all kinds of minor offenses like vagrancy, loitering, gambling, etc. These were punishable by a long sentence or a

The problem was not that the working class lacked social power but that it lacked the political leadership and consciousness to fight for its own rule. The working class



In the South, under the reign of various factions of the Democratic Party, the party of the former slaveowners, the Republicans were hemorrhaging members and supporters as black rights became increasingly circumscribed. By the late 1880s, a movement of farmers was consolidating into a broad network that came to include thousands of chapters of black and white farmers' alliances. This was the ground on which the Populist movement arose. The Populist movement in the American South had a wide scope and impact as a third-party movement. It also played a role in how the black population was consolidated as an oppressed race-color caste, the majority of which remains forcibly segregated at the bottom of society.

JUST OUT!



The Struggle Against the Chauvinist Hydra
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“The small farmer class itself could not be a real contender for political power in a capitalist society, while the dynamics of private farming inevitably brought about sharp competition among the farmers. This competition was exploited by the new political alliance of big planters, Southern capitalists and certain Northern financial interests, in particular, investors in Southern railroads, land, mining and timber. This bloc initiated a campaign of violent race hatred among their political opponents which succeeded in destroying the developing black-white unity.”

Two separate farmers' groups were formed nationally—the Colored Farmers' Alliance (CFA) in 1886 and the National Farmers' Alliance (NFA) in 1887. The

continued on page 6

Populism...

(continued from page 5)

Southern branch of the NFA was segregated. The NFA's ranks were for the most part small farm owners and tenants, mostly from the hill country. The leaders, who tended to be bigger landowners, were deeply enmeshed in commercial agriculture and were often small exploiters in their own right. These forces wanted higher prices and lower shipping costs for goods and to drive *down* the wages of agricultural workers. Many were supporters of the racist Democratic Party. As likely as not, NFA members in the South had ridden with the Red Shirts, the White Leagues or the Ku Klux Klan during Reconstruction. In contrast to the NFA's segregationist policy in the South, the CFA did not exclude whites willing to help build the organization. In fact, white leadership was welcomed because whites had the advantage of being able to reach out to leaders of other organizations and the government. R.M. Humphrey, a former Confederate officer turned Baptist missionary,

became head of the CFA. Initially the colored alliances were non-partisan social organizations and economic cooperatives trying to provide some relief to impoverished farmers. There are few surviving CFA newspapers. But there are written accounts from the CFA's white organizers, as well as references to the alliance in the white Populist newspapers. Black Populist organizing methods were secret, based largely in the black churches. Within the Southern caste system, black people could not just go out and have picnics and rallies like the white Populists. Heroic CFA organizers often paid for their activism with their lives. Black people risked being driven off their land or lynched just for standing up to the landlord, showing signs of literacy, ignoring racial "etiquette" or doing anything non-submissive, or doing nothing at all. Lynching was commonly the result of disputes over land and livestock or of confrontations with landlords and employers. In 1889, Oliver Cromwell, a black CFA organizer, was recruiting black farmers in Leflore County, Mississippi. Having organized black men into a militia group

in Clinton, Mississippi, during Reconstruction, he was described in the press as a "notoriously bad Negro." He organized a boycott of local white merchants, encouraging farmers to trade with the co-op store instead. When Cromwell's life was threatened, armed black men rallied around him. Whites organized posses, and the state militia suppressed Cromwell and his supporters in a sea of blood. The lynching went on for days, and dozens of black people were murdered. By 1891, the CFA claimed a membership of 1.25 million. The CFA was largely composed of black tenants and laborers who supported the Republican Party. They wanted higher wages and an end to convict labor and lien law. Both the CFA and the NFA wanted cheaper credit and more money in circulation. In 1891, the CFA organized a cotton pickers strike. Planters in the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta and the Arkansas Delta refused to pay more than 50 cents per 100 pounds of cotton picked. Some members of the CFA persuaded R.M. Humphrey that the organization should protect them. But there was a conflict: some members

thought that it was too dangerous for the black pickers to go on strike. Others opposed the strike for economic reasons—either they owned their own land or hired help to pick cotton. So Humphrey organized the Cotton Pickers League as a subgroup within the CFA. Practically nothing is known of the Cotton Pickers League. It was a secret organization, and its members were mostly illiterate. The Cotton Pickers League tried to use the strike as a means to improve the lot of landless black people. The strike only materialized in a couple of places—in East Texas and in the Arkansas Delta near Memphis. In Arkansas, planters organized a large posse to hunt for strike leaders, which took on added urgency when the strikers killed a plantation manager. Strike leaders were hunted down and murdered. After the strike, the CFA lost members and passed from the scene as an independent organization. The brutal suppression of the CFA showed the determined and violent opposition that black laborers were up against when they challenged the white landowners. [TO BE CONTINUED]

North Korea...

(continued from page 8)

as liberators by the masses of workers and peasants. The North's advance represented an opportunity for social revolution in the South. In response, the U.S. and other capitalist powers invaded North Korea, devastated the entire peninsula and flattened Pyongyang. The imperialists slaughtered some four million people, including a million Chinese soldiers, whose entry into the war was decisive in turning back the U.S.-led invaders. The war ended in a stalemate, and the U.S. refuses to sign a peace treaty to this day. The overthrow of capitalist rule in China and North Korea is a historic gain for the international working class. At the same time, both these workers states have been ruled from their inception by nationalist, Stalinist bureaucratic castes that exclude the working class from political power. The Stalinists preach the dogma of building "socialism in one country"—the myth that a classless society of abundance can be constructed in a single country amid scarcity. This perspective is an obstacle to the defense of these social revolutions and is counterposed to the struggle for international socialist revolution. As Trotskyists, we fight for the *revolutionary reunification* of Korea—through socialist revolution in the South and political revolution in the North. Key to our defense of the workers states is the fight for workers political revolutions to oust the Stalinist misrulers and replace them with governments based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

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Down With U.S. Imperialism!

In South Korea, President Moon Jae-in was elected earlier this year on the back of millions-strong protests against the corrupt regime of Park Geun-hye, who combined sweeping attacks on the unions with intense hostility toward North Korea. During his election campaign, Moon promised dialogue with the North, which won him the support of many in the South who do not wish to become the target of retaliation by North Korea. But as president, Moon has made clear his subservience to the U.S.,

which calls the shots in Seoul. Indeed, the U.S. would have operational control of the South Korean military in the event of war. Moon outraged many of his supporters by expediting the installation of additional THAAD rocket launchers, sited in a village south of Seoul, where the residents were deeply opposed. When some 400 protesters tried to physically block the delivery, 8,000 cops were mobilized to protect the U.S. military vehicles carrying the rocket launchers. Following Pyongyang's missile launch over Japan, Moon threatened the North, declaring, "We have the power to destroy North Korea and make it unable to recover." The "we" here is clearly the U.S. aided by their lapdogs in the South. Whether they are pursuing negotiations with the North or military threats, or both, the goal of the imperialists and South Korean capitalists toward North Korea is to force it to submit. Some liberal voices in the U.S. are calling for negotiations leading to "a deal in which Pyongyang would freeze its nuclear and missile tests in exchange for some American concessions," as a *New York Times* editorial (6 September) put it. The aim behind such calls is to render the North's nuclear deterrent ineffective by curtailing its capacity for missile delivery, thus leaving the country open to attack. Joining this imperialist chorus are the South Korean cothinkers of the British Socialist Workers Party (SWP), whose publication *Workers' Solidarity*—while "opposing Trump's drive to war"—made clear: "North Korea's nuclear weapon programmes cannot be supported" (socialistworker.co.uk, 15 September). Throughout its history this tendency has refused to defend the workers states against imperialism. It was founded in Britain by Tony Cliff, who broke with the Trotskyist movement in 1950 after his refusal to defend North Korea, China and the Soviet Union against U.S. and British imperialism during the Korean War. The Cliffites' "third camp" position that there is no side to take between the imperialists and Stalinist-ruled countries like the former USSR, North Korea and China has always put them on the side of the imperialists.

South Korea has a powerful proletariat, concentrated in strategic industrial sectors like steel and auto. It has waged tremendous battles, including in the 1970s and '80s, which gave rise to independent unions that are now grouped in the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU). KCTU-affiliated unions continue to lead labor struggle and face brutal repression by the Seoul regime. But the federation's leadership has a record of advocating support for bourgeois parties and candidates, including Moon. The South Korean Cliffites lamented the fact that "the majority of reformist forces pinned hopes on the Moon government" (socialistworker.co.uk, 15 September). But *Workers' Solidarity* neglected to mention that the reformists who pinned their hopes on Moon's (failed) 2012 election campaign included their own selves. The South Korean working class can further its own class interests only through complete independence from all wings of the capitalist class. Many of those protesting THAAD and other war moves by Washington and Seoul are doing so from a pacifist standpoint. What is necessary is to forge a Leninist-Trotskyist party in

Korea that can imbue the proletariat with the understanding that it must *defend* the workers state in the North as part of the struggle to overthrow capitalist rule in the South. The U.S. troops stationed in South Korea represent a dagger aimed not only at North Korea but also at the combative proletariat in the South. It is in the essential interest of the multiracial American proletariat to oppose U.S. imperialism and its military provocations and demand: *U.S. hands off the world*. The U.S. imperialists paint North Korea as a danger to the American populace. In fact, it is U.S. imperialism that is threatening to plunge the world into Armageddon. The same capitalist ruling class currently threatening to turn the Korean Peninsula into irradiated rubble is also destroying the livelihood of millions of working people at home. What is needed is a struggle for proletarian socialist revolution in the U.S. itself. The Spartacist League is dedicated to building the party that can lead such a struggle—the U.S. section of a reformed Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution. ■

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6

WORKERS VANGUARD

(continued from page 3)

Down With Racist Fortress Europe!

Regarding immigrants and refugees from Africa and the Near East, the Schengen Agreement, like all bourgeois immigration laws, has been used to control labor migration to Europe in accordance with the needs of the bourgeoisie, which in many EU countries needs to import workers at low wages and with no rights. “Freedom of movement” for immigrants and refugees has always meant mass drownings in the Mediterranean, barbed-wire fences and detention camps.

Pseudo-Marxist Supporters of Imperialist EU

The reformist left's support to the EU has allowed reactionary forces like the English UKIP, the French National Front or the Northern League and assorted Italian fascists to posture as protectors of those who have been impoverished by EU diktats and has allowed them to misdirect outrage into nationalist chauvinism and racism against immigrants, Roma and other minorities.

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The PCL and SCR both attempt to pass off their capitulation to imperialism as Marxism. The PCL wrote: "The truth is that the alternative is not between the euro and the lira, between free trade and protectionism, between the European Union and the nation. The real alternative is between capitalists and workers. Between capitalism and socialism. In every country and on a worldwide scale" ("Euro or Lira, the Real Problem Is Capitalism," 4 February).

A black and white photograph of a protest. A group of men are holding a large banner that reads "ABD ELSALAM ASSASSINATO MENTRE DIFENDEVA I DIRITTI DI T". On the left side of the banner is a portrait of a man. The men are also holding various flags, including one with the text "SINDACATO" and another with a logo.

scale is the only way to eliminate poverty, unemployment, war and racism is a fundamental truth. But when this truth is used to justify abstention and curtail working-class opposition to imperialist coalitions like the EU or NATO, it loses all revolutionary content and becomes aid to the imperialists. The struggle to overthrow capitalism *demand*s that the working class concretely oppose the EU and NATO. In fact, the Brexit referendum did not ask “are you for socialism or capitalism” but to take a stand for or against the EU. The abstention by the PCL and SCR was a betrayal of proletarian internationalism.

Control over currency is a prerequisite for national sovereignty. Normally, debtor countries can get a breathing space and regain a competitive economic edge by devaluing their currency. This is impossible with the euro. As demonstrated by the experiences of Argentina and Iceland, default and devaluation, though difficult at the beginning, can rapidly lead to economic recovery and an increase in employment because a weaker currency makes exports more advantageous. Unlike Greece, Italy is an imperialist country and its financial institutions participate in the plundering of dependent countries, including through foreign debt. Thus it is crucial for the Italian proletariat to demand the

Trotskyism Against Stalinism on the EU

Throughout the 1990s, all the components of Eurostop were integral parts of Rifondazione comunista and of the Ulivo [Olive Branch] capitalist governments that imposed austerity, also on behalf of the EU. (In 1998, Oliviero Diliberto and Marco Rizzo founded the Party of Italian Communists as a split from Rifondazione comunista in order to be part of the D'Alema government that participated in the bombing of Serbia!) Even [former metal workers union leader] Giorgio Cremaschi, spokesman for Eurostop Platform, was a supporter of a "social Europe." In 2002, after the euro was introduced, bourgeois enthusiasm for the EU's future was translated into the leftist mania for "Social Forums," which were actually financed by capitalist states or institutions like the Rockefeller Foundation and Ford Foundation (see "Churches, Charities, and CIA Cash—Social Forum Con Game," *WV* No. 853, 2 September 2005). At the time, Cremaschi's FIOM [metal workers union] enthused over "the enormous opportunity to build a Social Europe based on democratic participation" ("The FIOM in the European Social Forum," archivio.fiom.cgil.it, November 2002). Cremaschi himself promoted illusions such as "a European social wage as a guarantee against workfare" and wondered "what indispensable rights should be written in the European Convention," hoping to involve workers "in a mobilization for Social Europe" ("What Is Needed Is a Movement for Workers' Rights," 25 October 2002).

As an alternative to the EU, the Eurostop Platform wants to “build a new Euro-Mediterranean Area together with the so-called PIGS” to “adopt new social policies, independently of the diktats of the Central Bank and the French-German axis, to introduce a new currency and to build new internal and international relations based on justice, solidarity and complementarity modeled on the Latin American ALBA, which was formed by countries subjected for decades to US domination” (retedeicomunista.org, 12 May 2015). In the pipe dreams of the Rete dei comunisti [Communist Network], this commercial bloc would be an alternative to the EU and would include semicolonial countries of North Africa, capitalist countries like Portugal, Greece and Spain, and an (albeit third-rate) imperialist power like Italy. In other words, it’s a reformist-flavored version of Mussolini’s dream of “turning the Mediterranean into an Italian lake.”

Illusions in the Schengen Agreement and the EU have been used by reformists to promote the belief that the EU has progressively become a supranational state that has allowed capitalism to overcome the economic and military conflicts between rival imperialist states. For over a century, Marxists have explained that in the epoch of imperialism, i.e., the period of the struggle by the bourgeoisies of the dominant countries to rip away each other's shares of the world markets, the capitalist unification of Europe can only be utopian or reactionary. As the Russian revolutionary V.I. Lenin wrote in 1915: "Of course, *temporary* agreements are possible between capitalists and between states. In this sense a United States of Europe is possible as an agreement between the *European* capitalists...but to what end? Only for the purpose of jointly suppressing socialism in Europe, of jointly protecting colonial booty *against* Japan and America" ("On the Slogan for a United States of Europe").

[illegible]

7

All U.S. Forces/Bases Out of South Korea!

Down With U.S. Provocations Against North Korea!

SEPTEMBER 19—The U.S. may “have no choice but to totally destroy North Korea”—this is how Donald Trump put it today in his first address to the United Nations General Assembly. The threats against North Korea by the U.S. capitalist rulers on a near-daily basis are a reminder that they are prepared to risk nuclear war—and that neither the imperialists nor their capitalist order is rational. Trump rants as though North Korea were a dangerous threat to the U.S., the mightiest military power on earth with its vast nuclear arsenal.

North Korea, a country of 25 million people, is not a capitalist power, but a bureaucratically deformed workers state. In their drive to destroy this workers state, the U.S. imperialists have been ratcheting up their provocations. In March, the Pentagon began the installation of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile shield system in South Korea—a system that had been prepared under the Obama administration—and just two weeks ago installed additional rocket launchers. Since the Korean War, the U.S. has maintained a large troop presence—today numbering more than 28,000—in South Korea, as well as 50,000 more in Japan. In recent months, the U.S. has repeatedly conducted military exercises with its Japanese imperialist allies and its South Korean quislings. These war provocations include simulated invasions of North Korea, the destruction of its nuclear weapons sites and assassination of its leaders.

In response to the Pyongyang government’s test of a hydrogen bomb on September 3, the U.S. turned to its United Nations tool to step up efforts to strangle North Korea economically and force it into submission by reversing the modest economic growth the country has experienced over the last several years. On September 11, the UN voted the harshest measures to date, including a ban on North Korea’s textile exports, a halt to further hiring of North Korean workers abroad (a source of foreign currency) and a cap on the country’s imports of oil.

The U.S. agreed to water down its original sanctions proposal in order to secure the agreement of China (and of Putin’s capitalist Russia) in the Security Council. Like North Korea, China is a bureaucratically deformed workers state, and is North Korea’s only ally. The People’s Republic

U.S. Air Force bombers and South Korean warplanes conduct military exercises with live bombs in provocation against North Korea, September 18.

of China, the largest and most powerful of the remaining countries where capitalist rule has been overthrown, is in fact the ultimate target of U.S. aggression in the region. Yet China’s Stalinist rulers have bowed to imperialist pressure, treacherously leaning on Pyongyang to halt its development of nuclear weapons and supporting UN sanctions against North Korea, even if Beijing holds back from fully implementing them. Such concessions to the imperialists are detrimental to the defense of China itself.

In recent years, China has been the target of repeated U.S. provocations in the South China Sea, and the THAAD system is designed to intercept Chinese missiles. Trump’s threat to impose sanctions on any country trading with North Korea is aimed at intensifying pressure on China, Pyongyang’s largest trading partner.

Ever since the overthrow of capitalist rule in those countries, the U.S. imperialists under both Democrats and Republicans have pursued their goal of counter-revolutionary destruction of North Korea and overturning the 1949 Chinese Revolution. This campaign included the 1950-53 Korean War, carried out under the aus-

pices of the UN, during which the U.S. considered using nuclear weapons and was deterred only by the Soviet Union’s own nuclear arsenal.

As Marxists, our opposition to U.S. imperialism’s threats against North Korea and China is based above all on the class line: Despite being saddled with nationalist, Stalinist bureaucracies, North Korea and China are workers states based on the overturn and expropriation of capitalist rule. It is vital for the international proletariat, not least in the U.S., to stand for the unconditional military defense of these countries against imperialist attack and capitalist counterrevolution, including by demanding that all U.S. forces get out of South Korea and Japan and by calling for an end to all sanctions against North Korea. Such defense is integral to the cause of world socialist revolution.

Defense of these workers states must also include supporting their ability to have nuclear weapons and effective delivery systems. Four days after the UN voted for sanctions, North Korea defiantly launched an intermediate-range missile that passed over the Japanese island of Hokkaido before landing in the Pacific Ocean. In

northern Japan, the government sounded sirens and sent text messages instructing the population to go to bomb shelters, whipping up fears of nuclear annihilation that will be used to bolster Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s drive for intensified rearmament of imperialist Japan. In fact, North Korea’s nuclear program is defensive and aimed at deterring imperialist attack.

For Revolutionary Reunification of Korea!

Popular media often portrays the current stand-off between the U.S. and North Korea as the result of two crazed leaders threatening to plunge the world into a nuclear holocaust. Donald Trump is undoubtedly volatile and unpredictable, not least when tweeting. However, the policy he is pursuing with North Korea is in line with that of previous administrations and is aimed at destroying this workers state. Indeed, Obama himself had threatened to attack the North, including with nukes, and several times sent B-2 bombers over the Korean Peninsula.

As for North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and his regime, there is much that is bizarre and unsavory about his dynastic, mythologized, bureaucratic rule. But there is nothing crazy about his government’s drive for nukes. It is a rational and essential policy of defense against the U.S., which openly threatens a nuclear “first strike” against its perceived enemies. If not for such a deterrent, the U.S. would have already bombarded North Korea, as it has so many countries in the Near East and elsewhere. As a statement by the North Korean government last year underlined: “The Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq and the Gaddafi regime in Libya could not escape the fate of destruction” after giving up their weapons programs and “yielding to the pressure of the U.S. and the West keen on their regime changes.”

The horrors of the Korean War are still seared into the memory of the North Korean population generations later. Following the end of World War II, the Korean Peninsula was divided between the North, where capitalist/landlord rule was overthrown by guerrilla forces acting under the protection of the Soviet Army, and a brutal capitalist regime in the South, backed by the U.S. When North Korean army troops advanced below the 38th parallel in June 1950, they were welcomed

continued on page 6



Seoul: South Korean protest against deployment of U.S. THAAD missile system, September 8.

Xinhua