Dialogue & Initiative
2017 Edition

Fight Trumpism:
For Jobs, Equality, Democracy, Peace

Published by the
Committees of Correspondence Education Fund

Changemaker Publications
**Dialogue & Initiative** is a discussion journal published by the Committees of Correspondence Education Fund, Inc., 2472 Broadway, #204, New York, NY 10025.

(212) 868-3773

Email: national@cc-ds.org  
Web: www.cc-ds.org

Editors: Erica Carter, Paul Krehbiel, Harry Targ.

Layout and design for this issue: Carl Davidson

Manuscripts not exceeding 5000 words are invited. Send text via email; hard copy can be mailed or faxed. Manuscripts will be returned if not accompanied by postage-paid, self-addressed packaging.

Copyright: CoC Ed Fund, Sept 2017, unless otherwise reserved by the authors.

ISBN# 978-1-312-21139-1

Order online direct at:  
http://www.lulu.com/spotlight/changemaker
EDITORS’ NOTE

On the 100th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution, 2017 has seen dramatic changes in our country. The campaign of democratic socialist Bernie Sanders for president energized a new generation of progressive activists and ramped up the social justice movements to a new level. It also brought to life public awareness and support for socialism among millions of our people 25 years after the capitalist elite thought they had buried socialism for good.

On the other hand, the election of the right-wing Donald Trump to the presidency, despite losing the popular vote to Hillary Clinton by nearly 3 million votes, marks a grave threat to the wellbeing of our people and the people of the world. Trump’s election campaign and first 100 days in office have been a travesty of callous attacks on immigrants, Mexican-Americans, women, Muslims, people with disabilities, and many other groups, and programs such as health care and others, a forewarning of more attacks to come.

Yet from the moment of Trump’s inauguration, massive protests have swept the country demanding an end to his anti-people policies and an end to his administration.

The 2017 issue of Dialogue & Initiative will not only give special attention to the dangers of Trumpism, but also a clear focus on the mass movements and strategies to defeat Trump and the racists, misogynists, right-wing corporate elite, and pro-fascist elements within his circle. How the struggle between these divergent forces develops, and the allies each political force draws
in, will determine the direction of our country - for peace, prosperity and equality, or suffering, fear, and oppression.

As activists in this large resistance movement, we in the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism, join millions of others in our collective belief that Donald Trump and Trumpism can be defeated. We believe that our country can be turned in a new direction, one that reflects the needs and desires of the progressive majority of the people, for good jobs and economic security for all, quality public education, quality affordable health care for all, quality and affordable housing, an end to all forms of discrimination, and a culture of peace, democracy, cooperation and caring, here and with people of other lands. We highlight the women, people of color, unionists, young people -- all majority working-class, who are playing leading roles in the social justice struggles of the day.

The first section of this volume takes a look at the rise of the massive Resistance movement against Trump, beginning with the inspiring Women’s Marches that involved 3-4 million women, men and children in over 650 cities, towns and rural areas across the country and on all seven continents, the day after Trump took office. This section covers many issues and constituencies, and includes an opening discussion of ways to stop right-wing and fascist threats and movements.

The second section will give voice to the many and varied social justice movements, most of which are intertwined with the Resistance to Trumpism. Included are Native Americans at Standing Rock and beyond, youth inspired at the Carl Bloice School for Socialist Education at last year’s 8th CCDS National Convention, and struggles of millions against racism and the ideology of white supremacy, for health care, for union representation and jobs, economic justice, climate justice, a just and peaceful foreign policy and more.

In our third section we will address the struggle for socialism, with specific examples from several countries, and a vision and a plan to create the building blocks for socialism in the US.

In the fourth and final section we introduce readers to long and short reviews of books that can help us better understand and change the world. There is more here on stopping fascism, supporting the struggles against the exploitation and lies of imperialism and capitalism, exposing money in politics, the growing injustice of economic inequality, the long arm of the Deep State, labor organizing, voter suppression, progressive political organizing, the deep reaches of racism, and the role of global capital to strangle the South African revolution.
In keeping with the historic Women’s Marches, this issue of Dialogue & Initiative salutes women of all races and nationalities who are empowering millions of women and men, and providing leadership to all the social justice movements and the resistance to Trumpism. Women are leaders in all fields, including the women’s rights movement, the labor and student movements, the struggle against misogyny and racism and all forms of discrimination, the fight for quality education and health care, the well-being of families and children, the climate justice movement, politics, peace and international solidarity, in all the professions, and more. The first section of this issue appropriately features the Women’s Movement.

One final note about the 8th National Convention of CCDS in July of 2016 in Emeryville on the San Francisco Bay. We went into our convention with a focus on key issues regarding the work of CCDS, including growth and the financial resources of our organization, issues that most organizations grapple with from time to time. While we didn’t create a magic wand to make all our dreams come true, we did make good decisions that position us to make important contributions to the mass movements, the socialist left, and especially in this period, the fight against Trumpism and right-wing reaction. We mapped plans to enrich and step up our educational work, do more outreach to especially the new generations of young activists, intensify our work in building multi-racial and left unity coalitions, and develop an organizing plan that can help build the movement and CCDS.

And one final note about the Russian Revolution. First, it was earth shaking, and world changing. To mark the 100th anniversary of the world’s first socialist revolution and state, we are working on a special edition of Dialogue & Initiative with articles and analyses of the revolution, great gains and setbacks in building socialism, successes and failures, exhilaration and tragedy, and most importantly, lessons for our struggles today.

Join CCDS and become a part of this exciting movement.

June 2017
# Table of Contents

## Section 1: Resistance Grows During Trump’s First 100 Days

### The Women’s Struggle

*Three Million Women March to Protest Trump, Send Message to Politicians Looking to 2018.*  
By Janet Tucker ................................................................. Page 1

*Angela Davis’s speech on January 17, Women’s March in Washington, DC.* By Angela Davis.............. Page 11

*My Body, Her Body.* By Renee Y. Carter ........................................ Page 14

*Mexican American Women Blast Trump at Los Angeles Women’s March.* By Delia Chavez............... Page 17

*International Women’s Day.* .................................................  
By Alexandra Kollontai Page 22

### The Progressive Majority Hits the Streets

*The Progressive Majority vs. Trump.*  
By Paul Krehbiel ................................................................. Page 31

*Trump Ramps Up Immigration Repression to Serve Corporate Interests.* By David Bacon ....................... Page 60

*Trump’s First 30 Days: Attacks on Immigrants and People of Color—Assessment and Response.*  
A presentation of the CCDS Socialist Education Project (SEP) Series on the Trump Administration, February 27, 2017 By Mildred Williamson ................. Page 66

*Help Families Torn Apart by the Travel Ban.*  
By Rawya Rageh ................................................................. Page 73

*Report on the Resistance in Southeast Massachusetts.*  
By Rafael Pizarro ................................................................. Page 75

*Town Hall Resistance.* By Pat Fry ........................................ Page 78
Trumpism, White Nativism, and the Troubling Question of Fascism: The Need for Left Unity” By Alex Krehbiel ......................... Page 81

How Norway Avoided Becoming a Fascist State
By George Lakey ................................................................. Page 91

United and Popular Front:

Section 2. Building Social Justice Movements

Native American’s upbringing in Native culture provides guidance, support for Standing Rock. By Hartman Deetz ......................... Page 104

Standing Rock: Challenging Colonialism/Reclaiming the Future. By Judi Jennings, Sonja de Vries-Farah, and Jardana Peacock ............. Page 110

My Experience at the Carl Bloice School. By Joshua Colon ...... Page 114

Participatory Democracy--A Local Example.
By Meta Van Sickle ............................................................. Page 116

About SURJ. Excerpts from the Website............................... Page 124

Nissan Workers in Mississippi Build Southern Support for Union Drive.
By Rebekah Barber ............................................................... Page 126

Workers’ Resistance, Grassroots Solidarity Key to Honeywell’s Retreat.
By Frank Hammer .............................................................. Page 130

Labor’s Lessons Lead to Success, or Failure.
By Donna DeWitt ............................................................... Page 142

Where Are We in the Fight for Universal Healthcare? Through a Labor and California Lens. By Lenny Potash ......................... Page 147

National Health Care Single Payer Conference.
By Sandy Eaton ............................................................... Page 156

Capitalists Intensify Attacks, Resistance Grows.
By Randy Shannon ........................................................... Page 161

Deepen the Political Revolution - Fight for Economic Justice:
A 3 Point Program 6 Hour Day - Hike in Pay - Jobs for All.
By Randy Shannon ............................................................. Page 166
**World Domination: ‘Neoliberal Globalization’ versus ‘The Clash of Civilizations’: Parts One and Two.** By Harry Targ ........................................... Page 169

**War and Warming: Can We Save the Planet Without Taking on the Pentagon?**. By H Patricia Hynes .......................................................... Page 176

**Stop the Permanent War Economy Now!**  
By Peace and Solidarity Committee of CCDS ........................................ Page 184


**To All the Rebels: Remembering Berta Cáceres on the Anniversary of Her Assassination.** By Ryne Beddard and Daniel Mejia .................... Page 194

**Fanon on Race, Recognition, and Revolution Reconsidered.**  
By Peter Hudis .................................................................................. Page 197

### Section 3. The Fight for Democracy & Socialism

**On the 100th anniversary of the Russian Revolution.**  
By Duncan McFarland ................................................................. Page 209

**United States of America Delegation Latin American School of Medicine.**  
By Arthur Heitzer and Gail Walker ........................................ Page 212

**A Vision of Socialism. An Excerpt from the For a Democratic and Socialist Future: Goals and Principles of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism & CCDS Legacy.**  
CCDS 6th National Convention, July 2009 .......................... Page 215

### Section 4. Book Reviews: Read, Study, Organize

**Fascism Today: A Review of: The Anatomy of Fascism (Robert O. Paxton)**  
By Ted Pearson .................................................................................. Page 227

By Larry Abbott ........................................................................... Page 234

By Al Donohue and Paul Krehbiel ........................................ Page 237

**Review of: Global Capitalism and the Crisis of Democracy (Jerry Harris)**  
By Harry Targ .................................................................................. Page 244
Other Book Reviews

Dark Money: The Hidden History of the Billionaires behind the Rise of the Radical Right (Jane Mayer) ................................................................. Page 249

Runaway Inequality: An Activists Guide to Economic Justice (Les Leopold) .................................................................................................. Page 251

Freedom is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement (Angela Y. Davis) .................................. Page 252

An Indigenous People’s History of the United States (Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz) ..................................................................................... Page 253

Labor’s Untold Story (Richard Boyer and Herbert Morais) ........ Page 254

The Great Suppression: Voting rights, Corporate Cash, and the Conservative Assault on Democracy (Zachary Roth) .................. Page 255

Our Revolution: A Future to Believe In (Bernie Sanders) ........ Page 255

Refinery Town: Big Oil, Big Money, and the Remaking of an American City (Steve Early) ................................................................. Page 256

The Struggle for a Substantive Democracy: An Organizing Framework and Study Guide for Activists (Carl Bloice Institute for Socialist Education, Committees of Correspondence Education Fund) ........ Page 257

Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II (Douglas A. Blackmon) .... Page 258

Lost in Transformation: South Africa’s Search for a New Future since 1986 (Solomon Johannes Terreblanche) .......................... Page 259

Vietnam: From National Liberation to 21st Century Socialism (Editors: Duncan McFarland, Paul Krehbiel, Harry Targ, members and leaders of the CCDS) .................................................................................. Page 260

Secrets of a Successful Organizer (Alexandra Bradbury, Mark Brenner, and Jane Slaughter) ......................................................... Page 261

The Gilded Rage: A Wild Ride Through Donald Trump’s America (Alexander Zaitchik) ...................................................................... Page 262

The Communist Manifesto (Karl Marx and Frederich Engels) .. Page 263
Take a Free Subscription to Our Weekly E-Newsletter...

Easy to sign on and to unsubscribe as well. Go to http://tinyurl.com/ccdslinks, pick a back issue, and click the button in the left column. Arrives every Friday AM
Section 1. Resistance Grows During Trump’s First 100 Days

The Women’s Struggle

Three Million Women March to Protest Trump: Send Message to Politicians Looking to 2018

By Janet Tucker

Women made history on January 21st! Over three million women and their allies marched in 650 cities and towns across the United States and on every continent Saturday, January 21, 2017 to protest the misogynist, racist and reactionary policies and actions of Donald Trump.

This was the largest single day protest ever in the United States. The marches took place one day after Trump was sworn-in as the 45th president of the US. These huge marches were fueled by a long string of sexist comments and sexually abusive behaviors that Trump made during his presidential election campaign toward women, or that were brought to public attention by others. Women in all the marches protested this misogynist behavior, especially his boasting that he grabbed women by the genitals, and called them pigs, dogs, slobs and disgusting animals. The 99% spoke out loudly across the county and around the world.

The Washington, DC march had over 500,000 people, three times larger than Trump’s inauguration the day before. The rally heard a broad cross-section of speakers and wide range of progressive issues. Angela Davis gave one of the most politically compelling speeches when she linked the key struggles of the day and named the sys-
tem responsible: “This Women’s March represents the promise of feminism against the pernicious powers of state violence. An inclusive and intersectional feminism that calls upon all of us to join the resistance to racism, to Islamophobia, to anti-Semitism, to misogyny, to capitalist exploitation.” Report after report said that so many people crowded the streets of DC that the entire parade route was packed with people standing shoulder to shoulder. People could not move, many or most say they were unable to see or even hear the speakers but they cheered anyway. Something powerful was in the air. The hand-made “pussy hats” made a proud appearance at the rallies and marches in response to the misogyny of Trump and his administration.

Texas, New York, Boston

Anne Lewis, from Austin, TX, an independent documentary film-maker associated with Appalshop Films (http://www.annelewis.org/) spoke of her trip to DC with a bus load of women-a trip of 30 hours each way. “The bus was filled with a group of diverse working class women from various areas of Texas, many of them rural women. Most had never demonstrated before. Most did not know each other before the trip but they knew what they were doing was important. They bonded together around that fact.”

Anne went on, “Getting off the bus in DC at 6 am I was impressed at the greetings we got from everyone. The DC workers, mostly African American and Latino, seemed really glad to see us. I imagine it was a sharp contrast to the day before. While this massive gathering meant more work for them and we were mostly white, they were welcoming and happy to see us. We felt they saw us as ‘their people’.”

In New York, Pat Fry, reports “An estimated 500,000 people crammed Manhattan streets from the Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza at the United Nations on the east side of Manhattan to Trump Tower on Fifth Avenue at midtown, January 21st. Waves of marchers kept joining the massive crowds into the evening hours.” Pat Fry was active in New York Labor for Bernie and is a former CCDS national Co-Chair.

“We need a feminism for the 99% that focuses not on breaking glass ceilings but raising the floor for all,” stated Linda Martin Alcoff in a speech at the rally at City University of New York. Alcoff is a Professor of Philosophy at Hunter College and the CUNY Graduate Center and Visiting Research Professor at Australian Catholic University

In Boston, Rafael Pizarro stated, “I was told there were over 200,000 in Boston according to the Service Employees International Union Local 1199 rep on the organizing committee. I had a bus of Local 1199
members and community allies from Southeast Mass. It was a moving experience for all that attended. The high point for me was a great rendition of Amazing Grace.” Rafael Pizarro is a member of CCDS and on our National Coordinating Committee (NCC).

Charleston, Atlanta, and Chicago

Meta Van Sickle from Charleston, South Carolina said, “Local organizers noted that multiple permits had to be gained because of the massive turnout. Everyone remained peaceful and respectful. The marches started from several parking garages and converged at Brittlebank Park. We listened to several inspiring speakers who encouraged all of us to participate in democracy.” Meta Van Sickle is also a member of our CCDS National Coordinating Committee.

Jim Skillman, a CCDS leader in Georgia, said that the “police estimated 63,000 people took part in the Atlanta Women’s March, which would make it the largest march in Atlanta’s history. Organizers, none of whom had ever organized a political event, had expected 12,000 people. They raised over $40,000 to pay for expenses that included porta-toilets, EMT’s, police, sound, water and sanitation. They brought together a remarkably broad coalition around a multitude of issues that included reproductive rights, immigrant rights, Black Lives Matter, healthcare, housing and many others. Social media played a central role in notifying and communication with the attendees. The crowd included a good mix of young and old, men and women, and people from different communities. Congressman John Lewis, who had been slandered by President Trump days earlier, spoke at a rally preceding the march, and was then accorded the honor of leading the march as it moved from the Center for Civil and Human Rights to the Georgia Capitol.”

In Chicago, Mildred Williamson, a health care professional from Chicago, who attended that city’s march, said the massive outpouring of opposition to Trump nation-wide must “put both Republicans and Democrats who vote for Trump’s cabinet nominations and racist and reactionary policies on notice. Those Senators, and Trump supporters in the House, must feel the heat, especially those up for re-election in 2018. They all need to hear from their constituents now so they can either stand up to Trump or be voted out of office.” Williamson, who is also a member of the CCDS National Coordinating Committee, said the organizers and marchers there also worked to unite women’s issues, such as reproductive rights and protection from rape and other assaults on women, with the right to health care, public education, criminal justice, the Dakota pipeline, police accountability and other issues.
“It was extraordinary,” Williamson said. “Organizers expected 20,000 and 250,000 people came. People from every nationality were there, along with men and children. It could have been better demographically as the majority of marchers were white,” but overall the march was a big success, according to Williamson.

LA: You Can’t Intimidate Us Anymore

The Women’s march in Los Angeles was the largest, with 750,000 women, men and children in attendance. Latina’s bolstered this huge gathering. Protesters were to gather at Pershing Square in downtown Los Angeles and march to City Hall, a mile away. However, the streets between Pershing Square and City Hall were so clogged with people that it wasn’t possible to march. It was instead a huge rally, a massive torrent of protest against Trump and his misogyny and other anti-people behavior and policies.

Marian Gordon, a speech pathologist and member of SoCal 350 - a large environmental group in Los Angeles affiliated with 350.org, said the march was the largest she had ever seen in Los Angeles during her 50 years of living and working in the city.

“When we left my building for the march, we saw our neighbors going too.” Gordon said. “The Metro was so crowded that people were waiting for an hour to get on. It seemed everyone knew about it. People at work, and at the Y were I go. People who were not political were saying they were going.” Gordon, who is also a member of the National Coordinating Committee of CCDS, and her husband finally made it downtown and were surprised by the massive crowds.

“The huge number of people was amazing,” she said. “Equally amazing was that this was a spontaneous outpouring of women.” While the sponsor was a group called Women’s March LA Foundation, Gordon said “the march was initiated by a few women but was built by many women who spread the word using social media. It revealed the depth of anger at Trump, and the need to make a public stand against him and what he stood for. But the tone of the march wasn’t anger,” Gordon continued. “There was a joyous atmosphere. Women expressing themselves, with pride and confidence that we can stop Trumps terrible policies. It was like a celebration of our power as women.”

Many signs were creative, some poignant, and they covered practically every important social issue: “Women’s Rights are Human rights,” “Stop Trump,” Save Planned Parenthood,” “I didn’t flee my war-torn country for this,” “Make America Think Again,” “So bad, even introverts are here,” “Not My President,” “Make Music, Not War” (from Local 47 of the Musi-

“There were pussy hats everywhere,” Gordon said. “They were knitted by a few women in one city and the word got around and women were wearing them in practically every demonstration. Those hats, and signs using words that have been used to degrade women, to put women down, were turned against Trump,” said Gordon. “It was like women owned the word, and proudly proclaimed ‘we are strong women’ you can’t intimidate us anymore.’”

The Los Angeles Women’s March was multi-racial, with many tens of thousands of Latina’s participating - mostly Mexican Americans but also many others with roots in Latin America, South America and other countries and continents. See the article by Delia Chavez about the huge Mexican American presence at the march and the outrage against Trump’s anti-Mexican slanders.

**Portland, Corvallis, and Phoenix**

“The march in Portland was the largest ever in that city, 70,000 to 100,000,” said Courtney Childs. “It was diverse and spirited, and like all the other main city marches in Oregon, it was held under a serious downpour of rain. Police were in riot gear but had no excuse to attack the peaceful demonstration. A labor rally preceded the march.” said Childs, a member of CCDS-National Coordinating Committee, and chair of the CCDS National Peace and Solidarity Committee. “There were marches in other cities across Oregon, from Salem to Eugene and many others. In my small town, Corvallis, a march was called for those who couldn’t travel. Around 100 people attended, including myself.”

Sharon Stewart, a former journalist and progressive community activist in Phoenix, said that over 20,000 marched in her city on January 21, way beyond organizers’ expectations. Stewart and the organizers attributed the large turnout to Trump’s attacks on the rights of women, people of color, immigrants and others who are threatened by the Trump Administration. “This was the largest march I ever saw in Phoenix,” Stewart said. “It was diverse, mostly women, and also a lot of Latinos and Latinas. People are angry at Trump’s attacks on Mexican-Americans and immigrants, and other people of color. This march played a part in mobilizing a larger movement to resist Trump’s round-up and deportations of
immigrants. Lawmakers got the message that people are engaged and want an end to Trump’s reactionary policies.”
Stewart said that after the march, “my sister and I got together with old friends from high school and our old neighborhood and we all decided to make daily calls to legislators to protest Trump’s actions.” Steward is a former member of the CCDS National Coordinating Committee, was active in the Bernie Sanders campaign in Phoenix, and was the president of the Los Angeles Newspaper Guild when she worked in Los Angeles.

Resistance

The background for this outpouring of support for the Women’s Marches had its roots in earlier protests. People hit the streets on November 9, the day after Trump’s election. Demonstrations broke out across the county and are continuing on today in reaction to the Trump presidency. When Trump made his executive order for a travel ban of people from 7 Muslim-majority countries, protesters showed up at many large airports blocking traffic and stopping business as usual.

Demonstrations opposing the raids against immigrants are seen in a number of places. The manner in which these raids and round ups are going on are dehumanizing to say the least. These have spread fear in migrant communities, tearing families apart. The immigrant rights movement did not start with Trump or even with Obama. Barack Obama deported more people. Trump is very likely to surpass Obama’s levels. We see an increase in ICE and military budgets, while at the same time slashing of the safety nets that so many rely on.

The pushing of Right to Work legislation represents further attacks on unions. Trump is bound to destroy the Affordable Care Act. He has dramatically increased an already bloated military budget which is sure to increase instability globally. People have demonstrated and packed town hall meetings during the congressional break in support of the Affordable Care Act or in support of something better like single payer. Often times the representatives have chosen not to attend. And the income gap continues to grow larger.

Harry Targ, CCDS Co-Chair reported that a Bernie Sanders for president organization in greater Lafayette, Indiana that he was active in, rose up in opposition to Trumpism and transformed itself last fall into the Greater Lafayette Progressives. On January 15, 2017, based on an initiative from Moveon.org, a meeting of progressives was called to address the variety of concerns raised by the electoral victory of Donald Trump and the Republican sweep of the Indiana governor’s office and state legislature. About 45 people attended, broke into issue committees, and began discussion of future work. One week later, on Saturday, January 22, 2017, about 1,000 people assembled at the Lafayette Courthouse...
in solidarity with the Women’s March in Washington DC. In addition, about 30 activists from the area drove by van to DC to participate in the central national event and dozens more traveled sixty miles to the rally, attended by 5,000, in Indianapolis at the state capitol.

This year on March 8th, International Woman’s Day, actions and strikes went on around the world. In the US it was “a day without a woman”. This followed close on the heels of “day without an immigrant”. The call was taken up broadly in the US, reclaiming this holiday which originated in the US. Women across the country, in large and small towns and large cities, took up the call. Schools were forced to close across the US due to teacher involvement in the strike.

This followed on the heels of the massive demonstrations lead by Native people around the Dakota Access Pipeline. And this was preceded by and alongside of Black Lives Matters protests around police killings. Also a vibrant worker’s fight for $15 an hour has been ongoing. There has been long standing movements for racial justice, worker’s rights and environmental justice. Movement Building: Class, Race & Gender

Example after example shows something really dramatic is going on. This astounding ground swell is an unstoppable natural force, the kind which makes history! The Women’s Marches have inspired millions of people from all walks of life.

We need to fight for political power! We need the kind of movement and organization where we can run progressive candidates for office and win. We need to set our sights on the 2018 and 2020 elections. This political front needs to be consolidated on a platform of firm opposition to racism and in support of the rights of women. This Progressive Majority must unite not only progressives but also many center forces.

To build and sustain a broad progressive majority, we need to consolidate a strong core made up of the most active and dedicated members of our movements. We need to build organizations on various levels and fronts. That core can be built and consolidated around community and education. Developing personal relationships is important, one-on-one relationships and social gatherings are important. Women march against Trump in Fairbanks, Alaska.

Building our unity through education is also essential. We need educational work where all are teachers and all are students. We need to learn about past and present movements in the US and the world. We also need to learn from each other’s individual issues and struggles both past and present. It is important to sum up our work collectively. What went well and what didn’t and why. What did we learn for use in the fu-
tation? Everyone's input is important. This will help us develop a blueprint for future campaigns and actions.

**Education and Multi-Racial Unity**

Multi-racial unity is an essential to all we do. To build that unity we need to talk about white supremacy, its effect in our county and in the world. This is something we were not taught in school. Showing Up For Racial Justice (SURJ), an organization that focuses on talking to white people about racism, and calls on people to do the following: “draw people in, not push them out.” This should be the manner in which we work.

An important example in good educational work is a class in Beaver County, Pennsylvania led by CCDS leader Carl Davidson on black history (books studied are: The Half has Never Been Told, and Slavery by Another Name.) This study group, sponsored by Beaver County Peace Links, has been meeting at the local library. Carl said, “Our goal in the study of these two books is to show how slavery and the extermination of Native peoples played the central role in the growth and shaping of the American economy and society, up to the present day. It defines much of who we are as a people, and thus helps us with an outlook for changing the future.” The study guide for this can be found on the Online University of the Left, see the Slideshow for studying “The Half has Never Been Told.” The Online University of the Left is a valuable resource for planning education. (http://ouleft.org/). There are many wonderful materials there, including films, books, video lectures, and study guides.

Mildred Williamson suggested a path forward to greater advances, but also raised some difficult issues. “We need a multi-faceted, comprehensive, and sophisticated movement that takes us beyond what has taken place in the past. Climate change and the struggle against racism were not on the agenda the way they need to be. These issues must be addressed in a fundamental way, and that includes dealing with the division in the labor movement with the building trades unions seeking to build the Dakota pipeline in opposition to the rights of the Sioux and other Native people’s at Standing Rock and the welfare of the environment.”

Much has been made of “identity politics” since the election. On this Bill Fletcher states, in reviewing Linda Alcoff’s book, The Future of Whiteness, “In the aftermath of the November 2016 elections, a rather strange argument emerged that suggested that the Democratic Party had spent too much time focused on so-called identity politics rather than on so-called class politics.”
“Alcoff’s work challenges this approach. So-called identity politics should rather be understood as social justice politics that takes on various forms of oppression that accompany and reinforce capitalism. Those who believe that social justice politics, in this case, anti-racist politics, should take a back seat to some sort of pure alleged class politics miss the entire history of the USA and, therefore, are doomed to elaborate a set of views and strategies that cannot succeed in taking on actually existing capitalism. Alcoff’s analysis helps to highlight precisely this problem and for this we owe her, irrespective of differences on what might be a speculative matter.”


We certainly have our challenges ahead. We also need to make use of every opportunity we have. I think we all have been encouraged by the mass out-pouring of people against the present administration. It is our task to build that into a strong sustainable movement. There is much we can learn and take inspiration from, for example from the small rural working-class region of Beaver County, Pennsylvania, 30 miles north-west of Pittsburgh.

**Organizing in Trump Country**

Beaver County is in the heart of Trump country. Tina Shannon of Moral Mondays Pennsylvania explained how they organized a very successful progressive political rally in January in Beaver County. It was built around the call for Peace, Jobs and Justice. This multi-racial group worked hard to make the rally a success. Tina Shannon explained that “the Moral Monday Coalition grew from our ongoing Human Rights Banquet, organized by the labor movement and Black community. As we tried to generate support and attendance, we knew it would take the essential coalition of labor, the civil rights community and progressives.” It was around these principles and patient and persistent work that this coalition came together. “We first had William Lucy, Black trade union leader and one of the architects of the Divestiture Campaign from South Africa movement as our guest speaker. Then we had Representative John Conyers, author of the national single-payer Medicare for All bill in Congress.”

“In the beginning, we looked around,” Shannon said, “and realized that Rev. Barber had formed exactly the kind of coalition we were aiming to build here. About 8 of us traveled to North Carolina from Beaver County for the Moral Mondays March there and came back convinced we needed to bring Rev. Barber to Beaver County. We had him speak to around 500 attendees at our Human Rights Banquet and it qualitatively changed what we were doing. That’s how we consciously became the Moral Mondays coalition. To see what Rev. Barber has been able to do in North Carolina reinforced the rightness of what we were trying to do. I think
that progressives and leftists throughout the country should be taking a close look at what Rev. Barber is doing and take lessons from it. What he’s doing is every bit as important as what Bernie Sanders was able to do.” Tina Shannon is also on the CCDS National Coordinating Committee and was active in the Bernie Sanders campaign for president.

Patty Margaret, RN, SEIU retiree, (foreground) was among the 750,000 women and their supporters who demonstrated at the Los Angeles Women’s March.

The work in Beaver County can be a blueprint for all of us. “We know that if we are going to make any progress in the next 4 years,” Shannon said, “we have to stand together and help with each other’s issues. In the spirit of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs, Peace & Justice, please join together. Over the years, we have made many gains. There are many more we need to make. The only way forward is if we stand together. Please stand with us for Social Security, Medicare, $15 minimum wage, affordable college tuition, workers’ rights, healthcare accessibility, marriage equality, well-funded public schools, women’s rights, religious freedom, Black Lives Matter.”

Thanks to Paul Krehbiel, Anne Lewis, Pat Fry, Linda Martin Alcoff, Rafael Pizzaro, Meta Van Sickle, Jim Skillman, Mildred Williamson, Marian Gordon, Delia Chavez, Courtney Childs, Sharon Stewart, Harry Targ, Carl Davidson, Bill Fletcher, and Tina Shannon for contributing to this article.

Janet Tucker is the former president of Kentuckians for the Commonwealth and long-time community organizer. She is the National Coordinator and National Co-Chair of Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism and lives and works near Pittsburgh.
Forward Together, Not One Step Back

Angela Davis addresses 500,000 at the Women’s March in Washington, D.C.

By Angela Davis

Editor’s note: This is the speech that Angela Davis gave at the Women’s March in Washington, DC on January 21, 2017.

At a challenging moment in our history, let us remind ourselves that we the hundreds of thousands, the millions of women, trans-people, men and youth who are here at the Women’s March, we represent the powerful forces of change that are determined to prevent the dying cultures of racism, hetero-patriarchy from rising again.

We recognize that we are collective agents of history and that history cannot be deleted like web pages. We know that we gather this afternoon on indigenous land and we follow the lead of the first peoples who despite massive genocidal violence have never relinquished the struggle for land, water, culture, their people. We especially salute today the Standing Rock Sioux.
The freedom struggles of black people that have shaped the very nature of this country's history cannot be deleted with the sweep of a hand. We cannot be made to forget that black lives do matter. This is a country anchored in slavery and colonialism, which means for better or for worse the very history of the United States is a history of immigration and enslavement. Spreading xenophobia, hurling accusations of murder and rape and building walls will not erase history.

No human being is "illegal".

The struggle to save the planet, to stop climate change, to guarantee the accessibility of water from the lands of the Standing Rock Sioux, to Flint, Michigan, to the West Bank and Gaza. The struggle to save our flora and fauna, to save the air-this is ground zero of the struggle for social justice.

This is a women's march and this women's march represents the promise of feminism as against the pernicious powers of state violence. And inclusive and intersectional feminism that calls upon all of us to join the resistance to racism, to Islamophobia, to anti-Semitism, to misogyny, to capitalist exploitation.

Yes, we salute the fight for 15. We dedicate ourselves to collective resistance. Resistance to the billionaire mortgage profiteers and gentrifiers. Resistance to the health care privateers.

Resistance to the attacks on Muslims and on immigrants. Resistance to attacks on disabled people. Resistance to state violence perpetrated by the police and through the prison industrial complex. Resistance to institutional and intimate gender violence, especially against transwomen of color.

Women's rights are human rights all over the planet and that is why we say freedom and justice for Palestine. We celebrate the impending release of Chelsea Manning. And Oscar López Rivera. But we also say free Leonard Peltier. Free Mumia Abu-Jamal. Free Assata Shakur.

Over the next months and years we will be called upon to intensify our demands for social justice to become more militant in our defense of vulnerable populations. Those who still defend the supremacy of white male hetero-patriarchy had better watch out.

The next 1,459 days of the Trump administration will be 1,459 days of resistance: Resistance on the ground, resistance in the classrooms, resistance on the job, resistance in our art and in our music.
This is just the beginning and in the words of the inimitable Ella Baker, 'We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes. Thank you.

*Angela Davis is a distinguished professor, scholar, author, political activist, and a leader in the movement to reform the criminal justice system. She is a founder of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism, and serves on the CCDS National Advisory Board.*
My Body, Her Body

By Dr. Renee Y. Carter

It was cold when I got out of bed to drive over to the meeting place. I was wondering why I decided to give up one of my few Saturdays off to attend another march for reproductive rights. I marched in both the historic Million Women March in 1997 and the Planned Parenthood March for Women's Lives in 2004. Why am I doing this again? Why is it so important?

Then I sullenly remembered that the Electoral College had just handed over the country to a party that has vowed to destroy Planned Parenthood and deny a woman her right to control her own body. These thoughts energized me as I grabbed my coffee mug, put on my Planned Parenthood t-shirt and drove over to meet the buses taking us to DC. Since I was late making the final decision to attend the march, I ended up sitting in the smallest of three buses making the trip from Richmond, Virginia. We gathered on a cold, rainy morning. I was struck by how many men and women there were in their 20's and 30's. And, of that group, many were just hopeful there would be room for them on the bus since they did not register in advance. Ultimately, everyone was able to board and we started on our trip.

You could feel the energy, especially when the hosts started to pass around Planned Parenthood swag-- a pink knit hat or scarf. I wanted a scarf but they ran out of those in a matter of minutes. The bus was filled with conversation. It was weird since the bus rides to marches I attended in the past were always infused with the songs and words of inspiration that galvanized activists and compelled them to press on.

This ride was quite different-- it felt just like a regular Chinatown bus ride to the capital. Everyone on that bus had one single mission on that day and it was to show their support for women and reproductive choice. I buddied up with my medical assistant Imani. This was her first march. We arrived at the metro station and met a column of people trailing outside the building. I felt my energy level starting to build as I watched the
sea of old, young, black, white, Latina, women, men, mothers with strollers, fathers with their daughters hanging on to them as to not get swept up in the crowd- wearing pink pussy cat hats and carrying a myriad of handmade signs. The metro car itself was filled to capacity with a microcosm of people resembling a sea of pink. It was truly awesome!!! The view took my breath away.

When we arrived on the National Mall, our contribution to the hundreds of thousands pink pussy hats and people, who were already in place and ready to get down to business, made us feel like we were merging into an organized mass of resistance. There was a plethora of activity. Organizers were using this moment in history to gather signatures for various causes; hundreds of signs were floating through the air as the medium for their owners to communicate with others in the sisterhood; "Trust Women," "Not my President," "Hands off my..." (the word being symbolized by a well-drawn image), "Don't Let Politics Trump Medicine," and so on.

I was amazed when I saw that the Virginia contingency-- my state-- was well represented. Imani and I sprinted to get closer to the stage where the event performers and speakers addressed the crowd. Unfortunately, after we climbed up a dirt mound we were only able to glimpse the corner of the jumbo screen, but we could hear Cecile Richards as she reminded the crowd that reproductive healthcare is comprehensive healthcare and its access must be guaranteed. She also offered a promise, "The doors of Planned Parenthood will always be open!" I know the official count of the march was around 750,000, however, I believe we definitely hit the 1 million mark (the organizers did later admit that the number of attendees, who had not registered with an official group, were not represented in the official count).

Speaking to and pumping up the crowd went on for almost 2 hours. And the crowd was starting to get antsy. They even broke out chanting, "We want to march!" Imani and I wanted to get a good spot in the line so we left our standing area and started to walk towards Independence Avenue. After some further instruction and redirection, the crowd started lining up. We didn't even fight against the flow of the crowd anymore, we allowed ourselves to be carried along.

As I mentioned before, I've attended several marches, but what struck me about this march was the diversity of the people in attendance. This is definitely what "democracy looks like." I was also inspired by the number of men who attended. They appeared to make up almost half of the crowd. I saw 2 Latino men with 2 white women standing on a mound of dirt, chanting above the crowd, "My body, her body." This show of support and empathy for fellow human beings, after just having been ex-
posed to the video-taped antics of our misogynistic newly elected President, was empowering.

We continued to stand in a lineup for almost an hour. Some broke off to do their own marching elsewhere. Finally, an alert came across my phone that the march was cancelled! Initially, I thought this must be some sort of trick to mislead the marchers and destroy this monumental moment. Then the marshals for the march informed us that it was true—the "official" march had been suspended! The organizers had only secured a permit for 250,000 and we were not allowed to march since we were well beyond that number! Plan B—break up into small groups and march to the back of the White House, was quickly put into action. Imani and I happily conformed to the new plan so that we could heroically say that we didn't give up.

We started our walk back to Metro Center, but we soon learned that nobody was giving up. The march wasn't over! People then took to marching through the DC streets chanting anew with their signs held high as a show of renewed energy and solidarity. I actually thought that they had shut down 12th and 11th streets. Traffic was definitely not moving. But the drivers were patient and actually showed their support by sticking thumbs up and honking horns. Yeah, I have attended many marches before, but this march will hold a special place in my heart because its overall message was clearly pro-peace, pro-woman, pro-child, pro-environment, pro-immigration rights, and pro-democracy.

Renee Carter, MD, MPH, FACP is a general internist who serves as the Medical Director for Primary Care at the Virginia League for Planned Parenthood in Richmond, Virginia. She has long been an advocate of reproductive rights for women and men.
Mexican-American Women Blast Trump at Los Angeles Women's March

By Delia Chavez

Editor's Note: There are 4.7 million Latinos living in Los Angeles County, a county of 9.8 million people. The vast majority of Latino's are Mexican Americans. Tens of thousands of Mexican American women and men, and other Latinos, participated in the Women's March in Los Angeles, January 21, 2017 to protest Trump's misogynist, racist and anti-immigrant practices and policies. An estimated 750,000 people marched in Los Angeles. Here are the views of one of those Mexican-American participants.

I have not always been a protestors, or have had a voice to speak my mind. Growing up I was a young woman who was too scared to speak up. This is why the Women's March in Los Angeles was so important. Trump and the Republican Party have been so disrespectful to all women, and so many other groups. They want to take us back 50 years, to the days of coat hanger abortions and woman being seen and not heard. We all must fight that.

As a woman, as a woman of color, and a daughter of once undocumented immigrants it was vital for me and my friends to have been there. We need to show the country that women of color are opposed to Trump and his policies, and not only his treatment of women, but immigrants, Mexican Americans, Muslim Americans, African Americans and other groups that he's targeted. The march was very empowering for all Americans, especially woman who at this point in history are having to take back our rights, our voice and our power.

My parents came from Mexico. They both taught me the meaning of hard work. My father came to the United States with a sixth grade education and the hope that he could do better for himself and his family. He worked many jobs, milking cows, doing farm labor, and printing shirts.
But the job that saved our family was as a union bus driver. He was a member of the United Transportation Union and was employed by the Rapid Transit District in Los Angeles. Unfortunately, he died young, at 45, but my mother was able to continue raising all four of us, with the help of his union. I learned then how vital unions are to America and to building a middle class. My mother was just 35 when my father died, and I know I got my tenacity from her.

I’ve experienced discrimination as a Mexicana my whole life. I am darker skinned than my mother and siblings. They are blonde haired with green eyes. So whenever we crossed the border back into the US, I was singled out and asked a multitude of questions to assure that I was an American citizen. They thought my mother was trying to bring a Mexican immigrant into the country. So, I was raised fearing the "migra," knowing they could split up my family. Latina's celebrate women and revolution at Los Angeles Women's March to protest Trump's election.

Family is so crucial in my community. I come from a very Catholic family, like a lot of Mexican immigrants. We were raised to focus our attention on just our family and home, and not get involved in outside issues. The colonized mind tells us that we cannot get involved for fear of being discovered as undocumented. We live in the shadows fearing being caught.

Many people who have come from Mexico one generation back can remember the power of the PRI, and how they stayed in power for decades. It made people feel that nothing could be done. So in this country we stay behind, working every day to make our families stronger. This younger generation, that has been raised here, doesn’t have that experience from Mexico so they are more open to change. That's why it's important to reach out to Mexicans and Mexican Americans of many generations and bring them into these movements. We have to show them it’s possible to make our voices heard and work together with many communities for shared goals.

**Speaking Against Injustice**

Whenever I see discrimination I speak out and voice my opinion. I was not raised to have a voice, but I found my voice to empower my community because I was so scared of being deported or separated from my family. That internal fear helped me become fearless. When I was 18 years old I went to my first big march in Los Angeles to protest against Proposition 187 in 1994, which said that the state should deny all public services to people in the US without papers.

Children were the intended target as well, Proposition 187 wanted to bar undocumented students from receiving a public education. That
first march was a real turning point for me. I can remember my 5'1" Mexican mother who attended the march with me, in heels (because in her generation all woman wore heels to everything), and having to buy chanclas (sandals) to finish the march. That day she also found her voice and that was so beautiful to me. She has voted in every presidential election since because she knows her duty to this country.

Delia Chavez, third from left

Blaming Us

Two years later, I also marched and opposed Proposition 209, which called for ending affirmative action programs. Affirmative action programs came about because of the history of discrimination against people of color, to try to make up for past injustices. I was again taught through this racist proposition that my community along with other communities of color were being wrongly blamed for all the ills of society.

I can remember sitting in class, hearing this white girl say something so ignorant, that I could not help but shut her down. The lack of empathy from this woman my age was disgusting. We were speaking about illegal immigration and the Cuban policy of 'wet foot, dry foot" because this young boy was in the news, Elian Gonzalez, and how tragically his mother died trying to come to America from Cuba. The story is complicated but the fact that this "American Dream" is so powerful and this young student in my class was so ignorant to the human suffering and despair of others.

This taught me that ignorance is a choice, and that we have to be vigilant and educate those around us. That is our civic duty. The truth is that we all know politics is important. We also know there is ignorance in all communities. While the number of Latino's who voted for Trump is small - some polls say 29% based on controversial exit polls and Latino polling organizations say 18%, some of these Latino votes for Trump were in reaction against Obama's terrible deportation of over 2 million Latinos. We need to hold our politicians accountable, to stop the scapegoating. We can no longer just be the "sleeping giant". We need to voice our opinion and empower our communities.
The Beauty of My Culture

As a woman I have many roles. I am a mother, daughter, partner and business woman. They all carry certain burdens but they all need me to be strong. The strength I find every day in my business helps fuel me. My business gives me a greater purpose. I use my talents and the talents of my partner, Vulfrano Gutierrez, to show this country the beauty of my culture, heritage and history.

I have been to several places in the United States and have heard people tell us to get out, we are not Americans. I have felt that hatred first-hand. We all know this country would not be this great country without the contributions of Mexicans and other communities of color. We must all speak out against this mentality of ignorance, and this mentality of white power. The current administration seeks to oppress and blame Mexicans for all the wrong in our country and wants to build a wall to protect us all. We have seen it before; history finds a way to repeat itself because those in power are too ignorant to seek equality and prosperity for all.

Trump seeks to frighten my community to deport us all. He is too ignorant to see the large contributions we make. We are the ones who grow and gather the crops, care for your children and work in the shadows. We are not alone. There are other groups that also feel the ignorant wrath of
the current administration, Muslims, Arabs, and African Americans. We need to stand together before we are further divided as a nation.

Throughout my life discrimination has been prevalent, but I have learned to rise above it and speak to it. I had to be strong to raise my son into a strong man. I wanted him to be proud of me, our culture, and his gender. The Woman's March helped me strengthen my resolve, and to feel solidarity with other Americans. We all came out to voice our opinions, and while they vary we must all find hope and strength in each other in these troubling times.

Delia Chavez is the owner of Cultura Y Mas, an independently owned social justice clothing company in Los Angeles. The company was founded in 1990 by her partner Vulfrano Guitierrez. Cultura Y Mas is a company that prides itself on "educating all communities about the history, beauty and rich culture of our Mexican roots." Vulfrano and Delia work together through Cultura Y Mas to strengthen their voice in the Mexican/Chicano community. For more information, and to see or order clothing, go to: www.cymla.com, or email: cymlaca@yahoo.com.
International Women's Day

By Alexandra Kollontai

A Militant Celebration

Women's Day or Working Women's Day is a day of international solidarity, and a day for reviewing the strength and organization of proletarian women.

But this is not a special day for women alone. The 8th of March is a historic and memorable day for the workers and peasants, for all the Russian workers and for the workers of the whole world. In 1917, on this day, the great February revolution broke out. It was the working women of Petersburg who began this revolution; it was they who first decided to raise the banner of opposition to the Tsar and his associates. And so, working women's day is a double celebration for us.

But if this is a general holiday for all the proletariat, why do we call it "Women's Day"? Why then do we hold special celebrations and meetings aimed above all at the women workers and the peasant women? Doesn't this jeopardize the unity and solidarity of the working class? To answer these questions, we have to look back and see how Women's Day came about and for what purpose it was organized.

How and Why was Women's Day Organized?

Not very long ago, in fact about ten years ago (1910), the question of women's equality, and the question of whether women could take part in government alongside men was being hotly debated. The working class in all capitalist countries struggled for the rights of working women: the bourgeoisie did not want to accept these rights. It was not in the interest
of the bourgeoisie to strengthen the vote of the working class in parliament; and in every country they hindered the passing of laws that gave the right to working women.

Socialists in North America insisted upon their demands for the vote with particular persistence. On the 28th of February, 1909, the women socialists of the U.S.A. organized huge demonstrations and meetings all over the country demanding political rights for working women. This was the first "Woman's Day". The initiative on organizing a woman's day thus belongs to the working women of America.

In 1910, at the Second International Conference of Working Women, Clara Zetkin brought forward the question of organizing an International Working Women's Day. The conference decided that every year, in every country, they should celebrate on the same day a "Women's Day" under the slogan "The vote for women will unite our strength in the struggle for socialism".

During these years, the question of making parliament more democratic, i.e., of widening the franchise and extending the vote to women, was a vital issue. Even before the First World War, the workers had the right to vote in all bourgeois countries except Russia. Only women, along with the insane, remained without these rights. Yet, at the same time, the harsh reality of capitalism demanded the participation of women in the country's economy. Every year there was an increase in the number of women who had to work in the factories and workshops, or as servants and charwomen. Women worked alongside men and the wealth of the country was created by their hands. But women remained without the vote.

But in the last years before the war the rise in prices forced even the most peaceful housewife to take an interest in questions of politics and to protest loudly against the bourgeoisie's economy of plunder. "Housewives uprisings" became increasingly frequent, flaring up at different times in Austria, England, France and Germany.

The working women understood that it wasn't enough to break up the stalls at the market or threaten the odd merchant: They understood that such action doesn't bring down the cost of living. You have to change the politics of the government. And to achieve this, the working class has to see that the franchise is widened.

It was decided to have a Woman's Day in every country as a form of struggle in getting working women to vote. This day was to be a day of international solidarity in the fight for common objectives and a day for reviewing the organized strength of working women under the banner of socialism.
The First International Women's Day

The decision taken at the Second International Congress of Socialist Women was not left on paper. It was decided to hold the first International Women's Day on the 19th of March, 1911. This date was not chosen at random. Our German comrades picked the day because of its historic importance for the German proletariat. On the 19th of March in the year of the 1848 revolution, the Prussian king recognized for the first time the strength of the armed people and gave way before the threat of a proletarian uprising. Among the many promises he made, which he later failed to keep, was the introduction of votes for women.

After January 11, efforts were made in Germany and Austria to prepare for Women's Day. They made known the plans for a demonstration both by word of mouth and in the press. During the week before Women's Day two journals appeared: The Vote for Women in Germany and Women's Day in Austria. The various articles devoted to Women's Day - "Women and Parliament," "The Working Women and Municipal Affairs," "What Has the Housewife got to do with Politics?" etc. - analyzed thoroughly the question of the equality of women in the government and in society. All the articles emphasized the same point: that it was absolutely necessary to make parliament more democratic by extending the franchise to women.

The first International Women's Day took place in 1911. Its success succeeded all expectation. Germany and Austria on Working Women's Day was one seething, trembling sea of women. Meetings were organized everywhere - in the small towns and even in the villages halls were packed so full that they had to ask male workers to give up their places for the women. This was certainly the first show of militancy by the working woman. Men stayed at home with their children for a change, and their wives, the captive housewives, went to meetings. During the largest street demonstrations, in which 30,000 were taking part, the police decided to remove the demonstrators' banners: the women workers made a stand. In the scuffle that followed, bloodshed was averted only with the help of the socialist deputies in Parliament.

In 1913 International Women's Day was transferred to the 8th of March. This day has remained the working women's day of militancy.

Is Women's Day Necessary?

Women's Day in America and Europe had amazing results. It's true that not a single bourgeois parliament thought of making concessions to the workers or of responding to the women's demands. For at that time, the bourgeoisie was not threatened by a socialist revolution. But Women's
Day did achieve something. It turned out above all to be an excellent method of agitation among the less political of our proletarian sisters. They could not help but turn their attention to the meetings, demonstrations, posters, pamphlets and newspapers that were devoted to Women's Day. Even the politically backward working woman thought to herself: "This is our day, the festival for working women," and she hurried to the meetings and demonstrations. After each Working Women's Day, more women joined the socialist parties and the trade unions grew. Organizations improved and political consciousness developed.

Women's Day served yet another function; it strengthened the international solidarity of the workers. The parties in different countries usually exchange speakers for this occasion: German comrades go to England, English comrades go to Holland, etc. The international cohesion of the working class has become strong and firm and this means that the fighting strength of the proletariat as a whole has grown.

These are the results of working women's day of militancy. The day of working women's militancy helps increase the consciousness and organization of proletarian women. And this means that its contribution is essential to the success of those fighting for a better future for the working class.

**Women Workers Day In Russia**

The Russia working woman first took part in "Working Women's Day" in 1913. This was a time of reaction when Tsarism held the workers and peasants in its vise-like a grip. There could be no thought of celebrating "Working Women's Day" by open demonstrations. But the organized working women were able to mark their international day. Both the legal newspapers of the working class - the Bolshevik Pravda and the Menshevik Looch - carried articles about the International Women's Day: they carried special articles, portraits of some of those taking part in the working women's movement and greetings from comrades such as Bebel and Zetkin. In those bleak years meetings were forbidden. But in Petrograd, at the Kalashaikovsky Exchange, those women workers who belonged to the Party organized a public forum on "The Woman Question." Entrance was five kopecks. This was an illegal meeting but the hall was absolutely packed. Members of the Party spoke. But this animated "closed" meeting had hardly finished when the police, alarmed at such proceedings, intervened and arrested many of the speakers.

It was of great significance for the workers of the world that the women of Russia, who lived under Tsarist repression, should join in and somehow manage to acknowledge with actions International Women's Day. This was a welcome sign that Russia was waking up and the Tsarist pris-
ons and gallows were powerless to kill the workers' spirit of struggle and protest. In 1914, "Women Workers Day" in Russia was better organized. Both the workers' newspapers concerned themselves with the celebration. Our comrades put a lot of effort into the preparation of "Women Workers Day." Because of police intervention, they didn't manage to organize a demonstration. Those involved in the planning of "Women Workers Day" found themselves in the Tsarist prisons, and many were later sent to the cold north. For the slogan "for the working women's vote" had naturally become in Russia an open call for the overthrow of Tsarist autocracy.

Women Workers Day During the Imperialist War

The First World War broke out. The working class in every country was covered with the blood of war. In 1915 and 1916 "Working Women's Day" abroad was a feeble affair - left wing socialist women who shared the views of the Russian Bolshevik Party tried to turn March 8th into a demonstration of working women against the war. But those socialist party traitors in Germany and other countries would not allow the socialist women to organize gatherings; and the socialist women were refused passports to go to neutral countries where the working women wanted to hold International meetings and show that in spite of the desire of the bourgeoisie, the spirit of International solidarity lived on.

In 1915, it was only in Norway that they managed to organize an international demonstration on Women's Day; representatives from Russia and neutral countries attended. There could be no thought of organizing a Women's Day in Russia, for here the power of Tsarism and the military machine was unbridled.

Women Lead Bread Strike in Petrograd

Then came the great, great year of 1917. Hunger, cold and trials of war broke the patience of the women workers and the peasant women of Russia. In 1917, on the 8th of March (23rd of February), on Working Women's Day, they came out boldly in the streets of Petrograd. The women - some were workers, some were wives of soldiers - demanded "Bread for our children" and "The return of our husbands from the trenches." At this decisive time the protests of the working women posed such a threat that even the Tsarist security forces did not dare take the usual measures against the rebels but looked on in confusion at the stormy sea of the people's anger.

Working Women's Day has become memorable in history, and set the world on fire. The 1917 February revolution marks its beginning from this day.
"Working Women's Day" was first organized ten years ago in the campaign for the political equality of women and the struggle for socialism. This aim has been achieved by the working class women in Russia. In the soviet republic the working women and peasants don't need to fight for the franchise and for civil rights. They have already won these rights. The Russian workers and the peasant women are equal citizens - in their hands is a powerful weapon to make the struggle for a better life easier - the right to vote, to take part in the Soviets and in all collective organizations.

Our Call to Battle

But rights alone are not enough. We have to learn to make use of them. The right to vote is a weapon which we have to learn to master for our own benefit, and for the good of the workers' republic. In the two years of Soviet Power, life itself has not been absolutely changed. We are only in the process of struggling for communism and we are surrounded by the world we have inherited from the dark and repressive past. The shackles of the family, of housework, of prostitution still weigh heavily on the working woman. Working women and peasant women can only rid themselves of this situation and achieve equality in life itself, and not just in law, if they put all their energies into making Russia a truly communist society.

And to quicken this coming, we have first to put right Russia's shattered economy. We must consider the solving of our two most immediate tasks - the creation of a well-organized and politically conscious labor force and the re-establishment of transport. If our army of labor works
well we shall soon have steam engines once more; the railways will begin to function. This means that the working men and women will get the bread and firewood they desperately need. Getting transport back to normal will speed up the victory of communism. And with the victory of communism will come the complete and fundamental equality of women. This is why the message of "Working Women's Day" must this year be: "Working women, peasant women, mothers, wives and sisters, all efforts to helping the workers and comrades in overcoming the chaos of the railways and re-establishing transport. Everyone in the struggle for bread and firewood and raw materials."

Last year the slogan of the Day of Women Workers was: "All to the victory of the Red Front." Now we call working women to rally their strength on a new bloodless front - the labor front! The Red Army defeated the external enemy because it was organized, disciplined and ready for self-sacrifice. With organization, hard work, self-discipline and self-sacrifice, the workers' republic will overcome the internal foe - the dislocation of transport and the economy, hunger, cold and disease. "Everyone to the victory on the bloodless labor front! Everyone to this victory!"

**The New Tasks of Working Women's Day**

The October revolution gave women equality with men as far as civil rights are concerned. The women of the Russian proletariat, who were not so long ago the most unfortunate and oppressed, are now in the Soviet Republic able to show with pride to comrades in other countries the path to political equality through the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and soviet power.

The situation is very different in the capitalist countries where women are still overworked and underprivileged. In these countries the voice of the working woman is weak and lifeless. It is true that in various countries - in Norway, Australia, Finland and in some of the States of North America - women had won civil rights even before the war.

In Germany, after the Kaiser had been thrown out and a bourgeois republic established, headed by the "compromisers," thirty-six women entered parliament - but not a single communist! In 1919, in England, a woman was for the first time elected a Member of Parliament. But who was she? A "lady." That means a landowner, an aristocrat.

In France, too, the question has been coming up lately of extending the franchise to women. But what use are these rights to working women in the framework of bourgeois parliaments? While the power is in the hands of the capitalists and property owners, no political rights will save the working woman from the traditional position of slavery in the home.
and society. The French bourgeoisie are ready to throw another sop to the working class, in the face of growing Bolshevik ideas amongst the proletariat: they are prepared to give women the vote.

**Mr. Bourgeois, Sir - It Is Too Late!**

After the experience of the Russian October revolution, it is clear to every working woman in France, in England and in other countries that only the dictatorship of the working class, only the power of the soviets can guarantee complete and absolute equality, the ultimate victory of communism will tear down the century-old chains of repression and lack of rights. If the task of "International Working Women's Day" was earlier in the face of the supremacy of the bourgeois parliaments to fight for the right of women to vote, the working class now has a new task: to organize working women around the fighting slogans of the Third International. Instead of taking part in the working of the bourgeois parliament, listen to the call from Russia - "Working women of all countries! Organize a united proletarian front in the struggle against those who are plundering the world! Down with the parliamentarism of the bourgeoisie! We welcome soviet power! Away with inequalities suffer by the working men and women! We will fight with the workers for the triumph of world communism!"

This call was first heard amidst the trials of a new order, in the battles of civil war it will be heard by and it will strike a chord in the hearts of working women of other countries. The working woman will listen and believe this call to be right. Until recently they thought that if they managed to send a few representatives to parliament their lives would be easier and the oppression of capitalism more bearable. Now they know otherwise. Only the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of soviet power will save them from the world of suffering, humiliations and inequality that makes the life of the working woman in the capitalist countries so hard. The "Working Woman's Day" turns from a day of struggle for the franchise into an international day of struggle for the full and absolute liberation of women, which means a struggle for the victory of the soviets and for communism!

*Down with the world of Property and the Power of Capital! Away with Inequality, Lack of Rights and the Oppression of Women - The Legacy of the Bourgeois World! Forward To the International Unity of Working Women and Male Workers in the Struggle for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat - The Proletariat of Both Sexes!*

*Please refer to this link for a full list of references https://www.marxists.org/archive/kollonta/1920/womens-day.htm*
Alexandra Kollontai was a Russian Communist revolutionary during the 1917 Russian Revolution. After the Bolshevik's came to power she became the People's Commissar for Social Welfare in the new Soviet socialist government, and was a founder of the Women's Department to work for the equality and well-being of women. She was the most prominent woman in the Soviet government and the Soviet Communist Party. She later became the Soviet Ambassador to Norway, where she negotiated the sale of Russian timber to Norway while strengthening friendship between the two countries. Kollontai wrote freely about sexuality and politics, including unconventional ideas. She was awarded the Order of the Red Banner of Labor among other awards, and was the subject of the 1994 TV film, "A Wave of Passion: The Life of Alexandra Kollontai."
The Progressive Majority
Hits the Streets

The Progressive Majority vs. Trump

By Paul Krehbiel

The massive movement to stop real estate mogul and billionaire Donald Trump and his racist, right-wing corporate agenda and achieve a caring and fair society for all, is embraced by a majority of the people.

The size and breadth of this movement has stunned Trump supporters and opponents alike. Furthermore, this resistance movement reflects the sentiments of the majority of the people, and is snowballing in size, applying increasing political pressure, and winning some important victories.

Here are some of them:

• Stopping the "repeal and replace" Obamacare effort in Congress in March 2017, defeating the inhumane Trumpcare, and increasing support for an improved Medicare for All health care system--as we go to press the Republican majority is planning another repeal effort;

• Putting a spotlight on and taking public and legal action to stop acts of racism and reduce mass incarceration of young Blacks and Latinos, despite Trump’s call for more "law and order"--a code phrase that gives tacit support to police officers who have brutalized, imprisoned, and murdered people of color, and especially young Black and Latino men with impunity;
• Conducting airport rallies and other protests that stalled Trump's ban on Muslim travel to the US, and extending a hand of protection to Muslim families;

• Stopping the appointment of anti-labor corporate CEO Andrew Puzder as Labor Department secretary, gaining growing support for increasing the minimum wage to $15 an hour and a union, and creating a massive rebuilding and a green jobs program that would give millions of workers good paying jobs;

• Creating sanctuary unions, neighborhoods, community groups, cities and states to help protect our immigrant co-workers, friends and family from being split up and deported;

• Campaigning successfully by labor, environmentalists, and pro-democracy groups for years to stop the detrimental so-called trade deals, the TPP, NAFTA and others;

• Blocking an effort to sell 3.3 million acres of public land, and expanding the climate justice movement to protect the earth and to stop climate change;

• Launching mass protests of over 100,000 people at over 200 tax collection locations and other sites on Tax Day, April 15, which stalled Trump's draconian tax cuts for the rich plan;

• Supporting the growing number of companies that have cut ties and business support for the Trump network while offering assistance to some targeted communities;

• Increasing opposition to Trump by the mass media, growing numbers of elected officials from both parties, the courts, scholars in leading educational institutions, leaders of mass organizations representing workers, people of color, women, the LGBTQ community; and,

• Increasing mass demonstrations by millions of people at the grassroots level in meetings, demonstrations, rallies, conferences, Town Hall meetings, and other activities that have blocked many of Trump's anti-people initiatives, while strengthening the forces to create a society that meets the needs of all rather than continuing to line the pockets of billionaires.

Trump has won some victories too, which is causing much suffering to many people. But we must keep focused on our agenda and building the Resistance. Victory is within our grasp.

When we reach a critical mass the Trump Administration can be stopped, and with a good organizing and progressive political program, a pro-
gressive pro-people government can be brought to power. This idea of a critical mass is important. It has been studied by a number of political scientists.

One of those is assistant professor Erica Chenoweth at the University of Denver. She calculates that when 3.5% of the population of a country is involved in active and sustained activity in opposition to their government, that government can be stopped or even removed from power. In the United States that would be 11 million people. While this is an important component in figuring out how to bring about social change, equally important is the kind of change we want. We don’t want to change one corporate-dominated government for another, but one that clearly moves us in a more progressive, humane direction.

The political content of the mass marches and movements to protest against Trump is moving in the right direction, both in size and general political message. Over 3 million women and men participated in 650 Women's Marches across the country on January 21, primarily for women's rights, but also in support of many other progressive causes.

Millions more are involved in other activities working for positive social changes in all areas of society, including working to protect and improve workers' rights and well-being, fighting to defend and improve public education and health care, the environment, public safety, housing, jobs, racial justice, criminal justice, women's and LGBTQ rights, the rights of youth, students, seniors, and people with disabilities, democratic rights, peace and international solidarity, and more. All of these social justice movements challenge Trump's political agenda.

Social justice activists are marching in demonstrations and picket-lines, attending rallies, participating in Town Hall meetings with elected officials that have forced some to back away from Trump's agenda, making phone calls or writing letters or petitions to Congresspersons, and producing art and theater and film and social media that expresses outrage at the Trump abuses and highlights progressive politics.

Congressional Staffers Produce Anti-Trump Document

Resistance to Trump is coming from all sectors of society, from those inside the corridors of power to the everyday person on the street. A group of former congressional staffers published a guide to help the resistance. It is titled, Indivisible: A Practical Guide for Resisting the Trump Agenda, and is based on tactics that the right-wing Tea Party used against Democratic Congressional Representatives to challenge them and disrupt their Town Hall meetings when Barack Obama was
president. Progressives and those on the left have used this strategy for decades in the past to pressure elected officials, so the ideas are not new. But the Tea Party made a national concerted effort to disrupt the Obama agenda, and the tactics learned from that campaign helped enrich this strategy for today.

*Indivisible* went live as a google document not long after Trump's election. The former progressive congressional staffers studied the specific tactics that the Tea Party used to beat back much of Obama's agenda and evaluated what worked and why, and what didn't. They culled these lessons and presented them as a guide for the anti-Trump resistance. Scores of Town Hall meetings across the country have generated intense opposition to Trump's agenda and his Congressional Republican supporters in their home districts, many achieving great success. See an account of one of those Town Hall meetings in New York, written by Pat Fry for this issue of *Dialogue & Initiative*. Download INDIVISIBLE from the internet, and contact the authors at: IndivisibleAgainstTrump@gmail.com.

The resistance to Trump also includes those who do not cooperate with his draconian policies. For example, people from all walks of life are unhelpful to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials by not knowing anything about people who may not have papers when they are asked by ICE. Others are organizing groups of friends and family members to write letters to the editor of their local newspapers opposing Trump's agenda. Others are conducting strikes, boycotts and many other creative forms of protest and non-compliance. If these types of activities are carried out by 11 million people on a sustained basis the result will be a marked increase in the difficulty of the Trump Administration in carrying out its anti-people program, rendering the Trump Administration ineffective. We are close to that number now, according to some scholars.

Ira Chernus, Professor Emeritus at the University of Colorado at Boulder, estimates that 8-10 million people are currently involved in activities to stop the abuses of Trumpism. With more continued work and organizing and educating, we can reach 11 million, but it must be sustained resistance activity, at least to 2018 and then 2020. A major goal must be to make it as difficult as possible for Trump and Pence to get any traction on all of their anti-people policies, make Trump and Pence a one term administration or remove them from office through impeachment, and defeat his supporters now in office in 2018, and elect a progressive majority of pro-people fighters to Congress and state legislatures that year, and to the presidency in 2020. It will take organizing and talking to a lot of people.
A Progressive Majority Emerges

These conversations are taking place now, one-to-one, through a variety of organizations, and through a variety of media - social media, newsletters, journals, radio, TV, cable TV, videos, art, films, and other media. Most of the articles in this issue of Dialogue and Initiative reflect the thinking and activity of the 8-10 million social change activists that Chernus talks about. Beyond this core of 8-10 million progressive activists is a much larger sector of society which supports most or all of these social change movements. This larger group is generally not involved in sustained activity but they talk to their friends and family and they vote. This group constitutes a progressive majority of the entire public, and they provide a broad base of support for the progressive political activists. The way to achieve social change is for the progressive activists to organize and energize the progressive majority.

A progressive majority has existed in certain time periods in our history, but it has to be focused on a common objective to be effective. The last coming together of this progressive majority took place in the aftermath of the Great Recession of 2008. The Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism (CCDS) identified and analyzed various groups during the 2000's when George Bush was president (after also losing the popular vote to Al Gore, but winning the Electoral College vote). Massive public opposition to Bush's election and program, along with growing opposition to the neo-liberal cutbacks of social programs, and opposition to his Administration's brutal and unprovoked war against Iraq, turned the majority of our people against him and the Republican Party, and in a progressive political direction. But Bush's election, and Republican majorities in Congress and in a growing number of state governments led the public to believe that the majority of the people were politically conservative and supportive of Bush's program. CCDS did not.

CCDS pointed out that Democrat Al Gore won the popular vote, not George Bush. We pointed to voter suppression and other Republican tricks to skew elections in their favor. We pointed out that polls repeatedly showed that the majority of the people opposed Bush's major policies. After the terrible war on Iraq, the destructive neoliberal policies, and the crushing Great Recession of 2008-2009, the people rejected all of this and elected Barack Obama - the first African American president in our history. Voters elected Obama because they believed he would reject the Republican policies and replace them with something more progressive. While Obama's record was mixed, in part because of the relentless opposition from the Republican Party, all of these events changed the consciousness of millions of people, especially the young generation, onto a more solidly progressive political path. Based on this
reality, CCDS further developed this idea about the progressive majority into a political strategy to defeat the political right, to win progressive programs to serve the people, and ultimately to weaken capitalism and rebuild on its failures a more humane and fair system, socialism. CCDS believes that we must have a majority movement and a conscious plan to build and strengthen this progressive majority to succeed.

CCDS wrote in 2009, "Building and sustaining a progressive majority is the principle strategy to defeat reaction and place the country firmly on the road to progress. Our nation's history and traditions of successful struggle for progress shows that the working class, allied with broader forces, is the agent of change." We explained its tasks: "The multi-racial working class in alliance with trade unions, women, African Americans, Latinos and other people of color, youth, and progressive sectors of business now form the promising components of the progressive majority. The profound challenges before the working class and its allies is to organize this majority into a coherent force capable of responding to the various issues it confronts." This is even more true today. The Progressive Majority in 2017 and the opposition to Trumpism and the capitalist elite's control of society are part of the same movement.

**Danger on the Right**

While the Trump forces constitute a minority in number, they are a significant force and constitute a serious danger. Many people fear a sharper turn to the right by Trump, toward a more right-wing, authoritarian and even fascistic society. They believe that if that happens it will be much more difficult to resist. But there are historical examples of mass people's movements in a variety of countries that have defeated right-wing and even fascist movements. Chenoweth documents a number of them in her book, Why Civil Resistance Works. The key to success is creating a political and social atmosphere where huge numbers of people resist in a sustained way, reflecting the sentiments of the majority. The article in this Dialogue & Initiative about Norway in the early 1940's during the rise of fascism there and across Europe shows how such an anti-fascist movement was built in Norway and succeeded. The recent studies done by Chenoweth and Chernus corroborated the major features of the successful resistance movement in Norway 70 years earlier.

The Trump forces set out from day one to intensify their grip on the government, and to reject the will of the majority. They have won some important victories: the successful placement of right-wing and corporate leaders in high level government posts, such as recent Exxon/Mobil chief Rex Tillerson as Secretary of State, right-wing corporate heiress and enemy of public education Betsy DeVos as head of the Department of Education, right-wing Judge Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court, white
supremacist nationalist Steve Bannon as chief Trump advisor, to name only four of many others. This team will wage a relentless war to lower the living standards of millions of people and curtail their democratic rights. The goal is to further strengthen the wealth and power of billionaires and their corporations and the monopoly capitalist system they control. The stakes are high.

Timothy Snyder, a Yale historian who studies fascist movements, says people must keep building this resistance because Trumpism could move toward fascism quickly. "Nazi Germany took about a year," he told Steve Rosenfeld at Alternet. "Hungary took about two and a half years. Poland got rid of the top-level judiciary within a year. It's a rough historical guess, but the point is because there is an outside limit, you therefore have to act now." Snyder isn't saying that we are headed for fascism for sure, but the warning signs are concerning. Putting right-wing nationalists and the corporate elite in positions of power, putting facts aside for "alternative facts" according to Trump advisor Kellyanne Conway - which are actually lies, mistruths, and myths that are told as the official reality, and the politics of "emergency" or "disaster capitalism," as author Naomi Klein writes, are all tell-tale signs of a right-wing dictatorial and fascist agenda.

Snyder says these are classic markers and tactics used by the right since the Reichstag fire (when the German capitol building was burned down - recent evidence points to the Nazi's, and it was falsely blamed on Communists), cited as an excuse to suspend democratic rights and impose a dictatorship. "We are mentally being prepared for it (an emergency) by all the talk about terrorism and the Muslim ban," says Snyder. "Very often when leaders repeat things over and over they are preparing you for when that meme actually emerges in reality." Fascism is created in steps, sometimes moving slowly and other times quickly. But nothing is pre-ordained today, and we have powerful tools at our disposal to block a further turn to the right in our country.

**Trump: Illegitimate President**

One of those tools is to constantly remind people that Trump is an illegitimate president. When more people internalize that fact, Trump loses legitimacy and power, and more people accept resistance as just. Democrat Hillary Clinton won 65.8 million votes to Republican Trump's 62.9 million, a majority of 2.9 million votes over Trump. In any other democratic country Clinton would be president, and Trump would not. Trump was not the democratic choice of voters, and he never had majority support. Two months into his presidency, Trump had the lowest approval rating of any modern president at only 37%. All of this weakens Trump's
authority and makes it easier for many millions of people to oppose him and his policies. If resistance activities are carried out by focusing on the major issues that have broad popular support, a climate is created where millions more people, previously unsure about expressing their voice, will feel safe to join the movement. A robust, diverse and broad-based movement can erode the power base of Trumpism. This movement will also win over some Trump supporters, especially working-class voters who have real grievances but who have been lead onto the dead end road of Trumpism. The key is to find ways to help separate these people from their wrong ideas.

It's important that more people know and others reminded that Trump assumed the presidency undemocratically, only because of the undemocratic Electoral College. This institution was established in the early years of the republic to give slave states extra electors in the Electoral College by counting non-voting slaves as three-fifths of a voting person. The undemocratic nature of the Electoral College extends to all sectors of the country, giving smaller states more Electoral College votes per capita than larger states. Trump won by very narrow margins in several key winner-take-all mid-west former Democratic industrial states and took the presidency. This is the second time in 16 years that the highest vote getter lost the presidency due to the Electoral College (Al Gore got 50.9 million votes for president in 2000, to George Bush's 50.4 million, but Bush won the Electoral College vote and took the presidency.) This second subversion of democracy has resulted in a growing movement to abolish the Electoral College, a campaign we should heartily endorse and support.

**Voter Suppression**

We must join and help build the campaigns to stop voter suppression because it also undermines democracy, the will of the majority. Republican leaders, corporate Democrats, and the corporate financiers of both parties have many tools to subvert the will of the majority. Voter suppression is an important tactic, and it is being expanded. Republicans lead the field and use various methods to erect barriers for high propensity Democratic voters to not be able to vote. That is the only way Republican candidates have gotten elected in a number of states. (*The Great Suppression, The Politics of Voter Suppression, and Stealing Democracy*, are just three among a number of books that detail many of these strategies.) One tactic is for Republicans who control state government election bodies to reduce the number of polling places in heavily Democratic Districts. Districts with high percentages of African American voters are especially targeted because African Americans vote against Republican candidates by the highest percentages of any voter group, usually over
90%. Other Democratic districts with large numbers of Latino and Asian voters are also targeted as they are voting in higher numbers against Republican candidates. The result is that the voting lines are so long that many people don't get in line because they can’t wait hours to vote, and many have to leave the slow moving line before they get a chance to vote. In sharp contrast, the voting locations are so numerous in Republican majority districts that Republican voter turnout is easy and high, with no time waiting in lines.

Black voters wait in line for hours to cast their vote in heavily Democratic Districts as part of Republican voter suppression campaign. Other GOP tactics include setting inconvenient voting times and places for targeted communities, demanding official photo identification cards which a significant number of older African Americans and other people of color do not have, influencing voters through an avalanche of expensive political ads for conservative candidates that the wealthy and corporations write and pay for, promoting conservative ideas through a variety of institutions that they control to soften up voters for their candidates at election time. Another tactic is to erect legal, political, and economic hurdles for Democratic and third party candidates. One of the most insidious tactics is Republican gerrymandering to favor their candidates.

Republican gerrymandering of election districts in 2010 set the stage for the creation of artificial Republican majorities in local, state and Congressional elections. Republican dominated states drew district voting lines to give two Republican candidates a slight majority in two districts, while a third district combined a huge Democratic majority that elected just one Democratic representative. (Google "Republican Redmap Strategy" to read about how Republicans did it, in their own words. They drew election district lines in 2010 that are in place until 2020.)

We must help put the spotlight on Republican-led voter suppression tactics in districts that are solidly working-class and comprised of a majority of people of color. Many of these areas are traditional Democratic strongholds. Voter suppression tactics denied many thousands of votes for Clinton and tilted the scales to Trump.

Corporate Democrats and Republicans use similar tactics to try to deny progressives in their own parties from getting support. Witness the treatment of Bernie Sanders in the Democratic Party primaries when Democratic Party leaders contacted news reporters to get the media to push stories that would hurt Bernie, such as asking the press in Kentucky and West Virginia, where there are few Jewish residents, to emphasize that Bernie was Jewish. In the first half of the campaign, the mass media gave very little coverage or no coverage to Bernie's campaign when he
was trying to introduce himself to a national audience despite drawing the largest crowds at his campaign rallies. The corporate politicos also work to keep third parties from getting on the ballot with onerous ballot requirements to meet, pressure the major media to ignore their campaigns, and freeze them out of debates so they can’t get their message out to the public.

Republican leaders in the former industrial mid-west states that went for Trump used all of these voter suppression and voter manipulation tactics. The Electoral College results of these anti-democratic tactics present the false narrative that the majority of the American people are conservative to right-wing. That is not true. The majority of the American people, based upon numerous polls, embrace a progressive, compassionate and people-supporting political agenda which includes support for quality public education, good and affordable health care and housing, full employment at good wages, racial and gender equality, and that majority is growing.

Right-wing Attacks Increase

While a progressive majority exists, despite the machinations of the voting rules and election system abuses, it is alarming that over 62 million people voted for one of the most openly racist, misogynist, xenophobic, homophobic, and right-wing presidents in generations, maybe ever. The percentage that were motivated primarily by Trump's racist and reactionary views as their primary motivator is hard to calculate, as these voters, like most voters, were motivated by a variety of issues. Also, polling is problematic because many people who hold racist views won't admit them to a pollster but will vote their true beliefs behind a voting booth curtain. The appeal to racism and other reactionary ideas clearly was a big factor for many Trump voters, and that is cause for great concern and the need for sustained intervention.

Furthermore, and more alarming, is that Trump's campaign and election has fueled and encouraged the racist and reactionary elements to commit hate crimes in our society. The Southern Poverty Law Center, based in Atlanta, issued an "Intelligence Report" in the spring of 2017 headlined, "The Year in Hate and Extremism." The sub-headline reads: "The campaign language of the man who would become president sparks hate violence, bullying, before and after election." The article begins by telling about a homeless Mexican immigrant who was beaten brutally by two Trump supporters in Boston in August 2015, two months after Trump's speech about Mexicans being rapists and killers. The man who was attacked, Guillermo Rodriguez, had been sleeping outside a rail station and was left with broken ribs, fingers, and other injuries. The attackers high fived each other. After they were arrested, one, 38-year old
Scott Leader, said, "Donald Trump was right. All these illegals need to be deported." Trump's response to the beating was that "people who are following me are very passionate," as if it was okay.

The article continues: "In the immediate aftermath of the election, the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) noticed a dramatic jump in hate violence around the country." The SPLC wrote that after Trump called for a ban on Muslims coming into the country and suggested a Muslim registry, the FBI reported that anti-Muslim hate crimes rose dramatically, by "67% in 2015, while other hate crimes rose only slightly." The report went on to say that incidents were reported in nearly every state. The largest portion (323 incidents) occurred on school grounds, from kindergarten through college. "The incidents were dominated by anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim incidents (together, 329), but included ones that were anti-black (187), anti-Semitic (100), anti-LGBT (95), anti-women (40), and white nationalist (32)...the vast majority appeared to be celebrating his (Trump's) election victory."

The problem with reporting hate crimes is that it is up to local authorities. So, not surprisingly, states with a long and terrible history of racism and physical racist attacks, like Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and other deep southern states report little or no hate crimes. So the real number is much larger.

**Trump's Strategy: Divide with Racism**

Trump's strategy was and is to divide and conquer. His chief tactic was to praise and appeal to whites and promise them the moon, while attacking people of color, falsely blaming them for all the real or imagined problems that Trump rails against. His goal is to divide people by racism and white supremacy. Divide and conquer is a time-tested strategy. Trump feeds the long-standing narrative promoted by the ruling elite that one group gets ahead if they suppress another group, especially a group that is blamed for the hardships of the first group. Trump energized 58% of white voters to vote for him based on fear, promises of jobs, and racism. Many whites rejected Trump and his message. But, since white voters made up 70% of the total number of voters, the white Trump voters provided enough of a margin to eke out his Electoral College victory.

Political pundits wrote that, specifically, white workers put Trump in the White House. It wasn't primarily white workers; whites with higher incomes and especially those from the business class voted in higher percentages for Trump than did white workers. The media largely ignored that fact, or down-played such reports with short articles buried in the back of the newspaper. The effect of focusing the primary blame onto
white workers resulted in stigmatizing them in the eyes of those who opposed Trump. This created a widening division between white workers as a group, and other sectors of society. Trump and the Republicans want to divide the country by race, and since whites are in the majority (but only by a small margin), appealing to them and suppressing people of color and historic Democratic voters is the Republican strategy to win elections.

One problem for the Republicans is the unions. Even though unions have a majority of white members (but only by a slim margin -- unions are the most multi-racial organizations in the US), unions overwhelmingly endorse Democratic candidates. Furthermore, a majority of union members, including white union members, vote against Republicans and for Democrats. Yet, Republicans, like Trump, point to those conservative union leaders who vote Republican and are overwhelmingly white, and project them as the face of unions. Witness Trump's highly publicized meeting with the leaders of some construction unions, who are hoping to get jobs for their members from Trump's promises to re-build the country's infrastructure. The Republican goal is to divide the labor movement internally, and to divide the progressive majority in labor from its natural allies by falsely painting the entire labor movement as white and conservative.

To further muddy the waters, some journalists and analysts wrote that the primary motivation for many whites and white workers to vote for Trump was because of Trump's racism and misogyny. Others wrote that many voted for Trump because they believed or hoped his promises to bring back jobs and boost the economy would come true. There is truth to both claims. In sharp contrast, people of color voted heavily against Trump, due both to his open racism and backward policies. Whatever the number of whites who voted for Trump primarily because of his racism and other reactionary ideas, is unknown, but it is totally unacceptable and must be addressed as a top priority for all fair-minded people. But economic hardship was an important factor for many people, and that must be addressed as well.

But we must be clear that while economic hardship has affected all workers, it has affected a higher percentage of African Americans, Latinos, Asians and other people of color than whites, and too often much deeper for people of color. Add in the additional burdens of racism in other areas of life and the plight of people of color deserves the greatest attention and remediation. Further, the hardships levied on people of color have gone on since the early days of Europeans settling in North America, with the first crimes against the Native peoples, and then the Africans that were forced into slavery. These crimes, and the exploita-
tion, oppression, brutalization and murder has marked their lives from one generation to the next for centuries.

The solution is not to pit one group against another group, as Trump tries to do, but to find the path to unity. The unity of all workers will create a force stronger than any one group going it alone, and ultimately will be strong enough to win. But to achieve that unity, we white workers have to talk to and win over our fellow white workers to stand for justice for all workers, to unite with all people of color and all nationalities on the basis of equality and opposition to the ruling-class ideology of white supremacy. This is the path to win fair treatment and improvements for all workers and all people. The cause of the injustices faced by workers of color and white workers is the corporate class of capitalists that benefits from divide and conquer tactics and the exploitation of all workers.

Divide and conquer is a time-tested strategy of the capitalist elite. "I can hire one-half of the working-class to kill the other half," said corporate financier and railroad baron, Jay Gould in 1886. We see the modern version of this credo with Trump consciously trying to pit white workers against workers of color. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels pre-empted Gould in 1848 in the Communist Manifesto, "Workers of the world unite," and Marx wrote in Capital in 1885, "Labor in the white skin can never free itself as long as labor in the black skin is branded." Marx and Engels lit our path nearly 170 years ago and their guidance is as relevant today as it was then. Our job is to unite workers of all races, nationalities, here and internationally. That is our strength.

**Working-Class Unity and Political Action**

The working-class is made up of all who work for a wage or salary, and includes workers in production or services, union and non-union workers alike. The working-class also includes unemployed job seekers, those in precarious employment, temporary and part-time workers, those who are involved with Worker's Centers and other labor organizations, and people who may not be working, but who have a working-class background, including working-class students or single parents, and others unable to work, including those receiving public assistance. The working-class comprises 200 million people, comprising 65% - 75% or higher of the total population. While wage and salary levels vary from very low to well-paid within various sections of the working class, the key criteria to create unity is that that workers do not own the major means of production. Most workers are subject to the whims of business owners, especially large business owners, both on the job and in society. The organized core of the working-class are those workers who are in unions, institutions organized to restrain the arbitrary power of business owners and win improvements for union members, and the
entire working class and the larger society. The union movement has played the leading role in winning advances for the working-class for generations. While the struggle of progressives and leftists both inside and outside unions against internal union racism has been long and arduous, gains have been made. Much more needs to be done.

But unions have been under a withering assault from employers, like Trump, for the past 40 years. We have lost millions of our members and jobs due to off-shoring jobs, automation, and an intense union-busting drive by employers and their political representatives. Union members made up 35% of the work force after WWII in the 1950’s. Today that number is 10.5% of all wage and salary workers. Unions have a combined membership of 15 million workers, and when organized we still play a large role in promoting progressive programs and causes, and stopping harmful ones. Millennials are a large sector of the working-class, with 24 million voting in 2016. Some 55% of the working-class voted for Clinton, (and a much higher percent among workers of color), and 37% for Trump. Of the millennials who voted in the Democratic primaries, 80% voted for independent socialist Bernie Sanders. The large number of millennials, who are overwhelmingly working-class, voted for Sanders and gave more votes to than millennial votes for Clinton and Trump combined. These youth are our future, in the labor movement, and in society.

The political strategy of progressives and activists in the labor movement must be to engage in an "inside/outside" strategy, working to pressure the politicians in both major political parties to support progressive policies and oppose harmful ones. We also have to run our own progressive labor candidates for political office, both inside and outside the Democratic Party. Bernie Sanders inspired the formation of Our Revolution and that organization is doing that work today. The impact of Bernie Sanders' campaign for president moved both Clinton and the Democratic Party program in a more progressive direction. Yet, many Democratic Party leaders are still resistant. The struggle continues.

The Real World

How do these themes play out in the real world? How do we fight racism and build multi-racial unity? How do we build a progressive independent political force strong enough to defeat regressive policies and win real improvements? And how do these struggles provide lessons for fighting Trumpism today?

When I was a labor representative with SEIU Local 660 (now 721) in Los Angeles County in the late 1990’s and 2000’s, we organized a campaign for safe staffing in county hospitals to help over-worked Registered
Nurses and patients. A safe staffing law had been passed in 1999 and after hearings and studies, was to be implemented in January 2004, with one licensed nurse to six patients. Yet, LA County hospitals were assigning 10, 15 and more patients to one nurse and were totally unprepared to implement the new nurse-to-patient law in 2004, so we designed a campaign to force compliance with the law. We organized the campaign through our active work-site Stewards Council. The RN's would lead the campaign, but they would be supported by workers in other job classifications. We won after a tense 3 week struggle. Management was angry.

Knowing that the RN's were strong and organized, management retaliated against groups they thought were weaker, the Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVNs), and the Nursing Attendants (NAs). Management issued an order that would assign more weekend work to both of those classifications of workers. The RN's were a multi-racial group, with a significant number of RN's, while the LVN's and Nursing Attendants were overwhelmingly Black, Latino, and Asian. Also, all three classifications were overwhelmingly held by women, so this struggle involved issues on four levels. It was a fight for working-class and union rights to have a humane workload. But in order to achieve that we needed to have multi-racial solidarity and unity, solidarity among different classifications, and we had to fight for the empowerment and rights of women. Management hoped that long standing differences between RN's and the other two classifications of nurses, fueled by decades of management divide and conquer tactics, would keep them divided and weak. Our goal was to build a powerful united movement of all nurses and other classifications that would force management to revert to the less onerous weekend work schedule for LVNs and NAs.

If we did not respond to management's retaliation against the LVN's and NA's with the same intensity that we gave to the RN staffing campaign, it would perpetuate a terrible injustice against the LVNs and NAs, and weaken their bargaining unit, the RN's bargaining unit and the union as a whole. It would also be a capitulation to racism. The Stewards Council, comprised of workers from all classifications, organized a campaign that was led by the LVN's and Nursing Attendants, but supported by the RN's and other classifications of workers. Strong Latino RN's played an important role in this campaign. We also needed to get support from white RN leaders who could talk to the other white RN's. We were flexible. Whoever could talk to their co-workers and get them on board was welcome. We talked to the RN's about how important this campaign was and how important their role was in it. We talked about how the LVN's and NA's supported the RN's, and how the RN's had to support the LVN's and NA's now. We circulated a petition in support of the LVNs and NAs demand to go back to their old weekend work schedule and we put out leaflets to all the workers in the hospital about this injustice and our
campaign to correct it.

We had conducted a series of stewards training classes before this issue came up, and those classes included the necessity of opposing job classification divisions, and opposing all forms of racism and discrimination, and building multi-racial unity, among other subjects. With this background we were able to get some solid white RN's to step forward and play an important role helping to mobilize RN's to aid the LVN's and NA's. We also got the men workers to support the women workers. When management saw the support for the LVNs and NAs from other classifications of workers, including the RN's, they dropped their proposed change and reverted back to the old week-end work schedule. The campaign was won. This was huge. Since both campaigns were big victories, we reaped many other benefits. We demonstrated in real life how multi-racial unity and solidarity between the women and men, was the key to victory for all groups of workers. We also demonstrated that the empowerment, unity and leadership of women was a force to be reckoned with. This campaign strengthened the union among all classifications and all races, and especially among the women workers. Each group now saw all other groups as the union sisters and brothers that they were, and they carried this experience into future campaigns. This kind of unity building can help us create a stronger political movement against the abuses of the Trump administration.

**Stewards Councils Maximize Power**

Building Stewards Councils are very helpful in accomplishing many goals and moving to workers to a higher level of worker power. Stewards Councils represent a step up from mobilizing Stewards and members to take action as a problem arises, because a Stewards Council institutionalizes the gains and experiences of past campaigns into a permanent, ongoing action-oriented organization. Rather than just responding to actions that management takes, a good functioning Stewards Council can take proactive steps to ward off problems before they occur, combat them more effectively when they do arise, and make improvements beyond what was negotiated in the contract. All this helps empower workers, preparing them, step by step, to increasingly run their workplaces. These are all essential ingredients in building the skill sets and experience to ultimately build socialism.

Good Stewards Councils are essential. They must be democratic, member-driven, with a focus on resolving the problems that rank-and-file workers bring forward. When workers feel empowered, that they are the union, and that they have gained some control over their lives, they will fight to defend their union when it is under attack. That was our ex-
experience in Los Angeles County facilities where we had strong steward councils. (I wrote a series of six articles on building Stewards Councils for *Labor Notes* based on our experiences in Los Angeles County workplaces, and will make them available to workers wanting to learn more about them. Contact me at paulkrehbiel@earthlink.net.)

Other unions have also benefited from strong member-driven Stewards Councils, under even worse conditions. United Electrical workers union (UE), works to build member-driven Stewards Councils or other member-empowered internal structures in their local unions at the worksite. The result is that even in states that have anti-union right-to-work laws to try to deprive the union of dues money, UE has successfully protected its members, unions and dues collections and maintained the viability of its unions. One such right-to-work state where UE is successfully functioning is North Carolina. This is an important lesson for all unions today when the Trump juggernaut is ramping up plans to extend right-to-work laws across the country.

**Bernie Sanders and Labor for Bernie**

The Bernie Sanders campaign for president broke new ground in advancing a strong pro-worker program. There hasn't been a major presidential candidate ever that has put forward such a strong working-class platform, calling for a massive infrastructure building program that would put millions of people to work in good paying jobs, $15 minimum wage for low paid workers, opposing job-killing free trade deals like the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP), free college tuition (paid for by assessing a small tax on all Wall Street transactions), an improved Medicare for All single-payer health care system based on need and not ability to pay, equal pay for women, a special jobs program for Black and Latino youth, an end to racial discrimination at work and in society, and more. A high point for working people was the formation of the union-initiated Labor for Bernie, which had 50,000 online supporters. Over 100 local unions and seven national unions with 1 million members endorsed Bernie for president.

There were problems though. The leaders of most unions backed Hillary Clinton, even though leaders at various levels would admit, usually off the record, that Bernie was the best candidate. The unions with progressive national leaders held referendums among their members, and in all seven unions the majority of the members voted to endorse Bernie, and those unions gave Bernie their endorsement. They were the Communications Workers of America, American Postal Workers Union, Amalgamated Transit Union, National Nurses United, International Longshore and Warehouse Union, United Electrical Workers, and the National Union of Healthcare Workers.

The top leaders of other unions made the endorsement of Clinton with-
out a membership vote, prompting protests in many unions among the rank-and-file members. While the reasons vary, one common theme for endorsing Clinton was because she was the choice of the top leaders of the Democratic Party and many union leaders didn't want to go against the wishes of these party leaders. Many of those Democratic Party leaders have ties to and are members of the corporate elite, and they strongly opposed Bernie Sanders' pro-worker and anti-corporate, anti-billionaire program.

Some union leaders were conflicted. But most top union leaders saw the Democratic Party as their only tie to a major political force that might come to their aid, despite repeated letdowns. Since Clinton was the choice of the corporate Democrats, and since Clinton was expected to win the Democratic nomination and the presidency, the majority of unions backed Clinton. History did not turn out that way.

Labor for Bernie argued that supporting Bernie early in the primaries could bring him the Democratic Party nomination, and the presidency, since polls mid-way through the primaries showed Bernie beating Trump by a larger margin than Clinton. If Bernie didn't get the nomination, we explained, there was still plenty of time to get behind Clinton, even with her weaknesses, and to oppose the much worse Trump. Unfortunately few top union leaders supported this strategy.

But many rank-and-file workers from many unions did support Bernie, even though their unions didn't. Today, many of those unions are fighting to protect their standards and unions, and resist Trump's harmful policies. Trump has started rounding up suspected immigrants and promised to deport 2-3 million immigrants. Most are workers, and a significant number are union members. Unions must protect their members, all of them. Some unions and workers' centers are becoming sanctuary unions, and some are part of a larger movement to get their cities to become sanctuary cities, where city officials will not cooperate with immigration authorities and will provide safe places for immigrants. This is a good start, but more needs to be done.

As we go to press in April 2017, the California State Senate passed SB 54 declaring California a sanctuary state. A leading union in this struggle is United Services Workers West, a large local union within the 2 million-member Service Employees International Union. The union initiated Caravan Against Fear, that has united the national Day Labor Organizing Network, Global Exchange, and 200 other organizations to resist Trump's immigration policies and give support to immigrants. The coalition recently held street protests against Los Angeles County Sheriff McDonnell's opposition to SB 54.

**Labor Fights Back**
The National Union of Healthcare Workers declared after a series of union-wide meetings to be a "sanctuary union." It pledged to do everything in its power to "ensure the safety and security of all members of our community regardless of their immigration status." That means the union "will not voluntarily cooperate with federal agents to enforce immigration laws." Unite-Here Local 2850 in the San Francisco area has language in its contract that allows immigrant workers to take leaves of absence to deal with immigration issues, and protects their jobs and seniority.

The Restaurant Opportunities Center United is preparing fact sheets for immigrants, especially in the food industry, explaining their rights, and what employers should and should not do. United Teachers of Los Angeles is part of a coalition that is pushing to strengthen the city's role as a sanctuary city. Specifically, UTLA has worked with school administrators to not have teachers track students' immigration status, and to prohibit Immigration officials from entering schools without permission from the superintendent. Trump has retaliated against California by saying he will withhold federal money earmarked for California, even though California sends more money to Washington DC than it receives. So far, this retaliation has been blocked by protests and a brave judge's ruling.

Federal government workers have been meeting to map plans to resist Trump's regressive policies that they will be charged to carry out. Within the first two weeks of Trump's assumption of the presidency, "federal workers are in regular consultation with recently departed Obama-era political appointees about what they can do to push back against the new president's initiatives," wrote the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. "Some federal employees have set up social media accounts to anonymously leak word of changes that Trump appointees are trying to make." While recounting the "blizzard of outrage," from massive street demonstrations and rallies, at airports after Trump's Muslim travel ban, through phone calls to Congress that have shut down phone lines, and social media invective, and more, the Post-Gazette wrote that the federal workers opposition is less visible but "potentially more troublesome to the administration."

Nicole Cantello, vice president of the American Federation of Government Employees, Local 704, that represents workers at the Environmental Protection Agency in Chicago, told the Post-Gazette that unions and other groups representing scientists at the EPA are setting up a fundraising arm to "defend federal scientists we anticipate will be disciplined for speaking out or for defending scientific facts," particularly about climate change. Trump has appointed climate change denier Scott Pruitt to head the EPA, ordered that no government workers talk about or even use the words "climate change," and proposed to slash the budgets of
the Department of Health and Human Services by $12.6 billion, and the National Institute of Health by $25.9 billion. Tens of thousands of scientists protested Trump's anti-science policies on April 22, Earth Day, at over 600 demonstrations across the USA and the world. The Post-Gazette continued about federal workers, "The resistance is so early, so widespread and so deeply felt that it has officials worrying about paralysis and overt refusals by workers to do their jobs." A group of EPA workers set up two popular twitter feeds, @altUSEPA and @ActualEPAFacts. Both accounts have more than 200,000 followers and call themselves part of "the Resistance."

**Historical Precedents: Teamsters and Longshore Workers**

This opposition to Trump is larger and deeper than many past protest movements. Workers in nearly every field and industry can and are participating. I remember in the 1980's when I was working in a big freight terminal as a Teamster and talking to co-workers about reversing the de-regulation of the trucking industry to protect jobs, turning the mushrooming number of part-time casual jobs into permanent jobs, strengthening the rank-and-file through groups like Teamsters for a Democratic Union, and building the Coors Boycott because of the company's union-busting, and racist and right-wing practices. We talked about the power we had on the job to stop abuses by our employer, or oppose anti-labor, anti-people policies of then President Reagan. Shop floor organizing or strikes in certain industries can greatly impact the economy. Imagine a national strike by truck drivers and dock workers?

We did not have a strike then, but this work by many Teamsters across the country laid the ground work for the election of the strong reform Teamster leader, Ron Carey, to the presidency of the union in 1991. Carey and the movement around him waged a successful national strike of 185,000 Teamsters at UPS to force UPS to turn thousands of part-time jobs into full time jobs. The power that workers have, depending upon where we work in the economy, is incredible if it is informed, organized and focused.

The International Longshore and Warehouse Workers (ILWU) union is a case in point. Longshore workers waged a strike up and down the entire west coast in 1934 to establish their union and a union controlled hiring hall to end discrimination in hiring and job assignments. Other strikes took place to protect jobs, pay, benefits, and working conditions since then. One of the largest and longest took place in 1971 lasting 134 days. The ILWU is a progressive union and is concerned about supporting social justice causes. It has conducted strikes at major west coast ports during the US wars in Vietnam and later against Iraq to protest against
those wars, bogging down the delivery of bombs and bullets. The ILWU also conducted strikes against the apartheid regime in South Africa in the 1980's, especially to build the boycott of South African goods. These strikes, and lockouts -- there was a big lockout in 2012, put tremendous economic pressure on employers who lost a billion dollars a day when ships remain unloaded and containers stacked up in ports.

Combine this labor action with soldiers who refuse to fight in unjust wars, and this working-class power is multiplied many times. A good example is the widespread refusal of soldiers to fight in Vietnam in the later years of the war. This paralyzed the US neo-colonial war effort to try to subjugate Vietnam for US corporate plunder, and helped end the war. Many of these predominately working-class soldiers became progressives and radicals and joined Vietnam Veterans Against the War when they returned home. Many got active in their unions as social justice union activists. These are all powerful lessons to help us resist the current pro-corporate, right-wing Trump agenda.

Labor is active today. The AFL-CIO and many individual unions led the campaign to force Trump nominee, anti-labor fast food CEO Andrew Puzder, to withdraw his name for Secretary of Labor. That was one of the few successful campaigns to stop Trump's nominees from assuming top level government positions. Unions have been in the forefront of the campaign to stop job-killing trade agreements, such as the TPP, NAFTA and others. The overwhelming majority of unions did not back Trump because they knew that he would be bad for labor and our country. And unions have been in the forefront of protecting workers who have been attacked by employers who seek to slash wages, benefits and destroy unions. (See articles in this Dialogue & Initiative about union campaigns for workers' rights: UAW workers at Honeywell in South Bend, Indiana who defeated a union-busting lockout, and a union organizing campaign with UAW workers at Nissan in Canton, Mississippi that is picking up steam, just two union struggles of many across the country, and union organizing strategies from South Carolina AFL-CIO President Emeritus Donna DeWitt.)

Steelworkers, Factory Workers, and Jobs

Richard Trumka, president of the AFL-CIO, put the blame on both the Republican and Democratic parties for neglecting the needs of workers, workers of color and whites, for decades. A wave of factory closings beginning in the late 1970's threw millions of workers onto the street. Many of those workers have had a hard time finding comparable jobs, or any job at all. Shrinking incomes and increasing poverty have plagued these workers for decades - the same problems that have plagued workers of color for much longer.
When Trump started his campaign for president he appealed to white workers, telling them he felt their pain and would bring their jobs back, and made racist comments about Latino's, immigrants, Muslims, Blacks and women. Trump reached out specifically to workers and unions in construction, for example, by promising construction workers and their unions many new jobs rebuilding the country's infrastructure, the roads, bridges, public buildings--one of Bernie's campaign issues. Trump also appealed to steelworkers and their union by saying he would use US-made steel for oil and gas pipelines and other projects. Not mentioned was that the steel would be used for the Dakota Access pipeline that is going across Sioux lands at Standing Rock, the site of massive protests in support of Native peoples, water, and the environment. Also little mentioned, or conveniently forgotten, was that Trump has bought steel from overseas for years for his hotels, and has not used steel made by US steelworkers. But Trump's promise of more steel production and steel jobs led many steelworkers and other workers, both union and non-union, to vote for Trump. For unemployed or underemployed workers in those industries and others, Trump looks like a hero.

Trump has also curried favor with police and border patrol union members saying he needs more agents to secure our borders and protect our country from terrorists. He doesn't mention that more terrorist attacks have been waged by native-born white Americans. All of this scapegoating of others, especially immigrants and people of color, and appealing to the economic struggle of white workers has had an effect.

Independent journalist, Alexander Zaitchik, interviewed Trump supporters at Trump rallies and wrote their stories in his book, The Gilded Rage: A Wild Ride Through Donald Trump's America. Zaitchik commented in an interview with KPFK radio in Los Angeles after the election that he was surprised that he heard relatively little racism among those Trump supporters that he talked to. It was stories of economic plight, one after the other where ever he went. Economic plight can lead people to scapegoat others, and that happened in this election campaign, but Zaitchik saw little of it.

An out-of-work machinist from Wisconsin, one of the former industrial Democratic states that helped Trump squeak out a victory in that state in 2016, said: "People here are working at Walmart. They are working at McDonald's. You go downtown, where all the manufacturing plants used to be, and its parking lots. How many are unemployed? How many took early retirement, and still got screwed out of their benefits?" A former Trump supporter who works in transportation in another former industrial state, Pennsylvania, that went for Trump by a small margin, said, "In 1981, when I was in college, I worked as a casual dockworker, a Teamster job. I made $13.13 an hour...I went back there five years ago...
they started me at $10.50." A power line contractor in California who supported Trump, said: "We're frustrated. We're not anti-Mexican. If you live here, if you see the grief the migrants go through. If people heard rapes on their back property...It doesn't have to be this way." A miner in West Virginia, a state that give a large majority vote for Trump, said, "We're the little men. We live in this little community, we're rural, we're out in the woods, we're not to be heard. I'm tired of watching my friends and family suffer."

**Winning over Trump Voters**

How could these hard-hit workers vote for an anti-labor, corporate billionaire? The answer for many lies in Trumps concerted appeal to workers who hadn't heard such an appeal made so passionately from a presidential candidate in many, many years, and his equally impassioned proclamations to bring back their jobs. Trump campaigned in coal country, telling miners he felt their pain. He donned a hard hat and made digging motions, to the applause of the miners and community members in the crowd. Meanwhile Clinton was refusing to tell audiences during televised debates what she told to Goldman Sachs bankers in speeches while receiving millions of dollars in speaking fees. For many voters Trump appeared as the outsider, the anti-establishment candidate, while Clinton looked like the insider who did little or nothing to help working people crushed by the normal impoverishment of workers under capitalism. Truth be told, Trump will do little or nothing to help these economically squeezed workers either, and both Trump and Clinton are wedded to capitalism. But Trump's policies will be more harmful to more people. We must build a movement that will win over working-class Trump supporters to our movement, a movement for good jobs in environmentally safe and growing industries such as solar and hydro-electric and electric cars. We must also point out that unions led the fight for and won passage of social programs that millions of workers love and rely upon, Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, unemployment benefits and others, while Republican Party that Trump has embraced fought against every one of these programs.

Workers care about these social justice programs, which also include the fight to protect and improve public education, fight for free college tuition, and achieve health security for all with an improved Medicare-for-All system. We should invite all workers to join us in opposition to the inherent exploitation and abuses of "the system," which we should call by its name, capitalism. And join us in exploring a fairer alternative, based on expanding democracy, putting people before profits, and building on the best traditions of the American people.
Developing viable campaigns and candidates that have a proven track record of addressing the needs and concerns of our multi-racial working-class is essential for the future. Clinton had a detailed economic plan that she said would bring jobs and economic development, but hardly anyone read it. It didn’t matter. She was seen as the establishment politician, with ties to the hated banking industry, while Trump reinvented himself as another angry white man railing against "the system." Clinton was also the victim of misogyny. But millions of voters hated "the system" in this election. Trump's gimmick was a cheap trick, promoted by a con artist, but it worked well enough to capture millions of votes from workers, many of whom voted for Obama in 2008 and 2012. But just what system is Trump talking about? It is the government with its regulations and taxes on businesses and the well-to-do, like Trump, that Trump hates. Trump loves and has made millions of dollars off this capitalist system that has rewarded him so well.

**Trump as ‘Outsider’**

Clinton didn't talk much about any "system" because she is so a part of it, both economically and politically. But the government is complex, composed of people with widely divergent agendas. Too many voters didn't see it that way and blamed the entire government, in part, after being barraged with a steady stream of anti-government propaganda begun by the Reagan Administration in 1980, and by government mistakes and abuses that only fanned anti-government flames. After 40 years of decline for millions who were angry, confused and wanting to lash out at somebody or something, Trump conveniently played that role. He falsely presented himself as the "outsider" who would bash the system. The down-trodden couldn't bash the system, but Trump could bash it for them with his bombastic, racist and inflammatory speeches, ala Adolph Hitler.

Millions of people do want the government to regulate profit-gouging corporations and banks that benefit off the backs of working people and the community, poison the land and water with toxic chemicals and destroy the environment, including with mountain top removal in small coal mining towns in West Virginia and the rest of Appalachia. Many small business owners and entrepreneurs, who are not the enemy, are rightly upset with some government policies and inefficiencies that don’t help and instead add red tape to conducting their enterprises. Bernie has dealt with all these issues in his home state of Vermont, and in Congress, and has broad political support there, from the working-class of the cities and those in poor rural areas where conservative ideas pre-dominate. Had Bernie Sanders won the Democratic Party nomination, a number of political analysts believe he could have won many of the working-class Trump voters and with their votes the presidency.
While history has its own course, many of those working-class Trump voters can be won away from Trump and his agenda and toward a progressive agenda, like that proposed by Bernie Sanders. It won’t be easy, but it can be done. We need to focus on programs that address their economic needs, but in a way that is not harmful to others or the environment. One example is to build the campaign to produce products that advances safe energy, turning away from non-renewables like gas and oil, and turning to more solar, wind, water, and geothermal heat. Steelworkers could produce steel for wind turbines, solar panels and systems and other green energy products. Their union, the United Steelworkers and its president Leo Gerard, are partners in a coalition with other unions and environmental groups called the BlueGreen Alliance, to work for a safe, clean and green energy future. Other partners in the coalition include the Sierra Club, Service Employees International Union, Natural Resources Defense Council, and many of the construction unions that Trump is trying to woo, such as the Plumbers and Pipefitters, Sheet Metal, Air and Rail union, and Bricklayers. If Bernie Sanders was president the meeting he and our unions would have been about how to make the BlueGreen Alliance a living success. This is not pie in the sky. Germany is well on its way to transitioning away from fossil fuels and towards green energy, and China is developing major plans to make this shift too.
Democrats, Independents & Socialists

The Bernie Sanders campaign for the presidency lit a fire of popular revolt which re-energized the political left, and brought him just short of winning the Democratic Party nomination. While Sanders, a democratic socialist and staunchly pro-labor political leader, and Clinton had common ground on a number of issues, such as protecting and expanding education, social services, jobs and economic development, Sander's campaign forced Clinton to adopt much of his more progressive platform. Unfortunately, she was not the best candidate to carry that program, because she had not supported many of its planks ever before, and after adopting them promoted them less than convincingly. While Sanders energized the country, and especially the youth generation of all races, time ran out as he travelled the country to introduce himself and his program to a large enough pool of people to win.

When Clinton captured the Democratic Party nomination Sanders correctly urged his supporters to help elect Clinton and defeat Trump. It was a vote against the right-wing, racist and fascist forces that had galvanized around the Trump campaign, and which poses a much graver threat than Clinton. Sanders also initiated a grassroots organization, Our Revolution, to keep his campaign goals alive and to encourage his supporters and other progressives to run for political office all across the country. A number of key Sanders supporters backed away from Our Revolution citing weaknesses in structure and leadership (Sanders is not a part of the organization), but Sanders's campaign inspired many of his supporters to join, and to form other groups to promote a similar program.

I was involved in Bernie Sanders primary election campaign in Los Angeles County, and after he lost the nomination to Clinton, I joined Our Revolution and a local grassroots organization in my area comprised of other Sanders supporters, the San Gabriel Valley Progressives. Along with other Bernie supporters across California, we joined like-minded groups in all 80 California State Assembly Districts to run slates of progressive candidates for the state committee of the California Democratic Party. Over 800 Sanders' progressives ran for the 1,120 open seats in party caucus meetings in each Assembly District in January and elected over 650 of our slate to the state body. The Democratic Party rules give elected Democrats an automatic seat on the state committee, along with the right to appoint others, so we won't have a majority. But in alliance with other progressives among the mainstream of the Democratic Party, we hope to wield significant influence. Our goals are practical and immediate:

1. Promote progressive politics and candidates in the election of Califor-
nia Democratic Party leaders, and to nominate progressive candidates for political office, especially those from Bernie's campaign, the working-class, people of color, youth and women.

2. Influence the writing of the California Democratic Party Platform and fight to implement it by building pressure in the streets and in the voting booths.

Most of the Sander's progressives now active within the California Democratic Party are also active in social justice movements in their election districts. A number of these Sanders state committee members and others are planning to run for elective office. Their grassroots work in their election districts will help them immensely.

As we go to press, Our Revolution has endorsed 100 candidates nationwide for elective office and 60 have won. More important races are coming up this fall, and the largest and most important races take place next year when all 435 seats in the US House of Representatives are up for election, and 34 of the 100 seats in the US Senate. Progressive candidates are also looking to run for seats in state legislatures and for governor to reverse the Koch Brothers takeover of many state governments after the Republican gerrymandering of districts in 2010. All of this will prepare the progressive forces for the 2018 and 2020 elections, where one goal will be to elect a solid left progressive president in 2020 and reverse the damage of Trump and Pence. From now until the 2018 and 2020 elections the mass resistance movement to Trump, Pence, and the Republican Party must continue to expose and weaken them, and grow.

It's important for progressives, leftists and socialists to be everywhere. There are progressive independent third political parties that can and have broken the strangle-hold of a corporate-oriented Democratic Party and Republican Party in various localities. The Green Party has elected 117 of its members to office in 19 states to various public offices. The Vermont Progressive Party holds 12 seats in the Vermont State legislature, and 4 of 12 seats on the Burlington City Council, where Bernie Sanders started his career as mayor. The Working Families Party holds two seats in the New York State legislature. In Richmond, California, the grass-roots, multi-racial working-class Richmond Progressive Alliance has an elected majority on the city council and passes progressive legislation that has helped this community that had been dominated by the giant local Chevron refinery for generations. A good history of this inspiring people's political movement is told by Steve Early in his recent book, Refinery Town: Big Oil, Big Money, and the Remaking of an American City. (See a brief description of this book in our book review section.)
There are also other promising political movements in cities around the country. One is the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement in Jackson, Mississippi, whose community organizing efforts brought working-class black liberation organizer Chokwe Lumumba to the city council in 2009, and to the mayor's office in 2013. Unfortunately, Lumumba's sudden, untimely death put the movement back, but it has regrouped, and his son-- who espouses the politics of his father, was just elected mayor of Jackson as we go to press.

All of the social justice labor and community movements, combined with the struggle of progressives in the political arena, both inside and outside the Democratic Party, and the mass resistance movements sweeping the country in opposition to Trumpism is laying the ground work for a repudiation of Trump and his allies in 2018 and 2020. That is one immediate goal of the Progressive Majority.

A growing number of progressives and socialists also see building independent socialist organizations as part of the larger movement to help defeat Trumpism, but also to show people that the capitalist system is the major cause of the problems confronting society. The ultimate solution, socialism, is a system where goods and services are produced to meet the needs of the people, and not enrich a small upper crust of billionaires. One organization that has grown tremendously during this period is Democratic Socialists of America (DSA). DSA has tripled its membership from November 2016 to March 2017 to 20,000 members. It has attracted thousands of youthful Sanders' supporters into its ranks, and has formed many new chapters and committees on the most important issues of the day. Its goals include working to influence the Democratic Party to move to the progressivism of the left, to work outside the Democratic Party to build social justice movements, and the movement for socialism.

We at Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism applaud the growth of all left and socialist organizations, including our own organization, and all social justice organizations. We also recognize the importance of Marxism in advancing the understanding capitalism and right-wing movements, strategies to restrain capitalism's inherent abuses, and Marxism's guidance in helping to develop a solid theory and practice of how to build socialism. We actively seek areas of common ground with other left and socialist organizations upon which to build left unity projects, and seek to work with all social justice organizations to further the building of a strong, viable Progressive Majority and a united left and socialist movement in our country.

Paul Krehbiel worked as a union auto worker, and a Teamster. He was a union organizer, Managing Editor of the "Furniture Workers Press" of the
Furniture Workers union, AFL-CIO, and chief negotiator for 5,000 Registered Nurse members of SEIU Local 660 in Los Angeles. As president of United Union Representatives of Los Angeles he and others helped SEIU and the community save two county hospitals from closing in what was the first major defeat of neo-liberalism's cutbacks in the country. He was a coordinator of Los Angeles Labor for Bernie. He is a national co-chair of Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism.
Trump Ramps Up Immigration Repression to Serve Corporate Interests

By David Bacon

(Editor's note: The following presentation was given by David Bacon at a CCDS webinar sponsored by the Socialist Education Project on 2/27/17.)

First, let's look at specifically the order Trump issued last week, “Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States.”

It directs the Department of Homeland Security to hire 10,000 new Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers, which would triple ICE's current force of about 5,000. Already more Federal dollars are spent on immigration enforcement than all other Federal enforcement programs combined.

Despite Trump's threats, the federal government does not have the resources to deport every person in the U.S. who is undocumented. In 2014 Obama was forced to issue enforcement priorities because of huge
protests over the number of deportations - aggravated felony, felony, significant misdemeanor, or three or more misdemeanors. A Federal Court in Tucson began, and still is, conducting daily mass trials of border crossers who are imprisoned first, and then deported (Operation Streamline)

Under the new Executive Order, however, the priority categories are vastly expanded, which basically allows ICE to ramp up the number, and deport virtually anyone.

People with dependents, even citizen children, who have a deportation order, are a priority now. So are people simply charged with a criminal offense, or even who have committed acts that constitute a chargeable criminal offense, an accusation by police is enough.

It targets people who have provided false documents, which could include any of the 8 million who've given a bad Social Security number to get hired. It includes people who have "abused" a public benefits program, which might include getting care in an emergency room without being able to pay.

And immigration officers will now be allowed to target anyone they simply say "pose[s] a risk to public safety or national security."

Depending on how and by whom these priorities are implemented, virtually any undocumented person can be considered a priority for deportation.

The order once again expands the 287(g) program, in which DHS gets local police to enforce federal immigration laws. Currently, ICE only has 287(g) agreements with 32 law enforcement agencies because protests under Obama of widespread abuse. Now it will grow again.

And the secretary of Homeland Security, Marine General James Kelly, and attorney general Jeff Sessions will be given leverage to coerce localities into reversing their sanctuary policies and signing up with 287(g) by threatening them with loss of federal funding and other penalties.

Secure Communities will be revived, in which any time police take someone's fingerprints they'll be sent to ICE, who will then order police to hold the person for deportation if they had no legal status, even if they weren't charged with anything.

So that's the newest order. We all remember that the outpouring of people at the airports after Trump's first order got the courts to intervene
to stop it. That is now going to the Supreme Court, and meanwhile he says he’s writing a new one.

The old one banned migration from seven Muslim countries (Yemen, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Iran, Iraq, and Syria) for three months, and suspended refugee admissions for four months (and Syria indefinitely), which led to people being detained, or denied visas.

But let’s step back and think about the larger context for these orders. They are coming in a world in which people being displaced by the millions, and in which there is already an enforcement structure that has criminalized many of them.

Migration, including undocumented migration, has existed from Mexico, Latin America, Asia and the Caribbean for over a century.

As global inequality increases, so does migration - from colonies to metropolitan countries. This is a global phenomenon. The wars that produce migration in the Middle East are the consequences of colonialism and imperialism, made worse by global inequality. Migration from Central America during the 70s and 80s was produced by wars that were fought to overturn unjust social orders, and U.S. intervention produced a flood of refugees. Young people here were targeted (LA Crash Unit, Ramparts), and then deported back. Unemployment, maquiladoras, drugs, and violence produced more migration - the recent wave of mothers and children - fleeing on the one hand, reuniting with families already here on the other.

Migration from Mexico was put on steroids by NAFTA and economic reforms in Mexico forced on a population to benefit corporations - 4.5 to 12.5 million, 7 million without visas, 10% of the population now living here. Most of Mexico young people see their future in terms of migration, because the Mexican government and US government cooperate on policies prioritizing profits and investment over high wages, jobs or high farm prices. The big fight on the Mexican left is over the right to stay home. It is a fight the left in the US should support to the hilt.

U.S. policy criminalizes this flow. It has done so for decades, especially since IRCA in 1986, which criminalized work and began militarizing the border.
Both trade policy (displacement) and immigration policy (criminalization) are bipartisan policies. Trump is manipulating a situation created by presidents going back to Reagan. President Bill Clinton passed anti-immigrant bills and the first big increase in border enforcement. George W. Bush sent immigration agents carrying machine guns into workplaces to arrest workers, while threatening to fire millions for not having papers. Under President Barack Obama, a new requirement mandated filling 34,000 beds in detention centers every night. The detention system mushroomed, and over 2 million people were deported.

Enforcement, however, doesn’t exist for its own sake. Displacement and migration serve capitalist economic interests by supplying a labor force employers require. High levels of enforcement make that labor vulnerable, which makes it cheap. It also ensures profits of companies that manage detention and enforcement. Betsy DeVos, the sister-in-law of Blackwater’s Eric Prince, is in the Trump cabinet.

Immigrant labor is more vital to many industries than it’s ever been before, and a source of immense profit to employers. Today, according to the U.S. Department of Labor, about 57% of the country’s entire agricultural workforce is undocumented. The list of industries dependent on immigrant labor includes meatpacking, construction, building services, healthcare, restaurant and retail service, and more.

Both deportations and workplace firings face a basic obstacle—the immigrant workforce. Of the 11 million people in the country without documents, about 8 million are employed (comprising over 5% of all workers). Most earn close to the minimum wage (some far less), and are clustered in low-wage industries.

Even California’s minimum of $10/hour only gives full-time workers an annual income of $20,000, while the national average wage for 2015 is just over $48,000. In other words, if employers were paying the undocumented workforce the average U.S. wage it would cost them well over $200 billion annually. That wage differential subsidizes whole industries like agriculture and food processing. If that workforce were withdrawn, as Trump threatens, through deportations or mass firings, employers wouldn’t be able to replace it without raising wages drastically.

As president, Donald Trump will have to ensure that the labor needs of employers are met, at a price they want to pay. And the flow of migrating people will continue, because the basic causes of that flow have not changed.

Trump cannot—and, given his ties to business, has no will to—change the basic relationship between the United States and Mexico and Cen-
tral America, or other developing countries that are the sources of migration. That might be possible in a government committed to radical reform. Bernie Sanders might have done this. Other voices in Congress have advocated it. But Trump will do what the system wants him to do, and certainly will not implement a program of radical reform.

Arresting people at the border, firing them from their jobs for not having papers, and sending people to detention centers for deportation, all push the flow of migrants into labor schemes managed to benefit corporations. The more a Trump administration pushes for deportations and internal enforcement, the more it will rely on expanding guest worker programs, regardless of his rhetoric.

After the election, many city and some state governments and elected officials were quick to announce that they would not be intimidated. The Dreamers especially see direct action in the streets as an important part of defending communities. In detention centers themselves, detainees have organized hunger strikes with the support of activists camping in front of the gates.

The success of efforts to defend immigrants, especially undocumented people, depends not just on their own determination to take direct action, but on support from the broader community. In Philadelphia, less than a week after the election, Javier Flores García was given sanctuary by the congregation of the Arch Street United Methodist Church and those examples are multiplying.

To defeat the Trump enforcement wave, immigrant activists in unions and communities will have to fight for deeper understanding and greater unity between immigrants and U.S.-born people. In a diverse workforce, the unity needed to defend a union or simply win better conditions depends on fighting for a country and workplace where everyone has equal rights. For immigrant workers, the most basic right is simply the right to stay. Defending that right means not looking the other way when a coworker, a neighbor or a friend is threatened with firing, deportation, or worse.

The rise of a Trump enforcement wave spells the death of the liberal centrism that proposed trading increased enforcement and labor supply programs for a limited legalization of undocumented people. Under Trump, the illusion that there is some kind of “fair” enforcement will be stripped away. Sessions will have no interest in “humane detention,” with codes of conduct for the private corporations running detention centers. The idea of guest worker programs that don’t exploit immigrants or set them against workers already in the United States will face the reality of an administration bent on giving employers what they want.
So in one way the Trump administration presents an opportunity as well—to fight for the goals immigrant rights advocates have historically proposed—to counter inequality, economic exploitation, and the denial of rights. As Sergio Sosa, director of the Heartland Workers Center in Omaha, Nebraska, puts it, “we have to go back to the social teachings our movement is based on, which is the idea of justice.”

David Bacon is a former union organizer, an immigrant rights activist, and photojournalist. His new book, "In the Fields of the North / En los Campos del Norte," documents Mexican farm workers in the U.S. in photographs and narratives, and is published by the University of California Press in the U.S. and the Colegio de la Frontera Norte in Mexico.
Trump's First 30 Days: Attacks on Immigrants and People of Color—Assessment and Response

A presentation of the CCDS Socialist Education Project (SEP) Series on the Trump Administration, February 27, 2017

By Mildred Williamson

It's quite a laundry list of atrocities against the working class, inclusive of all races, that have occurred so early in this new administration. However, some things began before Trump was elected. For example, an escalation of deportations occurred under the Obama Administration, which led to him being labeled “deporter-in-chief.” Yet, he also set up the DACA, (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) program for undocumented youth in this country who entered as children. In Chicago, when the presidential election results became known, we had confirmed reports of four different DACA students who committed suicide in our city. These tragic deaths illustrate how young people, their families and in some cases, whole communities are under more concentrated siege since the Trump ascendency into the White House.

Trump, along with his far-right admirers of racist, anti-immigrant rhetoric, drives fear and anxiety for many immigrants whether their legal status is documented or not. Many households are a blend of both legal and undocumented family members. Many people are stereotyped and profiled based on how they look or speak, and this has real impact on real people's lives, regardless of citizenship status. Some important resistance efforts have occurred in this period. One resistance principle of many municipalities, including Chicago, is having the declared status of a Sanctuary City. In fact, the County of Cook, where Chicago is located, has a similar ordinance, covering much more geography and many more people. Progressives here and elsewhere around the country have pushed to take the spirit and implementation of these local
ordinances even further. The strategy is to not cooperate with federal immigration law enforcers under any circumstances, whether the person or people being targeted have a “criminal” status or not, thus potentially closing at least one of the many divide-and-conquer tactics of ruling class power. Important organizing connections have been made across the movements for police accountability, the fight for a living wage and immigrant rights here and elsewhere. There have been collaborations between all kinds of groups in mass actions, with slogans and shared themes that make the case for multiracial unity, immigrant/non-immigrant solidarity, economic justice, healthcare access and gender/sexual expression equality.

Another development with seeds originating before the election, has been the move by many states and municipalities around the country to actually suppress public resistance and civil disobedience against racism and economic injustice, in response to the ongoing fight for police accountability and an end to mass incarceration in cities and towns across the country. Case in point: in August 2016, a law passed in the State of Louisiana, called the “Blue Lives Matter” bill. It basically gives police officers the discretion to add a charge to anyone resisting arrest with a hate crime, which would potentially add up to 10 years in prison added to the original arrest charge. Immediately after the Trump inauguration, his team came out with a document entitled “Standing Up for Our Law Enforcement Community,” which essentially mimicked the Louisiana law, and called for the same thing to happen across the other states. This was promoted as keeping his Nixonian premise of being the “law and order” president.

Additionally, one of the earliest acts of newly confirmed Attorney General Jeff Sessions was to rescind the decision that the US Department of Justice made under President Obama to discontinue the use of private prisons. Stock prices for the for-profit private prison industry went up significantly with the election of Donald Trump followed by this policy reversal. Note that the use of private prisons isn’t confined to domestic corrections, but also utilized for the detention centers that house people who are coming into the country or have come into the country seeking asylum but held in detention centers and basically deported thereafter. One of the main issues that the Obama Justice Department said for their reasoning for discontinuing working with private prisons is that they were more costly and less safe.

The standard Republican fare for decades about US government is that there is too much waste, fraud and abuse, and that government spends too much money on so-called useless programs. This reasoning was in place long before Trump came along as a candidate. Such verbiage is the rationale frequently used to justify spending cuts on programs that
actually help people. It is well documented that the private for-profit prison industry is very expensive and of poor quality, especially those providing contracted correctional healthcare. However, it seems to be OK with the Sessions-led Justice Department to spend more money to manage human misery.

Additionally, there is a Trump budget proposal to add $54 billion dollars to the military budget. The dollars are supposed to be made available by proposed cuts to domestic programs, including education, healthcare and environmental protection, among others – programs and services that people actually need.

Speaking of healthcare, I think many participants on this call would agree with the notion that the best possible outcome for an improved health care system in the US is to have a single-payer program, a Medicare-for-all model, regardless of whether or not you are 65 or older, eliminating the need for private insurance companies. However, the ACA (Affordable Care Act) has elements within it that is currently improving many people's lives, but definitely not all. While 22 million people have gained health insurance since 2010, it is well known that the program is not available to undocumented persons, or to legal immigrants with less than five years in US residence. We know that Medicaid expansion has not occurred in all 50 states. To date there are 31 who have expanded the Medicaid program. This is one of the most progressive components of ACA, and if dismantlement goes forward in the way the rhetoric has been, it will harm people and will harm whole healthcare delivery systems.

One of the most vulnerable ACA components, disproportionately impacting people of color and all who are poor, is Medicaid. There is a Paul Ryan-led Republican effort to dismantle it, separate the program from Medicare, thus removing its entitlement program status as part of the Social Security Act, amended in 1965 under the Johnson Administration’s “Great Society.” The plan is to turn it into a block grant to the states, and let each state manage the dollars as they chose. If anyone is concerned or confused about this, I invite you to take a look at the 20 years of data showing the outcome experience we have with the dismantling of the previous Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program that has since been taken over by something called TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families).
Assistance for Needy Families), which officially ended entitlement program status. Entitlement as defined in government means that a given program is not subject to a cap on the number of people who can participate in it. Eligibility criteria is set in the federal law (income level, age, minor children and/or disability status, in this case). Anyone meeting such criteria can participate in the program, which is made available for as long as the person or family meets such criteria. In the case of Social Security, the criteria are basically age and documented years (counted in quarters) of work.

AFDC was an imperfect, yet important entitlement program that was coded as one of the original articles of the Social Security Act of 1935. It remained in operation until 1996, with some variation in how it was administered over those years. The TANF program, championed by the Clinton Administration, replaced AFDC essentially as a block grant, which goes to the states, with significant discretion to implement as they please. The latest data from 2014 shows nearly eight million families nationwide living in poverty and eligible for TANF cash assistance. However, TANF cash assistance is going to 1.6 million people in the country who are poor, yet eligible. Most states have used big portions of their TANF dollars for other things, including marriage encouragement programs, short-term job-readiness training and some subsidy of child care. Additionally, TANF has a maximum length of time that a person or family can use it, which is five years, with states having the optional discretion to make it available for as little as two years. Think what this means for example, to poor families that exhausted their five years prior to the 2007-2009 great recession, and could not find work. Think what this means to TANF recipient families who previously lived in public housing and then displaced due to demolition, such as those former residents of Chicago’s Robert Taylor Homes, Cabrini-Green and other such public housing developments around the country that no longer exist today.

TANF is not a race-specific program, poverty in the US affects all nationalities, and simultaneously has disproportionate negative effects on persons of color due to structural racism and historic segregation. The AFDC-TANF example is given to help make the policy connection to the Republican plan for Medicaid. The US already has nineteen states that have not expanded Medicaid, and those states are disproportionately located in the south, which is home to significant populations of poor people, disproportionately of color. The Republican plan is to essentially disentangle Medicaid as a federally guaranteed entitlement program and block grant it to the states with less money than is budgeted at this writing, similar to TANF. States will choose to be as progressive or as draconian as they want with the program, and people will suffer. Families will be harmed. Some people will prematurely die.
These economic decisions, together with proposals to increase the military budget, keep the Guantanamo prison open, keep private for-profit prisons in business with tax dollars, and provide tax cuts to the rich will obviously destroy beneficial programs and thus destroy communities that are already vulnerable.

Thankfully there is much evidence of resistance to these policies and people around the country and the world are connecting the dots of how one struggle is intertwined and relates to another, which on the surface, may seem to be separate.

**Criminalization of the Lack of Citizenship/Hatred of People not of European Origin**

I began this talk by sharing our local situation of four DACA students who tragically committed suicide. However, there has been resistance as well. The Day Without Immigrants in Chicago, had an estimate of 50,000 children who did not make it to school. Some schools, with the highest percentage of Latinos, as many as 76% of students were absent.

The Standing Rock Dakota Pipeline situation: by executive order, digging will resume with very little criticism of the fact that Trump himself and several members of his cabinet have personal investments in this pipeline. It was reported that one of the main leaders of this anti-pipeline effort was about to board a plane to try to have a meeting with Trump Administration representatives. He was abruptly informed that no such meeting would occur. Meanwhile, the Standing Rock camp has been dismantled, but this is a struggle that needs to continue.

We have had now murders that have occurred where the perpetrators assumed the people they were targeting were Arab or Muslim and killed them, such as the two Indian computer technology persons in Kansas City recently killed. This had some similarity to the killing of the Sikh worshippers in Wisconsin a few years ago where the perpetrator thought he was making a contribution to this racist movement by killing people whom he assumed were Arab or Muslim.

We now have reports of undocumented persons, residing in the upper Midwest, who are journeying on foot through dangerous weather conditions, to get to the Canadian border and inside of Canada, even with infants in tow, for the fear of being deported or harmed physically because of the atmosphere that has developed here in the US.

This atmosphere was pushed forward for 18 months of campaigning with the most racist, bigoted, misogynistic, xenophobic statements and
actions, including in-your-face bullying behavior that went virtually un-
checked and uncriticized by mainstream media until shortly after the
primary was won by Trump. Now we are met by the actual election re-
results. This issue has even been further confused with the public with
all the focus on Russian interference with the US election, and virtual
silence on the impact voter suppression and super-gerrymandering leg-
islative districts. It's as if those things did not count, in terms of the
election outcome.

**Some Things Are Very Encouraging**

I'm encouraged by movements to connect the dots between the crimi-
nalization of black youth and the criminalization of people without doc-
umentation. Police accountability and immigration rights have dots in
need of connection and work to be done in collaboration.

I am encouraged by municipal health care systems, public school sys-
tems, municipalities in general and religious movements who have
publicly rejected participation with ICE (US Immigration Customs En-
forcement). Our own Chicago Board of Health made a statement that
welcomes all to this city, and into health and human service department
facilities for services without fear. Our own Chicago and Cook County
sanctuary ordinances were passed years ago, and they both disallow
local law enforcement or others to cooperate with ICE officials, unless
there is a warrant for the person (thus the current strategy to remove
this loophole). Even Chicago Public Schools publicly presented an ICE-
noncooperation policy.

I am encouraged by Rev. William Barber, the North Carolina NAACP and
their Moral Mondays strategy which connects the dots for economic
boycotts, voter suppression, transgender rights, Medicaid Expansion
demand and environmental justice.

I am encouraged by the Muslim community and many others who con-
ducted fundraisers for the repair of the vandalized Jewish cemeteries.

I am encouraged by the many Super Bowl Champion Patriots, who are
not making the customary visit to the White House, in protest of Trump
polices.

I am encouraged by the Philadelphia organizers who resist ICE on the street
by creating church sanctuary conditions outside of the church walls.

I am encouraged by the Washington DC public school students’ rejection
of the visit of US Department of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos to their
schools.
There are still many things to be done. The corporatization of the media is a problem. The competitiveness between journalists must stop, and instead the emphasis needs to be on the principles of the first amendment-freedom of the press-investigative journalism. Something to think about:

At a recent press conference, April Ryan, the White House Correspondent for American Urban Radio Network, a black woman, asked the President if he would be willing to meet with the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC). He did not understand what CBC was. She explained that it was the Congressional Black Caucus of the US Congress – people who are African American and elected to serve in Congress. Then he stated that his team had reached out to them seeking a meeting, and had not received a reply. The CBC immediately responded publicly that no such outreach occurred from the White House, and that it was actually the CBC who made the initial request a meeting and never received a response. President Trump then asked Ms. Ryan to arrange the meeting for him, as if she serves as his secretary. What then should have happened at that moment, is that her colleagues present in the room should have closed ranks and reminded him that he has an army of people working for him, that their colleague is not his secretary, and collectively state that they reject such disrespectful talk to any Ms. Ryan or any other colleague.

I would argue that much anti-American, anti-Constitutional behavior has been exhibited by Trump and the people who work for him in this short period of time. There are some important lessons I learned from our founder Charlene Mitchell, who said we have to fight to improve the conditions under which we wage a struggle for social justice/human rights. I believe that an example of this concept was delivered in the winding years of the Anti-Apartheid movement when the collective decision was made to make South Africa “ungovernable,” meaning to challenge each anti-human policy and enforcement decision, every step of the way.

I am encouraged by the marches and the spontaneous actions that have occurred at the airports in response to the travel ban – but, we have got to find a way to work to build sustainability for this movement, because each of these anti-human actions need to be challenged, if not prevented, every time if we are going to get rid of this cancer that is now in the White House.
Thank you.

*Mildred Williamson is a health care worker and CCDS member living in Chicago.*
Help Families Torn Apart by the Travel Ban

By Rawya Rageh

Reprinted from 2017 Amnesty International USA alerts@takeaction.amnestyusa.org Rawya Rageh is an Amnesty Crisis Investigator and is working to stop Trump’s Muslim ban.

You need to understand the impact President Trump’s travel ban is having.

“These decisions made by President Trump have left us in a state of constant fear. We feel like suspects even though we’ve never done anything wrong in our lives.” – Fatima

My name is Rawya Rageh and I am a Crisis Response Senior Adviser with Amnesty International. When the first executive order came into force in January, my team and other researchers were immediately sent out to find cases of people affected by the ban, so we could gather evidence and make a compelling case against the order.

Yahia*, 19, and Maher*, 20, are stuck in Djibouti after running for their lives from gunfire and conflict in Yemen. They don’t know anyone in Djibouti, but going there was their only hope of being reunited with their mother, Fatima*, who is thousands of miles away in the USA.

Fatima, who is now a green card holder, applied in 2014 for her sons to escape war-torn Yemen and join her in the US.

Two years later, the boys were finally given an interview in Djibouti, as the US embassy in Yemen had closed. So at great personal expense they travelled there in the hope of being granted a visa.
But President Trump’s executive order has put a stop to all that. With Yemen being one of the six countries targeted, Yahia and Maher’s visa application appears to be frozen. They are now stuck in Djibouti where they cannot find work and don’t know anyone. Their mother is running up huge debts paying for them to have somewhere to live and helping them survive on one meal a day.

The situation for the family is desperate. Their mother tells me they are “devastated.” It is my job to find cases like these and to tell the world about them, so that together we can pile pressure on the US to drop the travel ban. But to continue doing this, I really need your help. Contact Amnesty International at the email address above.

*Names have been changed to protect the individuals concerned.

Rawya Rageh is a Crisis Response Senior Adviser at Amnesty International.
Resistance to Trump Agenda Grows in Southeast Massachusetts

By Rafael Pizarro

Like many communities around the country, Southeast Massachusetts has experienced an upsurge in resistance activities since the elections. People are not just angry, but motivated to make progressive changes both here and on the national level. Many of them have never been active in political work before, and there are a large number of woman and youth among them.

We had a meeting of a newly organized group a few weeks back that I expected only the leadership to attend and, perhaps a few interested people. I would have been happy had fifteen or so attended. Over 40 showed up. This was a clear demonstration that people wanted action and they wanted to be involved in it.

This newly-created organization we’re calling We Won’t Go Back New Bedford. We came together just after the elections. Much of our work is focused on immigration, but we’ve also participated in contributing to the Woman’s March (1199 SEIU provided a bus for us to go to Boston, where we joined over a 100,000) and we had a wonderful International Women’s Day event (that event was primarily organized by a young pansexual woman who was doing this for the first time).

But our ongoing work is currently two-fold. Our local county Sheriff announced soon after his own election that he was offering to send local prisoners to the southern border to help build the proposed wall. Additionally, he’s cooperating with ICE to turn over undocumented immigrants for deportation. When the former occurred, the community was up in arms. Our organization leaped into action. We wrote letters to the local paper and an op-ed piece which were all published and we demonstrated at the local jail. This too was covered by the local paper and radio
station. All of this activity was noticed by our local legislators and one of them submitted bills to stop the Sheriff. The first would prohibit sending prisoners anywhere outside of Massachusetts and the other would prevent local law enforcement from cooperating with ICE. While we didn’t lead all of these efforts, we contributed to turn-out and had a speaker at the event who represented our group.

The work we are leading is an effort to designate New Bedford as a sanctuary city. One of the members of our group is a city council member who’d proposed such at the city council and was totally rebuffed. Far from accepting a defeat, we’re planning activities to change that. There’s a local special election to fill a seat on the city council that was recently vacated mid-term. Many of us are supporting a young woman who supports our efforts. We intend not only to add an important ally to the city council but to organize within the communities of the opponents to change their opposition.

Our city was built by immigrants, primarily of Portuguese and Cape Verdean decent. Indeed, many of the local leaders, including city council members, are their descendants. I know of one member who is the son of Portuguese immigrants and yet he is among those who oppose our efforts! Currently, most of our immigrants are from Hispanic countries. Clearly, then, opposition to protecting the rights of immigrants is based on race, not on the stated concerns about crime. We intend to raise that issue in our campaign.

**Challenging ‘Safe’ Decisions**

However, I’d like to make a note here about some obstacles to the changes we need that I expect are cropping up elsewhere. One of the other candidates in that city council race is an attorney who works with our local congress member. While the congress member is generally progressive, many of us consider the candidate an establishment candidate (some of our group is supporting the latter but most of us are going with the former). The establishment candidate was recently endorsed by both the Firefighters union and the Central Labor Council. This is all good and well, but it disturbs me that we all talk about encouraging women and those new to the movement to run for local office. Then when one runs, we choose the “safe” candidate. Some of us do. This must be challenged if we’re to have legitimate change.

I should make clear that we’re hardly the only or best group leading these efforts. There are many longtime progressive groups who’ve been active and effective in progressive politics for a long time, such as the Coalition for Social Justice and, to a lesser extent, the NAACP. Then there are other emerging groups, like the local Indivisible chapter, who
are having an impact as well. But we’ve had an exciting development lately. Rather than work separately, leaders of the Coalition for Social Justice initiated a coalition of all of the resistance groups in the area, not just from New Bedford but from the entire region. There are currently thirteen organizations that have agreed to join in the effort. We’re calling it Resistance United and will have our “coming out” press conference next month.

I’m excited to see all of the new activity and the joining together of all those who want to see progressive change in our community and in the country. When I get down about the elections I try to focus on the great movement that’s being built. I know that together we’ll overcome this terrible situation we’re in. And I know that, despite the opposition, new leaders will emerge that aren’t tied to the same old politics that allowed this situation to emerge. We fight on.

*Rafael Pizarro is a labor representative in Massachusetts. He was a founding Co-Chair of CCDS and is currently on the CCDS National Executive Committee, And Co-Chair as well.*
New York Town Hall Meeting Demands Representatives Protect Social Programs

Editors’ Note: Many thousands of voters in scores of Town Hall meetings in Congressional Districts in states across the country have demanded that their Representatives protect education, health care and other social programs from attack by President Trump. Some Town Halls have become so impassioned that Republican Congressional Representatives have left in the middle of the meeting. Other Republicans refused to show up to their Town Halls.

Here is an account of just one of those Town Halls, held in New York City, Trump’s hometown in February, 2017 to protect Obamacare. As we go to press, Republicans have launched another effort to deny millions of people health care coverage.

By Pat Fry

An outpouring of protest at Town Hall meetings, sidewalk rallies, and massive phone calling in March and April delivered a stunning defeat to the Trump administration’s attempt to dismantle the Affordable Care Act. The Republican American Health Care Act, popularly called “Trumpcare,” called for over $800 billion in cuts to Medicaid through block grants and $1 trillion in tax cuts for insurance companies and the rich over ten years. The bill was withdrawn on March 24th after several moderate Republicans, feeling the pressure from their constituents, deserted the bill.

“Save Our Healthcare” was the cry in packed and overflow town halls from Utah and Arkansas to North Carolina and Staten Island, NY over the February President’s Day Congressional recess. Many Republican Congresspersons feared facing their constituents and refused to attend the town hall meetings. Protests intensified in the days leading up to the
March 23rd expected vote, cynically planned for the day the Affordable Care Act was signed seven years ago. Hundreds of thousands of phone calls jammed congressional and White House phone lines. The tsunami of resistance was organized by several national grass roots organizations and unions that coordinated with state and local coalitions. In New York City, the coalition included Citizens Action, SEIU 1199, CWA, NYS Nurses Association, Metro NY Health Care for All, the Sanders campaign’s New York Progressive Action Network, Physicians for a National Health Plan, MoveOn, Indivisible, Democratic Party Clubs, and a multitude of health care advocacy, community and religious organizations.

As the expected vote on the AHCA drew near, opinion polls showed that 54% backed the ACA, the highest since it passed. At the same time, support continues to grow for a Medicare for All single payer health care system. Sen. Bernie Sanders is expected soon to introduce such a bill in the U.S. Senate. In January, Cong. John Conyers introduced his Medicare for All bill, H.R. 676, in the House of Representatives with 76 co-sponsors. H.R. 676 has been introduced every year since 2003 when it had 25 co-sponsors.

On April 1st, a rally and march for single payer health care will be held outside of Trump Towers in midtown Manhattan, led by doctor organizations and nurse unions, part of a national mobilization. On April 4th, unions and advocacy organizations will lobby in Albany, the NY state capital, in support of the New York Heath Act, a single payer bill that has passed with a significant majority in the Democratic-controlled State Assembly in last two legislative years and is expected to again pass this year with a vote expected in May. In the Republican-controlled State Senate, however, the bill needs two more sponsors to gain a majority.
A town hall meeting on the NY Health Act was held on March 3rd in the Washington Heights neighborhood of Manhattan with some 200 attending, organized by the Uptown Progressive Action, the local branch of the Sanders’ campaign organization, the NYS Nurses Association, Physicians for a National Health Plan and the New York Health Campaign.

The coalitions and organizations that successfully turned the tide and prevented 24 million people from losing healthcare on March 24th, are jubilant but not resting. They fear that the Trump administration will sabotage the ACA through death-by-a-thousand cuts. For example, the Trump Administration could halt “cost sharing” payments to insurance companies to pay deductibles and co-pays for low income people who have policies on the state exchanges. Insurance companies would then certainly desert the exchanges and force the ACA to collapse. The budget is another battleground that will culminate at the end of April. Republicans are aiming for trillions of dollars in tax cuts for the wealthy and huge increases in the military budget at the expense of Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security as well as many other social welfare programs.

Town halls are being planned for the Easter and Passover Congressional recess, April 7 – 23. Increased public awareness of what the ACA is and what it is not is building wider support for single payer, particularly in New York and California where a single payer plan could be won in the not-so-distant future.

Pat Fry is a labor activist, retired from staff for a national healthcare union, and is a member of the CCDS national leadership.
Trumpism, White Nativism, and the Troubling Question of Fascism: The Need for Left Unity

By Alex Krehbiel

The election of Trump is threatening daily our most revered civil institutions. He is bringing forth deep-seated strands of structural racism, including a new form of state-sponsored lynching, along with misogyny, jingoism, xenophobia, and other serious injustices.

Trump's economic populism, like Hitler's and Mussolini's, is of the standard befuddling stock, saying one thing and doing the opposite. In the world of Trumpism, platitudes to white workers is really a ramping up of upward economic and social mobility and power for the capitalist elite while spreading greater impoverishment for the many.

In order to build a successful mass movement to denounce, stop and extinguish this discrimination and its abuses it is necessary to: (1) reckon with the underlying objective causes for this particular sickness - capitalism in deep crisis, (2) identify the best approach to combating Trumpism using the most effective strategy and tactics, (3) reach at least some modicum of common agreement to create a comprehensive structured organizational form in support of common goals and a course of action by the left and the broad progressive and anti-fascist political forces. Finally, (4) for an anti-fascist left to be successful, it must utilize Marxism as the most capable ideological framework for guiding this movement to success.

Marxism: A Guide for Understanding

I cite Marxism because it most accurately explains the essence and functioning of capitalism, with its exploitation of labor, inherent drive for
greater profits, which in turn impoverishes greater numbers of people, its inherent declining rate of profit and worsening crisis, and its turn to authoritarian and even fascistic solutions when it feels threatened by resistance and opposition forces. Marxism recognizes the many-sidedness of capitalism. The capitalist mode of production, with its co-determining socio-cultural, political and all other super-structural manifestations, inevitably creates socio-economic relationships of an inherently antagonistic nature. Race-based ideologies of superiority versus inferiority, patriarchal concepts entailing differing degrees of misogyny, commitment towards the maintenance of a dominant cultural zeitgeist informed by the philosophical credo of social Darwinism, rampant militarism and threats of war are all weapons to confuse, mislead, divide and pit one sector of the working-class and its allies against another.

Marx and Engels revealed that the inherent laws of capitalist production regularly come into conflict with the undergirding conditions of the systems of reproduction, giving rise to recurrent economic crises. They also wrote about how these crises influence the politics and culture of a society and the search for solutions to the changing objective conditions. As the internal crisis of capitalism intensifies and deepens, the autocratic rule of fascism or a political force containing elements of fascism, is employed to facilitate the unfettered march of capital to its logical destination: absolute control of all aspects of life. It is an imperative necessity that all civic-minded persons collectively act to insure the conditions of a decent livelihood, civil liberties, and material comfort for all. Fascism Defined

A more or less popularized explanation of fascism says that it is characterized by an uncouth, arbitrary, illiberal, racist, intolerant, patriarchal, autocratic and belligerent authoritarian figure (sound familiar?) who becomes a dictator, lording it over society and determining the smallest aspects of individual activity. While this explanation carries some weight, it would be wrong to attribute to one megalomaniac, psychotic, deranged politician the primary role in the fascisization of society, as some writers do. All these negative characteristics in a leader contribute to this process. But it does not explain the long trending cultural, political, intellectual and material (economic) precursors for it, which have been gestating and evolving in the recent period, as well as throughout the capitalist epoch, and even from earlier epochs.

Fascism often presents itself as a distinct political system, entailing a unique combination of pre-existing ideological and cultural dispositions. As a result it often displays eclectic or even contradictory strands of competing ideas: populist messages for struggling white workers by blaming people of color, but serving billionaires; "America first" propaganda aimed at workers while threatening massive economic and
military intervention in other countries to serve US-based multi-national capital. This double-talk is a major feature of Trump's pontificating on almost every issue.

A major authority on fascism is Robert O. Paxton, author of the book, *The Anatomy of Fascism*. See a review of this book later in this volume, by Ted Pearson, for an explanation of Paxton's work describing the development of fascism, especially in Nazi Germany and fascist Italy. I will cite only several of the characteristics of fascism that Paxton lists since Ted Pearson has done that in his book review. Paxton wrote, in part, that fascism has "a sense of overwhelming crisis beyond the reach of any traditional solutions." Trump played this fear card repeatedly throughout the election campaign, saying with no evidence that other countries have taken massive advantage of the US and that is why we have lost so many jobs. Corporate search for cheap labor combined with automation are the real culprits, while US capital has mercilessly exploited millions of people around the world.

Paxton wrote that a fascist leader instills "the belief that one's group is a victim, a sentiment that justifies any action, without legal or moral limits, against its enemies, both internal and external." Trump repeatedly appealed to white workers who have suffered job loss from the brutal but normal functioning of capitalism, but instead blamed this injustice on Mexican immigrants, foreign countries, liberals, environmentalists, and even the so-called "socialist" policies of President Obama that somehow rewarded others and not white workers.

In fact, Trump won the election on a rabble rousing campaign of wild racial scapegoating, stereotyping, vilification, national chauvinism, rabid xenophobia, noxious misogyny, promises to punish a specific religious group falsely blamed for terrorism against the United States - namely Muslims, mass deportations of immigrants irrespective of their legal status, pledges to be tough on crime, law and order - with the thinly veiled threat against African Americans, all people of color, and the struggling sectors of the working-class as a whole.

**Trump, Racism, and Fascism**

Factor in Trump's acceptance of support from an array of neo-nazis/white nativists/white supremacist individuals and organizations, and capped by naming right-wing white supremacist Steve Bannon to be his chief advisor, and we have more than a whiff of fascism in Trump's White House. In many African American, Native American, and Latino communities, and other poor working class communities -- especially those comprised of people of color, fascist-like conditions have existed for many generations, yet now threaten to get worse. The long fascistic his-
tory of slavery for Blacks is an example, with 2 million or more African's dying under horrendous conditions on slave ships in the Middle Passage from Africa to the America's, and another two million dying from racist abuse and killings by white vigilantes and public officials. Slave life for millions in the southern United States was living under fascist-like conditions, where only the basic minimal support to maintain life and thus slave labor was afforded, and most aspects of a slaves life was restricted, controlled and denied.

Even upon the end of slavery, white terrorist organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan and many local white sheriffs and public officials tried to re-enslave African Americans, by terrorizing freed slaves, denying them the right to vote, or to hold land or jobs, and did re-enslaved many of them through bogus criminal charges like vagrancy that put them in jail and then sold them into a new form of slavery to giant industrial corporations such as US Steel in Birmingham, Alabama and other companies. Second-class citizenship, plus racist attacks and murders by white vigilantes and so-called law enforcement throughout our life in the US created fascist-like conditions in many neighborhoods for generations of African Americans up to the present.

The open murder of African Americans in the streets today, often captured on video, have continued with impunity, and no white officers or vigilante killers have been brought to justice for committing these cold-blooded murders. This is fascism for African Americans. Mass incarceration of especially young Black men is a form of social control, locking away a segment of society that is more conscious of the discrimination, abuse, and oppression of the entire system, thereby making this group one of the largest threats if they become politically aware. That is similar to the incarceration of certain groups in Nazi Germany and fascist Italy, namely Communists, socialists, Jews, trade unionists and other politically aware and advanced groups, precisely because they were convenient scapegoats or uniformly resistant to fascist rule.

Genocide of First Nations

The genocide committed against the First Nations people's by European settlers is a horrible crime, just as was the genocide committed by the Nazi's against the Jewish people. This is fascism. Latino's and other people of color, along with Muslims, generations of residents of Mexican heritage living on land stolen from Mexico in the southwest US, and the LGBTQ community have also been victimized and murdered by vigilantes, mostly white nativists. All of this was done to enrich a segment of the capitalist elite. This is fascistic. The discriminatory and abusive conditions faced by all these groups is similar to many of the elements of fascism that Paxton observed studying Nazi Germany and fascist Italy.
Paxton wrote that fascism has a "need for authority by natural chiefs (always male), culminating in a national chieftan who alone is capable of incarnating the group's historical destiny." Slave holders were the authority figures who had the right to brutalize and kill their slaves if they chose, usually presented to the public as protecting "civil" white society and its historical destiny. Trump has repeatedly claimed that he and he alone has the wisdom and power to fix all of society's problems, especially the problems of workers -- and primarily white workers, who have been hard hit economically, and he'll do that by retaliating against and repressing immigrants and Muslims who are falsely alleged to be a threat to American white worker's historical destiny.

Paxton wrote that "fascism may be defined as a form of political behavior marked by obsessive preoccupation with community decline, humiliation, or victimhood (just as Trump has repeatedly claimed), and by compensatory cults of unity, energy, and purity in which a massed based party of committed nationalist militants, working in an uneasy but effective collaboration with traditional (conservative) elites, abandons democratic liberties and pursues with redemptive violence and without written ethical or legal restraints goals of internal cleansing and external expansion." The first part of this statement mirrors Trump's statements and behavior.

We also see attacks on major institutions of society, by both Hitler and Mussolini in the 1920's - 1940's, and Trump today. One institution is the mass media. While corporate owned, many in the media see a threat to democracy by Trump's policies, behavior and attitude of dismissal toward the media, with Trump making bizarre charges that truthful reporting is "fake news." This is an effort to intimidate and subjugate the media to Trump's will, just as Hitler and Mussolini did in their time. Some will rightly argue that Hitler and Mussolini were much worse. But the emergence of fascism is a process. It happens in stages. Whether Trump and the right-wing, neo-fascist forces around him will try to push on to higher stages of fascist development, or whether the American people will be able to stop them, is unknown. A wait-and-see attitude is courting serious trouble.
Corporate Rule Expanded

Trumps attack on the institutions of society is also seen in the people he has nominated to head government cabinets, departments and other bodies, almost all fierce opponents of the mission of the organization for which they are being proposed or appointed. Hitler and Mussolini did the same thing. For Trump, his proposing of the viciously anti-labor Andrew Puzder, CEO of a fast food chain, to head up the Department of Labor, is but one example. Puzder dropped out after a blistering "No" campaign organized by the AFL-CIO, individual unions and other organizations and broad sectors of the public. Another Trump act was to place a right-wing corporate billionaire heiress and opponent of public education, Betsy DeVos, as the Education Secretary. DeVos was confirmed after right-wing Republican Vice President Mike Pence broke the tie in the Senate. A third Trump nomination was Scott Pruitt, a corporate lawyer, who as Oklahoma Attorney General, filed 14 lawsuits in support of polluting industries. Trump proposed Pruitt to head the Environmental Protection Agency, the government agency mandated to protect human health and the environment. The Republican majority in the Senate endorsed Pruitt. Big demonstrations took place to protest these nominations and appointments. All these cases and other Trump nominees are examples of putting foxes in charge of chicken coops, just at Hitler and Mussolini did in Germany and Italy respectively. All this is an attack on democratic institutions.

Trump's budget is a disaster for the people, ballooning the military budget and slashing money for education, health care, jobs creation programs, assistance to the poor and unemployed. Boosting the military budget, larger than the military budget of the rest of the world combined, and building up the military, gives direct support to the most reactionary political and corporate forces in the country. This parallels the military build-up of Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy. Trumps bombastic threats to go to war against any country that displeases him echoes the threats and actions of Hitler and Mussolini.

Fascism, Evil Brother of Capitalism

Dealing with Trumpism and the threat of fascism invariably means dealing with capitalism, a system that wages war to gain more cheap labor, cheap raw materials, new markets, unencumbered by regulations in its quest to achieve higher rates of profit without opposition. A unified, progressive and socialist left is essential to building the movement needed to stop Trumpism and the right. Marxism will help guide us. Polls show that half of the youth are open to socialism, as are significant numbers of other people. But half are also open to capitalism. Some are the same people. We have to show that capitalism, and really the capitalist elite,
is the cause of most of the problems we face, not just bad people like Donald Trump. Of course, he is part of this capitalist class, but it is the class that determines major policies. Marxism explains how capitalism exploits workers, uses racism to oppress people of color and divide the people, is inherently structured to cause crises and hardship due to capitalism's boom and bust economic cycle, and uses war to expand profits and power in every corner of the globe. It is the inherent contradictions and crises of capitalism that makes capitalism absolutely unsustainable. The economic crises are more severe and deep seated, and the threat to the planet from climate change very hard to stop under capitalist-driven production for private profit. People must understand that it is the normal functioning of capitalism that is the cause of our major problems, and the movement of the right toward fascism will make it harder to resist. Fascism is the evil brother of capitalism.

Paxton's book alerts us to the elements of fascism. But it doesn't do enough to explain the links between capitalism and fascism. He explains the particular features of fascism, in part seemingly originating in the minds of evil men, but doesn't firmly root these features in the cause-and-effect dynamic of an economically exploitive society. If he did that he would have to come to grips with what is the best, most scientific method and political orientation to combat fascism, Marxism.

He does say that the left, including socialists and communists, were active in the fight against fascism. He also states the left's ideological basis for its fight against fascism and gives some credence to it. But, overall, he downplays Marxism, saying that it is somehow less than wholly fortified for the task of defeating fascism because it is a reductionist determinist philosophy. This is a pejorative term meant to connote methodological parochialism in postmodernist parlance. What this means is that Paxton seems to believe that Marxists reduce complex phenomenon to its constituent core elements and thereby loses some of the complexity, and its "determinism" is that we believe all events are determined by economics, and this mechanistically leaves out free will and other factors.

By elevating human free will and individual evil doers, this lets capitalism off the hook. It is interesting to note that the same reductionist/determinist criticism could be hurled at all fields of science for the same reasons, but no serious thinker does so. Without Marxism, fascism would be just another brutal dictatorial actor, rather that the response to a system in crisis

**Marx was Correct**

Terry Eagleton, a Marxist scholar and social critic, wrote in his book *Why Marx was Right*, "What really alters our view of the world is not so much ideas, as ideas which are embedded in routine social practice. If
we change that practice, which may be formidably difficult to do, we are likely in the end to alter our way of seeing." This is a paraphrase of Marx from his book, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*: "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness." In relation to Marxists making socio-economic events and forces central to their social-scientific approach, Eagleton has this to say: "In one sense, the claim that everything comes down to economics is surely a truism... Before we can do anything else we need to eat and drink... The first historical act, Marx writes in *The German Ideology*, is the production of the means to satisfy our material needs. Only then can we learn to play the banjo, write erotic poetry, or paint the front porch. The basis of culture is labor. There can be no civilization without material production." Eagleton explains further: "Labor for Marx concerns a great deal more than the economic. It involves a whole anthropology - a theory of nature and human agency, the body, its needs, the nature of the senses, ideas of social cooperation and individual self-fulfillment... The economic, in short, always presupposes a lot more than itself. It is not just a matter of how the markets are behaving. It concerns the way we become human..." Capitalism dehumanizes and destroys, and fascism dehumanizes and destroys on a much larger scale. One form of this is process is an intensification of social control.

Marxism's claim to being a sound social science is based upon its scientific approach to studying social phenomenon. It corresponds to scientific standards of observation and evaluation. Even those who do not identify themselves as Marxists, express Marxist postulates of life when they honestly study and reveal the essence of specific relationships.

**Racism and Social Control**

Michelle Alexander, in her best-selling book, *The New Jim Crow*, wrote: "In my experience, people who have been incarcerated rarely have difficulty identifying the parallels between these systems of social control. Once they are released, they are often denied the right to vote, excluded from juries, and relegated to a socially segregated existence. Through a web of laws, regulations, and informal rules, all of which are powerfully reinforced by social stigma, they are confined to the margins of mainstream society and denied access to the mainstream economy. They are legally denied the ability to obtain employment, housing, and public benefits -- much as African Americans were once forced into segregated, second class citizenship in the Jim Crow era." When former inmates do get jobs, they are often the lowest paid, and often the most oppressive.

We see that this mode of outlook, often termed 'economic determinism'
for which Marxism has been criticized, is recognized by serious social scientists like Michelle Alexander because it corresponds to social reality. The idea of economic exploitation and oppression in a capitalist society is not a new concept illuminated by anti-racist social theorists in their explanations of racism. Ms. Alexander goes on to write: "The concept of race is a relatively recent development. Only in the past few centuries, owing largely to European imperialism, have the world's people been classified along racial lines. Here, in America, the idea of race emerges as a means of reconciling chattel slavery - as well as the extermination of American Indians -- with the ideals of freedom preached by whites in the new colonies. That is, racism was an ideological construct invented to rationalize and justify pre-existing economic relationships between people that were based on exploitation and oppression."

Ms. Alexander goes onto explain that indentured white servants were the dominant way to secure cheap labor in early colonial days. However, Bacon's Rebellion around 1675, united Black slaves, indentured servants and poor whites in a revolutionary effort to overthrow the planter elite that was exploiting all of them. Terrified at this powerful unified multi-racial force, the capitalist elite devised a different strategy of social control.

Ms. Alexander explains: "They abandoned their heavy reliance on indentured servants in favor of importing more Black slaves" from non-English speaking African countries (and not English-speaking slaves from the West Indies.) "These slaves (from Africa) would be far easier to control and far less likely to form alliances with poor whites. Fearful that such measures might not be sufficient to protect their interests, the planter class took an additional precautionary step, a step that would later be known as a "racial bribe.' Deliberately and strategically, the planter class extended special privileges to poor whites in an effort to drive a wedge between them and black slaves. White settlers were allowed greater access to Native American lands, white servants were allowed to police slaves through slave patrols and militias, and barriers were created so that free labor would not be placed in competition with slave labor.

These measures effectively eliminated the risk of future alliances between black slaves and poor whites. Poor whites suddenly had a direct, personal stake in the existence of a race-based system of slavery." All of these measures were driven by economic considerations, the desire to hold onto and maintain a particular economic mode of production and control, capitalism, exactly what Marx and Engels discovered and wrote about in the mid 1800's. This tactic of pitting Blacks and whites against each other, Blacks against Latinos, and other races and nationalities against each other is the tried and true tactic of rulers - divide and conquer. It has been central to capitalist rule since its earliest days.
Economics is at the center of this unfolding story.

**Defeat Fascism**

The endeavor to defeat the right and fascism requires reaching a scientific understanding of all the historical determined conditions which made capitalism, and its fascist form, possible. Marxists are the main opposition forces which fully understand (1) the underlying causes of various social illnesses, like fascism, (2) the practical methods of identifying and using the best strategies and tactics to maximize the movement’s strength, (3) the need to unite all left and anti-fascist forces in democratic organizational non-sectarian cohesion, (4) that society is conditioned by its economic base, (5) the impact capitalist social relationships have on collective human psychology and culture, (6) how and why capitalism is constantly trending toward crisis and self-destruction, (7) why fascism is a logical, though not inevitable, development of capitalism in crisis, and (8) why ideologically sound and comprehensive solutions are needed - not half measures, like backing Hillary Clinton in the Democratic primaries when Bernie Sanders was within reach of getting the Democratic party nomination, as one of many examples.

We cannot afford to make the mistakes made in Germany in 1918-1919 when the left tried but failed to come to power, in Italy in 1920 when Mussolini came to power, and again in Germany in the late 1920's and early 1930's when Hitler came to power, namely having a divided left and progressive movement. We have to find ways to cooperate with each other, build left unity, and keep our focus on the main threat - to defeat the right and fascism, while preparing to wage the struggle for the only solution to the serious inherent problems of both capitalism and its more brutal brother, fascism, and that is the fight for socialism.

*Alex Krehbiel is an inmate in a California maximum security prison. He is the founder of the CCDS Prison Chapter, and a member of the National Coordinating Committee of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism.*
How Norway Avoided Becoming a Fascist State

By George Lakey

Yes! Magazine Reprint, originally Posted Feb 16, 2017

Instead of falling to the Nazi party, Norway broke through to a social democracy. Their history shows us polarization is nothing to despair over.

Donald Trump’s obvious affection for authoritarians is prompting worried comparisons of our polarized country to the polarized Germany of the 1920s and ’30s. Since I’m known to see in polarization both crisis and opportunity, my friends are asking me these days about Hitler, the worst-case scenario.

I grant the possibility of the United States going fascist, but argue that will not happen if we choose the practical steps taken by progressive Nordic social movements when they faced dangerous polarization. Consider the Norwegians, who experienced extreme polarization at the same time as the Germans did.

The Norwegian economic elite organized against striking laborers and produced a polarized country that included both Nazi Brown Shirts goose-stepping in the streets and Norwegian Communists agitating to overthrow capitalism. Many Norwegians were flattered by the Nazi belief that the tall, blue-eyed blonde was the pinnacle of human development. Others vehemently denounced the racism underlying such beliefs.

The politician Vidkun Quisling, an admirer of Hitler, organized in 1933 a Nazi party, and its uniformed paramilitary wing sought to provoke violent clashes with leftist students. But progressive movements of farmers and workers, joined by middle-class allies, launched nonviolent direct action campaigns that made the country increasingly ungovernable by the economic elite.
Quisling reportedly held discussions with military officers about a possible coup d'etat. The stage was set for a fascist “solution.”

Instead, Norway broke through to a social democracy. The majority forced the economic elite to take a back seat and invented a new economy with arguably the most equality, individual freedom, and shared abundance the developed world has known.

The key to avoiding fascism?
An organized left, a strong vision & broad support.

In some ways Norway and Germany were similar: predominantly Christian, racially homogeneous, and suffering hugely in the Great Depression. But Germany's workers movement failed to make common cause with family farmers, unlike Norway's alliance. The German left was also split terribly within itself: Communist vs. Social Democratic.

The split was over vision for the new society. One side demanded abolition of capitalism, and the other side proposed partial accommodation. They were unwilling to compromise, and then, when the Social Democrats took power, armed rebellion and bloody repression followed. The result was the Third Reich.

Meanwhile in Norway, the Norwegian Workers’ Party crafted a vision that seemed both radical and reasonable and won majority support for their view despite the dissent of a very small Communist Party. Grassroots movements built a large infrastructure of co-ops that showed their competency and positivity when the government and political conservatives lacked both. Additionally, activists reached beyond the choir, inviting participation from people who initially feared making large changes. Norwegians also took a different attitude toward violence. They chose nonviolent direct action campaigns consisting of strikes, boycotts, demonstrations, and occupations—a far less fearsome picture than Nazi Brown Shirts and street fighting. Norway therefore lacked the dangerous chaos that in Germany led the middle classes to accept the elite’s choice of Hitler to bring “law and order.”

The Norwegian set of strategies—vision, co-ops, outreach, and nonviolent direct action campaigns—is within the American skill set.

The Movement for Black Lives recently proposed a new vision for the United States that is attracting attention for the scope of its agenda, its commitment to inclusion, and fresh strategic thinking. The Black Lives movement showed its commitment to coalition-building when it gathered in solidarity at Standing Rock this fall, connecting two massive progres-
sive movements. Standing Rock showed the world march by march how nonviolent direct action campaigns win hearts and minds. And Bernie Sanders’ gift to electoral politics is an inspired, energized, unified movement built around the desire for economic equality and opportunity. He pulled people from the right as well as the left. The election is spurring many more people to be involved in struggle, and infrastructure like co-ops are prospering. Polarization is nothing to despair over. It’s just a signal that it’s time for progressives to start organizing.

References


George Lakey wrote this article for “Why Science Can’t Be Silent”, the Spring 2017 issue of YES! Magazine. George recently retired from Swarthmore College, where he was Eugene M. Lang Visiting Professor for Issues in Social Change. While there, he wrote “Viking Economics” after interviewing economists and others in the Nordic countries. It is the ninth among his books, all of which have been about change and how to achieve it.

By Paul Krehbiel

Donald Trump won the presidency in November 2016 on the promise of jobs, coupled with racism, nationalism, and misogyny. He launched attacks on human rights, promoted corporate power, appealed to white workers by scapegoating immigrants and Muslims, and ramped up militarism and authoritarianism.

A number of scholars have written about many of these characteristics in previous era's, such as Robert Paxton and others, as they were key elements of fascist regimes that came to power in Europe after WWI, especially Mussolini in Italy in 1922, and Hitler in Germany in 1933.

Some writers today are asking, "Is Trump a fascist, and will he bring fascism to the US?" While Trump's first 100 days in office aren't as brutal as Hitler's and Mussolini's in their early days in power, it's still too early to tell. Also, a massive resistance movement is throwing a wrench into Trump's game plan. But Trump's statements and actions have alarmed people from all walks of life. And history has shown that a country can turn to the right very quickly.

Millions of people are protesting Trump's ascension to power, beginning with the powerful Women's Marches the day after Trump assumed office. Street demonstrations, rallies, mass Congressional phone calls and Town Hall meetings, and much more have continued since. Discussions abound regarding how best to build this resistance movement. While we can learn from many sources, the success of the United Front and Popular Front strategies of the 1930's and beyond provide important lessons for us today.

The United Front and Popular Front strategy was presented by Georgi Dimitrov, leader of the Bulgarian Communist Party and a leader of the Communist International at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International in 1935. Its primary objective was to defeat fascism. Elements of this strategy were promoted by socialist workers organizations in a
number of countries, including the US, even before Dimitrov's speech. But Dimitrov's speech brought together these early lessons and presented a comprehensive analysis and plan.

Dimitrov wrote that "Fascism is an open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic, the most imperialistic elements of financial capitalism." He had witnessed fascism first-hand in Germany when he and others were arrested in 1933 soon after Hitler became Chancellor, and falsely charged with starting the Reichstag on fire, the German Parliament. Dimitrov defended himself in court and was acquitted. Hitler was infuriated and used the fire as an excuse to crack down on democratic rights and increase repression.

In his report Dimitrov said that all working-class and socialist organizations should work together in a United Front to defend the interests of workers and the working-class, and to resist and fight to defeat and overthrow fascism. He then said this United Front should also promote the creation of a broader Popular Front that would be comprised of the forces within the United Front but would reach out to all other sectors of society that are against fascism, including capitalists who opposed it.

Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy were arresting and killing targeted groups in their own countries, and invading foreign lands, waging war, and taking over other governments. They were rolling over traditional defense forces with lightening speed and power, some of whom surrendered in the face of vastly superior military power. Fear spread across Europe and beyond. This dire state of affairs led the Communists to develop a better, more comprehensive strategy for fighting and defeating fascism.

**Fascism and the Crisis of Capitalism**

Dimitrov described the roots and rise of fascism as a logical response, from the point of view of capitalists, to resolve the severe internal contradictions and crises within capitalism, reverse its falling rate of profit, and save the capitalist system from growing turmoil, chaos and threat of collapse or overthrow. The solution was to merge the most reactionary sectors of monopoly and finance capital with strong right-wing political and military forces, establish a dictatorship, and crush all opposition.
The goal was to stop capitalism from hemorrhaging assets and end all threats to its power and rule. Its chief method was to cripple democratic institutions and working-class organizations such as unions that the working-class and the people as a whole had used to wrest concessions from capital in the past, which cut into capitalist's profits. The result of imposing fascism was the further enrichment of select corporations and political groups, and their dictatorial control of the government, the economy, and the major institutions of society.

Today in the US we see the merger of right-wing political and corporate forces at the highest level of government, in the persons of billionaire real estate mogul Donald Trump in the president's office, with former CEO of Exxon Mobil Rex Tillerson as Secretary of State, General James "Mad Dog" Mattis as head of the Department of Defense, combined with extreme right-wing, neo-fascist media white supremacist and former Goldman Sachs banking executive Steve Bannon as Trump's chief strategist and advisor, to name just four. While capitalism is not on the verge of collapse, it is wrought with growing internal contradictions and crisis that the ruling capitalist class finds increasingly difficult to resolve.

While this merger of corporate and extreme right-wing power are key elements in the construction of fascism, no one can predict whether the group around Trump will try to impose a fascist regime, or not. Nor can anyone answer the question, if the Trumpists move more decisively toward fascism will it be similar to Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy? If it happens here, there could be features of Nazi Germany, or some other fascist or right-wing country, or develop its own unique forms of right-wing control. A major motivator could be another major economic crisis. While there are some similarities between Trump's group, and Hitler's and Mussolini's groups, there are also differences that should be recognized. It is not ordained that fascism will come to America. Much depends upon the size and scope and direction of the anti-Trump, anti-fascist resistance movement. There are good historical examples of mass movements that stopped fascism. One country that succeeded in the early 1940's was Norway; George Lakey's article above outlines Norway's successful movement and strategy. Other countries overthrew fascist regimes, and some of those established socialism (such as in Eastern Europe at the end of WWII). There are enough warning signs within the Trump movement to cause concern, and impel us to plan for a sharper turn to the right.

**Popular Front: Alliance of Necessity**

Unfortunately, the leaders and major political forces in most European countries in the 1920's and 1930's, for the most part, weren't prepared for the rise of Hitler and Mussolini, nor other right-wing dictators in
other countries. Divisions and sectarianism on the left and within the ruling classes of many countries existed, as well as among other sectors of society, and there was an under-estimation of just how serious the threat was until it was too late. Much horror, suffering and the deaths of tens of millions resulted.

In 1939, the United Kingdom and France and other smaller states joined forces to fight Nazi Germany, Italy and Japan. France succumbed, but a left-led resistance organized a French underground anti-fascist movement. The Soviet Union joined the fight against the Nazi's in June of 1941 after Germany invaded the USSR, and the USA joined in December 1941 after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. Out of necessity the UK and the USA and smaller capitalist countries recognized that they had to ally with every country opposed to fascism, and that included the socialist Soviet Union, an alliance that the world Communist movement had advocated since 1935. The capitalist countries put aside their anti-communism temporarily and joined forces with the Soviet Union, creating a Popular Front against fascism. The UK, USA and other capitalist countries also saw the necessity of creating a broad Popular Front in their own countries to mobilize and unite all forces in every society to build the greatest power possible to defeat fascism. Communists, socialists, and trade unionists worked together with major capitalists, including joining the military in capitalist countries including the USA, the UK and others to fight fascism. This strategy, and this strategy alone, was responsible for defeating fascism. Dimitrov's strategy was published as a book, For a United and Popular Front. A similar broad front is emerging in the US in the resistance to Trump today, which is exactly what is needed.

Some on the left opposed the Popular Front strategy, believing that it meant selling out to capitalism and the corporate billionaires. When Dimitrov proposed his strategy to defeat fascism, he did not intend that the working-class, the unions and the left give up their views, nor their independent organizations, nor their rights and struggles. Nor did the capitalists give up their support for capitalism. The Popular Front was a necessary temporary multi-class alliance to amass enough power to achieve a common goal: the defeat of fascism. The left, and especially the Communist Parties in many countries, including the US, pursued this strategy even before Dimitrov's 1935 speech and especially after.

**Opening doors to millions**

The United and Popular Front also opened doors to the left that had not been open before, allowing socialists and communists to talk to millions of people through the mass organizations of that time, the unions, civil rights organizations and more. This interaction helped raise the political consciousness of millions of people, won improvements in the daily
lives of many millions, and made leftist and socialist ideas and programs an accepted and fundamental part of the fabric of our society. These initiatives resulted in winning many New Deal programs including Social Security, the Works Progress Administration which created millions of jobs for the unemployed, Unemployment Insurance, the Wagner Act to protect union organizing, Fair Labor Standards Act, the Farm Security Administration Act, Civilian Conversation Corps, Federal Emergency Relief Administration, and more. All of these embodied the idea that the welfare and basic rights of all the people were to be supported and that the government would act to mandate it. These programs, all containing elements of socialism, had and continue to have strong support from the majority of the American people today.

The socialists, Communists and other activists did broad outreach everywhere, and helped build industrial unions in the 1930's and 1940's, fought Jim Crow racism, and simultaneously contributed to the defeat of fascism. As a result, the Communist Party USA gained a wider acceptance in society, and grew from less than 10,000 members to 100,000 members over the course of ten years. This broad approach to organizing not only brought victories to many social justice movements in the 1930's and 1940's, but carried over to organizing the civil rights move-
ment in the 1950's and 1960's, the anti-war movement during the war in Vietnam, the women's movement, the LBGTQ movement, the Occupy Wall Street movement of 2011, and the anti-Trump resistance and social justice movements of today.

The Popular Front, with socialists and capitalists working together to defeat fascism in the 1940's, was temporary and short-lived -- yet it accomplished its mission. Soon after fascism was defeated in 1945, the capitalist elite in the United States immediately turned against the left, domestically and internationally. In Greece, for example, the US capitalist class and their politicians in government supported the Greek capitalists and right-wing forces to crush a powerful Greek Communist-led movement for liberation and socialism. In the US, the US corporate elite launched a propaganda campaign to malign Communists, socialists and other progressives by launching an anti-communist crusade that painted anyone left of center as a Communist. This right-wing movement purged Communists, socialists, progressives and principled strong-willed liberals from their unions, teaching jobs, from Hollywood and many other sectors of society. This was a part of capitalism's overall ramping up of the Cold War to oppose and weaken leftism everywhere in the world in order to roll back the gains the working class had made. The attack was so ruthless that it wounded the left nearly everywhere. In the US even the broad liberal mainstream of society, most of whom supported capitalism, was retaliated against and weakened. Liberalism, in the eyes of this conservative ruling capitalist bloc, opened up society to a discussion of different ideas and different views. Some might be leftist views. This was seen as a threat to their singular, right-wing philosophy and control of the world as they wanted to shape it. But even the most repressive conditions were successfully resisted. Fascist Italy was one such place.

**Togliatti and Underground Organizing**

Palmiro Togliatti, leader of the Italian Communist Party, developed a strategy to deal with extremely repressive conditions. He deepened the strategy to fight fascism inside Italy where unions were banned, democracy crushed, and repression ran rampant. Togliatti told Communist Party workers in a series of secret lectures conducted underground that they had to go where ever workers went. There were popular local social clubs where workers went after work to drink beer and wine and socialize. The Fascist Party had come into many of these clubs and put their fascist emblem on the door. Many Communist and other progressive workers stayed away, repelled by the fascist emblem and fascist speeches inside, refusing to be seen with or associating with fascists. Yet, these clubs were a major gathering place for workers, since most of their own social organizations had been banned.
Based upon a sober assessment of the objective conditions in Italy under Mussolini, Togliatti told the Communist workers and their allies that they had to go inside those social clubs with the fascist emblem on the door and socialize with the workers. Not everyone at these clubs agreed with the fascist program, Togliatti explained. Listen to what people talked about, how they reacted to news reports about Fascist activities, or Resistance activities, he told them. When a worker was seen questioning a Fascist act, sit with him and become friends. Listen and contribute to the conversation, helping the worker see other things that he may not have noticed. Help him make connections, advance his political consciousness, and when the time is right, agree to meet outside the club, privately for more in depth discussions. Eventually this led to recruitment into Resistance activities, and among the most politically advanced, recruitment into the Communist Party.

Because the Communists adopted this method of work, they and the broader Resistance movement made an important contribution in the fight to bring down fascism in Italy. After Mussolini was captured and executed and the Fascist government overthrown, the Communist Party came out of the underground as one of the strongest political parties in the country. Their reputation in building the resistance was very high, and Communist candidates won election to many political offices in cities and towns across Italy in the post war period. In fact, some city and town councils had a majority of Communists in office and most of those cities and towns were among the best run, most honest, and most people oriented. Togliatti’s work was published in a book, Lectures on Fascism.

**Bernie Sanders was Correct: Stop Trump**

While we don’t have fascism in the United States as we go to press, there are lessons to be learned from these historical examples. When Bernie Sanders did not win the Democratic Party nomination, he endorsed Hillary Clinton for president. A number of Bernie supporters were angry and upset, and some felt betrayed. Others, including this Bernie supporter, argued that Bernie was correct by urging people to vote for Hillary, if only because Trump was much worse. Taking such a position does not mean that one supports everything Hillary stands for, such as her close ties to Wall Street and support for neo-liberalism, the fear that she may be too quick to go to war on inaccurate information and faulty arguments. While both Trump and Clinton support the capitalist class and neo-liberalism in varying degrees, the reality is that Trump is worse on almost every issue and measure. Trump is a part of the billionaire class, as Bernie called them, and his history and campaign abuses spell a sharp turn to the right. His policies are much more harmful to many more people on nearly every issue. Hillary, on the other hand, would have worked
for some positive programs, based on her past, such as her history of helping children, and support for education and a number of social programs. She also would have likely listened to her Wall Street backers when they demanded cuts in social services and other programs and rights that help the people, but she may also have been convinced to resist some of the worst demands of Wall Street after public input and political pressure, especially from her large base of voters.

Some are rightly concerned that support for a Popular Front strategy could lead to side-lining other important struggles, such as the struggle against racism and white supremacy, to name one, to maintain the Popular Front. We should not give up our principles to work in a Popular Front. For those of us who worked to elect Hillary Clinton to defeat the worse candidate Trump, we did not give up fighting against racism and white supremacy, nor our support for Black Lives Matter, nor our opposition to Wall Street and the capitalist system, nor our support for breaking up the banks and re-instating Glass-Steagall, nor our support for non-intervention in Cuba, Vietnam, Venezuela, Russia and other sovereign countries. Trump and the hard right-neo-fascists around him was and is the focus of our struggle today, and we should unite with all who oppose him and his reactionary policies and right-wing supporters, including capitalists - even if only temporarily, but without giving up our fight for all our social justice principles.

While Trump isn't a full-blown fascist as of this writing and so he is not analogous to Hitler and Mussolini, the anti-fascist strategies of the 1930's and 1940's used to defeat Hitler and Mussolini can guide us today to defeat Trump and his movement. That means in addition to building the largest possible political front against the Trump-Pence-GOP-rightwing-corporate alliance, we need to keep our focus on building the Resistance movement with working-class organizations and people, people of color, women, and others not part of the capitalist class or their supporters. We can recognize and welcome the broader forces that are opposing Trump, at least on some issues, including a number of business owners, members of the Republican Party both inside and outside of Congress, and some conservatives. But that doesn't mean supporting
their other backward ideas or supporting them as candidates. We should oppose their backward ideas and policies and support progressive candidates who will run against them. Working with people across the political spectrum to defeat the right, and building a left progressive social justice movement is not contradictory. With creativity and boldness, an advanced political understanding, and an open-hearted approach to broad sectors of the population, we can build both the anti-right movement to defeat Trump and the ultra-right, and build the social justice movement at the same time.

Fortunately, the anti-Trump Resistance is pursuing this path today and we are winning important advances. As our movement grows, a key task is bringing more unity, coordination and direction to the resistance, and helping the working-class, people of color and women take greater leadership, while supporting grass-roots progressive self-empowerment initiatives as the driving force.

*Paul Krehbiel is a long-time trade union and social justice activist who has worked on many election campaigns for pro-labor, pro-people candidates running in the Democratic Party, as well as for progressive third party candidates. He was a coordinator of Los Angeles Labor for Bernie, and is the Chair of the Organizing Committee of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism, and a National CCDS Co-Chair.*
Section 2. Building Social Justice Movements

Editor's Note: The following article is written by Hartman Deetz, a Native American activist of the Mashpee Wampanoag tribe and an environmental activist living in Richmond, California. Deetz went to the encampment at Standing Rock, North Dakota to support the Sioux Nation’s Water Protectors during their many months of protests to stop the Dakota Access Pipeline and to protect their tribal lands, water rights, and the environment.

Deetz writes here about growing up in his Native American culture and how it shaped his life, ultimately leading him to Standing Rock. While there, Deetz joined the broad coalition of Sioux and 200 other tribes, along with local farmers, ranchers, environmentalists and many people from all walks of life. Large numbers of protestors started arriving in mid-2016 to support the Sioux, who say the pipeline would pollute the Missouri River and Lake Oahe which provides the tribe’s water, as well as disturb the tribe’s sacred lands and burial grounds. The Sioux and their supporters want the pipeline halted, citing a rising number of pipeline accidents in recent years and harm to the environment. Many want the government to stop using fossil fuels and turn to wind, solar and other non-polluting energy. Over 400 protestors have been arrested.

The history of US government relations with First Nation people has been marked by war and repression. Since the establishment of the USA, the US government committed a war of genocide against the Native people, killing 90%, and privatizing the land they lived on bringing it under the burgeoning capitalist system for European settlers. The Native survivors were herded into colonial, apartheid-style reservations, where their children were removed to state-run boarding schools, often many miles away, where they
were taught English and Christianity and forbidden to study their own culture. Children who resisted were beaten. But Native people found ways to teach and preserve their language, culture, religion, and communal ways of living in harmony with the earth.

Hartman Deetz was a part of this work helping Native peoples to know their history and connect to their roots, especially in his native tribal homeland in Massachusetts. His work and that of many others laid the foundation for the broad scale support the Sioux Nation received at Standing Rock from many Native people's tribes from all across the United States and Canada. President Trump, an investor in Energy Transfer Partners - the company building the pipeline, signed executive orders January 24, 2017, just days after his inauguration, granting approval to resume construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline and the Keystone XL pipeline. Opposition continues.

Here, Hartman Deetz describes his coming of age in Native culture, and pays tribute to Penny Opal Plant, a First Nation woman from Yaqui/Choctaw/Cherokee/European heritage in the Bay area and who was a mentor to him. Penny Opal Plant is a power-house in the Native People's and climate justice movements, a founder of Idle No More, and was a featured speaker at our CCDS 8th National Convention in Emeryville, California in July 2016. She is an example of the many inspiring women that are emerging as powerful leaders of the resistance to Trumpism.

Native American's Upbringing in Native Culture: Mentoring and Support for Standing Rock

By Hartman Deetz

If you have been active in environmental politics in the greater San Francisco Bay area you are likely to have seen Pennie Opal-Plant speaking to the masses. She comes from a mixed settler and Choctaw heritage on her father's side and mixed Mexican settler and Yaqui on her mother's side, a tall woman with silver hair and a rebellious sparkle in her eyes. She is a long time defender of the environment, starting with the nuclear freeze movement in the early 1980s.
I first met Opal-Plant when I was thirteen years old, my grandfather brought me into her little Native arts shop on Solano Avenue in my neighborhood, Albany, California. My grandfather was traveling out from the eastern seaboard Mashpee Massachusetts, my tribe's homeland. Being so far from my homeland I did not have much Native community here in California, and most of the Native people like my dad, lived in Oakland or San Leandro as opposed to the predominately white town of Albany.

I would visit my dad in Oakland and be around the Native people who came to his house, but when I stepped outside my door it was a white world. In Opal-Plant's little shop I had access to culture and community in my neighborhood. Her space created an anchor for a kid like me who would have otherwise ended up assimilated into the American melting pot. She accepted all the Native people, from the rez or the city and even back in the 80s from Mexico or El Salvador as well as Canada.

In time I returned to my homeland and spent a decade working for my tribe and community doing language restoration, and other cultural work. I returned to the bay area in 2010 and got involved with Opal-Plant working on Keystone XL pipeline issues. Native people on both sides of the US Canadian border asserted treaty rights as one strategy to halt the pipeline. The Steven Harper administration in Canada, decided to address this problem by dissolving the treaties.

Four women came together to take action and started doing teach ins. Soon after a new movement swept across Canada, Idle No More (INM). Round dance flash mobs took over shopping malls, major intersections, and other public spaces across Canada. The online videos went viral, there was a new spirit of resistance in Indian country. This galvanized Canadian First Nation peoples across the board to take action. INM was taking on big oil, missing and murdered indigenous women, as well as Canada's long unresolved human crimes in its aboriginal boarding school program. Soon INM chapters were showing up in Native communities in the US and in colonized communities across the globe.

**Tribute to Penny Opal-Plant**

One day I stopped by Opal-Plant's shop and found out she had started a local INM affinity group, she told me "it really spoke to me that it was four women who started this international movement over their virtual kitchen table." We began rather small as a group with regular small actions at the Canadian consulate and Richmond's Kinder Morgan, a company intending to supply steel pipes for the Keystone XL pipeline, but soon enough the concerns of big oil struck close to home. Within clear view of Opal-Plant's living room window the Richmond Chevron refinery erupted into flames (http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Fire-at
Chevron-refinery-in-Richmond-3767221.php#photo-3293490) sending over fifteen thousand people to local hospitals, and even killing all of Opal-Plants chickens. From this point on the groups focused turned to the local extraction industry.

On the one year anniversary of the refinery explosion INM with the Sunflower Alliance marched on Chevron. The organizing and alliance building that Opal-Plant put into this march really helped to boost the visibility of INM as a local activist organization, and was a great success. (http://www.dailykos.com/story/2013/8/20/1232632/-Richmond-Chevron-Refinery). As a participant, I was excited to see this kind of action in Richmond. Throughout my life I had seen a lot of political activity in the bay area, but Oakland or Berkeley were usually the sites of protest. For me this was breaking new ground. I drove back home that night to my house in Pittsburg, California at the time, down a lonely highway. My route took me through a nearly fifteen mile stretch of undeveloped rolling grassy hills, broken in the middle by a small power plant with three smoke stacks pouring out pollution. Out of sight out of mind. I would drive past three more refineries on my way home all the smoke stacks releasing plumes into the sky.

Chevron Refinery Protests

I remember in the report back after the march on Chevron mentioning to Pennie how “it would be cool if we could get some direct action at the refineries where I live”. But then again a lot of things would be cool IF..... Pittsburg, California is a small working class town, in historically conservative contra costa county. To me the idea that people could or even would mobilize against the working-class pacifier of "jobs vs. the environment" seemed impossible to me, but Pennie Opal-Plant has a certain kind of magic. A week later it seems, she had a meeting planned with two women working on a local rail terminal expansion to deliver crude oil from the Alberta tar sands to Pittsburg, California for refinement. Pamela Arruz and Rosa Fallon met with us at a small cafe and we talked about the issues the plan of walking from place-to-place along what we referred to as "the refinery corridor" began popping up. Meetings like this often create to-do lists that come back to be reported at the next meeting, but as we stood up Opal-Plant suggested that we scout out the route for the first leg of the walk. Beginning only a few blocks down the street and to the refinery in concord, and like that, in one meeting the healing walks were formed.

INM began showing up in support of new allies in the refinery corridor (http://ww2.kqed.org/science/2013/12/04/tank-battle-activists-take-aim-at-bay-area-crude-projects) helping to block permitting for projects on a local level starting with a victory in Pittsburg city council voting to
Pennie Opal Plant

reject the crude by rail terminal expansion. This local level pro-active approach would bring Opal-Plant to work with Shannon Biggs to create Movement Rights, an organization that provides educational workshops that show communities how to structure local laws to protect local interests, as well as how to advocate as citizens to propose changes in local policy. Through her work with Biggs, Opal-Plant was invited to attend the rights of mother earth summit in Ecuador where the indigenous women of the Americas defending mother earth treaty was written and signed. This would be a part of Opal-Plant's moving to the world stage as one of our generation's indigenous woman standing up for the environment.

The refinery walks also brought many of Opal-Plant's treaty sisters to the bay area to walk with us in prayer. Such as Ponca elder Casey Camp Horn-neck, from Oklahoma, where fracking is causing massive pollution in the groundwater, Crystal Leman from Canada, or Patti Gualingua from the Kichwa people of the Bobonaza river in the Ecuadorian Amazon. (http://amazonwatch.org/news/2013/1120-patricia-gualinga-warrior-for-the-amazon ) When the Standing Rock North Dakota became the epicenter of so many issues I was not surprised to see another of Opal-Plant's treaty sisters reporting from the scene. The familiar face of Kandi Mossett was reporting for the Indigenous Environmental Network. Mossett
had walked with us from rodeo to Richmond in 2015 talking about the conditions of the Bakken crude fields of North Dakota, the pollution of the earth and water, the smells of toxins in the air, and the man camps that normalized sexual violence and child abduction. And, it was not surprising that INM SF Bay was at the forefront of local support efforts in Northern California. From shutting down the Army Core of Engineers offices in San Francisco to defunding the banks funding the pipeline, Opal-Plant and INM SF Bay have been busy keeping up with the new developments.

Pennie Opal-Plant is a powerhouse, but also a very humble and human woman. She has often provided guidance and space to Native people who find themselves marginalized even within the Native community. She is a role model and mentor for young Native activists who have important voices and need to be empowered to use their voice. Opal-Plant told her employee some advice who was too shy to talk to customers "right now you are stuck in your shy little shell, I want you to try to break out of that shell and just open yourself up to the world." Isabella Zizi is now the youngest member of INM SF Bay, at age twenty-two, she has certainly come out of her shell, and is now quite the leader herself having taken major roles in organizing events like our Nov.15 Army Core of Engineers shut down that brought over five thousand out in the street. Zizi leading the charge megaphone in hand. Zizi said of Opal-Plant "she opened my eyes to the world of getting involved with the climate movement and it has been an amazing journey finding my true passion." Watching Zizi grow into the adult she is has reminded me of my time as a teenager unsure in the world and the person Opal-Plant has been to me. I could easily echo Zizi's words myself, "I have learned so much from Opal-Plant and the grandmothers of INM, she believed in me when I didn't believe in myself."

Every time leaders from the Standing Rock movement asked for national or international action in support and solidarity Opal-Plant would answer, gathering donations or taking action against the state and corporate offices involved in the DAPL pipeline. I was one of four INM SF Bay members to travel out to Standing Rock, to deliver funds and supplies, to help winterize the camp, and document and take part in actions and trainings. There was a final approval and clearing of the resistance camp at Standing Rock. On March 10th of this year, Zizi and Opal-Plant set out on each coast to be in the lead marching on the institutions of power, demanding that the values of life on this planet be respected; that we must think of the unborn generations, the animals and plants; that Native rights ARE human rights; and that water is more precious than oil. In DC Opal-Plant marched on the White House and in San Francisco Zizi marched on the federal building. Reflecting on these things Opal-Plant expressed some calm satisfaction "our group of indigenous grandmoth-
ers have come together in prayer for ten years, out of that came our Idle No More group and out of that the refinery corridor healing walks. People grew to trust our reputation for leadership and action, and now when we organize thousands show up to stand with us"

Now we are preparing for our fourth and final year of the refinery walks (http://www.refineryhealingwalks.com/) that have helped us all connect the dots from Pittsburg to Martinez and Benicia to Rodeo, or from Standing Rock to Ecuador and beyond. For many of the people who arrived in Standing Rock from the Bay Area they had familiarized themselves with prayer full action here on these walks. To approach the conflict from a place of what you love and want to protect, not a place of anger and what you want to destroy. They understood what it was to pray for your enemy, that their mind or heart might be healed to see the error of their ways. Pennie has a special gift for connecting people, with each other and themselves. She has a power of connecting Natives across borders, issues across class, and power across generations. She is one of an important generation of Native women leaders defending the earth, the divine feminine with the power of love for the good things in this world we must protect.

Hartman Deetz is a Mashpee Wampanoag of Massachusetts who grew up in the San Francisco Bay area. Deetz became involved in Native American issues as a teen, which led him to environmentalism. He returned to Massachusetts in 2000 and spent a decade working for his Native community through the tribe’s language reclamation program, youth mentoring, and representing the tribes at a local museum. He returned to the Bay area in 2010, got a BA in cultural education and community sustainability from Goddard College, and is active in Native issues and organizations.
Standing Rock: Challenging Colonialism: Reclaiming the Future

By Judy Jennings, Sonja Farah-de Vries, and Jardana Peacock

In November 2016, three Louisville-based women of various ages and backgrounds, traveled to Standing Rock to support the water protectors at Camp Oceti Sakowin. Most white Americans still know little or nothing about the place or the people of Standing Rock. This is not an accident. It is the result of colonialism, hundreds of years of making Native American people, history, culture, and sovereign rights invisible, along with the human and environmental injustice done to them.

Colonialism is rooted in the unlawful taking of Native lands. As explained on the Standing Rock website, the Great Sioux Reservation bordered by the east bank of the Missouri River in what is now North Dakota was established by the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie. Twenty-one years later, the US Congress reduced Sioux lands and divided the great reservation
into six separate ones. Standing Rock Reservation, bordered by the Cannonball River, is one.

Oceti Sakowin are the words designating Sioux people in their own language. As explained on the camp website, Oceti Sakowin is a unified encampment of Water Protectors dedicated to protecting our land and water against the Dakota Access Pipeline. We value assuring the welfare of all people by honoring human rights, treaties, agreements, and cultures. Our goal is to peacefully and prayerfully defend our rights, and rise up as one to sustain Mother Earth and her inhabitants. In the fall of 2016, the elders and young leaders of the camp began calling for people who care about justice and Mother Earth to stand with them and challenge colonialism.

Judi Jennings and Sonja Farah-de Vries joined a self-organized 18-person multi-racial, intergenerational national delegation to make the trip. Members of the delegation converged at the camp during the first week in November. As state-based violence against the water protectors escalated, the camp leaders made a special call for healers. Jardana Peacock, a spiritual activist, traveled to Standing Rock in late November with a caravan of healers.

Standing with the Water Protectors

During Jennings and Farah-de Vries’ stay at the camp, the days were still warm. The tipis, tents, and yurts clustered near the Cannonball River were surrounded by the autumn beauty of the plains. The weekend they arrived hundreds and hundreds of people came to stand with the protectors. Chiefs and elders came on horseback. Young natives ran all the way from Arizona. Veterans of many racial identities, ages and backgrounds came to protect the Water Protectors.

Jennings is a native Kentuckian with deep roots in Appalachia. At Standing Rock, she saw the links between the colonization of Native people and Appalachians. There, a US corporation threatened Indian sacred land and water. In eastern Kentucky, US and British coal companies took mineral rights through exploitative “broad forms deeds.” The US government, service providers, educators and mainstream media devalue Native and Appalachian people and demean and disrupt their cultures. Like the Sioux, Appalachians resist by telling true stories and forming organizations like Appalshop, media arts and education center, in the coalfields of Kentucky.

Farah-de Vries is a photographer, poet, and social justice activist who has participated in delegations and actions in Palestine and Cuba. At Standing Rock, she connected to the consistent messages about the im-
importance of joining together against our nation’s brutal profit driven system. She also saw that the camp was about intentional ways of living together and practicing human values. Surrounded by natural beauty and connected through Sioux prayers and rituals, she discerned how “we have to be patient with ourselves and each other and be guided by love.”

Jennings and Farah-de Vries experienced how the resistance at Standing Rock is not only about stopping a pipeline but also about deeply-held values of human connection to each other and to the earth. Jennings observed that, unlike her previous experiences of resistance and protest, being at Standing Rock asked more of activists, not only to be for or against something, but to act differently, to live in the world differently. Farah-de Vries knows being guided by love is easier said than done, but “The old ways of organizing won’t cut it anymore. Tradition, creativity, culture, and spirit must be braided into the ties that bind us in love and respect.”

Peacock sees that “Prayer and silence, these are practices that offer us the sustenance to show up for our work of changemaking. Without sustenance, how will we be able to show up at all? Or rather, what version of me/us will show up?” She reminds us, “we have allowed indigenous people to be invisible. We must recognize that genocide and slavery are the basis of the systems we have now.

And so, I/we...
Practice, to be able to show up for liberation.
Love, to connect deeper to a web of healing.
Rest, to revitalize.
Connect with the natural world,
so that we can listen to the sound of spirit.
Pray, for blessings to come.”

Judi Jennings is a lifelong Kentuckian who firmly believes we have better days ahead. She worked at Appalshop, served as founding director of the University of Louisville Women’s Center, and directed the Kentucky Foundation for Women from 1998 through 2014. Now semi-retired, she directs the Special Project, focusing on increasing supports for families affected by incarceration in Jefferson County, Kentucky.

Sonja Farah-de Vries is a Louisville Kentucky film maker, photographer, poet and activist. She is the daughter of the leftist activist Henry F. Wallace, and the sister of Carla Wallace, a co-founder of the national Standing Up for Social Justice, and of Naomi Wallace, a playwright. Sonja has participated in social justice delegations to Palestine and Cuba.
Jardana is a writer, spiritual activist, founder and educator at the Liberatory Leadership Project, which works to bring spiritual, mindful and holistic practice more centrally into justice movements. She is the author and curator of the "Practice Showing Up Guidebook."
My Experience at the Carl Bloice School Changed My Life

By Joshua Colon

Before I attended the Carl Bloice School and the CCDS Convention in the Bay Area, I couldn’t have predicted how it would change my life. I left feeling inspired to be an agent of change and to make that part of my career.

The School offered lectures on police brutality, the current status of Cuba, the history of unions and more. What inspired me most was when we discussed the major successes of the U.S. labor movement. Before attending the classes, I knew workers had to fight tooth and nail for every single protection they needed. At the School, I learned how the labor movement was involved in those fights and in the struggles for improvements in workers lives in general.

I’m currently studying to be an attorney. Prior to attending the School, my goal was to be a tax attorney. I believed that a lawyer could help bring about social change by donating a portion of their salary to the cause, rather than working directly in labor or employment law. The Carl Bloice School completely changed my thinking on that. I have since taken courses in anti-discrimination law, employment law and labor law. I plan on volunteering for the Department of Labor and the Unemployment Action Center. I’m contemplating a career in labor law, which wasn’t on my radar at all before attending the school.

I highly recommend the Carl Bloice School to anyone interested in learning about social justice. The classes provide a good mix of theory and practical information. You are also given the opportunity to discuss the
topics from people with backgrounds ranging from journalists to union representatives to attorneys. I expect everyone that attends to be inspired as I was, to make a concrete contribution to the cause of social justice.

*Joshua Colon is a law student in New York. He is President of the Universal Justice group at his college, which takes law students to other countries to study human rights issues.*
Participatory Democracy Defends Rights of African Americans in South Carolina

By Meta Van Sickle

While I was teaching class, I was able to hear an important local event that illustrated Democracy in action. It showed how local groups can help support each other and help build a multiracial unity. Several local groups supported the speaking engagement of Bree Newsome held on the College of Charleston campus specifically for these purposes. The groups included, but are not limited to Standing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ), Black Lives Matter (BLM), Indivisible Charleston, We the People, and the Progressive Network. The synergistic activities across the groups are most important to the future of our country—at least in my mind. One thing that activism taught me early on was the all politics are “local.”

Local politics are important for the broader society and in understanding trends that take similar shapes around the globe. One such current global trend is populism. In our U.S. society, it is often hard for us to show up to defend the “other” especially in the face of aspects of populist movements. We often want to, but really don’t know what to say or how to act. This last week in Charleston, SC has revealed some deeply seeded problems and causes me to think about both our Constitution and our actions. It caused me to relate to people in several groups who focus on specific topics and ways to support each other. So, as I sat in my class listening to the actions on the street my colleagues and local SURJ leaders were on the street working for multiracial unity. More specifically working against white supremacy.

Just to provide a little local background information, on Saturday February 19, 2017 a group called “Secessionists” arrived and flew confederate battle flags from the rooftop of a parking garage across the street
from my office. Then on February 22, 2017 they stood across the street from the classroom where I was teaching. They were protesting the Bree Newsome speech that was happening on campus. Just as a reminder, Bree Newsome is the African American woman who scaled the flagpole outside the SC Statehouse and removed the Confederate flag that was flying there. She completed her racial justice action shortly after the Mother Emanuel AME church shooting on Juneteenth.

As is often the case, when an event can be construed as “negative” to one group that group will protest. In this case, protesters from many groups were simultaneously on the streets. It seems that the vast majority of people on the streets were there in support of Bree Newsome and her choice of participation about a highly charged political symbol. A few people were there carrying a Confederate battle flag. It seems that one BLM person did jump a police line as “remove” one flag before being arrested. Because I am not black and did not live his life I can’t imagine what feelings must have been running through his blood when he did the act that resulted in his arrest. I do know that our local groups helped raise the bail money to get him released from jail. This is a case of a local action within which we can participate. Over time because of the collaboration of the local groups we will learn about his feelings and reasons for his actions. This is also an example of how Left groups can work together. SURJ and BLM combined efforts to talk about the event and raise the bail money.

Our local groups work to maintain unity, practice Democracy and learn about activism. While we are fully supportive of 1st Amendment Rights and support all right to free speech it is problematic when the actions go from legal free speech and move into actions that are legally reprehensible and filled with hate and violence. For example, when there is Facebook post that reads like the following statements:
Openly armed Trump supporters in downtown Atlanta, GA

And then when a reader finds posts like these the statements are combined in the human mind many of us become very concerned. These are actions of white supremacists. They are not actions that serve us in forming a multiracial unity. These actions are designed to separate us and not bring us together for a larger good.

The following are some ways that our local groups are working to increase the participation in democratic processes:

• Our mayor enforces a Charleston City law that prohibits flying flags, banners, and posters from public buildings. Our Mayor took a stand on the policy and remains firm in that flying flags and banners from atop parking garages and other structures is not acceptable.

• Our local SURJ group is speaking to these issues in a way that many of us are unable to do. I did not grow up in the South and my ancestors were not active in the “War of Northern Aggression”. However, many people do have ancestors who were involved in the Civil War. Our local SURJ leader wrote the following message with words that help us express our thoughts and support our actions.

• A local SURG leader wrote, “My name is Kat Morgan. My great-great-grandfather was a Confederate soldier in Georgia. I am deeply offended by the flying of the flag and their misrepresentation of its past and present meaning. I want to interrupt their narrative, and let the public know that not every Confederate descendant holds their views. I wrote this statement as a response and I invite you to join me and sign it. If you are
a Confederate descendant who is offended by this symbol, please sign this statement. It will be sent to newspapers and published online, so please only sign if you are willing to make your opposition public. The intention is to interrupt the narrative that those of us with Confederate ancestors, especially white Southerners, all see this flag as a symbol of "heritage not hate." The intention is to set the record straight.

• Please sign and share this with others if you agree with this statement: We are Confederate descendants. We strongly disagree with Seccessionists' misinterpretation of the Confederate battle flag. We know this flag was and is a symbol of slavery, racism, and brutality. It represents a time when white people could commit violence against enslaved Africans legally, with impunity. People who flew this flag, including our ancestors, fought in the Civil War to preserve an economy which treated blacks as property and to maintain the legal right of whites to enslave blacks. Today it is a symbol of white supremacy. It is flown primarily by white supremacists, as it was by Dylann Roof, the mass murder who killed 9 people at Mother Emanuel church in Charleston, SC, in June 2015. We reject their assertions. We stand in opposition to them and this flag. We defy their contention that they represent Confederate descendants. We disagree with their interpretation of the past. The flying of the flag and their misrepresentation of its past and present meaning offend us.”

• A second response to an action that occurred at the Bree Newsome event--one of our Black Lives Matters leaders jumped over police line yellow tape and grabbed a Confederate flag. He was immediately arrested and of course, many comments were made about his actions from the very positive to the very negative. A local SURG leader noted, “I do not live this man’s life and I cannot feel all the pain that has to be associated with this symbol of white supremacy. I can say we must stand and help each other through this difficult time and hope that we are transitioning to a safer, kinder future space where we can have high human regard for each other.”

Finally, here are some of things we, as “white” people, can do when protesting that can be helpful.

• Remember that your life experiences are different from those with whom you are protesting. Help each other know the violence and interpretations of actions of those with whom you are protesting to assist with better understanding.

• Make sure the most effected group is nearest the speaker. Give them the front rows and the front lines so that their stories are seen and heard.
Consider placing yourself between the authorities and the larger group of protestors to help alleviate some of the tensions.

- And above all listen and learn. They will ask for information and facts that you may have and once they trust you might ask for. We must learn to ask different questions and speak in ways that forward a movement. Just changing the use of the word terrorist changes the picture the mind sees. For example, if I say a terrorist killed nine people in the Mother Emanuel AME shooting if creates a different picture in many peoples’ minds than if I say a white supremacist killed nine people in the Mother Emanuel AME shooting. We need to be clear about what we are standing for, who we are standing with and ways to help create a world without white supremacy and replace it with multiracial unity.

Meta Van Sickle, Ph.D. is a Full Professor at the College of Charleston. A teacher with over 30 years of experience, Meta earned her Ph. D. in Science Education at the University of South Florida. Her interests in education include the study of race, class and gender, especially as it relates to policy and practice in current schooling. She is active in many local groups, from the South Carolina Progressive Network to the local chapter of Standing Up for Racial Justice and others.
Showing Up for Racial Justice

Excerpts from the Website

http://www.showingupforracialjustice.org

MISSION

SURJ is a national network of groups and individuals organizing White people for racial justice. Through community organizing, mobilizing, and education, SURJ moves White people to act as part of a multi-racial majority for justice with passion and accountability. We work to connect people across the country while supporting and collaborating with local and national racial justice organizing efforts. SURJ provides a space to build relationships, skills and political analysis to act for change.

VISION

We envision a society where we struggle together with love, for justice, human dignity and a sustainable world.

SHARED VALUES

We need you defecting from White supremacy and changing the narrative of White supremacy by breaking White silence.

– Alicia Garza, co-founder Black Lives Matter and Special Projects Director at the National Domestic Worker Alliance
CALLING PEOPLE IN, NOT CALLING PEOPLE OUT

Our focus is on working with White people who are already in motion. While in many activist circles, there can be a culture of shame and blame, we want to bring as many White people into taking action for racial justice as possible.

_The battle is and always has been a battle for the hearts and minds of White people in this country. The fight against racism is our issue. It’s not something that we’re called on to help People of Color with. We need to become involved with it as if our lives depended on it because really, in truth, they do._ — Anne Braden

TAKE RISKS, MAKE MISTAKES, LEARN AND KEEP GOING

We know that we will have to take risks. Everyday, People of Color take risks in living their lives with full dignity and right now we are in a moment where young Black people are taking risks every day. We challenge ourselves and other White people to take risks as well, to stand up against a racist system, actions and structures every day. We know that in that process, we will make mistakes. Our goal is to learn from those mistakes and keep showing up again and again for what is right and for racial justice.

_Tap into Mutual Interest_

We use the term mutual interest to help us move from the idea of helping others, or just thinking about what is good for us, to understanding that our own liberation as white people, our own humanity, is inextricably linked to racial justice. Mutual interest means we cannot overcome the challenges we face unless we work for racial justice. It means our own freedom is bound up in the freedom of people of color. For Anne & Carl Braden, it was mutual interest that caused them to de-segregate an all-white neighborhood in Louisville Kentucy in 1954. It was a be-
lief in what was right and the idea of showing up again and again for justice.

It really boils down to this: that all life is interrelated. We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied into a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. — Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH COLLECTIVE ACTION

There can be an impulse for White people to try to get it right— to have the right analysis, language, friends, etc. What SURJ was called upon to do at our founding in 2009 was to take action— to show up when there are racist attacks, when the police attack and murder People of Color in the street, their homes, our communities, in challenging structural racism, immigrant oppression and indigenous struggles. We maintain ongoing relationships, individually and organizationally with leaders and organizations led by People of Color. We also know it is our work to organize other White people and we are committed to moving more White people for collective action. We can’t re-build the world we want alone— we must build powerful, loving movements of millions taking action for racial justice.

One more thing. You may not get the validation you hunger for. Stepping outside of the smoke and mirrors of racial privilege is hard, but so is living within the electrified fences of racial oppression— and no one gets cookies for that. The thing is that when you help put out a fire the people whose home was in flames may be too upset to thank and praise you— especially when you look a lot like the folks who set the fire. That’s OK. This is about something so much bigger than that.

There are things in life we don’t get to do right. But we do get to do them. — Ricardo Levins Morales

ENOUGH FOR EVERYONE

One of the things that dominant white culture teaches us is to feel isolation and scarcity in everything we do. SURJ believes that there is enough for all of us, but it is unequally distributed and structurally contained to keep resources scarce. We can fight the idea and the structures that
limit and control global capital by creating a different world together. We believe that part of our role as white people is to raise resources to support people of color-led efforts AND to engage more white people in racial justice. Together we can make the world we want and need.

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world.

_There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others._ - Marianne Williamson

**GROWING IS GOOD**

Sometimes we get afraid that if we bring in new people who do not talk our talk or “do it right” it will mess up what we are building. However, if we do not bring in new people, our work cannot grow. And if our work does not grow, we cannot bring the numbers of white people needed to undermine white supremacy and join People of Color led efforts for fundamental change. Longtime white southern civil rights activist Anne Braden once said that we have to stop believing that we are the only special ones who can be part of the work for racial justice. We must grow our groups and our movement, understanding that welcoming people in, even at the risk of it being messy, is deeply part of what we are being called to do.

**WHY WE ORGANIZE**

We live in a time of great hope and possibility, yet the potential for a just world for all of us is not possible when racism and oppression keep us divided. This can make us forget how closely connected we truly are. Racism is still present throughout all of our contemporary institutions and structures. Racism is devastating to People of Color and is closely intertwined with all systems of oppression. It robs all of us- White people and People of Color- of our humanity. We honor and learn from the long history of People of Color and White people who have been unrelenting in their struggles for racial justice, and ending all systems of oppression. We are showing up to take our responsibility as White people to
act collectively and publicly to challenge the manipulation of racist fear by the ruling class and corporate elite. We know that to transform this country we must be part of building a powerful multi-racial majority to challenge racism in all its forms.

To start a SURJ affiliate group, please read our chapter and affiliate group building toolkit and fill out our affiliate contact form. http://www.showing-upforracialjustice.org
Nissan Auto Workers in Mississippi Build Labor and Community Support for Union Drive

By Rebekah Barber


Canton, Mississippi — located in Madison County, just north of the capital city of Jackson — was a historic epicenter of the civil rights movement. It was where the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) focused a key voter registration campaign in 1963, and where Freedom Summer organizers launched successful voter engagement initiatives, known as Freedom Days.

But as in other areas of the South, when people have organized for greater say and power in Canton, they have often been met with backlash. During Freedom Summer, for instance, there were 32 incidents of assault against civil rights workers in Madison County, nine churches were burned, and ordinances that prohibited picketing and leafleting were passed to discourage further organizing.

Today, workers at the city's Nissan plant are facing a familiar backlash in their 12-year struggle for the right to organize a union. On Saturday, Jan. 28, Nissan workers will continue this struggle with a National Day of Action. In a show of solidarity, this week cities across the South also steeped in civil rights history — Atlanta, Birmingham, Charlotte, Greensboro and Nashville — are organizing local actions to support the Canton workers and build regional pressure on Nissan to allow free union elections.

Everlyn Cage is one of the protesters who will be joining in the Day of Action. Cage began working at the vehicle assembly plant when it first opened in 2003, after Mississippi gave Nissan a $363 million tax incen-
tive to locate in Canton. At first, Cage liked the job at Nissan, but as time passed, her concerns grew. According to Cage, workers were only given four hours a month of personal time, leaving them unable to take vacation and sick leave. Cage told Facing South, "If we’re allowed to vote for a union, it will have an effect."

Most people work there with a fear over their head," says one Nissan worker. Of the Canton Nissan's 5,000 workers, 80 percent are African American and an estimated 40 percent are relegated to lower-wage and temporary positions, according to data compiled by the United Auto Workers. The vast majority of temporary workers are African American. Temporary workers earn on average $12 per hour with few opportunities for wage increases, compared to top-level Nissan direct workers, who earn more than $23 an hour.

A major issue: safety in the plant

Workers also point to safety problems at the plant. In 2007, Cage suffered a spine injury which led to her having to undergo surgery. Once she was able to return to the job, she was sent back to work in the same position that had triggered her injury. For five more years, Cage, an African-American woman, continued to work at Nissan until she was terminated after she suffered a second injury — this time of her lower back.

Ernest Whitfield, a current Nissan employee who also began working at the plant in 2003, decided to fight for a union mainly because of safety concerns and seeing how workers like Cage are terminated after an injury.

"Most people work there with a fear over their heads," Whitfield told Facing South. He said a union would be important for many workers who are afraid to report injuries for fear of termination.

**Harsh Opposition from Nissan**

Many workers have gone on record stating they believe a union would give them more protection and job security, but organizers say the company has vigorously opposed their efforts. Workers at the plant and the United Auto Workers say the company has harassed and intimidated those who have expressed support for union representation.

According to Cage and Whitfield, when workers tried to organize a union, they were shown videos that suggested the Canton plant would close if they unionized, and union advocates were also forced to work more strenuous hours.
Nissan workers organizing for a union in Canton, Mississippi received support from those gathered at a solidarity rally in Atlanta. (Photo by DeLane Adams)

Union leaders see building support in Mississippi, the South and even internationally as key to victory. Last year, the union brought a member of France’s National Assembly, Christian Hutin, to speak with employees about conditions at Nissan and urged him to use his influence to convince Nissan to allow a free election for union representation. The French government owns 20 percent of the shares of the auto company Renault, which in turn owns more than 43 percent of Nissan.

Rights Violated

Last December, the union filed grievances in The Netherlands, Japan and France with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development calling for "an end to the systematic, prolonged and serious violations of labor rights that have been taking place at Nissan North America Inc.’s plant in Canton, Mississippi.”

Though Cage is no longer working at the Canton plant, she will be supporting workers at the solidarity rally in Atlanta on Saturday. There, workers will rally outside a dealership and present elected officials with a letter of support for Nissan workers in Canton.

As for Whitfield, he attended a solidarity rally in Tennessee on Thursday. Whitfield says he is humbled by the amount of support workers have been shown by their community and glad to see his coworkers waking up. As Whitfield said, "A union is a basic right."
Rebekah Barber (@bekah_soul) is a researcher and writer at Facing South/Institute for Southern Studies focusing on racial justice, democracy and Southern history. As a student activist she organized around issues including voting rights, the Fight for $15 and Medicaid expansion. She holds bachelor's degrees in English and History from N.C. Central University in Durham, North Carolina.
10-month UAW Lockout at Honeywell Ends: Grassroots Solidarity Caps Workers’ Win in Indiana

By Frank Hammer

“The workers didn’t crawl back to work, they walked back to work.” This is how Lee Gloster, a Teamster and longtime South Bend labor activist, summed up the outcome of the 10-month lockout that Honeywell International inflicted on UAW members of Local 9 (South Bend, IN) and Local 1508 (Green Island, NY). Together the two locals represent about 360 workers who manufacture brake assemblies for commercial and military aircraft (Lockheed-Martin F-35s and Boeing 747s).

That’s just one of the many ways Honeywell International makes billions in profits from its far-flung corporate empire, employing 131,000 workers at over one thousand sites in 70 countries across the globe. A “Fortune 100” transnational described as a “$90 billion company,” its profit centers include the home and building industry, aviation, defense and space, oil and gas, industrial, chemicals and vehicles. It extracted a record $4.8 billion in profits from $40 billion in sales in 2015 – up almost $2 billion from 2012. 10% of sales come from government contracts. Fortune magazine lists Honeywell’s (recently retired) David Cote as one of the ten highest paid CEOs with $55.8 million total annual compensation.

Cote is the “Goliath” in this story, and “David” - the members of the two UAW Locals. The grueling 42-week lockout ended on February 25th, 2017 – when members of the two locals voted to ratify the third version of Honeywell’s “last, best and final offer.” The combined vote totals were 189 yes, 142 no.
Withdrawal of Some Honeywell Demands Brings End to Lockout

The Local Bargaining Team was able to defend members’ health care coverage from unilateral changes by management over the life of the five year agreement, retain paid sick days in a compromise settlement, and protect some seniority rights regarding shift preference, and temporary layoffs. But Honeywell got its way, too:

Gone are defined pensions for new hires (instead, 401K retirement accounts) and overtime premium pay after 8 hours (instead, only after 40 actual hours worked). The new agreement contains a weakened union security clause, allowing expanded employment of non-union contract workers, and rising health care deductibles and co-pays. The company was successful in terminating Supplemental Unemployment Benefits (SUB) but only after the accumulated SUB benefits are disbursed to eligible workers. Skilled Trades lines of demarcation protections may have been weakened.

‘Return to Our Roots Rally

The compromise settlement came after months of reduced output, and just 11 days after 150+ Local #9 members and supporters joined in a spirited “Return to Our Roots” solidarity rally held February 11, 2017. UAW Local 5, the other South Bend UAW local (representing Humvee and Mercedes assemblers and, formerly, Studebaker workers), hosted the rally.

Organizers, including the UAW #9 officers, chose that date to coincide with the UAW’s 80th anniversary of the Flint, Michigan Sit-down Strike. In 1937, the militant autoworkers forced GM to recognize their union. At the rally’s conclusion, locked-out workers and supporters drove to the gates at Honeywell to form a mass picket. They boisterously disrupted a line of vans attempting to transport replacement workers out of the plant to their motel rooms (paid for by Honeywell). Picketers chanted, “to hell with Honeywell!” and “one day longer, one day stronger!”

Four staff members representing South Bend Mayor "Pete" Buttigieg supported the mass picket (Buttigieg was in Washington DC) (Photo, L to
R) City Councilwoman Regina Williams Preston, North Central Indiana AFL-CIO President Tony Flora, and Mayor Buttigieg representative Cherri Peate at the picket line. Afterwards many of the protesters returned to Local 5 Hall to view a 1976 BBC documentary highlighting the Flint Sit Down.

The Company Was Out to Break the Union

Over 200 “scab” replacement workers were ushered into the factory the year before - supplied by Strom Engineering, a notorious strikebreaking firm. That was right after Honeywell assigned Dean Palmer to oversee its South Bend operations. Palmer came from Honeywell’s Metropolis Works Facility in Illinois where uranium yellowcake is converted into nuclear fuel. Under his reign 200+ members of United Steel Workers’ Local 7-669 were locked out not once but twice: for 14 months in 2010-11, and 8 months in 2014-15.

Keenly aware of Honeywell’s activity, Treder and Rodgers and many Local 9 members were convinced the company was out to break their local union. In Treder’s words, “Honeywell was following a crafted script.” Treder added: “the company was willing to go to great lengths in a conflict that wasn’t over monetary issues, it was about dignity.”

Just three weeks ahead of their contract’s expiration, Honeywell submitted its first “Last, Best and Final Offer:” the 2011 contract with 80% of its language deleted (with red lines crossing out entire paragraphs and even whole pages). As soon as the two locals’ members rejected management’s takeaways on May 9, 2016, the company replaced them. Salaried personnel and the “replacement” workers, who had been “shadowing” the UAW members on the shop floor, took their place.

Then-Vice President-elect Mike Pence Shows True, Anti-labor, Colors

According to labor writer Mike Elk, then-Indiana governor Mike Pence (and not Honeywell) tried to cripple the locked out workers’ resistance, by delaying their unemployment compensation. Backed by the UAW’s strike fund ($200/week per worker), the workers persevered until the
unemployment benefits were finally reinstated. Honeywell refused to resume negotiations for a full three months after it locked out its UAW workforce. Once it did, it dragged its heels. It waited until November to make minor adjustments, just when the unemployment benefits were to expire.

Contrary to both hierarchies’ expectations (Honeywell and the UAW), the South Bend workers rejected the barely-modified offer by a 70% majority (though the smaller Local 1508 in NY voted to ratify). South Bend workers voted “no” despite a UAW representative urging a “yes” vote at a contract explanation meeting.

**UAW #9 Members Determined to Protect Hard-won Gains**

According to Todd Treder, the local’s unique history played a role in the workers’ determined resistance. The week of the second ratification vote, November 12, 2016, coincided with the 80th anniversary of the young local’s victorious Sit-Down strike in 1936 (UAW #9 formed in 1935). That’s when the then-Bendix workers took control of the factory complex and won union recognition in less than a week. (Their sit-down preceded, and inspired, the Flint sit-down a month later).

The locked out workers had the notion that they would not let Honeywell undo all the hard-won gains. Besides, many of the workers were able to find alternative manufacturing employment in the area, and thus were in a relatively strong position to resist Honeywell’s demands. On both grounds, management miscalculated.

Treder and Rodgers told me that management sent a note – via a rep from the UAW’s Aerospace Department – requesting that Treder and Rodgers schedule another vote the day before the Christmas holidays on the same contract. The incentive: the workers would be returned to work in January, and receive their Holiday pay. They refused.

The holidays were looking somber for many of the locked-out workers and their families, were it not for generous material aid pouring in from area unions (including Teamster Local 364 representing school personnel, along with church donations, non-profits, and especially support from UAW Ford Local 551 in Chicago. Among several solidarity actions by the Local beginning shortly after the lockout started, the Local’s Motorcycle Committee organized 20 bikers to ride to South Bend with material support. With that support funneled through the nearby Mishawaka Food Pantry, Local #9 volunteers converted the Local Union Hall basement into a highly organized, well stocked food pantry and school supply depot. The Local’s Christmas tree was draped with holiday gift certificates.
The Autoworker Caravan lends Critical Support

Unexpected support came in early January, from the Detroit-based “Autoworker Caravan” (AWC) - a loose network of active and retired UAW autoworkers that coalesced in the midst of GM’s and Chrysler’s financial fiasco in December 2008. The AWC drew its name from the car caravan of autoworkers that drove then to Washington DC - for a press conference, and for meetings with U.S Congressional representatives - to offer solutions from autoworkers’ point of view.

This time the AWC organized a caravan headed for South Bend. On January 5th, Detroiters drove in four cars in sub-freezing temps and near whiteout conditions – bringing material support ($500 in donations). We were warmly received. Along with UAW Local 551 members, we engaged with Local #9 members at two shift meetings, and at their temporary “locked-out” shelter at the plant gate. The meetings were very spirited; workers spoke their minds, denounced Honeywell’s greed, questioned whether the UAW was doing enough, and explored next steps. Two local activists – St. Joseph Valley Jobs with Justice member, Lee Gloster, and University of Indiana (South Bend) Labor Studies Director, Paul Mishler were also there, and proved to be key in rapidly growing the solidarity effort.

UAW Local 9 Leaders Clarify: “It’s a Lockout, We’re Not on Strike!”

That same day, Treder and Rodgers agreed to an interview for “The Real News.” http://bit.ly/2ojOPqI, which was posted on January 19th. Gloster sent the link to the video to all his networks, happy that it dispelled the widely-held belief, even in South Bend, that the UAW #9 members were somehow “on strike.” The growing public realization that the workers were forced off their jobs by Honeywell management, against the workers’ will, helped grow support in the waning days of the lockout for the Honeywell workers.

Treder and Rodgers both volunteered that the Solidarity Caravans brought a “breath of fresh air,” opening up new, previously unconsidered
possibilities. This was in stark contrast with the UAW chain of command, which had fallen silent. Information updates about the lockout on the UAW’s website had ceased. The only mention was in a December 28th Detroit News column by UAW VP Jimmy Settles, Director of the union’s Aerospace Department, decrying the corporation’s tactics, and affirming the “vital” role played by unions. http://detne.ws/2ih5VSn

‘Return to Our Roots’ Rally Planned

The Detroiters returned home determined to build awareness and continue organizing support. On the next conference call, we agreed to build for a sequel, this time on February 11, 2017, the 80th anniversary of the Flint Sit-down Strike.

We decided, with Treder’s and Rodgers’ support, to celebrate both the 44-day plant occupation at GM in 1936, and the successful but less-known Local 9 Sit-down strike during that period. A sub-committee was formed with Scott Houldieson, Electrician and Vice President of UAW Ford Local 551, Martha Grevatt, Tool and Die Maker and Local 869 Trustee at Chrysler Stamping, Melvin Thompson, hi-lo driver and former President at Dodge Truck UAW Local 140 (both in Warren, MI), Local #9 officers Todd Treder and Bryan Rodgers, Lee Gloster, and me.

South Bend labor activists, I came to learn, were stymied in raising their level of support for Local #9 due to fractures between the UAW Region 3 hierarchy and the North Central Indiana AFL-CIO. Years before, the UAW withdrew support from the AFL-CIO council, apparently over political campaign disputes. The rift served to isolate the locked-out workers from the broader South Bend labor community, which nevertheless continued to send donations.

For its part, UAW Region 3 mobilized for two rallies during the 9 month-lockout, while Region 9a organized a rally at the Federal Building in Albany, NY with members of Local 1508, to protest the awarding of military contracts to Honeywell during the lockout of its workers. The UAW also filed “unfair labor practice” complaints with the National Labor
Relations Board (NLRB), which were apparently “archived,” as no decision was ever issued.

**Obstacles within South Bend Labor Overcome**

I investigated with Tony Flora, President of the North Central Indiana AFL-CIO, and arranged for a call by Local #9’s Treder to Flora’s office. He and Rodgers then sent out a “Call to Action” on Local #9 stationery, urging support for the February 11th commemoration of the UAW’s “White Shirt Day.” In their words, to “remember those that have fought for worker rights in the past and those that continue the fight today.”

With the official request in hand, folks in South Bend immediately got to work, led by Gloster, Mishler, Flora, Saint Joseph’s County Jobs with Justice President Joe Carbone, UAW Local 5 President Joe Taylor and others, each reaching into pre-existing, long established labor, faith, student and community networks.

UAW Vice President Settles’ Department in the meantime requested that Treder and Rodgers travel to Detroit for a “strategy” meeting February 3rd at the UAW’s Solidarity House. This was the first initiative taken by the UAW hierarchy in response to the lockout since the “no” vote on November 12th.

**Rally Attended by 150+**

The South Bend support networks came together in a solidarity rally of over 150 activists and UAW #9 members and their families, joined by labor, county and city officials, clergy, and autoworkers from Chicago (UAW 551, 588), Kokomo, IN (UAW 685), Detroit (UAW 22, 140, 600, 869, 909) and Flint, MI (UAW 599). UAW Region 3 did not send a representative.

The event raised over $2,400, including $500 from supporters at the rally, $750 in a collection from the Broadway Christian Church (a first for the congregation), $1,000 from a Warsaw, Indiana Steelworker Local, and others. With thunderous support, the gathering approved diverting part of the proceeds to heroic workers fighting GM in Colombia (see below) - $850! Another $1,000 was later received from United Steelworkers Local 8751 representing Boston, Massachusetts bus drivers.

Local media, The South Bend Tribune, and Channel 57, local ABC affiliate, gave surprisingly favorable coverage of the February 11th rally on behalf of the locked-out workers: South Bend rally for Honeywell workers

and


Honeywell agreed to meet with the Local Bargaining Team and UAW reps in Chicago on February 21st. The one-day meeting produced the new tentative agreement, now supported by the leaders of both Honeywell locals. The ratification vote came three days later.

Treder, who was installed as President during the lockout, later wondered what might have happened if the UAW had initiated the solidarity shown on February 11th months earlier.

Speakers Energize “Return to Our Roots” Rally

Over a dozen speakers addressed an attentive crowd, after local activist musician (and unionist) David James (AFM) strummed his banjo and sang original lyrics about "turkey" Honeywell. Some of the speakers are highlighted below; they can all be heard via live stream at https://youtu.be/lyjJvK-nezw

Paul Mishler, Director of Labor Studies at Indiana University-South Bend, and Rally Chair, welcomed and thanked the “Solidarity Caravan” for twice travelling and bringing material aid from Detroit, along with members of the Carpenters’ Union, Teamsters Local 364, AFSCME, the Michiana Coalition for Peace & Justice, and the Women’s Study Dept at IUSB. He highlighted the UAW’s victory in the Flint Sitdown Strike and history of “White Shirt Day,” and thanked Leah Fick for her “Return to Our Roots” commemorative poster.

Addressing the locked out workers, Mishler exclaimed, “We, the community, are with you! We know having a union contract is one of the most important things for working people.” He added, “Unions have never fought just for themselves. Local 5 members at Studebaker were part of the fight against housing discrimination. There’s no other institution in American society that does it like unions. Solidarity isn’t just something
nice; it’s a requirement. ‘We have your back!’ should be the slogan of the labor movement.”

Bruce Schweizer, Bargaining Chair, UAW Local #5, AM General Unit, representing assembly workers at Mercedes and a Humvee assembly plant. Schweizer spoke of the strong bonds between the two UAW South Bend Locals, congratulating Local 9 for “leading the way.”

Scott Houldieson - Vice President, UAW Local 551, Chicago, representing the Autoworker Caravan, expressed the solidarity of UAW Locals 551 and 588, and had them all stand (to thunderous applause).

Todd Treder - President, UAW Local 9, South Bend expressed thanks on behalf of the locked out workers for all the support. “If it wasn’t for the Autoworker Caravan and UAW Local 551, I don’t know if we would be here today. Thank you for supporting us and guiding me.”

Don Stewart, chaplain & member, UAW Local 9 talked about how his mother and step-dad both worked at Bendix. He explained that, “Honeywell spent $110 million on the lockout. They want to break this union, there’s no doubt about it! We’ve got folks inside. They tell us they’re not putting out product; 65% is being outsourced.” He urged his fellow workers to “stay strong! We’ve gone too far to cave in now.”

Rally Speaker Blasts Trump

Regina Williams Preston – District 2 Rep-representative, Common Council, and school-teacher, South Bend. “I realized today that I’ve been in this all my life. My father worked for Bendix, and my husband worked for Honeywell. People who broke the color line back in the day of Studebaker were my people. I cannot stand by and not speak. What is the Democratic Party doing about this? We need to go to our elected officials. We need to put the politicians, including me, on jump street. Where are you, what are you doing to speak out?”

Referring to the presidential elections, she went on: “President Trump is concerned about companies moving jobs overseas, but what Honeywell is doing is more despicable! They are capitalizing on these economic conditions, pitting families against struggling families. We cannot allow that to happen.”
“We need to make this a national issue because it is happening in other places. We must help people really understand: this is not a strike! Honeywell has locked the workers out because of greed, and then brought in more vulnerable people and is paying them less. This is not acceptable. We can’t let that happen in the United States of America!”

April Lidinsky - Director of Gender Studies at Indiana University-South Bend, daughter of a union plumber, and lead organizer of the 4,000+ strong South Bend Jan. 21st Women’s March. Lidinsky explained that economic justice and workers’ rights were a key component of the Women’s march, and focused on women workers’ economic rights. She said “We can’t talk about injustices against women without focusing on migrant workers and women of color. And we can’t be talking about women’s inequality without talking about its economic roots.”

“Women have always been at the heart of the labor movement from the very beginning. Here in South Bend, women were full participants in the Bendix strike from the beginning.” She pointed out, “Those who oppose women’s rights are the same people who oppose labor rights. Workers’ rights are women’s rights and women’s rights are workers’ rights!”

UAW Local's, Columbian Workers in Solidarity

Frank Hammer, former President and Chairman of UAW Local 909 and retired International Representative, and Melvin Thompson, former President of Dodge Truck Local 140, representing the Autoworker Caravan (both in Warren, MI). We brought greetings of international labor solidarity to UAW Local 9 and 1508 from fired General Motors workers injured on the job in Columbia, and made a joint slide presentation about the struggle for justice by the injured workers’ association in Columbia, ASOTRECOL.

The Columbian workers encampment in front of the US Embassy in Bogota has persisted over 5½ years with support of Union members and solidarity groups in the U.S. and abroad. Thompson emphasized: “The labor practices [in Colombia] are a precursor to labor practices here.” The last of the eight slides showed a photo of the GM workers in Columbia at their tent holding two signs, one expressing solidarity with the two Honeywell Locals, the other saying, “If the present is filled with memory and struggle, the future is ours.”
Martha Grevatt – Trustee, UAW Local 869, Warren, MI, representing the Moratorium Now! Coalition, Detroit and Autoworker Caravan. Sister Grevatt led the fundraising effort with chants, “what workers’ rights are under attack, what do we do? We stand up and fight back!”

Scott Marshall, Coordinator, USW Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees, Indiana & Illinois, referring to the two lockouts of USW Local 7-669 in Metropolis, IL, said, “We had our own fight with Honeywell. We would have had more people here today except they’re attending meetings to protect rights of retirees to health care and social security.” Marshall pointed out that, “the celebration of the 80th anniversary of the South Bend Sit-down coincides with the 80th anniversary of the 1937 Republic Steel massacre in Chicago, Illinois. That’s where 10 brothers were murdered by the Chicago police, for protecting the right of workers to form a union. It’s little known that one of the participants who was shot that day was a six year-old boy.”

Robin Rich, Staff Organizer, United Steelworkers District 7 Gary, Indiana, arrived from two other steelworkers’ meetings, where she announced that one of the Locals in Warsaw, Indiana (USW Local 6805 representing Dalton foundry workers) voted to send UAW #9 $1,000.

A solemn prayer on behalf of the locked out workers, led by a UAW #9 member and board member of the UAW national Chaplaincy Committee, closed out the rally, but not before David James led the crowd in singing the labor anthem, “Solidarity Forever.”

Scott Houldieson later posted on Facebook: "It was an honor to be at this historic union hall celebrating our past while fighting for our future. We remembered the victory in Flint Michigan that put the UAW on the map. We remembered the victory by UAW Local 9 over Bendix that showed the way for Flint. More importantly, we demonstrated our solidarity with our brothers and sisters who have shown incredible resolve in the face of corporate greed! UAW Local 9 is on the front lines of the labor movement. We were proud to stand by your side on this historic day!"

In the Struggle’s Aftermath

Forty-three of the locked out South Bend workers declined to return. The vacancies are temporarily being filled by the scab workers, creating frictions in an already tense atmosphere. Management agreed to
replace them with new hires, but the corporation has instituted a company-wide hiring freeze. “Honeywell,” Treder recently said, “is continuing with its aggressive attacks against us. On Saturday, April 22nd, over 2,500 retirees started receiving letters from Honeywell informing them the company will terminate their health care insurance effective June 30, 2017. This had nothing to do with the recent contract, and came out of the blue. They've done this elsewhere, and now they're trying it here. UAW lawyers are involved. I’m really concerned about our retirees.” The struggle continues.

Other articles about the “Return to our Roots” Solidarity Rally

_Dianne Feeley_

_martha Grevatt_

_Toni Gilpin_

_Frank Hammer is a former autoworker and President and Bargaining Chair of UAW Local 909, General Motors Powertrain in Warren, MI and a retired UAW-GM International Representative. He is a co-founder of the Autoworker Caravan, and the Asotrecol Solidarity Network with auto workers in Columbia. He is a graduate of the University of California and University of Michigan, and a former lecturer in Labor Studies at Wayne State and Indiana Universities. He is a Board member of the Michigan Coalition for Human Rights, and The Real News, and works on climate justice, international labor solidarity, union reform, and restoring democracy in Detroit. He is married to his wife, Karen, for 49 years and lives in Detroit._
Labor's Lessons Lead to Success, or Failure

By Donna DeWitt

The history of the AFL and the CIO clearly have many examples of following two paths, one that leads to successes, and one that leads to failures. The elections of 2016 serves as an example of following a path that led to failure. The majority of our unions failed to endorse and work for the most pro-labor candidate for president, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders.

Bernie Sanders has a 40-year record of fighting for unions and working people, and all people. He spoke regularly and forcefully to the hurt and needs of workers. He had one of the strongest pro-labor programs ever, one that would rebuild our infrastructure and put people back to work, help us strengthen our unions with a majority union sign-up, end NAFTA, CAFTA and the TPP and all job killing trade deals, give equal pay for equal work, raise the minimum wage to $15 an hour, establish an improved Medicare for All health program, provide free college tuition at public colleges, and end all forms of discrimination. One of his most popular slogans and bumper stickers was "For the People, not the Billionaires." No other candidate embraced such a pro-labor record, and most were either weak on labor or outright anti-labor.

Instead of Bernie, along comes a billionaire charlatan, who pretended to be for labor, and who was elected. We see Trump's assault on labor and working families, women, people of color, and immigrants, and draconian cuts to social programs that working people and our unions have fought hard to achieve for many generations. Polls throughout the election campaign repeatedly showed Bernie beating Trump, and by a significantly larger margin than Hillary Clinton.

Many rank-and-file workers, including many union members, and some leaders at all levels of the labor movement endorsed Bernie Sanders and
worked hard for his nomination in Democratic primaries and caucuses across the country. But labor was divided, and therefore weakened. There are examples in our labor history where we were united, and we had successes. One example was the merger of the AFL and CIO in 1955. That strengthened labor and helped to win many important gains for workers and their families, and all Americans, throughout the 1950's, 1960's and into the 1970's.

**Grassroots Action, Women, and Dinner Talks**

The key to great successes is that they flow from the grassroots. Successes grow from solidarity and collaborative effort. The January 21st Women's March was the unfolding success story of the merging of a diverse universe of women to contribute their individual voices to create a choir, producing a masterpiece. Those who criticize the March’s participants, the majority of whom were women, because they focused attention on Trump's blatant disrespect for women, do so with caution. Those critics must calculate the risk of losing a constituency that provides 52% of the vote. Arguably, their caution displays questionable doubt about their own arguments. Look at the positive reaction to the discussions taking place in forums and, more importantly, households across the nation since these great marches.

This parallels the kinds of successful discussions about the labor movement that took place during the growth and organizing of the twenty year period following the merger, when the topic of unions and workers' rights found a way into the households and dinner tables of the working class. Unknowingly to many workers, their children listened and learned about the struggles and successes of the working class, producing new generations of activists and union members. A failure to recognize the complexity of the working class family in today's work environment has created a disconnect with the past several generations of workers.

While we attempt to teach young people today, we have failed to recognize they have been given few examples to follow. There are few family dinner table discussions about labor. After all, Memorandum of Agreements and arbitrations receive greater attention than many other important contract issues, like terrible working conditions, low pay, benefits under attack, and abusive employers. The result is that attendance at union meetings is down, attendance at organizational meetings is down, and many members now rarely look at their contract book.

While computer technology, research and studies may provide important facts that are useful to the labor movement, these activities do not provide the dialogue needed to make the labor movement a living experi-
ence. While I have given references and worked with dozens of students over my 48 years of union work, I was recently made aware of this most important fact when my 19 year old granddaughter accompanied me to a memorial out of state for a wonderful labor leader who had passed.

The drive provided the opportunity to discuss many issues. I was aware that she supported and worked for Bernie Sanders when I read it on her Facebook page. Since South Carolina is an early primary state I found the opportunity to introduce and include her in several small focus groups with Sanders. She was the only young person at the memorial, as the person we were celebrating was 88 years old when he passed away. She listened intensely to the speakers and learned about the tremendous labor history of the person whose life we were celebrating.

We attended a dinner meeting afterwards and I listened as she engaged many of the participants in discussion around the most important issues facing the working class today. It was then I realized that it is not what we are attempting to teach young people today in an academic way that carries the most weight. It is the dinner table discussions with family that was the mentoring experience children growing up gained most from, because those lessons were learned from those they have the most contact with and the people they love, and who love them. When these experiences are not provided to our young people it becomes a failure on our part. The reality is that you can create a success story by simply sharing your life experiences with a child or grandchild. That becomes one of the most important milestones of your life, and hopefully theirs.

**Failure to Address White Supremacy**

The issues we discuss must cover everything, because everything impacts workers and the working-class. The failure of labor leaders to recognize and discuss the rise of European white supremacy movements has simply allowed similar movements to flourish among Trump supporters within the working-class, and is now reflected in Trump's presidency. While racism and white supremacy has always existed and thrived in our nation, as it has in many labor organizations, it has now been cloaked in the many lies that Trump has told. A mere fact check could prove that Trump is wrong about the number of violent crimes being committed, but Trump makes his lies worse when he connects these numbers to acts of terrorism and immigrants. The failure to comprehend and discuss this issue has created a void where Americans do not understand the economic history of our nation. The economic engine was driven by the sweat and blood of slavery. In most cases slave labor was simply a commodity for those in power, not a choice of human necessity. When the Global South turns to other nations for trade there may be a recognition of distinction between commodity and necessity,
creating a glimpse of life elsewhere that will expose American corporate greed and the racism of white supremacy.

For many years an emphasis on organizing the South was a cry from workers, acknowledging that the manufacturing base that was transferring wealth to the South was not being shared with the workers. Twenty years ago when I approached an international union president to seek support for organizing in the South I was told it was not cost effective to organize in Right to Work states. My reply to him was that Right to Work was a cancer that would spread across our nation if it was not addressed through organizing efforts. Now the failure to organize workers, regardless of where they reside, has shifted to the importance of successful organizing. The non-stop attack on unions over the past 40 years, and failure of too many labor leaders to respond with a smart, well-organized fight-back program has dramatically reduced the number of workers now in unions. That has resulted in further reduction of pay everywhere. We are in a downward spiral, a race to the bottom. Why would a manufacturer located in a northern city with adequate infrastructure, good public schools, sufficient transportation systems and now the ability to provide low wages consider moving to the South?

**Good Leaders, Good Plan**

Clear paths for successes are created by good leaders. They must recognize the needs of the people, and to speak to these needs. A clear path for failure is to not recognize what we already know leads to failure, and continue to do nothing to correct it. Fortunately, there are examples of far-sighted leaders who are changing the failed policies that have held us back for too long. I mention just two. The heroic workers at Nissan in Canton, Mississippi who have been fighting a hard fought campaign to win union recognition with the United Auto Workers -- which is still on-going, and the UAW members in Local 9 in South Bend, Indiana who recently returned to work after a hard-fought 10-month long lockout by Honeywell where they suffered some take-backs but saved their union, their jobs, and their dignity. There were three key ingredients that pushed both of these important labor battles forward and are lessons for us all: (1) develop a strong organizing and fight-back plan, (2) involve the members, and (3) involve other unions and the community. That is the recipe for success.

Donna DeWitt is President Emeritus of the South Carolina State AFL-CIO after serving many years as president. DeWitt played a key role in organizing support for five International Longshoremen's Association Local 1422 union leaders and activists (the Charleston Five) who were framed on felony charges stemming from protesting the use of non-union labor on the Charleston docks in 2000. The workers, four African Americans and one white, were
found free of all charges in 2001 after a year under house arrest. DeWitt also served on the Steering Committee of the Labor Campaign for Single-Payer Healthcare, co-chair of the South Carolina Progressive Network, Chair of the Southeastern Institute for Women in Politics, Chair of the South Carolina Labor Party, is on the Executive Committee of the Labor Fightback Network, and is a Co-chair of the Labor Committee of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism (CCDS), and a member of the National Coordinating Committee of CCDS.
Where Are We in the Fight for Universal Healthcare? Through a Labor and California Lens

By Lenny Potash

With over 10 years of work in California with numerous groups and coalitions committed to winning single payer healthcare for Californians as well as nationally, it's a good time to look at where we are in this struggle, why it's important for socialist-minded activists, what are the challenges that lie ahead, and perhaps most importantly, what must go into a winning strategy? Of course, this is all colored by the new Trump administration and a Republican-controlled Congress.

My primary connection is and has been with Labor United for Universal Healthcare (LUUH), a coalition based in the Greater Los Angeles area with participation of locals, union councils, worker centers and some statewide unions. We have a close on-going relationship with the Campaign for a Healthy California (CHC), and nationally with the Labor Campaign for Single Payer Healthcare (LCSP).

To begin, there needs to be clarity about what is meant by single payer, universal healthcare, Medicare for All, etc., because on the face of it they may appear to be synonymous, but are not. They are often bandied about by those who remain outside our (single payer) movement.

Single Payer healthcare means that there is a public pool of money that pays the healthcare bills for all the covered services and for everyone who is covered. In effect, such a system socializes the cost of healthcare but not the provision of services which remain private and often, for profit. The defining characteristics of single payer plans around the
world is that everyone covered has the same benefit package and is covered to the same degree, and that there are no private insurance companies involved in the plan.

Universal Healthcare simply means that coverage is universal but as President Obama and Hillary Clinton have explained, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) or “Obamacare” is striving to be near universal by mandating that everyone be covered or buy a private health insurance plan. To our single payer movement, Universal Healthcare means a single payer plan that says, “everyone in, no one out”, regardless of immigration status.

Medicare for All is often used to give people a clear example of what a single payer plan looks like if we merely took out the requirement that one need be 65 years old or severely disabled to be a beneficiary.

Improved Medicare for All is used to recognize that as popular as the Medicare program is, its benefits need to be improved as few can afford the co-pays without supplementing their Medicare with private insurance.

Socialized Medicine does exist in the United States in the healthcare program available to veterans by the Veterans Administration. Not only is the coverage paid for by a single payer government fund, but as well, the providers are government employees, although recently the VA has begun contracting out for some services. Both funding for the VA and for the most part, the provision of healthcare services is socialized.

**Why Are So Many Socialist-Minded Activists Working on this Issue?**

For me, I saw this to be an issue that made several important connections and could move people.

- It exposed how the insurance and healthcare system exploited misery for monetary gain and in the end left people to suffer if they lacked the outrageous resources needed.

- It proposed a solution that at least in part, demonstrates that a socialist model of healthcare funding can be so much more effective and efficient for our economy and meet a universal social need.

- It holds out the possibility of uniting masses of people who are being denied the healthcare they need with progressive, socialist minded people who are part of this movement for change.
We need to understand that when our movement is successful, there will remain several battles about healthcare such as expanding it to every state, taking the profit out of healthcare, creating a quality public healthcare delivery system, etc.

**Single Payer Forces in ‘Our Movement’**

In the past 10 years or so, some 20 states have active and developing single payer movements with varying degrees of success but all, so far, have fallen short of a win. It's beyond the scope of this article to go through a thorough analysis of state campaigns for universal Medicare for All efforts but here are four states that offer some lessons.

Led by the Vermont Workers Center with decent support from organized labor, the Healthcare is a Human Right Campaign had a near win when Act 48 was passed. It committed the state to providing single-payer healthcare for all as a public good. The Act was signed into law by Gov. Shumlin, who was re-elected, in part, for his support of Healthcare is a Human Right. But when it came time for him to implement one of the public funding options, he opted out saying Vermont could not afford it. Lesson: the financial plan was not part of Act 48 up front.

The New York State Assembly twice passed the “New York Health Act”, a universal health care bill to provide comprehensive health care to all New Yorkers without premiums, co-pays, deductibles, or limited provider networks. The Act has a fair degree of support from organized labor but now must move through the upper house and it is unclear as to whether it has support from Gov. Cuomo.

In Colorado, this past November the question was put squarely to the voters in Amendment 69 which offered all Coloradans an improved Medicare for All. The measure had almost no support from organized
labor and very little political support. The campaign was led by a committed and passionate single payer movement that eschewed institutional support. It clearly underestimated the reality of the opposition, its wealth and the barrage of anti-Amend. 69 messaging. It was seriously underfunded and did not understand how personal healthcare coverage is and failed to do the deep education of the populace that was required long before Election Day to win. The measure garnered a mere 20.4% of the vote.

In California, the movement goes back at least to the early 1990s when Proposition 186 which sought to establish a single payer healthcare system appeared on the 1994 ballot. Simply put, the campaign grossly underestimated both what it would take to win over millions of voters who were bombarded by the massive onslaught of insurance industry counter arguments. It was roundly defeated. It took 20 years for the next effort. In 2005 a Universal single-payer healthcare bill was introduced. Over the next four years the bill passed both houses of the legislature twice only to be vetoed by then Gov. Schwarzenegger. It became clear when the bill was reintroduced after the election of Gov. Brown that Democratic support had all but evaporated in the face of Pres. Obama's new Affordable Care Act.

A bill supporting an alternative to the ACA was seen by most Democrats as a lack of support for Obama. As well, all progressive legislators were committed to implementing the best ACA possible in California and an alternative bill was a distraction that had almost no political support. A schism that had developed within the movement over whether another bill should be introduced has been mended and the All Care Alliance and Campaign for a Healthy California have come together in a Collaborative to move the universal single payer healthcare effort forward by legislation and/or ballot initiative.

By the time this article is printed there will be a legislative proposal to provide such a healthcare plan for all Californians which will begin a multi-year process to be successful. There is an understanding that successful legislation would certainly be challenged by the insurance industry and become a ballot initiative. Ultimately, Californians would have to vote in a referendum to enact universal single-payer healthcare.

The Labor Campaign for Single Payer healthcare helps organize, coordinate and support both state and national single-payer efforts within the organized labor movement. LCSP works with 14 unions including a caucus of national unions for single payer within the AFL-CIO. In 2009 the AFL-CIO adopted Resolution 34, “The Social Insurance Model for Health Care Reform” which stated in part,
“All families deserve the security of a universal health care system that guarantees access based on need rather than income. Health care is a fundamental human right and an important measure of social justice.”

Unions for Single Payer Health Care focuses on supporting HR 676 (Conyers), recently reintroduced as Improved and Expanded Medicare for All. HR 676 would create a national single payer healthcare system. The bill that has been in Congress for 10 years and currently has endorsements from 22 national and international unions and 624 local and other union bodies across the nation. Forty-four state AFL-CIOs have also passed resolutions supporting HR 676.


There Are Partners and There Are Allies

The movement includes numerous other single payer organizations across the nation including Healthcare-NOW, Physicians for a National Health Plan, and Health Care for All among others. All play very important and active roles in education and supporting state and national initiatives. Additionally, there are many more allies; organizations that support expanding Medicare for All and are primarily committed to progressive incremental healthcare reform. They choose to emphasize limited but important battles such as expanding access and coverage for the poor and undocumented and most urgently, fighting the threats to expanded Medicaid, crucial healthcare coverage for the poor, including undocumented children in California and possibly elsewhere. Leading this effort is the Health 4 All coalition – with strong participation from our movement. Our movement’s challenge is and has been to partner with these allied groups whenever possible as we did on the 50th Anniversary of Medicare and today in beating back the new attacks from the Trump administration. More and more these allied groups are joining the Campaign for a Healthy California.

What's Driving This Movement?

There are several things that are and have been calling out for real change in America’s healthcare.

It has long been recognized that the US spends two times more than most other countries with single payer systems, and has lower healthcare outcomes. Healthcare accounts for nearly 18% of the US. Gross Do-
mestic Product and continues to go up each year. Before the ACA, there were nearly 50 million people uncovered by any healthcare plan. Medical bankruptcy was rampant and deaths from lack of healthcare were tragically and embarrassingly high. These factors and the powerful insurance industry led to the passage of the Act that became known as “Obamacare” in 2010.

The Affordable Care Act of 2010, also known as “Obamacare” created a set of dynamics that has played havoc with our movement. From the beginning, there were those who saw the ACA as a massive giveaway to the health insurance industry and a distraction from real universal healthcare.

At the same time others saw the ACA as a modest but important regulation of insurance companies that materially benefited millions. It eliminated preexisting medical conditions, annual and lifetime limits on insurance, put modest limits on how much insurance companies can use for administration (marketing, CEO salaries, profit, etc.), and allowed children to stay on parent's policies until age 26. Most importantly, the ACA allowed for and helped fund a significant expansion of Medicaid in 32 states that opted in. This meant medical coverage for millions of low-income people who heretofore had none.

The movement recognized that the ACA contained no mechanism to control premium price increases and merely guaranteed people the right to buy the insurance they could afford and not the right to the healthcare they might need. The result has been that many with ACA coverage are seriously under-insured and still can't receive the care they need due to high deductibles and co-pays. By the end of 2016, the ACA allowed 20 million more people to buy insurance but it fell far short of providing universal coverage. It expressly excludes some 12 million undocumented, and many young and temporarily healthy people resisted the individual mandate to buy insurance that was still expensive and did not offer good coverage. In 2017 insurance companies raised premiums sharply. Other companies withdrew from the ACA Exchanges because a healthier and less costly population were not entering the ACA pool.

From 2008, the national debate that led to the ACA brought the issue of healthcare front and center for the American people. As the opening for a healthcare system that was a true social insurance program
closed, progressive legislators around the country turned their attention to creating the best possible ACA Exchange or marketplace in their state. Along with this massive task, and battle in many states, there was a reluctance to sponsor or support legislation like a Medicare for All bill that could be interpreted as critical of President Obama's ACA. The movement used these years to educate and expose the limitations and inequities built into the ACA. Partly due to the 2016 election, it was difficult, in most states, to get political traction for single payer legislation even though the Act provided for the possibility of state innovative programs that improved on the ACA as of 2017.

The 2016 election again highlighted healthcare and the ACA. While Donald Trump and Republicans campaigned on overturning the ACA, Bernie Sanders popularized and won significant support for a universal healthcare program based on a Medicare model. Hillary Clinton was forced to confront the double digit rise in premiums on the various state Exchanges and began advocating a public option to be included on ACA exchanges to exert a downward pressure on premium costs and to create more competition as insurance companies pulled out. But to many in the movement, a public option was a way of allowing the insurance industry to “cherry pick” and leave the ill and more expense healthcare customers for the public option. Some others see the public option as a path to a single payer system.

The Trump presidency has sent shock waves to millions who believe they are better off with the ACA than they would be without it, despite its shortcomings. But the most serious threat facing healthcare are potential Presidential and Congressional actions that will strangle expanded Medicaid. This program is heavily dependent on federal funds, supplemented by participating states. This battle is a matter of life and death for millions who have few other resources. Already we can see a broad movement to resist these plans that would end even the limited regulations on insurers that have made coverage available and subsidized. And still the ACA may be imploding because of uncontrolled premium rate increases, declining insurance company involvement, and the high number of people who are still uninsured.

What's Needed to Win?

In November 2016 Californians voted on a modest proposal to prohibit the State from paying any more for drugs than the federal Veterans Administration. Proposition 61 would have only affected some five million Californians. It was quite popular and easily qualified for the ballot. The Pharmaceuticals swamped the campaign with $130 million and defeated the measure 54% to 46% with the fear that the future of drug prices would become uncertain and might even go higher.
The failure of Prop. 61 also speaks to the culture, confusion and secrecy that is built into our healthcare industry. Everyone pays a different amount and the costs and prices of drugs and services are never posted nor are they consistent between providers. Price transparency is all but absent.

Probably the most important element for a winning campaign is to have a true appreciation of what we’re up against. The medical, hospital, pharmaceutical and health insurance industrial complex, is one of the richest and most powerful corporate consortium. They can, have and will spend whatever is required to defeat us. A successful campaign must have masses of people prepared, in advance, to say, “The private insurance industry has nothing to contribute to the provision of healthcare and we can no longer allow them to extract their billions of dollars from our healthcare”. It’s like telling the gangsters we will no longer pay into their protection racket.

We also have the examples above from different state initiatives to adopt single payer healthcare. In both the 1994 California initiative and the Colorado Care ballot measure of 2016 we saw how everyone has a personal relationship with their healthcare and change. No two people have the same healthcare needs, the same insurance plan, the same out-of-pocket costs, the same healthcare sponsor (employer, Medicare, ACA, Medicaid, union trust fund, etc.) or the same providers. Although people may not be thrilled with their insurance plan or healthcare provider they often lack a clear idea of the difference. The only way to overcome this and to inoculate the voters and public against the lies and distortions of the insurance industry is to do deep education that starts a year or more before the issue is on the ballot. Vermont did this and won at the ballot box. There was strong support for their slogan “Healthcare is a Human Right”, a campaign that had been going on for years.

There are other lessons we have learned. Although Vermont passed their single payer healthcare act, the financing was left to be decided after a study came up with three different approaches within three years. It was then left to the Governor, originally a supporter of the campaign, to choose from one of these options and begin the legislative process to pass the budget for the new plan. When the time came, the Governor choose the costliest plan and said that Vermont could not afford it. The basic plan and financing must be defined in advance and understood and supported by the voters.

A successful movement must also have both a well-organized state-wide campaign with committed and identified support from all the key sectors of society: labor, faith-based, seniors, students and political (including elected representatives), and even business. The campaign must also be able to reach into all communities.
We also should understand that even if we are successful in passing and enacting a state plan adopting an improved Medicare for All plan, we can be certain the insurance industry will challenge it in a ballot referendum where their money will swamp ours. Of course, there are many other strategic considerations about going through the legislative process, how detailed a proposed law or a ballot initiate should be, as well as creating a coalition that can win this battle. We have learned from the various state efforts above that a Medicare for All victory cannot be won by a committed and passionate single payer movement alone, any more than Social Security or Medicare could have been won by seniors alone, or the civil rights victories could have been won by African Americans alone. All progressive social change that has been won owes victory to the broad unity and commitment of the key sectors of our society and especially most working people, i.e., the 99%.

Winning a universal improved Medicare that hold as its premise, Everyone in, No one out. Such a victory would begin to erase one of the most unequal living conditions in our country that disproportionately affects people of color, the poor and low-income workers. Healthcare that is socially funded for all would also amount to the largest raise in income for the overwhelming majority of people.

It's Time We Finish the Job And Make Healthcare a Human Right!

*Lenny Potash is a long-time leader of the single-payer healthcare movement. He is a life-long trade union activist and leader who is currently an Executive Board member of AFSCME Retiree Chapter 36. He was a founding member of Labor United for Universal Healthcare in Southern California and served as its Co-chair until 2016. He is a member of Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism.*
National Health Care Conference Maps Plans for Single Payer Health Care across Country

By Sandy Eaton

Five hundred healthcare activists assembled in New York City on Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Day weekend for the historic national single-payer strategy conference. Half the delegates came from various labor organizations, with nurses’ unions providing the largest bloc. Nearly half were first-time attendees. New Yorkers came in droves, including many from upstate, emboldened by the burgeoning support for the New York Health Act, a state universal, single-payer health care bill. A major reason for this year’s conference being held in New York is that state’s success in moving the single-payer New York Health Act a total of three times now through the Assembly, although still falling a few votes short in the Senate.

Conference organizers last fall expected that the focus would be to find ways to push beyond the ACA’s status quo in a neoliberal Clinton Administration to get to truly universal health care. The new political reality, however, propelled attendees onto a higher plain of engagement to rally around the core theme: Going on Offense While Playing Defense, pushing for improved Medicare for all while blocking cuts to Medicaid, Medicare, Planned Parenthood, CHIP, VA care, Black Lung benefits and every manner of social good while locking arms with the broad resistance movement coming together.

This convocation was organized by Healthcare NOW! (HCN), the Labor Campaign for Single Payer (LCSP) and the One Payer States network. HCN is the long-standing national umbrella for single-payer groups. LCSP,
founded exactly eight years earlier shortly before Barack Obama's first inauguration, is the national coalition of unions demanding healthcare that works for all. The One Payer States network is a loose grouping of representatives of state organizations working to enact single payer on a state-by-state basis. These coalitions held joint meetings in August 2014 in Oakland and October 2015 in Chicago, which proved to be so successful that they resolved to continue, this time in the Big Apple. Labor troubadour Anne Feeney provided timely songs throughout the conference.

This strategy meeting was preceded by a healthcare rally at Trump Tower, which then merged with the nearby rally of strikers from Momentive Performance Materials in Waterford, NY, members of IUE-CWA. Seven hundred workers had been on strike since November 2nd to stop the loss of retiree health and the imposition of high-deductible plans on those still in the shop. A tentative agreement has just been announced.

The Grand Ballroom of the New Yorker witnessed Friday evening’s opening plenary, chaired by Marva Wade of the New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA). Ironically, this was to be the venue for Hillary "Single Payer? Not now. Not ever!" Clinton's victory speech on November 8th. Welcome greetings came from the host committee: Deborah Burger of National Nurses United (NNU), Judy Gonzalez of NYSNA and Bob Score from IATSE Local One.
“The Legacy of Dr. King - Organizing at the Intersection of Healthcare Justice and Racial Justice” provided the theme for remarks from local leaders: Manhattan Borough President Gayle Brewer; Mary Travis Bassett, MD, NYC Commissioner of Health; Ed Rosario, President, NYC Chapter of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement; and State Senator Bill Perkins, lead sponsor in the senate of the New York Health Act. Nina Turner, former Ohio senator and frequent spokesperson of the Bernie Sanders campaign, delivered the dynamic and moving keynote address while Momentive strikers rallied on the stage. The rest of this weekend was spent at the downtown headquarters of AFSCME District Council 37, a tight fit for this bustling crowd.

Saturday morning’s opening remarks by LCSP director Mark Dudzic included the observation that "single payer is now an option - the Affordable Care Act is no longer an option." Dr. Oli Fein, chair of the New York Metro chapter of Physicians for a National Health Program, and Les Leopold, from The Labor Institute and author of Runaway Inequality, assessed the coming attacks on health care and put them in context. Michael Lighty, NNU’s policy director, developed the conference’s core theme, “Going on the Offense While Playing Defense,” with input from Alex Lawson of Social Security Works and Judith LeBlanc of the Alliance for a Just Society. Jim McGee, Transit Employees’ Health & Welfare Fund administrator, introduced the new LCSP briefing paper that he principally authored: Multi-Employer Plans, Taft-Hartley Funds & Single Payer Healthcare. He urged participants to listen to rank-and-file members’ healthcare concerns.

Oli Fein, chair of the Metro New York chapter of Physicians for a National Health Program, parsed the healthcare threats we all faced from the incoming administration, What to Expect in Health Care from the Trump Administration? It is clear that the Republican Congress wants to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA) whether or not they have a replacement for it. There are four proposals that the Trumpists have suggested might constitute a replacement:

- Tax Credits for individuals who buy their own private health insurance.
- Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) with high deductibles.
- High Risk Pools. Patients with expensive illnesses can apply for such a pool, but may have to wait a long time before being approved.
- Health insurance sales across state lines, so you can buy a bare-bones plan that your state insurance commissioner wouldn’t allow to be sold in your state previously.
Each of these proposals benefit the rich and the private for-profit health insurance companies. They are a shabby substitute for the ACA even with all its faults.

But the real scary proposals are:

- **Block Granting Medicaid**: giving each state a fixed amount of federal tax money to spend the way they want to. It would reduce the federal contribution to state budgets by billions and cut millions of people off Medicaid.

- **Voucherizing Medicare** - called premium support. Instead of guaranteeing insurance coverage for those over 65 years old, give them a lump sum of money to buy private, for-profit health insurance. There would be no defined benefit package.

- Finally there are the proposals to outlaw abortion or severely limit it and to make people pay for contraception; to deny LGBT patients access to and subsidies for HIV treatment; to loosen the regulatory authority of the FDA and thereby reduce or eliminate federal regulation of the pharmaceutical industry.

The time has come for single payer. Repeal the ACA and we have a replacement that will indeed cover everyone with a plan that guarantees high quality, comprehensive coverage for medically necessary care, and will cost less than the current system. It’s called “Improved Medicare-for-All.”

Workshops addressed areas of concern for both labor and community activists:

- **Making the Case for Single-Payer**
- **Next Steps for Labor: The AFL-CIO Convention and Beyond**
- **Telling Your Healthcare Story**
- **How to Play Offense While Playing Defense: Developing Local Campaigns for 2017**
- **Single-Payer Organizing & Public Sector Workers in an Era of Privatization**
- **Next Steps for Campaign for New York Health**
- **Addressing Union Concerns Regarding State Single Payer**
• Moving from Tactical Coalitions to Strategic Partnerships
• Online Organizing for Single-Payer Activists
• The State of State Single-Payer Campaigns in 2017
• Single Payer Study Controversies

Saturday afternoon’s session concluded with panel presentations on Resisting Privatization & Organizing for Public Rights with Mark Dimondstein, President of the American Postal Workers Union; The Re-Opening of State Health Reform, Prospects for Single-Payer, with Richard Gottfried, NY assemblyman and lead sponsor of the New York Health Act; Jeff Johnson, Washington State AFL-CIO; Pilar Schiavo, Campaign for a Healthy California.

The panel on Building a Unified Opposition brought together Kamini Doobay, Coalition to Dismantle Racism in Healthcare; Nadina LaSpina, Disabled in Action; Mari Lopez, Health for All; Claire McClinton, Flint Democracy Defense League; and Brandon Cuicchi, ACT UP New York.

Sunday morning saw roundtable strategy discussions which allowed participants to interact intensely with each other while tackling a set of strategic questions. John Lozier, National Healthcare for the Homeless Council, facilitated the sharing of the responses.

After conference organizers Benjamin Day of Healthcare-NOW and Mark Dudzic of the Labor Campaign for Single Payer gave the closing charge and also announced the launching of the Campaign for Guaranteed Health Care to give voice and shape to the new spirit of activism that animates the healthcare justice movement, participants marched on the Golden Calf, the iconic Wall Street bull, taking the fight for healthcare justice to the seat of finance capital, our contribution to the January 15th nationwide insurgency to defend health care.

Sandy Eaton, RN, is a retired nurse in Boston. He is a member of Massachusetts Nurses Association, an affiliate of National Nurses United. Sandy is also a member of the steering committee of the Labor Campaign for Single-payer Healthcare, and an activist for many social justice issues.
Capitalists Intensify Attacks, Resistance grows

By Randy Shannon

The capitalist class is unified in the drive to reverse the decline in the rate of profit that became critical in the 1970’s due to labor’s growing bargaining power. The capitalist class is pursuing four tactics to restore the profitability of their system of production relations – globalization, neoliberal austerity, financial speculation, and military expansion.

The economic, political, and social crisis that we now experience is evidence that the bourgeois solution to their crisis is a failure. The system has not recovered. There is no expansion of production, no revival of infrastructure investment, and the 1.1% annual increase in labor productivity since the Great Recession is the lowest in history.

The deepening crisis is emblematic of Gramsci’s analysis: “A crisis occurs, sometimes lasting for decades. This exceptional duration means that incurable structural contradictions have reached maturity, and that, despite this, the political forces which are struggling to...defend the existing structure...are making [persistent] efforts to...overcome [the contradictions]. These...persistent efforts form the terrain of the conjunctural and it is upon this terrain that the forces of opposition organize...any falling short before a historical duty increases the necessary disorder and prepares more serious catastrophes.”

Division at the Top

The capitalists are now divided on how to proceed. The new dominant option is to double down on the exploitation of labor, destroy the regulatory limits on production, abandon the social safety net, and steal un-
developed natural resources. The former option is to profit from crises like global warming with limited new investment, invest in more automation, slowly erode the social safety net, and gain consent for intensified exploitation of labor and natural resources through trade agreements.

For the working class the unifying elements are the increase in exploitation of labor accompanied by an attack on unions, depressed wage growth, an intensified work pace, automation, and increasingly authoritarian management of the workplace. In the US 40% of the civilian labor force is out of the labor market and 15% of the employed do not have stable jobs.

These conditions are profoundly affecting the political consensus. Loyalty to the employer and the dominant culture is challenged by dismay at the tremendous disparity in wealth and income while millions struggle in poverty or on the edge of poverty. Consent to the leadership of the hegemonic block dominated by finance capital with labor and minority organizations as partners began eroding in the 1970s with the beginning of neoliberal austerity. Now the neoliberal bloc has lost control of the government apparatus. The Democratic Party, their effective agent of consent, has lost the trust of the progressive majority.

The inability of the center-left forces to organize political opposition to neoliberal austerity, globalization, and financial speculation allowed the far right to exploit economic anxiety using xenophobia, racism, sexism, and great power chauvinism to build an alternative political consensus. Although far from a majority, this far-right consensus, helped by fraud at the polls, elected a far-right authoritarian government. The election outcome has shocked the financial elite and their partners in the Democratic Party, the labor movement, and the progressive majority.

The fledgling Sanders primary campaign, although unable to upset neoliberal dominance, articulated an opposition to the policies of neoliberal capital that can mobilize the progressive majority. The Sanders campaign also highlighted the inability of the left to field a competent team of ideological and practical organizers and activists. There was no left infrastructure either inside or outside the Democratic Party to wage an effective ground game or to guarantee that the votes cast for Sanders would be counted.

Likewise, there was no left or liberal infrastructure in the Democratic Party that was willing or able to challenge the massive fraudulent elimination of African-American voters from the polls in numerous swing states, including Michigan and Wisconsin where their numbers exceeded Trump’s margin of victory.
The Trump administration immediately attacked the government infrastructure so that governance is in the hands of a few Wall St. and far-right loyalists constituting an authoritarian clique. The Republican attack on healthcare coupled with a massive tax cut for the wealthy and Trump’s budget proposal liquidating most social programs provided the shocked electorate with the first concrete issues.

We are in the midst of a building wave of social, cultural, and political resistance and opposition to the far-right agenda. The women’s march on January 21st was a mobilization of 3 million across the country raising numerous issues, but focused on equality and respect for women. This 3 million is one quarter the size of an effective mass counterweight to the authoritarian government, based on the research of Erica Chenoweth. The mobilization of 3 million was a remarkable achievement and a promising step toward the practical goal of 13 million nonviolent resisters.

The women’s march was followed by a broad mobilization of millions directed at the Congress to stop the destruction of Medicaid to pay for a tax cut for the rich. Again women were at the forefront. Daily Action, a political service that texts subscribers with a suggested political action for the day, was launched in December. Over 250,000 subscribers log an average 10,000 calls per day. A poll of these grass roots activists found that of the 28,000 respondents, 86% were women and over 60% were 46 or older. Almost 75% reported they planned to attend more protests. The growing activism and emergence of leadership of women in the resistance to the far-right and for a progressive agenda is a critical element in the development of the progressive majority.
The Sanders campaign has awakened the youth to the political reality and the necessity to work for change. Our Revolution has succeeded the campaign as an organization of 66,000 activists and a mobilization tool for even more. The critical element for the development of the progressive majority is the flood of young Bernie activists into Democratic Socialists of America – DSA. This is becoming a mass phenomenon that reflects the millennials’ negative assessment of US capitalism. DSA has become the base upon which the young generation seeks to build a left alternative to bourgeois politics. DSA is multi-tendency with a flexible approach to the struggle for political power. The mass development of DSA chapters across the country presents a critical demand for left resources to help build the organization into the left pole of US politics.

There are two levels of problems that we confront. One is the overall problem of developing an effective resistance and counter-attack against the far right that can mobilize 13 million nonviolent protesters. This problem can only be solved by arguing for a broad coalition of all the organizations in the progressive majority. The North Carolina Moral Monday coalition provides a model for solving this problem. The June 9th People’s Summit in Chicago is a step in this direction.

The upsurge is taking many forms. Planned Parenthood, the ACLU, Black Lives Matter have seen new support and activism. #DemEnter, Progressive Democrats of America, Progressive Caucus formations in 18 state Democratic Parties, Indivisible, and many local groups are expanding size and impact as they fight for leadership of the Democratic Party. The path forward requires work to unite the new activists around a progressive agenda that focuses on concrete issues rather than personalities; unites different social strata; and builds solidarity with the African American, Latino, and Muslim communities that are targets of the xenophobic racists in the government.

A particularly difficult set of problems confront the trade union movement. The Trump regime and the Republican Congress will intensify capital’s war on the unions. The unions representing federal employees are fighting back. Across the country labor activists are supporting the many groups forming the resistance to Trump. Unions and Labor Councils are working in coalition with progressive forces. Key areas of labor involvement are protecting immigrant workers, fighting to raise the minimum wage, and protecting and expanding access to healthcare.

However, the unions’ defensive ability is compromised by the failure of the labor-management partnership, established in the 1950s, to serve the interests of rank-and-file workers. The labor-management partnership includes the political alliance of trade union leadership with the corporate wing of the Democratic Party. This has required the acceptance of
the erosion of workers’ rights. This deal has demoralized and demobilized the mass of union workers and their friends. This trend resulted in the political blowback of 2016 in which 37% of union members voted for Trump, according to an AFL-CIO poll. The Building Trades Unions met with and praised Trump, while AFL-CIO Pres. Richard Trumka praised Trump’s reactionary State of the Union address to Congress. SEIU announced a 30% budget cut to deal with the anticipated assault on its members. As a top staff member of the United Steelworkers said to me: “We feel that our members abandoned the union when they voted for Trump and the members feel that the union abandoned them when we supported Clinton because of the trade issue.” Labor is facing important internal and external challenges that must be successfully confronted for the power of the progressive majority to grow. Labor leadership must be at the core of a successful nonviolent movement of 13 million Americans.

Lastly the threat of nuclear war has accelerated since the second Obama Administration and is near a dangerous critical mass. The Trump administration is committed to carry out Obama’s $1 trillion nuclear escalation including a new level of nuclear threat to Russia with an ABM system in Eastern Europe. This is accompanied by a simultaneous mobilization of the largest number of US troops, tanks, and war-fighting equipment into Eastern Europe since World War 2. The US navy is also building up a fleet of warships in the Black Sea. The US is leading a boycott of the first session of United Nations talks on a treaty eliminating nuclear weapons, joined by Britain, France and 37 other countries. The left and the progressive majority must find a path of effective rejection of nuclear arms to guarantee humanity’s future.

*Randy Shannon is a member of the National Coordinating Committee of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism (CCDS) and is a member of the Steel Valley Organizing Committee of Democratic Socialists of America (DSA). He is also the Secretary of the National Board of Progressive Democrats of America (PDA), and was an elected Bernie Sanders Delegate to the 2016 Democratic National Convention.*
Deepen the Political Revolution: Fight for Economic Justice with A 3-Point Program: 6 Hour day - Hike in pay - Jobs for all

By Randy Shannon

The unprecedented level of wealth disparity in our economy remains the fundamental divide in US society. The vast majority suffer its effects to varying degrees. It was a key motivation for voters in the 2016 election.

The 2016 election campaign and the electorate’s response make clear that the oligarchy has succeeded in obscuring both the causes and the solutions to this unsustainable disparity. The election of a far-right government guarantees the intensification of the transfer of wealth from the have-nots to the haves.

The economic dominance of manufacturing and the social power of the organized working class that grew out of the Great Depression has been greatly diminished over the past forty years by the globalization of production, technological innovation, and anti-labor austerity policies.

The forty-hour work week, minimum wage, overtime pay, and prohibition of child labor was established by the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. However, workers had been demanding a thirty-hour work week since the 1920s. The Cold War launched by Truman’s National Security Council Report 68 (NSC-68) targeted US workers. NSC-68 called “for lengthening hours of work” as a matter of national security.

The shorter work week is key to increasing employment and reversing the trend of growing wealth disparity. The 6-hour workday will increase the demand for workers and lower the number of unemployed. A shorter work week is fundamental to increasing the workers’ share of their labor’s surplus value.
The social wage in the US has also been under attack over the last four decades with the globalization of the workforce. The social wage is the sum total of value produced by labor that is actually returned to labor by the owners of capital. This includes wages, benefits, and access to social programs.

The Fight for $15 movement is a response to the oppression of workers in the service industry. However, progressives should raise the demand for an overall hike in pay for all workers, including retirees. This would raise living standards and stimulate an economic renewal.

‘Jobs for all’ is the third leg of an economic program that addresses the fundamental issue in our society. Full employment challenges capital’s ability to coerce workers with the threat of an army of unemployed. The army of unemployed has allowed the oligarchy to prevent job action to improve pay and working conditions. The value of workers’ compensation has been reduced by financial manipulation, gradually lowering living standards.

The United Nations and Pres. Franklin Roosevelt’s 2nd Bill of Rights both recognized employment as a human right that is fundamental to the enjoyment of other human rights. The history of progressive legislation to provide jobs for all continues in Rep. John Conyers “21st Century Full Employment Act” HR 1000.

HR1000 establishes a Full Employment Fund in the Department of Labor that finances local job creation initiatives. It prioritizes areas where employment is weakest. It is funded by a Wall Street transaction tax. This act should be a banner demand for economic and racial justice. The promises of the Republican campaign to bring back jobs will, like other promises, be broken in short order. However, the need for jobs will become sharper and more widespread as the technological revolution intensifies, production moves offshore, and the cost of living leaps higher.

The progressive movement can unify the broadest sectors of the population, bringing together many disparate social and political forces, in a movement that addresses our most common problem, enjoyment of the fruit of our own labor.
Building this movement will take a coalition that has the patience and determination to educate, organize, and mobilize a growing force that demands a 6-hour work week, a general rise in pay, and jobs for all at the local, state, and national level. We can point to the examples of many countries in Europe where the 35-hour work week and the 30-hour work week are standard.

The left recognizes that economic justice is a fundamental issue. Now is the time to raise the issue of US wealth disparity and bring forward concrete solutions as a basis for electing a progressive Congress in 2018, and to give voice to the many people who had placed their hopes on false promises to ‘bring back jobs.’

Randy Shannon is a member of the National Coordinating Committee (CCDS). He also is a member of Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) and is a leader in Progressive Democrats of America (PDA).
World Domination: ‘Neoliberal Globalization’ versus ‘The Clash of Civilizations’

By Harry Targ

Part One

United States foreign policy since the dawn of the twentieth century has been shaped by similar but competing ideologies. Ideologies are usually generated by those who rule to explain and justify the policies that they adopt and implement. Often, but not always, purveyors of one or another ideology believe what they say. And journalists and scholars dignify the ideologies by developing rigorous explanations of why the approaches taken are justified by theories of human conduct.

During various periods of world history, elites who compete for power and influence disagree over policy but share a common ideological understanding of the world. But sometimes policy disagreements lead to substantial conflicts of perspective, of ideologies. With the election of Donald Trump, ideological contestation between two elite class ideologies has emerged: one based upon the theory of neoliberal globalization and the other on a thesis based on an alleged clash of civilizations. Understanding the ideological disputes might help deconstruct the political disputes today over foreign (and domestic) policy and facilitate the process of resisting both versions of a United States imperial agenda.

The Ideology of Neoliberal Globalization

The policy referred to as neoliberalism has its historical roots in the expansion of capitalism out of feudalism. Theorists as varied as Adam Smith and Karl Marx saw capitalism as an expansive system that through competition led to growth of economic actors. For Smith, capitalist competition would reach its natural limits and “the invisible hand” would be-
come a regulator of the enterprises that prospered in the marketplace, limiting egregious consolidation of economic and political power.

For Marx capital accumulation meant that competitive capitalism would be qualitatively transformed into consolidated and later monopoly capitalism. This process of economic consolidation was inextricably connected to globalization: from kidnapping and enslavement, to trade, investment, and appropriating natural resources. By the time of the Spanish/Cuban/American war the United States had accumulated enough military power to expand its economic tentacles to Asia, the Pacific, the Caribbean and Latin America. But competition with other colonial powers, the Russian and Chinese revolutions, and world wars stifled the free unfettered expansion of United States capitalism.

After World War II, with the United States as the dominant power, a global economy was constructed that facilitated trade, investment, and a debt system. The then existing Socialist Bloc, rising anti-colonial movements in the Global South, the spread of social democracies across Europe, and labor pressures at home limited the full economic freedom that would maximize the opportunities of capitalist expansion.

By the 1970s, economic competition among capitalist states, anti-colonial wars against the United States, and overproduction of goods and services combined to reduce rates of profit. Monopoly capital expanded its historic shift from manufacturing to financial speculation. As Lenin had long ago assumed, the export of capital began to take priority over the export of commodities.

To facilitate financial speculation, political elites began to actively pursue on a global basis what became the neoliberal agenda: privatization of all public institutions; deregulation of economies; austerity, that is cutting social programs that give some support to majorities for education, health care, jobs, housing, and transportation; and for many of the world’s countries shifting their economic programs from producing goods and services for their own people to the development of larger and larger export sectors.

In addition, with the qualitative shift in capitalism from manufacturing to financialization, neoliberal institutions encouraged the opening of national economies to foreign speculators. As the price of oil rose dramatically in the 1970s an emerging debt system was created whereby countries of the Global South were forced by international financial institutions to adopt neoliberal policies. The collapse of socialism in the 1990s triggered a radical transformation in the former Socialist Bloc to free market economies. The changes imposed by international institutions were to occur quickly, sometimes called “shock therapy.” Also, So-
cial Democracies in Europe shifted in the direction of neoliberalism. The rise to power of Margaret Thatcher in Great Britain and Ronald Reagan in the United States personified this global shift in public policy at home and abroad.

The neoliberal policy agenda was defended in terms of the presumed connection between market freedom and development, capitalism and development, markets and democracy, and the fanciful idea that neoliberal globalization would facilitate harmony among nations, economic development, and the transformation from four hundred years of nation-state competition to a new world order.

In the United States political elites of both major political parties endorsed the major features of neoliberalism: free trade agreements; pressures on poor countries to deregulate their economies; downsizing all governments at home and abroad; and using military power to impose the neoliberal agenda on recalcitrant countries. Most foreign policy elites from the 1980s on advocated so-called “humanitarian interventions,” to transform rogue states that opposed the global shift in economic and political institutions.

The ideology of neoliberal globalization justified trade agreements such as The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the emerging World Trade Organization (WTO). US foreign policies inspired by neoliberal ideology justified military interventions in the former Yugoslavia, the Middle East, Persian Gulf and East Asia and subversion of regimes in Latin America and Africa. And under the guise of promoting market democracies the United States since the 1990s constructed over 700 military bases, mostly small “lily pads;” established a military command structure in Africa; and since 2009 unleashed drone warfare on an unprecedented scale. Supporters of the neoliberal agenda continue to support expanded trade agreements, expansion of the global presence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and military spending.

Part Two

“To be brutality frank, I mean Christianity is dying in Europe, and Islam is on the rise...we’re in a war...” Steve Bannon quoted in Steve Reilly and Brad Heath, “Bannon Takes a Dark View of Islam,” USA Today, February 2, 2017).

‘The Ideology of “the Clash of Civilizations’

The history of the United States cannot be understood without grasping the central role of the capitalist mode of production. The Western
Hemisphere became vital to the emerging world system of capitalism in the fifteenth century. Also, the globalization of capitalism was inextricably connected to the rise of modern racism, an ideology that justified mass murder, kidnapping, and enslavement of millions of people, primarily people of color. Rising capitalism and racism grew in tandem. Each was the product of the other. In one of Marx’s most powerful renditions of the emergence of the two phenomena he wrote in *Capital*:

“The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black-skins, signalised the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production. These idyllic proceedings are the chief momenta of primitive accumulation. On their heels treads the commercial war of the European nations, with the globe for a theatre. It begins with the revolt of the Netherlands from Spain, assumes giant dimensions in England’s Anti-Jacobin War, and is still going on in the opium wars against China, &c.”

Beginning with the introduction of capitalism and slavery in the Western Hemisphere in the fifteenth century, different iterations of white supremacist ideologies were articulated using metaphors that denied humanity to the indigenous people who lived in the Hemisphere before the arrival of European colonial powers and the slaves kidnapped from Africa. For some, people of color were not human beings. For the “liberals” they were like children. And as the United States expanded across the North American continent, the taking of land, the slaughter of indigenous people, and the establishment of slavery were all justified by virtue of the superiority of the white man.

As the new great power emerged from the war with Spain, soon to be President Theodore Roosevelt referred to the special contribution of the white race to civilization. Indiana Senator Albert Beveridge declared that it was the Christian duty of the United States to expand on a worldwide basis (see Harry Targ, “The Ideology of U.S. Hegemony in the Hemisphere”, *The Rag Blog*, June 6, 2012). In our own day, President Reagan reiterated the old Puritan metaphor: the United States is the “city on the hill.” Secretaries of State Albright and Clinton, as well as former President Obama referred to the United States as “the indispensable nation.” In sum, United States history is replete with references to the intellectual and moral superiority of the United States and, directly or indirectly, of the “white race.”

As neoliberal ideology is a contemporary version of classic theories of free market capitalism, the thesis of the “clash of civilizations” is a mod
ern derivative of classic ideologies of white supremacy. Distinguished political scientist Samuel Huntington published books and articles in recent years that posited a fundamental global contradiction between civilizations. For him, wars are not about disputes between nations but between civilizations. A civilization is a large swath of land, millions of people with a shared culture, values, and beliefs, and overarching political and military institutions.

In world history Huntington suggested, it was because of incompatible civilizations that wars occurred. In his 1996 book (The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order, Simon and Shuster), he suggested that the fundamental clash that would be occurring in the years ahead was between the Christian West and Islam. (Huntington’s writings have had an enduring and negative impact on public policy. He recommended for South Vietnam, the Strategic Hamlet Program, which was designed to move rural Vietnamese people away from their communities where the enemy was strong. He also warned in the 1970s of the excesses of democracy. Too many people are participating in political processes, he argued).

White supremacy gave inspiration to support for wars in the twenty-first century. Muslim people were increasingly conceptualized as monsters, killers, and terrorists. They constituted a civilizational threat to the West. And it was this conception of the clash of civilizations that was used to build support among a war-weary US population to fight in Afghanistan, the Persian Gulf, and the Middle East. During the 2016 election, the theory of the clash of civilizations hovered just below the surface of discourse. United States security was threatened first and foremost by Muslims, but also by Latinos, Africans, and Asians.
While not all supporters of candidate and now President Trump are white supremacists, he and his key aides constantly imply that the United States is currently in a World War, a war of a new kind, a civilizational war. For the Trump narrative, the maintenance of the racial superiority of the United States requires economic policies that limit the outflow of United States investment dollars and the inflow of migrant labor and goods produced overseas. In other words, in the contemporary ideological climate the ideology of the clash of civilizations is connected to policies promoting economic nationalism, a perspective at variance from the neoliberal ideologues. And, at least rhetorically this ideological wing of the foreign policy elite favors less involvement in global diplomacy and institutions while we prepare for global conflicts.

If one had to oversimplify political discourse on the United States role in the world in 2017, the ideological struggle is between one faction of the political class that prioritizes the globalization of the United States economy, pursuing policies to open doors to American capitalism, particularly finance capitalism, and another which pursues white supremacy at home and seeks to impose the dominance of the United States, while limiting economic, political, and cultural ties across the world.

Another World is Possible

The two ideologies, neoliberal globalization versus the clash of civilizations, vary in theoretical underpinnings. On occasion followers of one or the other ideology advocate differences in policy. But both are committed to establishing or reestablishing (in the twenty-first century) United States dominance of the globe economically, militarily, and politically.

The neoliberal ideology begins with an economic motivation for militarism; the clash of civilizations begins with a racial motivation for militarism. One proclaims that our economic and political institutions represent a beacon of hope for the world; the other frankly believes that the United States, because of its racial identity, is a superior civilization. Neither approach to the world provides any semblance of hope for economic and social justice.

Therefore, one task of the peace movement in 2017 entails offering a population skeptical about United States wars and military spending a new way of thinking about how the nation should participate in the world and why this new way is vital to the survival of humankind. The task includes articulating a theory of how the world can work.

First, a new world order that maximizes human potential everywhere and minimizes violence can only be built on a shared, equitable distribution of societal resources. The promotion of any economic system that
institutionalizes exploitation must be opposed. Peace can come only in a global society that is based upon economic fairness.

Second, a just world order economically requires the development of a political culture, values, beliefs, and practices, that celebrates human oneness—solidarity—and diversity. Political cultures based on notions of superiority and inferiority are diametrically opposed to ideas of solidarity and diversity.

Third, combating the institutionalized violence bred of economic disparity and racial supremacy requires mass movements that oppose war-making, killing, and the amassing of the weapons of war. A twenty-first century peace movement must oppose the war system.

The two-year presidential campaign is over and a new administration is serving in its first one hundred days. The campaign and election have shown that large numbers of Americans, and people from around the world who watched the US elections carefully, reject the ideology of neoliberal globalization. Growing resistance to the new Trump administration suggests also that people are rejecting the white supremacist/economic nationalist alternative that this new administration represents. The peace movement task in the months and years ahead includes developing a coherent theory or ideology of peace and engaging in processes of education, agitation, and organization to achieve its goals.

Harry Targ is a professor of Political Science at Purdue University, and was an American Federation of Teachers delegate to the Northwest Central Labor Council of Indiana (AFL-CIO). He is a member of the Lafayette Area Peace Coalition, and is a national co-chair of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism.
War and Warming: Can We Save the Planet Without Taking on the Pentagon?

Oil is indispensable for war and militarism. Think of it as the lifeblood coursing through our foreign policy, a policy based on maintaining superpower status and confronting those whom we perceive as challenging us.

By H Patricia Hynes
Portside, January 26, 2017

“If we are not united in peace, we cannot save the planet.” Thich Nhat Hanh

Looking out to my audience of young climate change activists and older peace activists gathered for a talk and discussion on "war and warming," I see in the generational difference what many peace activists perceive. Peace, war, militarism, and nuclear weapons are an agenda of another era - an earlier era, while progressive political energy today is galvanized by climate change. (One climate activist explained that in his lifetime, no nuclear weapons had been used while climate change had worsened.) Thus, our movements largely work in silos, despite the actuality that war and fossil fuels have been fatally co-dependent since the Second World War.

Persian Gulf War

Oil is indispensable for war and militarism. Think of it as the lifeblood coursing through our foreign policy, a policy based on maintaining superpower status and confronting those whom we perceive as challen-
ing us. The 1980 Carter Doctrine, which stated that the United States would use military force if necessary to defend its national interests in the Persian Gulf, formalized the toxic nexus between access to oil and war. Since the late 1970s, the United States has spent $8 trillion protecting oil cargoes in the Persian Gulf region through ongoing naval patrols. Keeping oil and gas supply sea lanes in the South China Sea open, in the face of China’s expansionism there, is also a factor in the US pivot to Asia.

This foreign policy pivot has involved engaging Australia and Southeast Asian allies in military training exercises, opening new and previously closed bases to the US military, and sales of new weapons systems. Further, the Obama administration prioritized a military "triangular alliance" with Japan, pressuring them to abandon their peace constitution, and South Korea, where the US has a military foothold on the Asian continent, for countering North Korea and the rising power of China. This ratcheting up of military dominance is reliant on oil, the lifeline of weaponry, military exercises and war.

War for oil has come home. Militarized North Dakota police attacked non-violent water protectors protesting the Dakota Access oil pipeline with rubber bullets, tear gas, concussion grenades, and water cannons in sub-freezing temperatures. One medic treating injuries described it as a "low grade war." (1)

A thumbnail sketch of recent US spending confirms the axiom that *war culture is a defining feature of US politics.* In 2016, as in previous years, an estimated $1 trillion was allocated to military defense, militarized national security, veterans, and debt from recent wars. In that same year, a few billion dollars-crumbs from the master’s table-were allocated to research and development for energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies. Between 2010-2015, the federal government invested $56 billion in clean energy internationally, while it recently committed to $1 trillion for modernizing nuclear weapons, their infrastructure and their delivery systems by 2030.
What’s clear from US spending priorities is that access to oil and military dominance has governed US policy in the world. Add to this a thin-skinned bully as president surrounding himself with generals and we will likely get into deeper displays of male dominance. Foreign policy advisor to both Presidents Bush, Philip Zelikow, put it bluntly. With President Trump's "ambient prickliness, we could end up picking a fight with three quarters of the world." (2) The immense policy and spending inequality between military and renewable energy (one that mirrors our society’s massive economic inequality) retards sustainable energy research and development and accelerates the perilously trending climate change.

**Militarism: An Engine of Climate Change**

In 1940, the United States military consumed one percent of the country's total fossil fuel energy usage; by the end of the World War II the military’s share rose to 29 percent. Militarism is the most oil-intensive activity on the planet, growing more so with faster, bigger, more fuel guzzling planes, tanks, and naval vessels. At the outset of the Iraq War in March 2003, the Army estimated it would need more than 40 million gallons of gasoline for three weeks of combat, exceeding the total quantity used by all Allied forces in the four years of World War 1. (3) The frequency and prevalence of US armed conflict since World War II is another factor in the combustible mix of war and warming. One count has documented 153 instances of US armed forces engaged in conflict abroad from 1945 through 2004, a number consistent with other estimates. (4) This count, though, does not include covert military missions in which US Special Operations Forces (larger in number than the active-duty militaries of many countries) operate in 135 countries. Nor do the 153 military conflicts since 1945 include US occupation forces stationed abroad since World War II, military participation in mutual security organizations such as NATO, military base agreements for the estimated 1000 US military bases across the planet, and routine oil-intensive military training exercises around the globe.

In 2003, the Carter Doctrine was implemented with "shock and awe," in what was the most intensive and profligate use of fossil fuel the world has ever witnessed. The projected full costs of the Iraq War (estimated $3 trillion) could have covered all global investments in renewable energy needed between now and 2030 to reverse global warming trends.

Between 2003 and 2007, the Iraq war generated more carbon dioxide, equivalent in greenhouse gas emissions to each year of the war, than 139 of the world’s countries release annually. Re-building Iraqi (and Syr-
ian and Yemeni) schools, homes, businesses, bridges, roads, and hospitals pulverized by the war will require millions of tons of cement, the most fossil fuel intensive of all manufacturing industries.

After an unprecedented investigation into military use of fossil fuels, Barry Sander, author of The Green Zone, calculates that the US military consumes as much as one million barrels of oil per day and contributes 5 percent of current global warming emissions. Few countries use more oil than Pentagon. Yet, this comparison understates the extreme military impact on climate change. Military fuel is more polluting because of the fuel type used for aviation. Carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions from jet fuel are larger - possibly triple - per gallon than those from diesel and oil. Further, aircraft exhaust has unique polluting effects that result in greater warming effect by per unit of fuel used. Radiative effects from jet exhaust, including nitrous oxide, sulphur dioxide, soot, and water vapor exacerbate the warming effect of the CO2 exhaust emissions.

Nor does this calculation include the fossil fuels used by civilian weapons makers. Their greenhouse gas emissions comprise both those from manufacturing and testing weapons and also the intensive cleanup of hazardous waste produced by them. Nearly 900 of the US Environmental Protection Agency's approximately 1,300 Superfund sites are abandoned military bases/facilities or manufacturing and testing sites that produced conventional weapons and other military related products and services, according to the 2008-2009 Annual Report of the President's Cancer Panel.

Climate Change in a Militarizing World

Climate change is inevitably an issue of peace because the Pentagon is the single largest contributor of climate change emissions in the world. And as the Pentagon goes, so go the military budgets of other major powers. "We are not your enemy," a Chinese strategist told journalist John Pilger, "but if you [in the West] decide we are, we must prepare without delay." (5)

According to some security analysts, talk of fighting terrorism fills the media but is secondary in the talk of US and NATO generals, admirals and defense ministers. Many politicians of the West and NATO believe that war between Great Powers (Russia and/or China) is not only possible but may break out at any time. Therefore, bigger spending in all involved countries on high-tech weapons, deploying more forces, and more military joint exercises will exacerbate climate change emissions and heighten the potential for nuclear war, risking another kind of climate change-nuclear winter.
Others point to the elevation of generals by President-elect Trump to positions historically held by civilians in order to maintain civilian control of the military, namely Department of Defense, National Security Advisor and Department of Homeland Security. They are "enablers" and "accelerants to military action," warns retired Colonel William Astore. "[T]he future of U.S. foreign policy seems increasingly clear: more violent interventionism against what these men see as the existential threat of radical Islam. Both [the United States and radical Islam] embrace their own exceptionalism, both see themselves as righteous warriors, both represent ways of thinking steeped in patriarchy and saturated with violence, and both are remarkably resistant to any thought of compromise." (6)

Growing global militarization portends greater military buildup in Russia, China, NATO and the Middle East and greater climate change emissions. The United States expends 37 percent on the global military budget and its military is estimated to contribute 5 percent of climate change emissions. Can we not, then, assume that the rest of world's military spending, weapons manufacturing, military exercises, and conflict combine to bring military-related fossil fuel emissions to near 15 percent of global climate change pollution? Intensifying military tensions will drive it higher and could vitiate country commitments to the Paris climate agreement.

Climate Change, Water Shortage and Conflict: Syria

Climate change is necessarily an issue of peace given the potential conflicts over the remaining oil as we near peak oil and given diminishing potable water supply and arable land. The UN panel that analyzes climate science <http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/technical-papers/ccw/chapter1.pdf>, the IPPC, concludes: "Water and its availability and quality will be the main pressure on and [critical] issue for societies and the environment under climate change." Within little more than a decade, nearly one-half of the world's people will be living in areas of high water shortage. (7)

The worst Syrian drought on record, from 2006 to 2011, caused agriculture to collapse; food prices to rise, thus aggravating poverty; and drove more than 1.5 million farm workers and families to cities for survival. Simultaneously hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees from the US-led war in their country fled to Syrian cities. The extreme and rapid swelling in urban population from war and climate change-related water scarcity, combined with the lack of support from the Assad government for basic needs and services, added fuel to the fire of civil conflict and the current war in Syria. The Syrian scholar Suzanne Saleeby notes that "escalating pressures on urban areas due to internal migration, increasing food insecurity, and resultant high rates of unemployment have spurred many
Syrians to make their political grievances publicly known in popular uprisings..." (8)

While it is evident from history that the source of violence in societies suffering from scarce resources is fundamentally inequality, injustice, poor economic and resource management, and lack of democracy, the stress of climate change on the Syrian society is neither isolated nor temporary; and it is worsening. The entire Middle East inexorably faces a hotter, drier climate from climate change that will further stress water resources, agriculture, food prices and existing conflicts. Thus, the seeds of future conflicts in authoritarian and unequal societies may also include scarce water resources as farmers and thirsty people, opportunistic politicians and powerful corporations contend for that diminishing resource.

**Conclusion**

War mirrors the culture of a country. US militarism—from its training, tactics, and logistics to its reasons for going to war and its weapons of war—is distinctly shaped by core elements of American identity. These determining cultural forces are, according to military historian Victor Hanson <http://www.thenewatlantis.com/publications/military-technology-and-american-culture>:

- manifest destiny;
- frontier mentality;
- rugged individualism;
- unfettered market capitalism; and
- what he calls a "muscular independence" (power projection in Pentagon-speak). (9) These eminently masculinist qualities converge to generate bigger, better and more destructive war technology. And they have delivered up a bullying, white nationalist, law-breaking billionaire and sexual predator as president.

The US habit and competence for war, with its origins in the past annihilation of Native Americans, may be our society's nemesis unless we do critical soul-searching about our cultural and personal values <http://www.thesolutionsjournal.com/node/969> and actively engage in transforming them. Let us remember and honor the plentitude of activist, non-violent movements in our society that have profoundly challenged the dominant patriarchal profile of our culture described by Hanson. These are the feminist violence against women and equal rights for women movement; the civil rights, immigrant and indigenous rights
movements; the anti-war and peace movements; Black Lives Matter and Standing Rock water protectors; progressive media, peace and justice studies; progressive labor and health workers; the coop, sustainable agriculture, and Transition Town movements; and the pervasive climate change activism and victories against fracking and oil pipelines.

The challenge is how to build voice, social cohesion and public influence for our shared values of a sense of human community, our core connection as humans with nature, our empathy with the exploited and our thirst for equality and justice for all.

In these times of overt authoritarian and corporate control, our hope for turning the tide will come from local, community-based campaigns and actions. These comprise anti-fracking ordinances, town by town; the fight for $15 minimum wage city by city; churches and cities providing sanctuary for undocumented workers; children suing their government for their right to clean energy and a livable future; campaigns against all forms of violence against girls and women; using community media to promote equal rights for all; and electing people to local and regional office who champion these issues and campaigns.

Working together, we must turn the tide on these destructive forces and seek enduring peace "on" earth and enduring peace "with" earth.

[This piece originated in talks given to 350.org CT and Promoting Enduring Peace, New Haven; Women's International League for Peace and Justice, Boston branch; and the Women's Pentagon Action 2016 Forum.]

Sources

1. https://insideclimatenews.org/news/22112016/dakota-access-protesters-inj...
5. http://www.alternet.org/world/will-trump-start-war-china

H. Patricia Hynes is a retired Professor of Environmental Health from Boston University School of Public Health, and chair of the Board of the Traprock Center for Peace and Justice. She writes and speaks on women, the environment, war, militarism, and public health. She contributes to the Environmental Health Policy Institute of Physicians for Social Responsibility, an organization working for single-payer Medicare for All.
Stop the Permanent War Economy Now!

By the Peace and Solidarity Committee of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism

President Trump’s proposed budget includes a big increase in military spending and is a document for war. It attacks the environment, diplomacy, education and social programs that benefit the poor and people of color.

CCDS opposes this budget, calling instead for a 50% cut in funding for the Pentagon to support jobs, the environment and programs benefiting the people. The following statement gives historical perspective to the growth of the military budget and the military industrial complex.

Woodrow Wilson’s Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, proclaimed the danger the new Bolshevik Revolution represented to the needs of capitalist expansion: trade, investment, cheap labor and resources.

Almost thirty years later as World War II ended, key advisors of President Truman warned of a return to the Great Depression if war-related demands for manufacturing products declined. The United States Cold War against the former Soviet Union began with the dropping of the bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, sending a message to the Soviets that the United States was the new dominant power in the world. Between 1945 and 1950, the President declared his famous doctrine warning of an “international communist threat,” began a foreign assistance program for part of Europe, launched the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and promised never to recognize the new Peoples Republic of China.

In 1950 President Truman embraced the recommendations he received from advisors in National Security Council Document 68. It called for a perpetual commitment to military spending. It recommended that when a president sits down to map out a federal budget, his/her first priority should be to spend all the military wants and only after that should he allocate financial resources to other societal needs.
As soon as the Korean War started NSC 68 became an unchallengeable feature of public policy. It served the needs of the economy, provided the war material to engage in imperialist adventures all across the globe and, to justify itself, launched a global struggle against “international communism.” Even though the image of the demonic enemy, the Soviet Union, was a lie, US military prowess would be used to stifle revolutionary nationalist and socialist movements and regimes wherever they sprung up.

Dramatic increases in military spending occurred periodically ever since the 1940s for major foreign interventions and as an economic stimulus. For example, President Kennedy’s administration was made up of the military hawks who had tried to get President Eisenhower to spend more on the military. Kennedy expanded investment in counter-insurgency forces, war-related research and development, and military assistance. Eisenhower had held the line and in his farewell address warned of the unlimited influence of the military that was growing in the United States, a military/industrial complex. But in the Kennedy and Johnson years, military spending increased by a third. To scare the American people and get votes, candidate Kennedy warned of a “missile gap” with the Soviet Union which turned out to be false.

Twenty years later President Reagan spoke of a “window of vulnerability” as US defenses allegedly diminished because of “détente” with the Soviet Union in the 1970s. Reagan’s justification for defense spending was a lie also. After modest declines in military spending in the 1990s as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, President Clinton’s last projected defense budget before leaving office was set at $306 billion.

In the new century the United States substantially increased military spending to launch two wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Some years ago Joseph Stiglitz predicted the Iraq War would cost the American people $3 trillion dollars. Today some analysts claim that figure has been surpassed.

During the Obama years military spending stabilized in some areas and increased in others, such as projected development of a new generation of nuclear weapons.
War has changed also as US forces over the last two years have struck "enemies" with drones and bombs in six countries, and maintained over 700 military bases in at least 40 countries (particularly on the African continent). The military spending and wars of the twenty-first centuries were defended as responses to the shock of 9/11 and the need for a global "war on terrorism."

**Trump's Expansion**

Now we have a new Trump administration, The President has announced he will be seeking an additional $54 billion in his first military budget (which will total just over $600 billion), a large 10 percent increase, while cutting a comparable amount of spending for non-military tasks. For show he has targeted selected military projects for criticism but it is clear he “wants to win wars again.” As NSC 68 called for a long time ago military spending will remain the first priority of the federal government.

In sum, what we can deduce from this history is that military spending since World War II has been a top priority of the federal government. Military spending has consistently “primed the pump,” overcoming the traditional tendency of capitalism toward stagnation. Also, military superiority (the US spends more on the military than the next seven countries combined) has been the prime tool for maintaining global capitalism and opposing any governments, movements, or ideologies that oppose the expansion of capitalism. Millions of deaths and casualties of people everywhere, the loss of thousands of lives of American military personnel, the flight of millions of refugees from war torn lands, and the incredible impacts of war and preparation for war on the environment all suggest that the war system is a nightmare for most citizens of the globe.

We in CCDS call for a 50% reduction in the military budget to fund social programs, jobs, and a Green New Deal. We welcome and encourage the rebirth of a US and global peace movement and we pledge to participate in doing all we can working with others to end the capitalist war system.
El Salvador: Threatened by the Right Wing

Twenty-five years after the signing of El Salvador’s Peace Agreement, the country’s right-wing forces seek to undermine core democratic institutions. This article is reprinted with permission from the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA).

By Samantha Pineda and Alexis Stoumbelis  
NACLA Report on the Americas

As the warm sun broke through the mist on the morning of January 16th, the San Salvador stadium quickly filled with people dressed in white and sporting their finest guayaberas (traditionally embroidered Latin-American dress shirts)—a symbolic gesture of peace for the commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the signing of 1992 Chapultepec Peace Agreement, which ended the country’s 12-year civil war.

School-age children and teenagers carrying small lunch sacks were the first to be seated. They looked on as a wide spectrum of Salvadoran society, who might not otherwise be found in the same room, joined them in the arena. Elderly folks expressed a similar excitement, dotting the crowd among social movement activists, representatives of indigenous communities, war veterans, and participants from the Yo Cambio (“I Change”) program for the rehabilitation and reintegration of incarcerated peoples.

President Salvador Sánchez Cerén, one of the former guerrilla commanders who signed the 1992 agreement with the Salvadoran government on behalf of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), presided over the event alongside other government representatives. Amidst the celebration of achievements, however, emerged a call for a “second-generation” of national agreements to address the country’s deep-rooted challenges.

The proposal comes after months of consorted right-wing efforts to destabilize the governing FMLN administration by blocking government

finances, undermining democratic institutions, and an ongoing media smear campaign. If successful, the new United Nations facilitated dialogue, could bring about a truce between the rivaling political parties and other sectors of Salvadoran society as well as address the limitations of the 1992 peace treaty.

An Incomplete Peace

The 1992 UN-sponsored truce ended El Salvador’s decade long civil war between the U.S.-funded Salvadoran military and popular revolutionary armed forces (FMLN). In the months following, guerrilla combatants were slowly demobilized, and the majority of weapons were decommissioned by UN officials and destroyed.

At the same time, the government dismantled its brutal state security apparatus, including the National Guard and the National Police. These groups, together with the country’s armed forces, were said to be responsible for at least 85 percent of human rights abuses, murders, and disappearances perpetrated against civilians during the armed conflict, according to a Truth Commission report assigned to investigate such crimes.
In an attempt to undermine justice and render the evidence discovered by the Truth Commission toothless, El Salvador’s legislature, under the right-wing Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) party, approved the infamous and recently repealed 1993 Amnesty Law. This law provided blanket immunity to high ranking officials, as well as military and police personnel, implicated in grave human rights violations during the war.

Ultimately, the military was substantially reduced in size while constitutional reforms prohibited its involvement in politics and in public security, except during national emergencies. A new civilian police force was formed, made up of one-third former state security agents, one-third demobilized guerrilla combatants, and one-third new civilian recruits.

At the institutional level, the Peace Agreement ushered in an unprecedented democratization of many of El Salvador’s state institutions. The FMLN successfully transitioned from a guerrilla insurgency into a political party. A new institution, the pluralistic Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE), was created to regulate elections and protect voter rights. The agreement guaranteed the protection of essential political and civil liberties, such as freedom of speech and association, and created the Office of the Ombudsperson for the Defense of Human Rights, an independent government institution charged with promoting and protecting human rights.

Despite these significant advancements, the Agreements ultimately failed to bring about the structural economic and social change that was at the heart of El Salvador’s revolutionary struggle. At the negotiating table, the post-conflict government would not concede to economic demands, namely the redistribution of land and wealth away from the hands of a few elite families. Following 20 years of postwar rule by ARENA and five years of governance by the FMLN, economic disparity has surpassed pre-war levels, fueled by a ruthless application of neoliberal economic policies, including the privatization of major public institutions like banks, telecommunications and electricity and the adoption of legal frameworks to privilege foreign corporations. El Salvador’s minimum wage is second only to Nicaragua as the lowest in Central America.

As if that weren’t enough, two decades of impunity, displacement, and family separation have created an environment of increased violence and insecurity that has caused tens of thousands to flee the country.

Recognizing the challenges that El Salvador continues to face, President Sánchez Cerén also announced a new round of UN-facilitated accords between the government and the country’s various political powers and social sectors just a few weeks ago. “In 2017, we will promote a new dialogue to achieve a second generation of agreements in the face of
the current needs and challenges and move closer to that country that we dream about,” he said.

**Threats to Peacetime Democracy**

In recent years, right-wing political parties and institutions that represent the interests of the Salvadoran oligarchy have attempted to undermine the very democratic processes the Peace Agreement ushered in. Since 2009, they have employed a variety of tactics to erode support for the government—from organizing media smear campaigns to withholding of legislative votes aimed at blocking funding destined for social programs and security initiatives.

These actions have prompted popular social movement organizations to take to the streets to denounce opposition efforts as a “soft coup,” which they claim are intended to oust the FMLN prior to the 2018 legislative and 2019 presidential elections. Scholars and researchers have noted a growing trend throughout Latin America of “soft” or “parliamentary coups.” Unlike a traditional military coup, this strategy involves an opposition party’s use of dubious legal means, or “a fig leaf of legality,” as Kregg Hetherton and Marco Castillo write, referring to the case of Paraguay, to justify ousting a leader or party before they are constitutionally up for a vote to leave office.

Key to the Salvadoran right-wing’s strategy is the Supreme Court, which is waging a war on two of the country’s principal democratic institutions: the Supreme Electoral Tribunal and the Legislative Assembly.

After decades of quietly rubber-stamping ARENA government action, the Supreme Court, and especially four magistrates in its five-member Constitutional Chamber, roared to life following the election of Mauricio Funes in 2009, the first candidate from the FMLN to advance to the presidency in El Salvador.

In seeming reaction to Funes’ electoral victory, the Chamber issued ruling after ruling on the electoral process, effectively re-writing entire swathes of the electoral code that had been painstakingly hammered out through the country’s peace negotiations and pluralist legislative debate. The changes allowed candidates to run independently for office rather than running on a traditional vote-by-party slate. The cumulative impact of these revisions was to water down the power of political parties at precisely the moment when the left-leaning FMLN had become the most popular party in the country. As FMLN legislator Jacqueline Rivera explained at a 2012 popular movement forum, “As soon as the FMLN wins through the electoral system, you’re telling me the electoral system no longer works? No way.”
Despite the shifting parameters, the FMLN prevailed again in the 2014 presidential elections. The Constitutional Chamber then turned its attention to the country’s highest electoral authority, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE), where they stripped political parties of their ability to participate and thereby maintain oversight over the process.

In June 2014, the Chamber issued a ruling that Eugenio Chicas of the FMLN could no longer serve as President of TSE on the grounds that his election to that position in 2009 was unconstitutional, despite the fact that it followed the same protocol that had been in place for decades. El Salvador’s Constitution gives the political party that won the most votes in the presidential election, which in 2009 was the FMLN, the right to nominate the TSE President. Prior to 2009, ARENA party leaders openly held the TSE presidency; Chicas’ predecessor, Walter Araujo served not only as an ARENA parliamentarian but also briefly as president of the party itself.

However, after the FMLN’s second presidential victory in 2014, the Constitutional Chamber ruled that TSE magistrates could not have political affiliations. New magistrates were elected after the ruling in time to oversee the 2015 legislative and municipal elections; however, in recent weeks, the Chamber announced it would accept a case against TSE Magistrate Ulises Rivas for some comments made in support of the FMLN’s candidates, despite the fact that he is not a member of any party. Rivas is now seeking protective measures from the Inter-American Human Rights Commission of the Organization of American States.

The Chamber has also targeted the Legislative Assembly, El Salvador’s most representative democratic institution. In July 2016, they announced a set of controversial rulings that popular movement leaders and the FMLN denounced as an attack on both the executive and legislative branches of government. The court declared unconstitutional the emission of $900 million in government bonds that the Legislative Assembly had approved the year before and halted a 13 percent energy tax increase intended to finance renewable energy.

Most alarmingly, however, is that in order to justify its ruling to block the emission of $900 million in bonds, the Constitutional Chamber issued a subsequent ruling that dramatically re-shaped the legislature itself. The close legislative vote to approve the bonds included votes from substitute deputies, who are elected alongside congressional representatives to fill in when the principal or proprietary deputy is absent. Substitute deputies are referenced in the Salvadoran Constitution, which gives the Legislative Assembly the power to call upon substitutes in the instances of “death, resignation, annulment, temporary absence or impossibility of attendance of the proprietary deputy.” Despite their explicit mention in
the Constitution, and the fact that the Legislative Assembly vote to elect these magistrates to the Supreme Court included fourteen substitutes voting, the Chamber ruled them unconstitutional and stripped them of their titles overnight, throwing the legislature into a temporary crisis.

Popular movement leaders decried the Supreme Court ruling as an attack on the autonomy and structure of the legislature and accused the Court of acting as a “political instrument of destabilization against the government.” During a July rally outside the Supreme Court, representatives of popular and social movement organizations told the press, “We call on the magistrates [of the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court] to stop their political maneuvers disguised as judicial rhetoric, which ... are at the service of powerful oligarchy groups. Their actions have converted the Chamber into a political instrument of destabilization against the government.”

**Constant efforts aim to undermine government**

Human rights organizations and diverse voices from other social movements joined the union federation and campesino organizations in denouncing the Supreme Court magistrates and calling for their resignation. Immediately following the ruling, the Social Alliance for Governing and Justice (ASGOJU) spoke out against the rulings as interfering with the responsibilities of other branches of the government. According to Margarita Posada of the National Health Forum, “The rulings are true attacks on the institutionalism of the country.”

In the face of growing outcry, the Salvadoran elite turned to international allies for protection, presuming correctly that the independence of the judiciary would be upheld even in the face of mounting evidence that the magistrates are acting in violation of their jurisdiction and Constitutional mandate.

In late September, members of Aliados por la Democracia (Allies for Democracy), a conglomerate of right-wing organizations, think-tanks and private business interest groups that has received funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), called on the Organization of American States (OAS) to declare its opposition to the “attacks suffered by the Constitutional Chamber [of the Supreme Court] on behalf of the government, and groups and movements associated with the FMLN party.” Both the OAS and the UN responded in favor of the Court, lending legitimacy to this political maneuver.

Over the years, the U.S. Embassy has also weighed in on these internal political disputes to defend the Supreme Court. In 2013, former U.S. Ambassador Mari Carmen Aponte said that “the Constitutional Chamber’s
decisions should be respected;” otherwise, U.S. development cooperation, namely, a $277 million Millennium Challenge Development pact, would be in jeopardy.

Despite the external pressure, there is growing consensus in El Salvador that the five-member Chamber has strayed far afield of their constitutional mandate and that their judicial activism represents a dangerous abuse of power. According to Marielos de León of the Coalition for a Safe Country without Hunger (CONPHAS), “The four magistrates of the chamber today want to deliver rulings, legislate and govern in this country … [But] government in this country [is constituted by] mayors, legislators, and the president, because we popularly elected them.”

The face-off between El Salvador’s democratically-elected government and the Supreme Court has echoes of the 2009 coup against President Zelaya in Honduras and the 2012 ouster of President Lugo in Paraguay. As many Latin American countries “turn right” and elites consolidate new strategies to undermine democratic progressive governance, El Salvador’s revolutionary leadership and popular social movements are now organizing to defend the institutions that were won and shaped by their struggle 25 years ago. As Norma Ramos, coordinator of Movimiento Popular de Resistencia MPR-12 (Popular Resistance Movement) reminds her fellow organizers, “These achievements, they have cost us blood, they have cost us 12 years of war.”

Alexis Stoumbelis is Organizational Director with the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador in Washington, DC (CISPES).

Samantha Pineda is a researcher on political and social issues currently based in El Salvador. She is a graduate from the University of California-Santa Cruz in Feminist Studies and Latin American and Latino Studies.
Remembering Honduran Climate Justice Leader Berta Cáceres on the Anniversary of Her Assassination

Editor’s Note: As we go to press we learned that the Sierra Club magazine, Sierra, will publish a feature article about Berta Cáceres in its July/August 2017 issue. Sierra has a circulation of 515,000, and an audience of 879,000. Honduras has one of the worst records of any country in the world for the murder of social justice activists.

By Ryne Beddard and Daniel Mejía

On February 17th, earlier this year, José Santos Sevilla, an indigenous leader in Honduras, was killed by armed gunmen in his home. This assassination comes just before the one-year anniversary of another assassination of an important indigenous leader in Honduras, Berta Cáceres. March 3rd was the anniversary of her death. She would have been forty-six years old the next day.

Cáceres, who remains an iconic national hero for the poor – in a country in which about two thirds of the population live in poverty – is most well-known for her work organizing the indigenous Lenca people to resist the building of the Agua Zarca Dam on the Gualcarque River. The Gualcarque is considered sacred by the Lenca and the building of this dam – which violated Honduran indigenous treaties – would reportedly “cut off the supply of water, food and medicine for hundreds of Lenca people and violate their right to sustainably manage and live off their land.”
In 2015, her work with the National Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH) which she founded in 1993, was awarded the prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize. In a profile on Cáceres they briefly describe how, in 2006, members of the Lenca people in Rio Blanco sought help from COPINH after they began to see heavy construction machinery being transported into their region.

Under Cáceres, the people built a road blockade, which they were able to maintain against violent attacks and numerous eviction attempts for well over a year. The Lenca people used a well-organized communication system to keep a powerful and peaceful presence in the face of the aggressive Honduran forces impeding on their autonomy.

The Goldman Environmental Prize profile goes on to explain that, since the 2009 military coup that ousted the democratically elected President, Manuel Zalaya, Honduras has seen a dramatic increase in the privatization of land and the building of megaprojects that are devastating important ecosystems, displacing poor and indigenous communities by the masses. These violent land grabs only serve the interests of a small, wealthy elite in Honduras and foreign corporations like the state-owned Chinese contractors slated to build the Agua Zarca Dam and the International Finance Corporation, the private sector arm of the World Bank, which was funding the project.

Before her assassination, Cáceres was openly critical of the coup, as well as then U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton for her role in legitimizing the brutal regime. Since 2009, Honduras has become one of most dangerous places in the world, especially for environmental activists who dare to challenge the state. Earlier this year, Global Witness released a report that named Honduras as the most dangerous country in the world for environmental activists: more than 120 have been killed since 2010. The damning report details how both the elite, ruling party in Honduras and the United States government – Honduras’ biggest monetary aid donor and an active supporter of the regime’s exploitative megaprojects like the Agua Zarca – are directly implicated in this string of violence.

On Hit-list of US-Trained Special Forces

In June of 2016, the Guardian reported that, “Berta Cáceres, the murdered environmental campaigner, appeared on a hit-list distributed to US-trained special forces units of the Honduran military months before her death.” Cáceres, who had been receiving threats for some time before she was killed, refused to allow this intimidation to deter her efforts. Laura Cáceres, her youngest daughter, told the Guardian that just days before the assassination her mother told her, “If something happens to me, don’t be sacred.” Laura also reflected that, “She won the Goldman
prize, she met the Pope, I thought recognition would protect her. Whoever was behind her murder wanted to send a message that no one is safe, that they can kill anyone. We can’t accept impunity.”

On the one-year anniversary of her assassination, it is important to remember the bravery and sacrifice of Berta Cáceres, José Santos Sevilla, and the others like them, that continue to risk their lives organizing and resisting a transnational neoliberal order that is seemingly hell-bent on destroying the environment and indigenous communities in the name of cheap resources and profit. The struggle against these demonic forces – and I use that word quite intentionally, as I can think of no other that adequately expresses the principalities of darkness that would wreak such hell on earth in their limitless devotion to mammon – continues on today, not only in Honduras, but in North Dakota, Alberta, Texas, Florida, New Jersey, and all over the Americas.

It is appropriate, here, to conclude with the closing words of Cáceres’ Goldman Prize acceptance speech:

“The Gualcarque River has called upon us, as have other gravely threatened rivers. We must answer their call. Our Mother Earth – militarized, fenced-in, poisoned, a place where basic rights are systematically violated – demands that we take action. Let us build societies that are able to coexist in a dignified way, in a way that protects life. Let us come together and remain hopeful as we defend and care for the blood of this Earth and of its spirits. I dedicate this award to all the rebels out there, to my mother, to the Lenca people, to Rio Blanco, and to the martyrs who gave their lives in the struggle to defend our natural resources.”

*Ryne Beddard is a graduate student at the University of Denver in Religious Studies. He is Assistant Editor of the Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory, and Assistant Editor of Political Theology Today.*

*Daniel Mejia is from Honduras. He is an organizer with the North Carolina Environmental Network, a member of the Waterkeeper Alliance, and is a farmer and carpenter in North Carolina.*
Fanon on Race, Recognition and Revolution Reconsidered

Delivered at Plenary of Radical Philosophy Conference, Lexington KY, November 2016

Editor’s note: The author delivered this paper at a Plenary of the Radical Philosophy Conference in Lexington, Kentucky, November 2016. We believe this paper makes an important contribution to the discussion of the interconnections of class and race using insights from Frantz Fanon. The issues raised here about socialist societies and communist parties will be discussed in a special issue of Dialogue & Initiative on the Russian Revolution, to be published this fall.

By Peter Hudis

The work of Frantz Fanon is making a grand re-enactment in today’s political and theoretical debates. One sign is that five new books on Fanon have appeared in English over the past two years—in addition to a new 600-page collection in French of his previously unpublished or unavailable writings on psychiatry, politics, and literature (an English edition will soon be published by Bloomsbury Press).

Yet these developments do not exhaust the extent to which Fanon has re-entered the field of political and theoretical discourse. It is most of all reflected in the many times his words have appeared on posters, flyers, and social media by those participating in recent protests against police abuse, the criminal injustice system, and racism on college campuses. What explains this remarkable resurgence of interest in a thinker who passed from the scene 55 years ago?

One reason is that contemporary capitalism is manifesting the most egregious expressions of racial animosity that we have seen in decades—and the thought of Fanon, one of the foremost critics of race and racism of the twentieth century, increasingly appears to speak to ways to address
and combat this. The extent of this racist resurgence is evident in the attacks on immigrants of color in the U.S. and Europe, the revival of rightwing populism, and the victory of Trump in the U.S. presidential election. But why is there this resurgence of racial animus at this point in time?

Part of the answer is that a new generation of activists has emerged in recent years that have creatively exposed the Achilles heel of American and European civilization—its racism. The protests against police abuse, prison warehousing, and demonization of immigrants have put the spotlight on issues of race in as creative a manner as did the Occupy Movement for economic inequality. In reaction to this, a significant section of bourgeois society has decided to drop the mask of civility and openly reassert the prerogatives of white male domination. The forces of the old always rears its head anew when new challenges emerge to its dominance and hegemony.

No less important is the emergence of reactionary, rightwing challenges to neoliberalism in the last several years that are trying to obtain mass support through racist demagoguery. This has posed a serious challenge to the Left, much of which has focused its energies on combating neoliberalism rather than the logic of capital as a whole. It is crucial to keep in mind that neoliberalism is just one strategy employed by capitalism at a particular point in time—just as Keynesianism was employed at an earlier point. And just as Keynesianism was largely jettisoned by capitalism when it no longer served its purpose, so the same may be true of neoliberalism. What brought down the Keynesian welfare state in much of the world, we must recall, was the crisis in profitability faced by corporate capitalism in the early and mid-1970s. A marked decline in the rate of profit convinced global capital that it needed to embrace a new stratagem with which to restore earlier rates of profit. The decision made perfect sense from their point of view, since it is profitability—and not effective demand—that in the final analysis determines the course of the development of modern capitalism.

Profit rates did go up from the early 1980s to 2000 as global capitalism unleashed the forces of global competition, free trade, and privatization. However, most of these gains were in real estate and finance—whereas manufacturing profitability remained at historically low levels. This explains the anemic rate of growth in the world economy today, which is causing so much distress—not only among those most negatively impacted by it, but also by sections of the ruling class that are increasingly recognizing that the neoliberal “miracle” has proven to be something of a mirage.

In sum, neoliberalism has not succeeded in extricating capitalism from the decline in the profit, which largely prompted its emergence in the
first place. The system is not delivering on its promise—not just to us, but to many capitalists. Hence, many of them are attacking aspects of neoliberalism (free trade deals, globalization, etc.) in favor of an atavistic nationalism bent on reasserting the power of the nation state.

What does this tell us? Since racist is the foremost stratagem being used to pursue power by bourgeois forces that have grown disenchanted with aspects of neoliberalism, we must begin and end our opposition to them with a firm and uncompromising rejection of any program, tendency, or initiative that in any way, shape or form is part of or dovetails—no matter how indirectly—with racist and/or anti-immigrant sentiment.

**One-sidedness on Neoliberalism**

In other words, we can now see that many on the Left were misled in focusing their attention virtually exclusively on combating neoliberalism (which is one reason some on the Left even have a hard time grasping the danger of Trump). In combating neoliberalism, we must ensure that we explicitly oppose the inner core of capitalism—its logic of accumulation and alienation that is inextricably tied to production for the sake of augmenting value. And what has always been at the inner core of the dialectic of capital accumulation is racism. Capitalism first emerged as a world system through the anti-black racism generated by the trans-Atlantic slave trade, and its reproduction since then has been dependent on racism. Racism is not and never has been an epiphenomenal characteristic of capital. It is at its inner core.

Hence, it will not be possible to respond to the realities now facing us by holding onto such outdated notions as “there is no race question outside the class question” or “the race issue, while important, is secondary to class.” Since U.S. capitalism has been shaped by racial factors, it is impossible to effectively oppose its class divisions without making the struggle against racism a priority. The same is increasingly true of Europe. The measure of any social movement today is how effective it proves to be in opposing not just the manifestations of capitalism, but its inner essence and core.
The vote for Brexit brings this into focus. Although there was a leftwing argument for Brexit, most who voted for it were motivated by racism and anti-immigrant hysteria. So where does this leave the British Left—especially the part of it that supported Brexit? Its foremost task must now become the effort to combat xenophobia—otherwise, its critique of the EU will fail to fundamentally distinguish itself from that of rightists.

We therefore face the following questions: 1) How can we prioritize the struggle against racism in such a way as to target the inner core of the capital relation? 2) How can struggles against racism lead to the development of a genuine alternative not just to neoliberalism also but to all forms of capitalism? Numerous theoretical resources need to be drawn upon to work out these unresolved issues, and it makes sense that many would see new relevance in Fanon’s work in light of them. Few figures in modern revolutionary history thought harder about the dynamics of race and racism than Fanon, and few were more committed to envisioning the deconstruction and destruction of race and racism in the struggle against colonialism and capitalism. It is with these eyes that we want to take another look at Fanon’s contribution to race, recognition, and revolution.

II.

Fanon repeatedly emphasized that anti-Black racism is not natural but is rooted in the economic imperatives of capitalism—beginning with the transatlantic slave trade that created the world market and extending to the neo-colonialism of today. As wrote in *Black Skin, White Masks*:

“First, economic. Then, internalization of rather epidermalization of his inferiority.” At the same time, he held that racism cannot be combatted on economic or class terms alone, since racialized ways of “seeing” and being take on a life of their own and drastically impact the psychic, inner life of the individual. He argued that both sides—the economic and cultural/psychic—have to be fought in tandem. As he put it, “The black man must wage the struggle on two levels: whereas historically these levels are mutually dependent, any unilateral liberation is flawed, and the worst mistake would be to believe their mutual dependence automatic...An answer must be found on the objective as well as the subjective level.”

For Fanon, what makes racism especially deadly is that it denies recognition of the dignity and humanity of the colonized subject. As a result, the latter experiences a “zone of nonbeing”—a negation of their humanity. He calls this as “an extraordinary sterile and arid region, an incline stripped bare of every essential form from which a genuine new departure can emerge. It is a zone of depravity that renders implausible any
“ontology of Blackness.” The Black is not seen as human precisely by being “seen”—not once, but repeatedly—as Black. However, this zone of non-being in no way succeeds in erasing the humanity of the oppressed. As Fanon never ceases to remind us, “Man is a ‘yes’ resonating from cosmic harmonies.”

On this issue there are striking parallels between Fanon’s work and Marx’s—even it is rarely acknowledged. In the first essay in which he proclaimed the proletariat as the revolutionary class, Marx defined it as “the class in Civil Society that is not of Civil Society.” The proletariat lives in Civil Society, but unlike the bourgeoisie its substantiality is not confirmed in it. Since workers are robbed of any organic connection to the means of production in being reduced to a mere seller of labor power, they find themselves alienated from the substance of civil society. This is because what matters to capital is not the subjectivity of the living laborers but the rather their ability to augment wealth in abstract, monetary terms. There is only one “self-sufficient end” in capitalism—and that is the augmentation of (abstract) value at the expense of the laborer. Insofar as the workers’ subjectivity becomes completely subsumed by the dictates of value production, the worker inhabits a zone of negativity. Yet this “living hell” is what makes the proletariat potentially revolutionary. It has nothing to lose but its chains.

As Marx put it, only the proletariat “has the consistency, the severity, the courage or the ruthlessness that could mark it out as the negative representative of society.” It alone possesses “the genius that inspires material might to political violence, or that revolutionary audacity which flings at the adversary the defiant words: ‘I am nothing and I should be everything.’”

There is more than an echo in this of Fanon’s declaration in Black Skin, White Masks that “Genuine disalienation will have been achieved only when things, in the most materialist sense, have resumed their rightful place.” But Fanon also points to a key difference between racial and class oppression, in that the former cuts deeper than the traditional class struggle insofar as the person of color is robbed of their very being—not solely their capacity for conscious, purposeful activity. Their very existence is at issue.

Genocide is, indeed, the ultimate logic of racism, just as turning the worker into an appendage to the machine is the ultimate logic of capitalist class domination. The latter is bad enough. But the capitalist at least needs the worker to produce commodities (even as her labor power is itself commodified). But the racist does not, ultimately, need the Black person at all. Black lives indeed do not matter to this society. This is especially reflected in the disproportionate impact of deindus-
trialization upon African-Americans. Does their capacity for labor even count?

Fanon powerfully suggests that even more than the traditional class struggle, the “additive of color” in struggles against racial degradation raises the question of what does it mean to be human as the colonized subject struggles to battle against the interior as well as exterior barriers to mutual recognition and freedom. When we think of this in terms of today, it is not hard to see that the fight against today’s racism may well open up a new phase of social struggles that has the potential of going way beyond such reformist measures as taxing the rich or ending free trade deals.

Fanon insights on the relation of race and class are most profoundly posed in his discussion of Hegel’s master/slave dialectic in *Black Skin, White Masks*. Hegel maintains that the master wants to be recognized by the slave (whether chattel or wage slave), for without it he is unable to obtain a sense of his own self-certainty and selfhood. But for Fanon the relation of master and slave is radically altered when race enters the picture. The master is no longer interested in being recognized by the slave, just as the slave is no longer interested in recognizing him.

**Racism is Not Reducible to Class Struggle**

This is because the white master does not see the Black as a human being. Hence, relations of racial domination call into question not simply the rights of Blacks as political subjects of civil society, but rather their very ability to be treated, and to live, as authentic human beings. The struggle against racism is therefore not reducible to the class struggle; nor is it a mere ancillary or ally of it. The class relation is fundamentally reconfigured once it presents itself through the “mask” of race. Like any good Hegelian perspective, Fanon points to the positive in the negative of this two-fold alienation in which class and racial oppression overlap. Thrown into a “zone of non-being,” yet retaining their basic humanity, the colonized finds itself compelled to ask what does it mean to be human in the very course of the struggle. In “screaming against the curtain of the sky,” its struggle has the potential to reach for a new humanism.

Fanon is feeling his way to the universal—a world of mutual recognitions—by emphasizing the particular, the specific nexus of responses engendered in struggles against racial dehumanization. His emphasis on not rushing too fast from one to the other is one of his important insights, and is addressed in an especially striking manner in his critique of Sartre’s attitude toward Negritude. Although Sartre praised Negritude in *Black Orpheus*, he referred to it as a “weak stage” of the dialectic that must give way to the “concrete” and “universal” fight of the prole-
tariat. Fanon is dismayed by Sartre's position, stating, "The generation of young Black poets has just been dealt a fatal blow." vi Fanon rejects the claim that the effort to affirm the attributes that existing society denigrates in those of African descent is a mere way-station on the way to confronting the "real" issue—proletarian revolution. He credits Sartre for "recalling the negative side" of the Black predicament, "but he forgot that this negativity draws its value from a virtually substantial absoluteness." i It is not just that negativity is the font from which the individual is impelled toward the positive. It is that upon being subjected to absolute denial and lack of recognition, the individual finds it necessary to draw upon the substantial reservoir of hidden meaning that it possess as a human subject. “That which has been shattered is rebuilt and constructed by the intuitive lianas of my hands.” i

Fanon never takes his eyes off of the real prize—the creation of the positive from out of the negative, of absolute positivity from out of absolute negation, of a new humanism from out of total dehumanization. He was indeed an incurable humanist. Given the aborted and unfinished revolutions of his time and since, Fanon’s insistence on neither getting stuck in the particular—that is, pride in one’s race and ethnicity (the mark of identity politics)—nor skipping over it in the name of affirming an abstract, colorblind advocacy of “proletarian revolution,” takes on new significance. Hubert Harrison’s conception (voiced in the 1920’s) that struggles of African-Americans against racism represent the “touchstone” of American society—later re-cast in Raya Dunayevskaya’s Marxist-Humanist conception of Black masses as the vanguard of U.S. freedom struggles—reflect a similar understanding of the relation of race and class that we find within Fanon’s lifelong effort to grasp their dialectical interconnection.

In some respects, the debate between Fanon and Sartre is being replayed today, as seen in the impatience of some on the left who urge anti-racist activists to “get to the real issue”—as if that is the state of the economy. This is not to deny that the economy is of central importance. But so is the psychic impact of racism and discrimination upon the inner life of the individual. It is only approaching those struggling for freedom from the particular nexus point that defines their lived experience as potentially revolutionary subjects that we can work out the difficult question of how to surmount the matrix of contradictions that define modern capitalism. Just as there is no road to the universal that gets stuck in the particular, there is no reaching it that rushes over it.

III.

The fullest expression of these insights is found in The Wretched of the Earth. It is a very different book than Black Skin, White Masks, since its
focus is the actual dialectics of revolution—the struggle for national culture and independence against colonialism.

One of its central themes is the “Manichean divide” that defines the colonial experience. So great is this divide between colonizer and colonized that Fanon speaks of them as if they were two “species.” It would appear that the racial divide is decisive, replacing class dominance as the deciding factor. For some post-colonial theorists, Fanon’s discussion of the Manichean divide proves that he has “put aside” the Marxian view of class. However, the appearance is deceptive. First, Fanon is not endorsing this divide; he is describing it. Second, he does not pose this divide as stable or impermeable. As the revolutionary struggle progresses, he argues, it begins to fall apart. He writes,

“The people then realize that national independence brings to light multiple realities that in some cases are divergent and conflicting...it leads the people to replace an overall undifferentiated nationalism with social and economic consciousness. The people who in the early days of the struggle had adopted the primitive Manicheanism of the colonizer—Black versus White, Arab versus Infidel—realize en route that some blacks can be whiter than the whites...The people discover that the iniquitous phenomenon of exploitation can assume a black or Arab face...The species is splitting up before their very eyes...Some members of the members of the colonialist population prove to be closer, infinitely closer, to the nationalist struggle than certain native sons. The racial and racist dimension is transcended on both sides.”

We see here how the struggle for national liberation unites the people and breaks apart the racial dichotomies that define colonialism, thereby pointing the way to the death of race and racialism as socially defining features.

Clearly, Fanon does not set aside class relations in his critique of colonialism. James Yaki Sayles, a New Afrikan political prisoner who spent 33 years in a maximum-security prison and wrote what I consider one of the most profound studies of The Wretched of the Earth, put it this way: “The existence of Manichean thinking doesn’t make economic relationships secondary to ‘racial’ ones—it does exactly what it’s supposed to do: It masks and mystifies the economic relationships...but doesn’t undermine their primacy.” He adds, “When Fanon talks about the ‘species’ breaking up before our eyes...he’s talking about the breakup of ‘races’ themselves—the ‘races’ which were constructed as part of the construction of world capitalism, and which must first be deconstructed along with the deconstruction of capitalism.”

Does this mean that Fanon adopts Sartre’s position in Black Orpheus that class is primary and race a “minor term” by the time he writes The
Wretched of the Earth? That may seem to be the case, since racial identity is not the guiding or central theme of The Wretched of the Earth. Its guiding theme is the struggle for national liberation and the necessity to transcend the confines of bourgeois society. Yet this is precisely what undermines any claim that he has changed the position outlined in Black Skin, White Masks. In the latter work Fanon also connects racism to class relations by pointing to the economic factors that drive its social construction. And in that work he also poses the deconstruction of race as the essential precondition for a New Humanism. As he so poignantly put it, “Because it is a systematic negation of the other person, and a furious determination to deny the other person all attributes of humanity, colonialism forces the people it dominates to ask themselves the question constantly: ‘In reality, who am I?’”

Most important, Fanon held that while race is a product of class relations, which serves as its mask, it is not a secondary factor. While race reflects underlying class formations, a reflection is not a one-way mirror image. The reflection is taken up in consciousness and performs a sort of doubling by mirroring its origin at the same time as reshaping it. Determinations of reflection are not passive; they actively reconstruct what they reflect. We see this in how an arbitrary social construct, race, can be appropriated by an oppressed people as a way to express pride in their heritage and unite them in a struggle to abolish existing social structures. To be sure, racial attributes can readily become essentialized, thereby hindering recognition of class relations. But since racial determinations are not superstructural but become integral to the logic of capital accumulation, efforts by people of color to take pride in the attributes that bourgeois society uses to demean them can lead them to target and break up existing class relations.

Whereas racial identity is the major focus in Black Skin, White Masks, national identity takes center stage in The Wretched of the Earth. But the structure of Fanon’s argument remains very much the same. In both works, the path to the universal—a world of mutual recognitions—proceeds through the particular struggles of those battling racial, ethnic or national discrimination. This separates Fanon’s New Humanism from an abstract humanism that skips over the lived experience of the actual subjects of revolt.

There is nothing abstract about this New Humanism (in contrast to the many abstract treatises which seek to divest Fanon of the concept). As Fanon sees it, a New Humanism can emerge only if the colonial revolutions transcend the bourgeois phase of development. He writes, “The theoretical question, which has been posed for the last 50 years when addressing the history of the underdeveloped countries, i.e., whether the bourgeois phase can be effectively skipped, must be resolved through
revolutionary action and not through reasoning.” Fanon is directly referring to the debates in the Second International prior to World War I as to whether a revolution in a technologically underdeveloped society must endure the vicissitudes of a prolonged stage of capitalism. Building on the work of previous Marxists, he emphatically rejects the two-stage theory of revolution, arguing, “In the underdeveloped countries a bourgeois phase is out of the question. A police dictatorship or a caste of profiteers may very well be the case but a bourgeois society is doomed to failure.”

This was a very radical position. It was not put forth by any of the political tendencies leading the African revolutions, including in Algeria. Fanon was nevertheless insistent on this point in prophetically arguing that if they did not “skip” the phase of bourgeois nationalism, the African revolutions would revert to intra-state conflict, tribalism, and religious fundamentalism.

How successful was Fanon in navigating this path beyond the bourgeois phase? Much of his discussion of violence in The Wretched of the Earth was directed at this, in arguing that a people armed would not only be better equipped to evict the colonialists but also push the revolution beyond the boundaries set by the national bourgeoisie after the achievement of independence. He also emphasized the need for a decentralized as against a centralized political and economic apparatus that could succeed in directly drawing the masses into running the affairs of society, thereby dispensing with the need for bourgeois leadership over the masses. And he argued strenuously against the idea of a single-party state, arguing, “The single party is the modern form of the bourgeois dictatorship—stripped of mask, makeup, and scruples, cynical in every respect.”

Needless to say, Fanon strictures were not followed by the leaders of the national independence struggles, who found a comfortable place for themselves within the framework of the bourgeois phase of development—even when (or especially when!) they anointed their rule as some form of “socialism.” But were the material conditions present at the time that would have enabled the African revolutions to bypass the bourgeois phase? I am not referring mainly to conditions of economic backwardness or underdevelopment, since these would not be decisive barriers if the newly independent nations could receive aid and support from the workers of the technologically developed world.

Marx, after all, held—in 1882—that economically backward Russia could bypass a capitalist stage if a peasant revolution there linked up with proletarian revolutions in the West. Yet in the context of the African revolutions of the 1950s and 60s, such aid could not be expected—in large
measure because forces like the French Communist and Socialist Parties disgracefully supported French imperialism’s war against the Algerian Revolution (something that major left intellectuals inside and outside the French CP at the time, such as Althusser and Foucault, never managed to find time to condemn). In lieu of any significant support from the workers of the industrially developed West, how were the African Revolutions going to obtain the resources needed to sustain their independence, let alone move further ahead towards the creation of socialist societies?

For many of the African leaders, the answer to that question was to ally with one or another pole of global capital—either the imperialist West or the so-called “communist” East. Fanon was opposed to this approach. He wrote,

It [is] commonly thought that the time has come for the world, and particularly for the Third World, to choose between the capitalist system and the socialist system. The underdeveloped countries...must, however, refuse to get involved in such rivalry. The Third World must not be content to define itself in relation to values that preceded it. On the contrary, the underdeveloped countries must endeavor to focus on their very own values as well as methods and style specific to them. The basic issue with which we are faced is not the unequivocal choice between socialism and capitalism such as they have been defined by men from different continents and different periods of time.xv

**Not Happy with Existing Socialisms**

Fanon was clearly not satisfied with existing “socialist” societies “as they have [so far] been defined.” He was aware of their many deficiencies. But this does not mean that he conducted an analysis of them or acknowledged their class basis and thoroughly oppressive character. This is unfortunate, since it has led some followers of Fanon to whitewash their crimes, which has only fed into the general discrediting of the Left for supporting regimes which were as exploitative of their working class as imperialist ones.

Of course, Fanon cannot be blamed for his rather inconclusive discussion of how to surmount the bourgeois phase of development in Wretched of the Earth, given that he was only beginning to explore this issue at the end of his life and he passed from the scene only days after the book came off the press. However, we who face the task of developing an alternative to all forms of capitalism—whether the “free market” capitalism of the West or the state-capitalism of the East—do not have that excuse. Given today’s realities, we are compelled to conclude: just as it is counter-productive to talk about race and racism without linking it to
class relations and capitalism, so it is counter-productive to talk against
capitalism without immediately and thoroughly attacking the Stalinist
and neo-Stalinist distortions of Marx’s liberatory vision. Developing the
spirit of Fanon’s many insights for the twenty-first century calls on us to
do no less.

i Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, translated by R. Philcox (New

ii Ibid.

iii Ibid., p. xii

iv “Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right: Introduc-

v Black Skin, White Masks. p. xiv.

vi Ibid., p.112.

vii Ibid., pp.112-13.

viii Ibid., p. 117.

ix Frantz Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, translated by R. Philcox (New

x James Yaki Sayles, *Meditations on Frantz Fanon’s Wretched of the Earth*

xi Ibid., p. 181

xii *Wretched of the Earth*. p. 182.

xiii Ibid., p. 118.

xiv Ibid., p. 111.

xv Ibid., p. 55.

Peter Hudis is a Professor of Humanities and Philosophy at Oakton Com-
community College and author of *Marx’s Concept of the Alternative to Cap-
talism* and *Frantz Fanon: Philosopher of the Barricades*, and essays on
Hegelian philosophy, Marxism, Latin American social movements, and
Critical Race Theory. He co-edited (with Kevin B. Anderson) of *The Power
of Negativity: Selected Writings on the Dialectic in Hegel and Marx*, by
Raya Dunayevskaya and *The Rosa Luxemburg Reader*, as well as *The Let-
ters of Rosa Luxemburg* (with Annelies Laschitza and George Adler). He
is also edited Volume I of *The Complete Works or Rosa Luxemburg: Eco-
nomic Writings 1* and co-edited Volume II, *Economic Writings 2* (with Paul
Le Blanc) and is General Editor of *The Complete Works of Luxemburg*,
a planned 16-volume collection. He is a member of the International
Marxist-Humanist Organization.
Section 3. The Fight for Democracy and Socialism

On the 100th anniversary of the Russian Revolution

By Duncan McFarland

This year is the 100th anniversary of the Russian revolution, one of the most important events in the modern history of the world and also socialism and people's revolution. The victory of the revolution was followed by establishing the first working class state in history, the Soviet Union. These events lit a fire in communist, radical and liberation struggles all over the world. The successful type of Bolshevik organization led to the formation of communist parties in many countries, connected through the Third International. The Soviet people experienced great progress in meeting basic economic needs, literacy and equality of women.

The October victory led by Lenin established several strategic principles. Engels after the defeat of the 1848 revolutions in Europe said that what is needed would be a combination of the working-class movement with a peasant uprising -- the workers and peasants alliance. This alliance was established as a core political force of the Bolsheviks. Lenin was also champion of the revolutionary potential of the national liberation movements in the colonies after World War I as a major ally of the working class.

The October revolution bore fruit in the US with the establishment of the Communist Party USA. There followed the emphasis on the importance of the struggle against racism to unite the multinational working class,
and the organization of strong industrial unions in the 1930s. Much of the progressive legislation of the New Deal, such as social security, has its roots in the Communist program for the great depression. Many American writers, artists and filmmakers were inspired by the revolution, as was the Lincoln Brigade which fought against fascism in the Spanish civil war.

There are many examples of the USSR supporting communists, the Left and national liberation struggles worldwide, such as the anti-Apartheid struggle in South Africa and the upholding the national independence of Cuba. Perhaps the most important was the Soviet leadership and vast sacrifice of the Soviet people in defeating fascism and Nazi Germany in World War II, one of the greatest working class victories. After the war, the USSR championed the cause of peace and mutual coexistence.

Needless to say, US and global imperialism responded with countless attacks of every sort to defeat the world's first socialist state. After military intervention in 1919 by a dozen countries failed, a policy of isolating the new USSR followed; the US withheld diplomatic recognition until 1933. After World War II, The Truman administration adopted cold war, anti-communist policies which continued in every US administration through Reagan and Bush. The formation of the military industrial complex with its colossal budget was directly motivated by the goal of pressuring the USSR and depleting its resources.

There are many reasons to celebrate the Russian Revolution. But we must also be aware of the many problems and bad aspects. There was a loss of democratic process, beginning with the decline of the influence of the Soviets and splits in the top leadership. Economic development veered from a successful NEP towards over-centralization and bureaucratization; a top-down model mostly eliminated initiative at the grassroots. The dynamic constructivist movement in the arts was replaced by a limited socialist realism and a lessening of the moral and spiritual dimension in life.

Reasons for these problems are debated by historians; there is a complex of factors. The revolution occurred in unevenly developed, semi-feudal Russia, not the advanced industrial country as envisioned by Marx. This was historically unprecedented, there was no previous experience to guide the way. The world was still mostly capitalist and there was relentless pressure of every type from imperialism and fascism, persistently working with white-guard and reactionary forces in Russia.

Stalin's purges, horrific errors and crimes did great damage although rapid industrialization, modernization and elevation of the living standards of most working people were achieved at the same time. There
were foreign policy mistakes such as miscalculations leading to the early recognition of the state of Israel in 1948 and support for repression in Eastern Europe. But even at the end, the Soviets did their best to reduce the tensions with imperialism to prevent nuclear war.

**Emphasizing the Positive**

The picture is mixed but the overall assessment is to emphasize the positive achievements as the main part, a perspective lost to many of today's Left activists. The movement, socialists especially, must draw the lessons and applications from the rich experience of the October revolution of 1917, to better organizing efforts and practical effectiveness in pushing forward the struggles and movements of today towards socialism.

This edition of *Dialogue and Initiative* describes many experiences and movements to defeat reaction and imperialism that were the same enemy of the Russian Revolution, and we have the same goal of creating a better future where working people and community are at the center of social life instead of money and power for the few. The Russian Revolution is an integral part of people's history, important to remember, study and celebrate.

*Duncan McFarland is chairperson of the CCDS Socialist Education Committee and former chair of the Peace and Solidarity Committee. Long a student of Marxism and China, he was an organizer of CCDS socialist delegations to Vietnam in 2009 and 2011 hosted by the Vietnam Women's Union. Duncan is part of the CCDS project commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Russian Revolution.*
United States Delegation at Cuba’s Latin American School of Medicine

By U.S. Medical Students in Cuba

Mission Statement

We are students from the United States of America who have chosen to study medicine in Cuba. Our delegation is composed of individuals from diverse ethnic, socioeconomic and religious backgrounds. We are members of an international medical education program that specializes in training physicians from low income communities and communities of color.

As students of the Latin American School of Medicine, (the ELAM Project) we belong to a health care initiative established by Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro, built upon values of internationalism and humanism, created in response to the immense need of nations victimized by political and socioeconomic instability and devastated by natural disasters.

Recognizing that similar conditions exist in many parts of our country, the Cuban government offered medical training, free of charge, to qualified students from underserved areas in the USA. Thanks to the tenacious work of Rev. Lucius Walker, the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO), and members of the Congressional Black Caucus, we are beneficiaries of this medical education scholarship.
We believe that equal access to quality, culturally competent, and sustainable health care is a human right. As members of the US Delegation, we are committed to return to our communities, improving their health outcomes by prioritizing preventative health care and creating opportunities for future conscientious health care professionals.

We strive for peace and social, economic, environmental, and political justice for all people that have historically been and continue to be oppressed at home and abroad. Our delegation stands in solidarity with these communities as future physicians who will place human dignity at the center of health care.

Declaración de principios de la delegación de los Estados Unidos Escuela Latinoamericana de Medicina

Nosotros, los estudiantes de la delegación de los Estados Unidos, que estudiamos en Cuba, y quienes provenimos de diversas realidades socio--económicas, etnias y credos, pertenecemos a un programa que enfatiza la necesidad de entrenar doctores de comunidades de bajos recursos y marginalizadas, las cuales posiblemente no tendrían acceso a educación médica.

Luchamos por la paz con justicia social, económica, política y ambiental para todas las comunidades que históricamente han sido, y continúan siendo oprimidas tanto al interior de nuestro país como fuera de sus fronteras. Nuestra delegación está en solidaridad con todos estos pueblos, como futuros médicos que tienen la convicción de que la dignidad humana debe ser el centro y punto de partida de los sistemas de salud.

Como estudiantes del proyecto de la ELAM, somos miembros de una iniciativa de salud fundada por el Comandante Fidel Castro sobre valores de internacionalismo y humanismo, y concebida en respuesta a la inmensa necesidad que afrontaban varios pueblos víctimas de políticas excluyentes, inestabilidad socio--económica, y desastres naturales. Reconociendo que condiciones similares existen en muchas de nuestras comunidades, el gobierno cubano ofreció educación médica, sin costo alguno, a estudiantes merecedores de comunidades de bajos recursos en Los Estados Unidos, como muestra de su solidaridad. Gracias al arduo y visionario trabajo del Reverendo Lucius Walker, Pastores por la Paz, y miembros del Congressional Black Caucus, se pudo cristalizar la oportunidad de tan generosa oferta.

Como miembros de esta delegación y en gratitud al pueblo cubano que tanto ha sacrificado y resistido tenemos plena convicción de regresar a nuestras comunidades de origen y retribuir con trabajo consiente, prior-
izando la prevención y atención primaria, y creando oportunidades para futuras generaciones de profesionales médicos dignos del pueblo. Alineados con la visión del Comandante Fidel Castro nosotros también creemos que el acceso a servicio de salud ecuánimes y de calidad es un derecho humano.
Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism outlines its vision of Socialism

Editor’s Note: Photo: Charlene Mitchell, CCDS founder and retired co-chair. This entry is the final section of the document titled, "For a Democratic and Socialist Future: Goals and Principles of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism." This is the guiding document for the work of CCDS, adopted at the 6th National Convention of CCDS in July 2009. Earlier sections analyzed the multi-level crisis of capitalism and its impact throughout society and the fight-back of labor, people of color, women, the LBGTQ community, all social justice movements, and international movements for peace and equity, and climate justice. The 21-page document also develops the concept and strategy of building and strengthening the Progressive Majority. Here, we focus on the vision of socialism. The entire document is available from CCDS in booklet form, or can be obtained online: simply google "For a Democratic and Socialist Future."

A Vision of Socialism

An excerpt from the "For a Democratic and Socialist Future: Goals and Principles of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism"

CCDS 6th National Convention, July 2009

History

Socialism is the extension and preservation of democracy into all realms of human activity, especially the economic arena. It is a political, social, economic, cultural, and ethical project: a struggle to transform power relations within a society dominated by a tiny minority for the benefit
of the overwhelming majority of working people. Socialism liberates human energy to pursue its creative potential.

Socialism has honorable roots in the nation's history. Socialist aspirations and experiments predate the Civil War when efforts were launched to form cooperative communities built on shared labor, shared production, and a shared commitment to the common good. Many streams fed socialism in the United States from utopianism to Marxism. Marxists were active in the struggle to overthrow slavery.

The populist movement that swept the Midwest and South in the late 19th century was not avowedly socialist. But it advocated public ownership of banks and railroads as means to relieve farmers and workers of the burden of economic crises.

The Socialist Party in the early twentieth century was a significant movement for public ownership of the means of production. In some states it gained widespread support and held many local public offices. In the Great Depression of the 1930s, large numbers looked to the Communist Party. It played a leading role in organizing the Unemployed Councils and the CIO. Other left organizations joined in the struggle against the ravages of the crisis and for a vision of a transformed society shorn of the inhumanity of capitalism.

**Capitalism Today**

When the feudal mode of production could no longer accommodate the revolutionary productive forces of capitalism, a social and political conflict ensued. The rising class of capitalists, whose interests were tied to the new system, engaged in a conscious struggle supported by the new working class to overthrow the old feudal social order and its political power.

Today, capitalism is a mature system unable to utilize the powerful creative forces it has developed to serve human progress. As technological developments increase the ability of the productive forces to meet all human needs, capitalism’s implacable quest for ever higher profits renders it unable to place these developments at the service of society.

Less and less workers are needed to produce what is needed to meet our needs. But under capitalism, this results in higher unemployment instead of fewer hours of work. Under capitalism production is increasingly socialized while the wealth created by that production is privatized into fewer hands. That is the core contradiction of a system whose relations of production can no longer accommodate advances in its productive forces without impoverishing working people in growing numbers.
Need for Socialism

Socialism does not emerge from sentiment, ideology, or wish fulfillment. Socialism emerges because the working class, as it struggles around the crisis of everyday living brought on by the capitalist system, comes to recognize socialism as a necessity.

Capitalism's inability to provide a decent living for working people, its environmental devastation, militarism and war, its fomenting of racism, sexism, xenophobia and homophobia, its nagging overproduction and destruction of productive capital, and its dependence on financial manipulation inform the working class struggle for deeper and broader democracy.

In the 2008 presidential election, Barack Obama was accused of wanting to "spread the wealth around" through moderate adjustments to restore some equity in tax policy. That hardly constitutes socialism. But it has aroused public interest and has widened the field for discussion of the concept.

For many, the notion of "spreading the wealth around" sounds good when the top one percent in the United States gained $600 billion annually in income while the bottom eighty percent lost the same $600 billion from 1979 to 2008. This translates into an average gain of $500,000 for each person at the top and a loss of $8,000 for those at the bottom.

Guiding Principles

History and contemporary reality do not yield a schematic blueprint for socialism. A Marxist historical analysis of experiences in social struggle, combined with a critique of objective circumstances, suggest some possible guiding principles for the transition to a socialist democracy.

- Socialism's fundamental building blocks are already present in US society. The means of production are fully developed and stagnating under the political domination of finance capital. The US labor force, for the most part, is highly skilled at all levels of production, management, marketing, and finance. There is a broadly enfranchised electorate, as well as kernels of socialist organization scattered across the landscape in cooperatives, socially organized human services, and centralized and widespread mass means of communication and supply/demand data management. Many earlier attempts at socialism lacked these advantages.
• Socialism is a democratic political system wherein the interests and organizations of the working class and its allies have attained and hold the preponderance of political power and play the leading role in society. It is still a class society, but in a protracted transition to a future classless society as exploiting class privileges are gradually abolished, and class distinctions generally decline. Because it will be a mixed economy, with both public and private ownership, socialism will have classes, including some capitalists, for some time. There will still be a need for entrepreneurial startups, both as worker cooperatives and as private firms serving the common good.

• Socialism at the base is a transitional economic system anchored in the mode of production brought into being by capitalist development over several centuries. While it will vary according to prevailing conditions at the time of transition, its economic system is necessarily mixed, since we can’t predict the time frame of changes in class relations. It also makes use of markets, especially in goods and services, which are regulated more rationally and consistently, especially regarding the environment. But capital markets and wage-labor markets can be sharply restricted and even abolished in due time. Markets are a function of scarcity, and all economies of any scale in a time of scarcity have them. If needed, a stock market can still exist for remaining publicly traded firms and investments abroad, but will be strictly controlled. A stock transfer tax will be implemented. Gambling in derivatives will be outlawed. Fair trade agreements with other countries will be on a bilateral basis for mutual benefit. In addition to regulated markets, socialism will also feature planning, especially where markets have failed. Planning will especially be required to face the challenges of uneven development and harsh inequalities, as well as the challenge of moving to an energy system based on renewable green energy sources.

• Socialism will be organized in public and worker ownership of the main productive forces and natural resources. This can be achieved by various means: a) buying out major failing corporations at steep discount, then leasing them back to the unions and having the workers
run them; b) workers directly taking ownership and control over failed and abandoned factories; c) eminent domain seizures of resources and factories, with compensation; d) public funding for startups of worker-owned cooperative businesses. Socialism will also require public ownership of finance capital. Lease payments from publicly owned firms could go into a public investment fund, which would in turn lend money to community and worker owned banks and credit unions.

• Socialism will require democracy in the workplace of public firms and encourage it in all places of work. Workers have the right to independent unions to protect their social and daily interests, in addition to their rights as worker-owners in the governance of their firms.

• Socialism will largely be gained by the class-conscious working class and its allies winning the battle for democracy in society at large, especially taking down the structures and backward laws of class, gender, and racial privilege. An important first step is campaign finance reform to curb the influence of wealth in our electoral system. It will need a true multiparty system, with fusion voting, proportional representation, and instant runoff. All trends are guaranteed the right to speak, organize, petition, and stand for election. These are the structural measures that can allow the majority of the people, especially the working class and its allies, to secure the political leadership of government and instruments of the state by democratic means, barring sabotage by reactionary forces.

• Socialism will be a democratic political order with a representative government and state power. The government and state components of the current order connected to the old ruling class will have to be broken up and replaced with new ones that are transparent and serve the majority of the people. The US Constitution and Bill of Rights can remain the initial basic organizing principle for a socialist government and state. The democratic rights it has gained over the years will be protected and enhanced. The legal fiction that corporations are people will be eliminated. Government will also be needed to organize and finance social development and environmental protection. Forces that try to overturn and reverse the new socialist government illegally will be broken up and brought to justice. Our society will need a state power for some time to come, even as its form changes. Still, government power has limits; the powers of any government necessarily will be restricted and subordinate to the universal and natural rights of all humankind. Attempts to ignore or reject these principles have severely harmed socialist governments and movements in the past.
• **Socialism will be a society in harmony with the natural environment.** The nature of global climate change necessitates a high level of planning. We need to redesign communities, introduce healthier foods, and rebuild sustainable agriculture—all on a global scale with high design, but on a human scale with mass participation of communities in diverse localities. We need intelligent growth in quality and wider knowledge with a lighter environmental footprint. A socialism that simply reproduces the wasteful expansion of an earlier capitalism creates more problems than it solves.

• **Under socialism the government will serve as the employer-of-last-resort.** Minimum living-wage jobs will be provided for all who want to work and adequate security for those who cannot work. Socialism is committed to genuine full employment. Every citizen will have a right to work.

• **Socialism values equality, and will be a society of far greater equality of opportunity, and far less economic inequality.** All citizens and residents will have equitable access to a “universal toolbox” of paid-up free public education for all who want to learn, for as far as they want and are able to go; universal public pre-school care; a minimum income for all who create value, whether in a workplace or social environment. Universal single-payer health care with retirement benefits at the level of a living wage is critical to start. Socialism would create the basis for positive and respectful relationships amongst diverse ethnic and racial groups. No nation can be free as long as it oppresses another.

• **Socialism is a society where religion can be freely practiced, or not, and no religion is given any special advantages over any other.** As important theologians have long pointed out, a Marxist critique of capitalism with its vision of a classless society is compatible with both belief and non-belief in God.

• **The role of armed forces under socialism will be transformed.** Their mission will be to defend the people, secure their interests, and help in times of natural disasters. It will not be their task to expand markets abroad and defend the property abroad of the exploiting classes. Armed forces also include local police, under community control, as well as a greatly reduced prison system, based on the principle of restorative justice. Non-violent conflict resolution and community-based rehabilitation will be encouraged.

• **Socialism is internationalism.** It extends a hand of cooperation to the rest of the world. It does not seek dominance over other nations. It seeks fair trade with others. It seeks to improve the conditions of work-
ing people the world over. It seeks to learn from the experiments in social justice and socialism proliferating around the world. At the same time, US socialism should have no dogmatic attachment to other models, but respects and expresses solidarity with all who are trying to build just, humane, and secure societies.

The world has moved beyond the 20th century experiments in socialism. Those efforts went through uncharted territory under severe coercion from outside capitalist powers. In that context, the democratic soul of socialism was seriously undermined; the essential need for popular participation in building the system was largely unrealized, and economic advances were distorted by dogma.

We learn from those failures as we probe deeply into our own national history and traditions to create a vibrant and successful socialist vision. Most of all, socialism is the proximate solution to the intractable problems of an exhausted capitalism devoid of hope and increasingly unable to advance human development.

CCDS considers educating and organizing to build the path to socialism to be the primary purpose of our organization and all who wish to bring the human epoch into existence.
CCDS: Its Outlook and Role

Legacy

The Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism is a national organization, united by a common commitment to struggle for democracy and socialism. CCDS embodies the legacy of the great social movements for peace, freedom, and democracy led by the working class, and racially and nationally oppressed people. CCDS carries forward the courageous traditions of the American democratic socialist and left leaders and activists.

CCDS is a pluralist organization within the framework of working class partisanship embodied in Marxism. Our pluralism reflects a political culture in which people are joined in a common, profoundly humanistic project. This encompasses the creation of an atmosphere that elicits different views in substantive as well as supportive exchanges to advance our collective strength.

Janet Tucker, Anne Mitchell, and Pat Fry at CCDS table at the Left Forum in New York.
Principles

We are governed by principles that empower our members to determine the policies, activities, and leadership of our organization. We strive for an organization that is multiracial, of all generations, and gender balanced, both in membership and in elected bodies. Every member of CCDS is entitled to full participation in every aspect of the organization.

CCDS adheres to the principles of democracy and transparency, including full disclosure of all aspects of our organization and the decisions that we make. We welcome constructive criticism offered in the spirit of mutual respect. CCDS endeavors to cultivate a deep commitment among its members to work collectively on common projects.

CCDS views the concrete struggles against the depredations of capital as the basis for the development of class and socialist consciousness. The theoretical framework of dialectical and historical materialism that constitutes Marxism provides CCDS the scientific and philosophical basis for collective conscious development.

We draw upon Marxism, not as "revealed truth" but as a guide to understanding the dynamics of historical development and change, and as a scientific tool to discover the essential societal relations and social forces that advance the struggle for democracy and socialism.

Our organization has no theoretical test for membership-only a willingness to study, explore, debate, act upon, and develop the principles of human liberation exemplified by the theory and practical works of Marxists.

Science of Marxism

Our study embraces the many currents that have nourished Marxist thought over nearly two centuries from Europe, to Asia, to Africa, and the Americas. It explores the meaning of Marx's view of class struggle at the core of all history and the role of the working class as the essential agent of social transformation. It seeks to develop the struggle for equality drawing from the rich Marxist theory and practice developed in the movements for national liberation.

It seeks to understand Marx's work in relation to the vast changes in science, technology, and the whole of human productive forces since his time. It explores the contradictions between modern advances in science and the fetters placed upon those advances by contemporary capitalism. It examines the dialectical relationship between nature and society; how
external circumstances impact consciousness and how consciousness, in turn, acts upon nature.

CCDS seeks to promote a dialogue, a correspondence, between generations. Marxism is not static; it is always evolving with changing times. It is understood and acted upon by different generations in different ways. The dialogue between generations is aimed at a productive synthesis between past and present. It aims to merge the experience of older generations with the fresh outlook of the young, forging a deeper understanding by all of how past history informs the present and provides a vision of a socialist future.

CCDS seeks to understand and convey the history of all oppressed people as central to the struggle for the liberation of all. From that standpoint we stress the inseparable relationship between the struggles of all nationally oppressed people and the struggles of the working class for a new society. We have an unambiguous commitment to the leadership of people of color and of women, acknowledging both the essential historic and current contributions of these groups to all major progressive achievements.

**Education**

CCDS stresses the dialectical relationship between theory and practice in the spirit of Marx's critique of preceding philosophers: "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it."

In that spirit, CCDS advances an interconnected program of socialist education and democratic action. As a socialist organization, we seek to engage in advanced theoretical and educational work to explore the road to socialism; we conduct research and policy development aimed at charting and amplifying public and workers’ ownership. We study varying roads to socialism through discussion and organized travel to countries charting their particular paths to transformation. We seek to better understand and popularize socialism through study groups, forums, and media.

At a historic moment filled with portents of change, our socialist education is an essential element of our program. Our Socialist Education Project is charged with developing web-based course outlines for study groups on a wide range of subjects relating to capitalism and socialism, to organize public forums, to participate in academic and movement conferences, to organize a speakers’ bureau, to develop popular programs through film and other media. In these endeavors we urge and welcome the full participation of our members.
Action

In the realm of democratic action, we engage in mass campaigns for peace, justice, and economic security. We work to promote the consciousness and leadership of the working class in all struggles. At the core is our determination to build and unite the progressive majority. We seek to build mutual respect and cooperation among all progressive forces through mature, honest, open relations and through primary commitment to the interests of the mass movements.

In political struggle, CCDS works in both electoral and non-electoral arenas, recognizing the dialectical connection between these spheres of activity. Thus, in advancing democratic action, CCDS favors a full range of tactics: electoral activity, lobbying, mass action, civil disobedience, picket lines, and strikes without mechanically favoring any particular tactic, while always acting based on a scientific analysis of concrete conditions.

We advocate a realignment of the nation's politics, recognizing that the parties of the capitalist class cannot be agents of qualitative change. We also recognize that such realignment can only be achieved through mass movements and mass struggles. Socialists and progressives must participate fully in those currents - consulting, influencing, organizing, working to change the electoral system to accommodate new parties, and forging relationships inside and outside the current two-party system.

Political Independence

We uphold the vision of a progressive political party independent of capital. Our present efforts in concrete struggles to build the progressive majority will inform and develop the path to the precise form of that political independence. The successful establishment of such a party will be furthered by the experience of independent political formations as well as by joint actions with progressives in all areas of politics. In a historic realignment of the nation’s politics that will reflect the ascendance of the progressive majority, unity and cooperation of the broadest constellation of progressive forces is essential.

Dialogue

CCDS seeks to build cooperative relationships with other socialists and progressives, organized and unorganized. We seek our proper space on the political landscape by commitment to study, learning, and contributing to struggle based on developing socialist consciousness and Marxist
theory. We strive to contribute a mature, principled, respectful voice to
dialogue on the left. We seek to play an active role in effective move-
ments to liberate the working class and its allies and to build a socialist
future. We anticipate that future with confidence.
Section 4. Book Reviews: Read, Study, Organize

Fascism Today

Review of: The Anatomy of Fascism
By Robert O. Paxton
Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2004

Available for free download at the Knopf website, or may be purchased on Amazon.com, Google Books, and other Internet locations.

By Ted Pearson

The advent of Donald J. Trump to the Presidency of the United States has generated an avalanche of interest in fascism. It is the 2016 number one lookup on the Meriam-Webster site. Google reports that searches for fascism-related topics have surged since Election Day, 2016.

Why all the sudden interest? It would not be empty speculation to recognize that people are alarmed by the Trump Presidency and are trying to see where it fits in the political spectrum. It seems that categories like “liberal,” “conservative”, “left”, and “right” are not up to the task. “Socialist”, “Communist”, “Anarchist”, and “Libertarian” definitely don’t fit.

The news media calls Trump a “populist.” The Business Dictionary defines populism as follows:

“In general, ideology or political movement that mobilizes the population (often, but not always, the lower classes) against an institution or government, usually in the defense of the underdog or the wronged. Whether of left, right, or middle political persuasion, it seeks to unite the uncorrupt and the unsophisticated (the 'little man') against the corrupt dominant elites (usually the orthodox politicians) and their camp
followers (usually the rich and the intellectuals). It is guided by the belief that political and social goals are best achieved by the direct actions of the masses. Although it comes into being where mainstream political institutions fail to deliver, there is no identifiable economic or social set of conditions that give rise to it, and it is not confined to any particular social class.” http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/populism.html

This definition certainly would embrace Donald Trump. But what’s left out is the comparison between what Trump, the candidate and media personality, says, and what Trump, the President, does. Robert O. Paxton disapproves of relying on what fascists say and insists on examining the record of what they do. This is a refreshing discussion.

Instead of trying to define fascism by the programs of its parties and the speeches of its leaders, or the actions of its adherents at various stages, “Let us instead watch fascism in action, from its beginnings to its final cataclysm, within the complex web of interaction it forms with society. Ordinary citizens and the holders of political, social, cultural, and economic power who assisted, or failed to resist, fascism belong to the story. When we are done, we may be better able to give fascism an appropriate definition.”

*The Anatomy of Fascism* is a page turner. It cannot be read except in the looming shadow of the 2016 election and the initial performance of Donald Trump as President. For anyone wanting to understand fascism and its relation to Trump and Trumpism this is a book that can’t be put down until finished. Its 200 pages of exhaustive and thorough tracing of fascist movements and governments through the 20th Century, conclude with a definition.

Paxton delineates five stages of fascism:

1. The creation of movements based on the unifying and mobilizing passions outlined below – especially nationalism and racism.
2. The rooting of fascist movements in the political system through collaboration with conservative and political and corporate leaders by confronting them with a stark choice between the fascist path or concessions to Labor and the Left and ultimately, socialist revolution.
3. The fascist seizure of power, in which they replace or subsume through coercion all the departments of government through the creation of parallel police and military structures that compete for influence and power.
4. The exercise of power, where the manifestation of absolute rule is established and enforced through terror and without regard for law or human rights.
5. And, finally, the long duration, during which the fascist regime chooses either radicalization - extreme steps toward the elimination of internal and external enemies - or stagnation and dissipation.

The history of every fascist dictatorship demonstrates this evolutionary process, which ultimately moves toward stage 5: ethnic cleansing and/or genocide, and war. The only alternative for fascism is entropy.

Trump and Trumpism has passed stage two of this process and is rapidly working on stage 3. Its weakness has been that its apparatus is heavily dependent on the structure of the Republican Party and its Tea Party wing, which lacks armed organizational strength. It is working to change this and create a structure of violence and terror by unleashing and giving blessings to elements like the KKK, neo-Nazi white nationalist groups, and homophobic attacks on gay, lesbian and transgender people. While lacking a mass base these groups are now formally entrenched in the White House in the persons of Breitbart News’ Stephen Bannon and Steven Miller, the protégé of Jefferson Beauregard Sessions III, Michelle Bachman and John Shadegg.

For Bannon and Miller, Michael T. Lynch and Michael Ledeen - the theoretical fathers of modern U. S. fascism - the United States is faced by an intractable enemy – Islam – which must be defeated and extirpated from the Earth or risk conquest and destruction of Western Civilization at its hands.

Fascism does not have an ideology, or philosophy, that can be ascertained from the writings, programs and speeches of fascists and fascist movements. Instead, fascism has what Paxton calls common “mobilizing passions” across national particularities. One can hear the voice of Donald Trump in the background as one reads these “passions.”

• A sense of overwhelming crisis beyond the reach of any traditional solutions;

• the primacy of the group, toward which one has duties superior to every right, whether individual or universal, and the subordination of the individual to it;

• the belief that one’s group is a victim, a sentiment that justifies any action, without legal or moral limits, against its enemies, both internal and external;

• dread of the group’s decline under the corrosive effects of individualistic liberalism, class conflict, and alien influences;
• the need for closer integration of a purer community, by consent if possible, or by exclusionary violence if necessary;

• the need for authority by natural leaders (always male), culminating in a national chief who alone is capable of incarnating the group’s destiny;

• the superiority of the leader’s instincts over abstract and universal reason;

• the beauty of violence and the efficacy of will, when they are devoted to the group’s success;

• the right of the chosen people to dominate others without restraint from any kind of human or divine law, right being decided by the sole criterion of the group’s prowess within a Darwinian struggle.

Paxton outlines several preconditions for fascism historically. Some ring a bell with the recent phenomenon of Trump. Others may just indicate the potential direction of events.

• Mass politics, and the extension of the franchise to white male citizens.

• The split in the Left, which was required before fascism could become possible.

• The loss by the Left of its position as the automatic recourse for all the partisans of change;

• Fascists can find space only after socialism has become powerful enough to have had some share in governing, and thus to have disillusioned part of its traditional working-class and intellectual clientele.

• The fright given the entire middle and upper classes by [the Communists’] victory in Russia, and the possible success of [Communists] was crucial to the panicky search by the bourgeoisie for some new kind of response to Communism. (Substitute Third World and Muslim for Communists.)

• Fascists use nationalist and racist prejudices to mobilize parts of the working class against other parts of it,

• Fascists appeal especially to youth.

• The relative scarcity of working-class fascists historically was not due to some proletarian immunity to appeals of nationalism and ethnic
cleansing. It is better explained by “immunization” and “confessionalism”: those already deeply engaged, from generation to generation, in the rich subculture of socialism, with its clubs, newspapers, unions, and rallies, were simply not available for another loyalty. The Cold War repression of the U. S. Left has weakened this immunity.

• The unemployed were more likely to join the communists than the fascists, unless they were first-time voters or from the middle class. In post-Cold War U. S. with a weakened Labor and Left movements, this is not as true.

• What united fascists was values rather than a social profile: scorn for tired bourgeois politics, opposition to the Left, fervent nationalism, a tolerance for violence when needed.

How does fascism come to power? Historical experience suggests that fascists cannot easily break into a political system that is functioning tolerably well. Only when the state and existing institutions fail badly do they open opportunities for newcomers. For example, the gridlock the Republicans used to try to strangle the Obama Administration and Congress opened the doors to Trump.

The role of intellectuals was crucial at three points: (1.) discrediting previous liberal regimes; (2.) creating new poles outside the Left around which anger and protest (until recently a monopoly of the Left) could be mobilized; and (3.) making fascist violence respectable. For example, the modern use of rumor and falsehoods spread via social media today and the winking at racist police and vigilante violence against Black and Latino people, Muslims, immigrants, and gay, lesbian and transgender people.

Fascisms grew from back rooms to the public arena most easily where the existing government functioned badly, or not at all.

The legitimization of violence against a demonized internal enemy is close to the heart of fascism. Here we have seen only beginnings among hysterical participants at Trump rallies, and the more open terrorism of the KKK, Christian Identity, neo-Nazi, and other white nationalist groups that have enthusiastically attached themselves to Trump and been given license by his cabinet appointments, especially to the Departments of Justice, Homeland Security, and the National Security Council.

After achieving power fascism creates parallel structures, or “dual power.” Such parallel fascist structures live in tension with the state. This contrasts with revolutionary (communist) parallel structures which totally replace the state. This has been especially true for the
military and police, historically. The Trumpists are currently lagging in this area.

Fascism depends on at least the passive support of existing authority. Republican silence in the face of Trump assaults on reality, his xenophobia, racism and misogyny is enabling.

Although conservatives might accept violence against socialists and trade unionists, they will not tolerate it against the state. Most fascist leaders have recognized that a seizure of power in the teeth of conservative and military opposition would be possible only with the help of the street, under conditions of social disorder likely to lead to wildcat assaults on private property, social hierarchy, and the state’s monopoly of armed force. This is a stage that Trump has not reached, yet.

Since the fascist route to power has always passed through cooperation with conservative elites, the strength of a fascist movement in itself is only one of the determining variables in the achievement (or not) of power, though it is surely a vital one. Fascists did have numbers and muscle to offer to conservatives caught in crisis in Italy and Germany. Equally important, however, was the conservative elites’ willingness to work with fascism; a reciprocal flexibility on the fascist leaders’ part; and the urgency of the crisis that induced them to cooperate with each other.

A central ingredient in the conservatives’ calculation in Germany and Italy was that Hitler and Mussolini would not have the faintest idea what to do with high office. They would be incapable of governing without the cultivated and experienced conservative leaders’ savoir faire. Sound familiar?

In sum, fascists offered a new recipe for governing with popular support but without any sharing of power with the Left, and without any threat to conservative social and economic privileges and political dominance. The conservatives, for their part, hold the keys to the doors of power.

“However we interpret the deadlock of democratic government, no fascist movement is likely to reach office without it. At the stage of attaining power, when the elites chose to co-opt fascism, the functions of mature fascism became even clearer: in immediate terms, its role was to break a logjam in national politics by a solution that excluded the Left. In a longer term, it was to enlist mass support behind national, social defense, to unify, regenerate and rejuvenate, ‘moralize,’ and purify the nation that many saw as weak, decadent, and unclean.”

There is much to be learned from Paxton’s detailed and deep probe of the history of fascism. To sum it up, Paxton comes to this conclusion.
“Fascism may be defined as a form of political behavior marked by obsessive preoccupation with community decline, humiliation, or victimhood and by compensatory cults of unity, energy, and purity, in which a mass-based party of committed nationalist militants, working in uneasy but effective collaboration with traditional elites, abandons democratic liberties and pursues with redemptive violence and without ethical or legal restraints goals of internal cleansing and external expansion.”

Or, as the 7th Congress of the Communist International put it in 1935,

“Fascism is the open, terroristic dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinist and most imperialist elements of finance capital.”

Paxton characterizes this definition as “doctrinaire,” and adds, “Though many more interpretations and definitions were to be proposed over the years, even now, more than eighty years after the San Sepolcro meeting [where Mussolini launched the principles of Fasci Italiani di Combattimento in 1919], none of them has obtained universal assent as a completely satisfactory account of a phenomenon that seemed to come from nowhere, took on multiple and varied forms, exalted hatred and violence in the name of national prowess, and yet managed to appeal to prestigious and well-educated statesmen, entrepreneurs, professionals, artists, and intellectuals.”

Yet Paxton’s work in this very valuable book points back to the basic definition offered by Communists in 1935. There is nothing here that contradicts it and much that can help us come to grips with it.

“[B]efore the establishment of a fascist dictatorship, (capitalist) governments usually pass through a number of preliminary stages and adopt a number of reactionary measures which directly facilitate the accession to power of fascism. Whoever does not fight the reactionary measures of the (capitalists) and the growth of fascism at these preparatory stages is not in a position to prevent the victory of fascism, but, on the contrary, facilitates that victory.” --Georgi Dimitrov, Main Report delivered at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, August 2, 1935.

Ted Pearson is a founding member of CCDS and was a long-time member of its National Coordinating Committee. He was also a leader of the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, and its Chicago chapter, and worked on numerous campaigns to free people unjustly arrested and wrongly incarcerated.
Ilan Pappe: Unafraid of Anti-Zionism


By Larry Abbott

The extremes of the Trump regime, the frantic efforts of mainstream Democrats to rationalize the catastrophic loss of their neoliberal candidate and the principled truth-telling of the Sanders campaign are all converging to cause many Americans to question seriously for the first time in their lives the foundations of the patriotic narrative they were born into.

*Out of the Frame*, Ilan Pappe’s intellectual autobiography, is a story of intellectual courage and personal transformation that could not be more timely. Pappe is probably best known for writing *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (2006). There he described in detail what an actual ethnic cleansing looks like, the years of detailed planning and preparation that went into it, the massacres and pillage, and he demolished many of the foundational myths cooked up by its architects to justify this dispossession of an entire people. For example, “Operation Dani”, the codename for the “cleansing” of Lydd and Ramla, two Palestinian towns roughly halfway between Jaffa and Jerusalem in July 1948, is described in Chapter 7 of “Ethnic Cleansing”.

The commanders for these operations were Yigal Allon and Yitzhak Rabin. Both towns had been abandoned by the out-gunned Arab Liberation Army and the Jordanian Legion, leaving the townspeople to defend themselves. Ramla was attacked on July 12. On July 13 Yitzhak Rabin led the attack on Lydd. The men of Lydd retreated to the mosque in the center of town with a few old rifles. After a few hours of futile resistance it was over. Four hundred and twenty-six men, women and children were murdered in the subsequent pillage, including the 176 men in the mosque. As news of this spread to Ramla the people there quickly surrendered.
Pappe: “The people of both cities were forced to march, without food and water, to the West Bank, many of them dying from thirst and hunger on the way. As only a few hundred were allowed to stay in both towns, and given that people from nearby villages had fled there for refuge, Rabin estimated that a total of 50,000 people had been ‘transferred’ in this inhuman way [70,000 actual]. Again, the inevitable question presents itself: three years after the Holocaust, what went through the minds of those Jews who watched these wretched people pass by?”

Pappe quotes Spiro Munyar, a young physician at the local hospital in Lydd and an eyewitness to the massacre and expulsion:

“The occupying soldiers had set up roadblocks on all the roads leading east and were searching the refugees, particularly the women, stealing their gold and jewelry from their necks, wrists and fingers and whatever was hidden in their clothes, as well as money and everything else that was precious and light enough to carry.”

In *Out of the Frame* Pappe speaks eloquently of the intellectual journey that brought him to write and speak out about this crime. Pappe is a sabra, a child of German-Jewish settler colonists who had immigrated to Palestine in the 1930s and formed a closed Central European cultural enclave in Haifa. Born in the early 1950s and attending conventional Israeli schools he first heard the work “Nakba” (“catastrophe” in Arabic, a reference to the expulsion of 1948) whispered quietly by two Palestinian high school classmates. From high school he dutifully moved on to his three years of compulsory military service in the army, including the 1973 war, then on to university studies in Middle Eastern history in Jerusalem.

It was not until Pappe reached Oxford in 1979 to work on a doctoral dissertation using recently declassified Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) documents that Pappe realized there were serious discrepancies in the Zionist narrative he had been taught since childhood. Two other Israeli authors, Benny Morris and Avi Shlaim, also working with these archival materials, came to similar conclusions and began to publish their findings. Together these three became known as the “New Historians” and they traveled together to debates in Israel to challenge the conventional Zionist history. By the mid-90s however, the hate mail and death threats were mounting and fellow academics at the University of Haifa, where Pappe was now teaching, were accusing Pappe of treason. Morris and Shlaim retreated to the comfort of apologists for Zionism and Pappe was left more isolated than ever.

Pappe includes in this book the story of Teddy Katz, one of his students at Haifa University and a member of a kibbutz a few miles away. After
discovering that his kibbutz was built on the ruins of a Palestinian village, Zeyta, Katz began exploring the history of other destroyed Palestinian villages. After several years of research he wrote a MA thesis that received a 97% rating, consistent with his other academic work. Included in this thesis was a chapter on the village of Tantura, where Katz concluded that about 20 Palestinian fighters had died in the battle to defend their village against the Alexandroni Brigade, and that afterwards over 200 Palestinian villagers had been systematically murdered. As news of this research leaked out, veterans of the Alexandroni Brigade decided that this publicity was unwelcome. They sued Katz for libel for one million shekels. The story of what happens after is a classic story of the power of ideological indoctrination, even in a university context.

Pappe makes clear that he is hardly the first to describe the Nakba (a term he dislikes because it fails to denote responsibility for a crime) and, particularly in Ethnic Cleansing, acknowledges respectfully the many Palestinian historians, such as Nur Marsalha and Walid Khalidi, who have gone before him. As he notes in the preface, “the uniqueness of my particular journey lies in its origin rather that it’s final destination.” Out of the Frame was written in response to persistent requests to explain his journey and, as he notes “to answer a far more important question as well as the personal one: can other people in Israel change their views in a similar way? Or will they remain entrenched in their positions in a way that will defeat any hope for peace and reconciliation in their country?” This is a question that many Americans may well be asking themselves of their own country as well.

Larry Abbott is a retired union carpenter and bilingual primary grade teacher in Los Angeles. He was chair of the Human Rights Committee at United Teachers Los Angeles, union chapter chair at his school and active in developing age-appropriate curricula for elementary schools on LGBT issues. He is a veteran of the American war against Vietnam and a member of Veterans for Peace, Democratic Socialists of America and the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism.
Vietnam History Exposes Hypocrisy of ‘War Commemoration’ Celebrations

Review of: The American War in Vietnam: Crime or Commemoration?
By John Marciano

By Al Donohue and Paul Krehbiel

On May 25, 2012, then President Obama and the Pentagon announced the kick-off of a Vietnam "War Commemoration" celebration to last until 2025, the 50th anniversary of the end of the war. The effort was initiated by President Bush in 2007 to divert attention from the disaster and massive public opposition to his war in Iraq. The focus of the Vietnam War Commemoration, according to its website, is to honor Vietnam veterans for their sacrifice and service to their country. Originally, the goal was to organize educational programs around the country. But impassioned protests from a broad cross section of Americans, including Vietnam scholars and anti-war protestors who offered to help write those educational programs, halted that goal, and reduced it to a commemoration to honor our vets.

Paying tribute to veterans is a time-honored tradition for politicians, a safe way to show that they care about the men and women who sacrifice their lives in America's seemingly endless string of wars. That goal sounds lofty, until one factors in the information that is conveniently left out of the official narrative. Missing from the Vietnam War Commemoration are scores of lies told by the US government to the American people about Vietnam to bamboozle them into supporting the war, and the shocking loss of life and property visited upon the Vietnamese people, and US troops.

Professor John Marciano provides much of this missing history on nearly every page of his book. One concludes after reading Marciano's book
that the real goal of the Vietnam War Commemoration is to sanitize the horrors and lies under the rubric that the US war in Vietnam was a "Noble Cause" (a term used after the war by President Reagan to justify it), thereby making it easier to draw in American youth to fight new wars. The official US government narrative was and still is that the US went into Vietnam to protect the democratic rights of the Vietnamese people to choose their own future. Marciano disproves this.

With each exposed lie, Marciano rips the veneer off the "Noble Cause" fairy tale, and his verdict is decisive. The US war against Vietnam was a terrible crime, and nothing to commemorate. Why would anyone want to celebrate a war based on lies, a war that took the lives of over 3 million Vietnamese and 58,000 US soldiers, a war that destroyed a country that was absolutely no threat to the US, a war where the US government poisoned millions of Vietnamese and many US soldiers with Agent Orange and other herbicides - many of whom are still suffering today from cancer and other diseases and birth defects in their children and grandchildren? *The War Commemoration* doesn't discuss any of these issues. Marciano's book does, and it should be in the library of every high school and on the reading list of every college American History course. Marciano's book is an antidote to the government's campaign to re-write history.

Marciano begins by recounting the earliest opposition to the war, beginning in 1945 when US sailors spoke out against being ordered to transport French troops to Vietnam in an effort to restore France's brutal colonial rule of Vietnam. The official *War Commemoration* mentions briefly France's "involvement," but doesn't say what it was. Marciano also exposes an early US government-CIA promoted myth that thousands of Catholics left North Vietnam in the late 1940's and 1950's because of their opposition to socialism.

Marciano quoted former CIA and White House specialist Chester Cooper who said: "Data subsequently available tend to support the late (historian and journalist) Bernard Fall in his conclusion that'...the mass flight
was admittedly the result of an external, intense, well-conducted and...very successful American psychological warfare campaign." The War Commemoration doesn't mention this either.

**Eisenhower: Voters would have elected Ho Chi Minh**

Also missing from the official government history is the fact that the US government undermined the 1954 Geneva Agreement that marked the end of French colonial rule, war and occupation of Vietnam by cancelling the elections scheduled for 1956 to re-unite a temporarily divided Vietnam. Nor does *The War Commemoration* explain why the elections were cancelled. The reason was because the leader of the Vietnamese resistance, Ho Chi Minh - a communist, would have won, and the goal of the US was to replace the French as a new neo-colonial ruler of Vietnam. Marciano explains that. President Eisenhower wrote years after Geneva in his book *Mandate for Change* that had elections been held in 1956 it's likely that 80% of the people would have voted for Ho Chi Minh. US government and corporate leaders wanted to stop that at any cost because Ho Chi Minh would have barred big US multi-national corporations from getting free access to cheap raw materials, cheap labor and new markets in Vietnam. That was what the war was about, not fighting for the democratic rights of the Vietnamese people. *The War Commemoration* says nothing about any of this critically important history.

Marciano also exposes the lie about the Gulf of Tonkin incident of August 4, 1964, which was used by President Johnson to stampede Congress and the American people into going to war against socialist North Vietnam. The US government story, told to the American people, was that on two occasions North Vietnamese military boats shot at American vessels off the coast of Vietnam, in international waters, in an unprovoked display of aggression. *The War Commemoration* maintains that one shooting by a North Vietnamese boat did take place. The truth, Marciano revealed, was that neither shooting incident by the North Vietnamese took place, and that US military vessels were inside Vietnamese territorial waters.

Marciano also exposed the myth that the My Lai massacre of 500 unarmed Vietnamese women and children by US troops in 1968 was just an isolated example by a handful of rogue military officers and soldiers. Marciano shows My Lai and many other killings like that - all of which were covered up by the US government, along with torture and other forms of terrorism, destruction of crops, homes and villages–were driven by high US government and military policy makers and were common place in Vietnam. That information is not in the official *War Commemoration*. 
Marciano also writes that Nixon sabotaged peace talks in the spring of 1968 while he was running for president. He sent a secret message to the extreme right-wing South Vietnamese government dictators (South Vietnamese Vice President General Ky said his only hero was Adolph Hitler) that they should stall the negotiations because Nixon would support them with more arms and troops to keep the war going if he got elected. This isn't mentioned in *The War Commemoration*. Nixon was elected in November 1968 and escalated and prolonged the war for over four more years.

**Exploiting POW's**

Marciano tells about how President Nixon promoted the charge that the North Vietnamese held American POW's to divert attention away from the public exposure of the My Lai massacre in 1969, by American GI Ron Ridenhour and crusading journalist Seymour Hersh, and the huge and growing US anti-war movement that included many American war veterans. The US claimed there were 1600 American POWs/MIAs in Vietnam. The Vietnamese cite over 30,000 Vietnamese that were Missing in Action and unaccounted for. There were over 10,000 South Vietnamese imprisoned by the right-wing South Vietnamese government. Many were tortured and crippled for life or killed while in captivity. Nothing is said about these prisoners of war (POWs), nor the Vietnamese Missing in Action.

Nixon's POW/MIA campaign was pushed so hard that the truth was turned upside down. Marciano quoted the late Jonathan Schell saying that US citizens got behind Nixon's lead and "began to speak as though the North Vietnamese had kidnapped four hundred Americans and the United States had gone to war to retrieve them." Of course, this was bizarre. It was the US that invaded Vietnam with troops and started a war against Vietnam, not the other way around. The Vietnamese didn't invade the US. Much of this insanity was rammed down the public's throats and accepted by many because of the intense and repressive twenty-year anti-communist crusade carried out by the US government and sectors of big business to scare the public, justifying practically any crime against anyone, any organization, or any country charged with being "communist."

Nixon was especially concerned about the growing anti-war sentiment among veterans and soldiers in Vietnam who were increasingly refusing to fight in what they saw as a meaningless or unjust war. Many joined Vietnam Veterans against the War (VVAW) when they returned home. VVAW helped organize big anti-war demonstrations, leading many of them (one memorable one featured Vietnam veterans throwing their Vietnam war medals over the White House fence in protest of the war),
and the 1971 War Crimes Tribunal where veterans gave detailed accounts of war crimes committed by the US military in Vietnam. Lies used to justify going to war aren't just harmless stories or minor misdeeds. Lies lead people to support wars that they wouldn't support if they knew the truth, leading to incredible and unnecessary death, suffering and destruction both here and abroad. All of this, including the anti-war protests of VVAW, is missing from The War Commemoration. Instead, the focus on The War Commemoration web-site is to praise the military exploits of US soldiers and applaud their success in killing the "enemy" and in American GI sacrifices.

The US government and ruling elite used American soldiers during the war, and are using them now. Vietnam veterans and all veterans need health care, jobs, housing, education, treatment for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), treatment from cancer and other illnesses caused by exposure to Agent Orange, not a pat on the back by hypocritical political leaders and their corporate supporters. Veterans are 2.5 times more time likely to be homeless than the general population. Suicide among veterans is 21 percent higher than the general population. Veterans seeking medical treatment at Veteran Administration hospitals have waited weeks or months to be seen by a doctor, much longer than civilian patients at non-VA hospitals. Yet, President Trump's proposed hiring freeze will negatively impact the Veterans Health Administration by not allowing VA hospitals to fill open jobs for doctors and nurses, according to Time magazine on January 30, 2017. Meanwhile, the Vietnam War Commemoration whitewash will cost tax-payers $15 million a year.

‘Commemoration’ Ignores Vietnamese Suffering

It’s incredible that the War Commemoration says nothing about the death and destruction of the Vietnamese people and their country. Marciano cited figures from the writings of historian Marilyn Young. When the war ended in 1975 between 3.6-3.8 million Vietnamese people had been killed, and millions more were injured, made homeless and children orphaned, 9,000 hamlets out of a total of 15,000 were destroyed, as well as 24 million acres of farmland destroyed by bombs and poisonous chemicals, such as Agent Orange. Over 58,000 US soldiers died in Vietnam and many more suffered crippling injuries including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Both sides suffered, but not equally.

Marciano quoted historian Marilyn Young: "The 3.8 million dead Vietnamese were approximately 8 percent of the total population of that country in 1975. The equivalent death toll in the United States would be about 17.5 million people." That would be like wiping out every man, woman and child in the cities of Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, Phoenix, San Antonio, Jacksonville, Indianapolis, San Francisco, Buffalo,
Marciano's powerful anti-war voice isn't the only one. Millions of Americans protested the war, through educational forums, mass demonstrations, GI resistance, election campaigns and lobbying, and a 4-million strong general student strike in May of 1970. This outpouring of strong and widespread opposition to the war is missing in the official War Commemoration. On the back of The American War in Vietnam W. D. Ehrhart Ph. D. and author of Vietnam-Perkasie: A Combat Marine Memoir, wrote that Marciano's book "provides analysis and perspective on how the war ought to be remembered -- and how it is being misremembered and misunderstood." Marciano also cites H. Bruce Franklin, who has written on the POW issue in MIA, or Mythmaking in America, and agrees with Franklin that "the main competing American stories of the war are Noble Cause, the Quagmire, and Imperialism." For Franklin, Marciano and these reviewers, the imperial explanation is the only one that makes sense and can reasonably account for America's "half century of military, political and economic warfare against Vietnam and the hostility toward every other colony and former colony that resisted" US aggression.

Many readers will be familiar with some of the books referenced in the 27 pages of Notes and the Selected Biography at the end of this concise 160-page history. For those who did not experience the war personally or this time period in our history, this is the book to read.

This is not the first time Marciano exposed the truth about Vietnam. The late professor William Griffen and Marciano did a study of how the war in Vietnam was presented in high school textbooks in 1979. Almost universally these texts echoed the government's line. Griffen and Marciano wrote about this and the true story of Vietnam in their book, Teaching the Vietnam War. It is a tragedy that their insights and awareness contained in that book were not more widely disseminated and adopted in classrooms across the country. Marciano quoted the late Tom Hayden, longtime anti-war and social justice activist, on the current War Commemoration: "Clearly the National Security State is attempting to win on the field of American memory what it lost on the battlefield."

While reading Marciano's book we thought about the scene in the movie
A Few Good Men, where Jack Nicholson, playing a Marine officer in a court room drama says, "the truth, you want the truth? You can't handle the truth." It's time that the American people are told the truth about Vietnam. That truth is in The American War in Vietnam. It's also in the book, Vietnam: From National Liberation to 21st Century Socialism, written by members of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism who visited Vietnam in 2009 and 2011, and which is available from Changemaker Publications at lulu.com. In answer to Nicholson's Marine officer, the American people can handle the truth.

John Marciano is Professor Emeritus at the State University of New York at Cortland.

Al Donohue was an Army combat infantry soldier in Vietnam in 1966. He is a member of Vietnam Veterans against the War, and a member of Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism (CCDS) in western New York.

Paul Krehbiel was a Vietnam War resister, trade unionist, and president of the Buffalo Draft Resistance Union in 1970. He is a national co-chair of CCDS, and author of a coming-of age anti-war memoir, Shades of Justice.

John, Al, and Paul were all active in the Buffalo antiwar movement during the war in Vietnam.
Global Capitalism and the Crisis of Democracy

Review of: Global Capitalism and the Crisis of Democracy
By Jerry Harris
Clarity Press, 2016

By Harry Targ
Portside, June 22, 2016

As the Berlin Wall came down and the former Soviet Union collapsed, the dominant mantra of pundits that portrayed a world of superpower struggle between the “free world” and communism was replaced by one celebrating the “end of history.” To complement history’s end they began to describe a new world order based on “globalization.” From the 1991 demise of the Socialist Bloc until today, libraries of books on globalization have been published. After a period of excitement about the new world order, “global celebrants” were challenged by analysts more skeptical about the meaning of the changes in international politics and economics.

The more sophisticated theorists correctly argued that the dramatic increase in cross-border economic, political, and cultural interactions was not merely the result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, or the technological revolution, or the happy dawn of worldwide production and investment. For some theorists, including Jerry Harris, globalization was not even just a byproduct of a systematic policy by international economic institutions (although it was that too) but the development of a new stage in the history and direction of capitalism. This new stage in the development of global capitalism is the subject of this book. It provides the most comprehensive analysis to date of how neoliberal globalization shapes politics, the role of the state, and the possibilities for the creation of a new kind of socialism, a twenty-first century socialism.

For Harris, neoliberal globalization is inextricably connected to the decline of democracy. The neoliberal age is based on the proposition that
the pursuit of capital accumulation and profits requires the shift in the role of the state from serving the ruling class and the traditional working class, to the redistribution of wealth and power to what Harris calls a transnational capitalist class (TCC). Under the new global conditions of capitalism—a qualitative shift from manufacturing to finance; expanded cross-border manufacturing, investment and trade; and a fundamental reconstitution of the working class from a relatively secure, organized political force to an increasingly marginalized precariat—a new stage of capitalism has emerged.

The qualitative change in the global capitalist system and its class structure, Harris contends, began in the 1970s “with corporations locating more of their assets, production, and employment abroad.” As the global economy was changing and the global class fraction in each nation was gaining greater influence everywhere “the state apparatus was used to restructure laws and regulations over trade and the flow of capital.” (61)

Neoliberal policies introduced by states, international financial institutions, and trade agreements promoted downsizing state services to citizens and the privatization of public institutions. TCC-dominated global institutions demanded that most countries shift their economic profiles from production for domestic consumption to production for export. And, with the opening of doors to international capital and manufactur-
ing, citizens, primarily workers, lost the last vestiges of their sovereign rights to determine their own destiny. By the 1980s, financial speculation was the driver of the new global economy and workers became migrants, part-time employees, and isolated atoms in a new economy devoid of any economic security and autonomy. The several hundred year momentum for building democracy was reversed with the rise of the TCC.

A substantial portion of the Harris book describes in detail the network of economic connections, financial and manufacturing, that have led to the transformation of national capitalist classes to a TCC. National capitalist classes still exist, and fractions of them conflict within national boundaries, but the development of the global economy makes the globalization of a capitalist ruling class the leading force in historical development.

Ukraine and China

Having analyzed the development of a new stage of capitalism, globalization, and an ideology and set of policies to sustain it, neoliberalism, Harris describes the dialectical development of both in two critical cases: Ukraine and China. In the Ukraine case, a national ruling class is embedded in conflict with sectors of Russian and European ruling classes. However, conflict between national ruling classes are less central to Central European politics than the deep network of economic ties between sectors of the TCC in Russia, Ukraine, the European Union, and to a lesser extent, the United States.

In the Chinese case, a hegemonic Communist Party directs and supports the development of global capitalism, and while China is engaged in global competition with older capitalist powers, it too is becoming part of the network of global capitalism. Many of its key entrepreneurs are connected to the TCC. The data Harris presents on these connections and the rich analyses of both Ukraine and China are compelling. For those theorists of neoliberal globalization who still see the hegemonic power of the nation-state system, Harris makes a powerful case for a new globalized economic and political order.

Harris then addresses the difficult theoretical and practical questions so relevant to activists: How do we save the planet and move history in a progressive direction? First, the author addresses climate change and the problematic character of the ways representatives of global capitalism seek to forestall it. On this question the fundamental contradiction remains between the processes of capital accumulation at all costs versus the recognition by sectors of the TCC that devastation of the environment has potential negative consequences for the making of profits.
As a result of the TCC concern for both profit and the environment, various movements and organizations promoting “green capitalism” have emerged. Some prominent members of the capitalist class advocate for market solutions to the environmental crisis, using taxing and trade policies to reward economic actors who reduce their misuse of air, water, and other natural resources. More advanced green capitalists argue for a Green New Deal, shifting societal resources to develop the economy in a way more compatible with the environment. They propose massive reallocation of federal dollars in the United States that could rebuild the nation’s infrastructure, emphasizing wind and solar energy, and at the same time, employ millions of marginalized workers.

After a rigorous analysis of neoliberal globalization, the rise of a TCC, and the development of a powerful argument that neoliberal globalization constitutes a qualitative new stage in the historic development of capitalism, Harris addresses the critical question for the left: what next? Drawing upon three core institutions in modern history—markets, the state, and civil society, he discusses the twentieth century shortcomings of “free market” capitalism, state-directed socialism, and anarchist rejections of both the market and the state. For him excessive emphasis on any one of these reduces the probability of creating full democracies.

A twenty-first century socialism, based on the thinking of analysts such as Marta Harnecker, David Schweickart, and Gar Alperovitz, and the concrete experiences of worker cooperatives in Spain and North America, and the effort to build cooperatives in Cuba, Venezuela, and Italy, constitute an alternative to neoliberal globalization. Although each can and should be critiqued, existing proposals and experiments use markets as ways to distribute goods, encourage and rely on state support for building institutions at the base without creating centralized bureaucratized socialism, and facilitate and reconstitute civil society while not rejecting the contributions markets and the state can make. A central premise of Harris’ thinking is the value of building alternative institutions today which might serve as a skeletal form of a new society.

Global Capitalism and the Crisis of Democracy is a seminal work which addresses the major questions raised by the vast critical literature on neoliberal globalization. It addresses markets, the state, civil society, the transforming working class, the environment, and the draconian reversal of the historic drive to create real democracy. It accumulates a dense collection of data on financial speculation, investment, and trade to demonstrate the growing network of cross-national ties that bind a new transnational capitalist class.

This volume should be read and used in classrooms and study groups to stimulate a conversation about the new era of neoliberal globalization
and the prospects for building twenty-first century socialism. Two prominent elements of the new global order should become part of these conversations, elements that did not receive adequate attention in the Harris book. First, the discussion of the military-industrial complex and its integration into the TCC needs to be expanded. Also, the techniques of empire, mentioned briefly, need to be more rigorously connected to the cross-national economic ties, the forced transformation of the working class, and the rise of protest against neoliberal austerity.

Second, while Harris makes a compelling case for the existence of a TCC, he does not sufficiently address the existence or possibility of the emergence of a transnational working class (TWC). Data-based research and anecdotal evidence suggests a dramatic upsurge in protest activity and progressive political organization all across the globe. One research project, counting protest activities over the last decade, found a dramatic upsurge of public protests in over eighty countries. Half of these protest events were motivated by opposition to austerity policies and/or included demands for democratization. The optic of protestors in Tahrir Square in Cairo sending money to buy pizzas for protestors in Madison, Wisconsin is a powerful metaphor. In the end a Transnational Capitalist Class must be challenged by a Transnational Working Class at the same time as workers everywhere build vibrant alternative economic and political institutions.

Harry Targ teaches foreign policy, US/Latin American relations, international political economy, and topics on labor studies in the Department of Political Science and a program in Peace Studies, at Purdue University. He sees connections between theory/education and political practice. Targ is a member of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism (CCDS), the Northwest Central Labor Council (AFL-CIO), and the Lafayette Area Peace Coalition (LAPC). His book, Diary of a Heartland Radical, can be ordered here [1]. He can be reached at targ@purdue.edu [2].

Links

[2] mailto:targ@purdue.edu
Other Book Reviews

By Dialogue & Initiative staff

Dark Money: The Hidden History of the Billionaires behind the Rise of the Radical Right
By Jane Mayer
Doubleday, 2016

Growing numbers of Americans are aware that billionaires and the big corporations they run aren't like you or me. While most Americans focus their attention on getting and keeping good jobs, raising a family, and living in peace with their neighbors, billionaires work overtime to acquire more money and power, by exploiting and harming others.

Increasingly, right-wing extremists are working with billionaires to help them achieve their political goals, and get some of the spoils for themselves. Dark Money, by Jane Mayer, staff writer at The New Yorker and a best-selling author, exposes the largely hidden network of very wealthy people who lavishly fund a host of right-wing organizations, that step-by-step move our country to the political right.

One of the best examples today is the political marriage of right-wing billionaire Donald Trump with ultra-right, neo-fascist Steve Bannon, now working as President Trump's chief advisor. In many cases the billionaire activist and the right-wing activist is one and the same person, though generally unbeknownst to the general public. A good example of this is the Koch brothers.

Mayer's meticulously researched history rips the civic-minded veneer off the sordid operations of Charles and David Koch, owners of the multi-billion dollar Koch Industries. They are right-wing political activists in their own right. They have a major influence or outright control of a host of organizations, mostly non-profit foundations, that they either started or bankrolled and that carry out their right-wing, pro-corporate plans. Most operate under the cover of civic sounding non-profit organi-
izations like Americans for Prosperity, the Koch's major political organization. Other recipients of Koch money, influence or direct control is the Heritage Foundation, an early right-wing think tank that helped guide the Reagan Administration, and the Cato Institute, which specializes in breaking unions and union organizing campaigns.

Mayer wrote: "In 2008 alone, public records indicate that the three main Koch family foundations gave money to thirty-four different political and policy organizations." These donations are not just gifts, but rather investments: the Koch's are strong believers in the adage that he who pays the piper picks the tune.

**Koch Brothers: Billionaires, Manipulators and Deceivers**

The Koch brothers are manipulators, deceivers and hypocrites. Mayer wrote: "The Koch's routinely cast themselves as libertarians who deplore government taxes, regulations, and subsidies, but records show they took full advantage of the special tax credits and subsidies available to the oil, ethanol, and pipeline business, among other areas of commerce in which they were engaged. In many cases their lobbyists fought to protect these perks. In addition, their companies benefited from nearly $100 million in government contracts in the decade after 2000."

When Wall Street tanked the economy in 2008 into the Great Recession, Koch's Americans for Prosperity, a publicly anti-government libertarian organization, organized Congress behind the scenes for a massive "yes" vote for the government bailout to help Koch businesses that were threatened to lose millions of dollars.

The Koch brothers hated Obama from the day he was elected and worked to undermine him daily throughout his presidency. But they didn't do it in their name. They did it through front groups which they funded and directed behind the scenes. One was the Tea Party movement, ostensibly a spontaneous grass-roots rebellion of ordinary people angered at Obama's supposedly "socialist" program for trying to stimulate the economy to help people who had lost their jobs get back to work. This movement was the Tea Party, which was financed and directed by the Koch's.

The Koch brothers also finance the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) which writes model pro-corporate, anti-worker, anti-regulation, pro-pollution laws for politicians who receive Koch money to introduce these bills in state legislatures and in Congress. Mayer has a couple
pages on ALEC, but much more is needed to expose the depth of influence Koch-ALEC has had in the legislative field. Koch also played a major role in putting their candidates into office in state legislatures across the country who then re-drew election boundary lines to favor conservative Republican candidates, through gerrymandering.

The result in many states is that while a majority of voters voted for Democrats, a majority of Republicans were elected. (Google Redmap gerrymandering for the details of how they did it.) Those who hold conservative and right-wing positions don't comprise the majority of the people.

The Koch's and other Dark Money operatives have created a false "majority" in state houses and Congress (just like the Electoral College did to put Trump in the White House) to pass their draconian laws "democratically." The Koch brothers, acting behind the scenes, also helped Trump pick his cabinet and department heads, all wealthy conservative billionaire corporation owners, heirs or major stockholders, almost all of whom are anti-labor, racists, misogynists, imperialists, and climate change deniers.

This is a powerful argument for ending Citizen's United and getting corporate money out of politics.

Runaway Inequality: An Activist's Guide to Economic Justice

By Les Leopold
Labor Institute Press
2015

Similar to Bernie Sanders’ stump speeches about economic inequality, though this book goes into greater detail. Sanders did the American people a great service putting this issue front and center during the 2016 presidential campaign.

But Les Leopold digs deeper, on wage theft, taxes and inequality, racism and the economy, and more. One shop steward wrote: "I'm not a reader. In fact, I hate to read. But I loved reading this book. It's written for people like me. I can't put it down."
Freedom is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement

By Angela Y. Davis
Haymarket Books, 2016

Angela Davis, icon of the socialist, Black liberation, women’s, and anti-prison movements—and advocate of intersectionality—has written a book that connects all the issues and political movements for justice and peace, both present and past.

Davis understands that the struggles of Black youth in Ferguson are linked to the struggles of the Palestinian people, which are both linked to the struggles of women everywhere, and to labor struggles, the fight against poverty and homelessness, against all forms of racism and discrimination, for an end to all exploitation, and abuse, and the struggle for dignity and respect -- that all these struggles are interconnected by a common thread of wanting relief from oppression and its major cause, capitalism.

"Progressive struggles -- whether they are focused on racism, repression, poverty or other issues -- are doomed to fail if they do not attempt to develop a consciousness of the insidious promotion of capitalist individuality," Davis says on page one of this volume. The praise for this book is mighty. Gloria Steinem, an early leader of the women's movement said Angela's book "will be a huge help in daily life and action" by promoting the "understanding that leaders are only leaders if they empower others."

Mumia Abu-Jamal, former leader of the Black Panther Party in Philadelphia and now serving a life sentence in prison, wrote, "This is vintage Angela; insightful, curious, observant, and brilliant..." South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu and anti-apartheid leader, recalled Nelson Mandela's message that we have to "be willing to embrace that long walk to freedom. Understanding what it takes to really be free, to have no fear, is the first and most important step one has to make..."

Cornel West, Honorary Chair of Democratic Socialists of America who has taught at Princeton, Yale, Harvard, and the Union Theological Seminary, and a major theoretician of Black liberation, wrote the introduction to this book. "During the thirty-year ice age of neo-liberal rule, Angela Davis remained on fire for the freedom of poor and working people...her
ubiquitous lecturing, marvelous teaching, and courageous solidarity in every corner of the globe keep candles of hope burning in the cold and chilly days of neoliberal hegemony...She remains... the most recognizable face of the left in the US Empire."

_Angela Davis was a founding member of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism, and sits on our National Advisory Board._

### An Indigenous People's History of the United States

**By Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz**

_Beacon Press, 2014_

Peterson Zah, former President of the Navajo Nation, wrote that Dunbar-Ortiz's book "provides an essential historical reference for all Americans...The American Indians' perspective has been absent from colonial histories for too long." Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz's book corrects that. Reading this book gives one a much deeper understanding of Native people's history and culture, and the importance of the Native people's struggle at Standing Rock today.

Dunbar-Ortiz grew up in rural Oklahoma, the daughter of a tenant farmer father and part Indian mother. Active in the 1960's civil rights, anti-Vietnam War, anti-apartheid, and women's liberation movement, Dunbar-Ortiz has been involved in the international Indigenous movement for four decades.

Her book is truly an untold history of the centuries-long genocide of Native American people. Dunbar-Ortiz wrote: "The history of the United States is a history of settler colonialism - the founding of a state based on the ideology of white supremacy, the widespread practice of African slavery, and a policy of genocide and land theft." Her book details, with meticulously researched documentation, this charge.

There are approximately 3 million Native Americans in the US today, the descendants of 15 million people that at one time inhabited what is now the United States. Scholars write that 90% of Native peoples died as a result of European settlement of North America, through diseases brought from Europe, and three centuries of warfare. Dunbar-Ortiz' book focuses on the war waged against Native peoples since the landing of Columbus in 1492. The results speak for themselves. For those who
survived, Native Americans have among the highest poverty and lowest life expectancy of any group of people in the US. Yet, Native peoples have resisted occupation, privatization, and despoiling of mother earth since European settlers came here.

This is a story of theft and plunder, sorrow and struggle, but also of truth. It is also a lesson in the ways of Native people's living that can light the path forward for all people. Traditional Native life was based on cooperation and the common good, not competition and selfish enrichment. It was based on respect for the earth, not exploiting and harming the earth. Native ways built a socialistic society of caring for all, not the capitalist society that encourages the top elite to enrich themselves at the expense of others.

Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz was a featured speaker at our CCDS 8th National Convention in San Francisco in July of 2016.

**Labor's Untold Story**

**By Richard Boyer and Herbert Morais**

**United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers**

This is the pre-eminent story of the movement to establish the US labor movement as a fighting force for the working class. It covers the ups and downs, and successes and setbacks, from the end of the Civil War to beyond the Cold War.

Written as an adventure story with real heroes and villains, this untold history highlights the mass movements that were at the heart of big victories for workers, including winning the 8-hour day, and the fight against racism and for multi-racial unity in the labor movement among so many others. Relive the historic sit-down strikes that won union recognition, mass marches, and general strikes in San Francisco and other cities where workers ran their cities for days - giving a glimpse of workers' power and socialism in living practice. This book exposes the inherent exploitation and oppression of capitalism, and pays respect to the leadership role that Socialists and Communists played in building the labor movement, groups usually ignored or unjustly slandered. This book is indispensable reading to understand what worked best in building the unions and the working-class movement as a whole. It also provides lessons to light our path for future victories.
The Great Suppression: Voting rights, Corporate Cash, and the Conservative Assault on Democracy

By Zachary Roth

The ruling elite has tried to rig elections for generations to keep itself in power. One of the recent tactics has seen a new twist on voter suppression, employed by a shrinking but desperate Republican minority to hoodwink the public into believing that its regressive policies reflect majority sentiment. Far from the truth.

Author Zachary Roth exposes conservative and right-wing Republicans winning office by passing restrictions on voting in 22 states, gerrymandering election districts, voter fraud, vote buying and voter suppression. All this is aimed primarily at stopping African-Americans, other people of color, youth, workers and others from voting -- all long-time Democratic voters. (For more on the insidious Republican gerrymandering google Redmap Project.) The Great Suppression rips the mask off these unsavory hypocritical politicians who declare their undying love for democracy while they prevent others from voting because they know they can’t get elected in truly democratic elections.

Our Revolution: A Future to Believe In

By Bernie Sanders
St. Martin’s Press, 2016

Bernie Sanders, US Senator from Vermont and 2016 Democratic presidential candidate, chronicles his amazing run for the White House. Dismissed by the political establishment as a "fringe" out-in-left-field candidate, Bernie and his swelling army of supporters disproved the pundits. Starting with no money, no organization, and no national name recognition, Bernie proved that being in left field was exactly what millions of Americans wanted, someone tough enough and progressive enough to
take on the billionaire class with proposals to tax Wall Street, rebuild our infrastructure and create millions of new jobs, offer a free public college education, and launch a frontal attack on all forms of inequality and discrimination.

As voters got to know him and his programs as he travelled the country, his poll numbers sky-rocketed, dramatically closing the gap with nationally known Hillary Clinton. He got 13.2 million votes in the Democratic primary, to Hillary’s 16.8 million. (If the campaign had gone on for another 6 months, he may have received the Democratic Party nomination. A Trump vs. Sanders race could have put Sanders in the White House.) Our Revolution takes you through Bernie’s remarkable campaign, introducing the reader to people from all walks of life that helped bring 1.4 million people to Bernie’s rallies and voters to election booths for wins in 22 states.

Equally important, Bernie lays out a program to continue the political revolution: Our Revolution is also the name of the group of Bernie supporters who continue to meet, fight for social justice in their local communities, and run on progressive programs for elective office.

Refrinery Town: Big Oil, Big Money, and the Remaking of an American City

By Steve Early
Beacon Press, 2017

Steve Early tells the story of a political revolution that put progressives into the mayor’s office and in a majority of city council seats in Richmond, California, home of one of the biggest oil refineries in the country, owned by Chevron. This once company-run town, with a multi-racial working-class, had huge problems with pollution, poverty, and elite corporate control.

Fed up with the neglect, exploitation and suffering, a broadly-based people’s movement that had been involved in community and labor organizing decided to run for office -- all of them in city hall. Working outside the establishment-controlled Democratic Party, they formed their own
organization, the Richmond Progressive Alliance. Early takes the reader through the ups and downs of organizing against Chevron and the political establishment, and on to the people's stunning election victories. Here's a case study of how progressives can overthrow corporate interests, who routinely buy politicians, and take political power for the community to embark on a program to improve education, housing, jobs and justice, laying the groundwork to move further left.

Bernie Sanders wrote the introduction to Refinery Town, praising the grassroots people's movement that was elected to power as an example of the political revolution that he sparked nationwide with his run for the presidency.


By the Carl Bloice Institute for Socialist Education
Committees of Correspondence Education Fund, 2015

This short 106-page book covers a lot of ground, beginning with a presentation of Marxist theory to guide an analysis of the convergence between the working-class and the African American people's struggle for freedom.

Initiated by leaders of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism and close allies, including Tim Johnson, James Campbell, Pat Fry, Janet Tucker and Karl Kramer, the study looks at the Atlantic Revolutions of Black slaves centered around the revolution in Haiti, Reconstruction which empowered freed slaves in the US until the KKK and other pro-business right-wingers reversed those gains until the civil rights movement.

Where the Black freedom movement and the labor movement joined forces, such as in building the left-inspired CIO union movement in the 1930's and beyond, the greatest gains were made for all involved. This labor-Black unity and the ever expansion of democracy in society and politics is the central theme of this study guide, demonstrating that this strategy is a winning formula for today.
Harry Targ, a professor at Purdue and a co-chair of CCDS, contributed a chapter on the organization of black and white workers in the formation of the politically progressive Packinghouse workers’ union and the leadership role played by the Communist Party. The book ends with a discussion of the Democracy Charter, written by Jack O’Dell, a Civil Rights icon, theoretician, a former aide to Martin Luther King, Jr., and a member of the Advisory Board of CCDS.

Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II

By Douglas A. Blackmon

This Pulitzer Prize winning national bestseller exposes the national narrative that slavery ended in 1865 with the end of the Civil War. Blackmon takes the reader into the world of freed slaves who were plunged back into a world of neo-slavery until WWII.

The methods were insidious. The short breath of freedom under Reconstruction ended when northern troops left the South in 1877. The defeated Confederacy, former slave holders, and racists and terrorists like the Ku Klux Klan retaliated against the new freemen and women to re-enslave them. A host of new laws were passed by the white supremists who controlled all levels of government. One such law was "vagrancy." A person was a "vagrant" if he or she couldn't prove that they were employed at a given moment in time. As the economy of the south suffered from the war, there was much unemployment of both Blacks and whites.

But the new vagrancy laws were reserved almost exclusively for Blacks, and thousands were arrested and put in jail. Upon conviction, and unable to pay newly imposed fees for the sheriffs, deputies and court clerks, they were given extended sentences of a year or more. During that time, deals were struck between government and local businesses: imprisoned Blacks would be "leased" to businesses to work during their sentences - the businesses would get free labor, and pay a fee to the
government for supplying the labor. Then new bogus "crimes" would be made against the black prisoner laborers, they would be convicted and more years added to their sentence. The bargain between the government and the business would continue, effectively returning ex-slaves to slavery. Laws were also imposed on Blacks to take away their vote and many other rights. The long struggle of African Americans (and their allies), to win back their freedom continued up through WWII and into the Civil Rights movement of the 1950's and 1960's. Gains were made at every stage of the struggle, but continual backlash requires that the struggle continues. The title of Angela Davis' new book, *Freedom is a Constant Struggle*, sums up this reality.

Lost in Transformation: South Africa's Search for a New Future since 1986

By Solomon Johannes Terreblanche

The liberation of South Africa from the ruthless apartheid system, under the leadership of Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress (ANC), was one of the great revolutions in the latter half of the 20th century. The Black majority was free to build their own future after generations of grinding poverty, exploitation and repression from state-sanctioned racial separation and intense discrimination.

When Mandela was elected president of South Africa in 1994, hope was high for great improvements to be made in the life of the people. While some gains were made, other problems got worse. Unemployment, low wages, slum housing, poverty and other social ills continued to plague the Black majority.

Since the ANC worked in an alliance with the South African Communist Party, and the Congress of South African Trade Unions, expectations were that a leftist government would work hard to relieve the suffering of the people. Many leaders and members in all three organizations did work hard for this goal. But unbeknownst to many of them, the general South African public and the world, giant multi-national corporations and financial institutions from the US, UK and other capitalist countries, working with especially the Mineral Energy Complex in South Africa,
worked furiously to undermine the new ANC government with draconian economic edicts.

The ANC leaders were confronted with very tough economic choices: Either they play ball with the multi-national corporations to maintain and boost their profits as part of a neo-liberal bargain in exchange for promises to provide the economic aid needed to rebuild the country. Or if the ANC refused, the financial elite would pull the plug on internal South African economic development. Some in the government were taken in with these promises.

The ANC was a broad liberation movement, comprised of those who favored socialism and some who favored capitalist development. Most promises weren't kept, and some didn't pan-out as promised. Terreblanche tells the sordid story of this economic blackmail by the international capitalist elite and its betrayal of the ANC government. The author is hard on the ANC for accepting this faustian bargain and for making mistakes, too hard from our perspective. But Terreblanche presents a wealth of information, data, contents of meetings and documents detailing the economic sabotage of the ANC’s program, a program aimed at helping the people.

One comes away after reading this book with a much deeper understanding of the powerful economic power that can override the will of elected political leaders and replace their policies with those that serve the economic elite. The lessons for progressives and socialists are to weigh heavily this economic power, develop well-thought plans to anticipate the worst case scenarios, be on guard for deceit and lies, and have solid back-up plans if Plan A gets bogged down or fails.

Vietnam: From National Liberation to 21st Century Socialism


Based on two CCDS socialist study tours of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in 2009 and 2011, participants found a society with a vibrant growing economy which was increasingly meeting the needs of its people, raising their living and cultural standards, and steadily and dramatically
reducing poverty. The key finding was that after winning the war against the US invaders, the Vietnamese people, under the leadership of the Communist Party, developed a workable balance between allowing foreign private companies to come into Vietnam to operate their businesses to make a good profit, while helping Vietnam build up its economy in a way that helps serve the needs of the people.

One difference between South Africa and Vietnam was that the Vietnamese Communist Party had full political control of the country and had given great thought to finding a solution to resolve the serious social and economic problems they faced since the end of the war in 1975 until 1985. If the South African Communist Party had been in control of the South African government could it have devised a plan to do something similar?

No one knows for sure, but its Marxist analysis of complex economic and political forces would have made it better equipped to deal with the machinations of the multi-national capitalist elite. A highlight of the book is the chapter written by Tran Dac Loi, a Vietnamese political leader, who explained the history of Vietnam in its struggle for liberation, and how and why Vietnam made the successful economic developmental choices it did.

Secrets of a Successful Organizer

By Alexandra Bradbury, Mark Brenner, and Jane Slaughter

This excellent handbook is for workers and labor organizers who want to correct problems at work. It distills years of shop floor organizing into one volume, highlighting the most successful strategies and tactics for organizing workers’ power on the job. While geared for unionized workplaces, the lessons can be used by workers anywhere, with or without a union.

The book begins by identifying problems at work that impacts many workers. It teaches the reader how to identify leaders already in the
workplace, how to organize them into a committee, conduct a campaign that involves more workers, and applies the right kind of pressure to fix the problem and bring about change. This book is highly recommended for anyone who wants to make their work-life better. This is an indispensable step forward in creating the building blocks for a new, more just society.

The Gilded Rage: A Wild Ride Through Donald Trump's America

By Alexander Zaitchik

Here's the blurb on the book cover: "A gripping, intimate, heart-breaking portrait of the walking wounded who make up the base of the Trump movement." A little too simplistic. We know that many Trump voters were making decent money—though some were struggling just the same, and some were well off. But this book looks at that working-class and poor base of whites who voted for Trump. For some it was the first time they voted. Others were Democratic voters, even Obama voters in 2008 and 2012. And some hold racist and reactionary ideas. Alexander Zaitchik, a freelance writer, followed Trump rallies across the country, and more importantly sat down with Trump supporters to listen to what they had to say. The book jacket sums it up: "Millions of Americans have felt abused and disregarded for too long: sent to fight in wars for no compelling reason, robbed of jobs that were shipped overseas, tossed out of homes by banks that were bailed out by taxpayers."

An out of work machinist from Wisconsin said: "People here are working at Walmart. They're working at McDonald's. You go downtown, where all the manufacturing plants used to be, its parking lots. How many are unemployed? How many took early retirement, and still got screwed out of their benefits?"

A disabled vet in Arizona said: "Bush Jr. was trying to clean up for his daddy and their friends. They were all in business together. They all own shit over there (the Middle East). They're making money off of our loss. And the ones that are going further and further in the fucking hole."

A miner in West Virginia said: "We're the little men, understand, we live
in this little community, we're rural, we're out in the woods, we're not to be heard. We don't have a voice...I'm tired of watching my friends and family suffer."

The book jacket concludes: "Now wounded America has found its champion, someone to roar as loudly as they feel."

Zaitchik said, remarkably, he found hardly any expressions of racism among those he talked to, though many were misogynist. Trump made repeated appeals to these folks: 'I feel your pain, you won't be forgotten any more, I'll bring your jobs back.' Hillary said little or nothing to address these hard times for millions. Many "overlooked" Trump's misogyny, racism, immigrant and Muslim bashing to vote for a guy who they hoped would help them get out of the economic suffering they were feeling. Others accepted or even agreed with these reactionary ideas. Our job is to talk to these people, and try to separate them from their wrong ideas.

If Bernie had won the Democratic Party nomination, polls showed him beating Trump by a larger margin than Hillary. Bernie was addressing the economic concerns of the economically wounded, and in a much more honest and serious way than Trump. Some say Trump and the right would likely have launched a massive red-baiting campaign against Bernie. Would it have worked? No one knows for sure. The Christian fundamentalists and other right-wingers that populate the radio stations in small towns and rural areas have spread the gospel of hate for decades, largely unchallenged. But for sure, if we don't talk to these folks, the Right will continue to do so. To all our peril. That's the take-away from Zaitchik's book.

The Communist Manifesto

By Karl Marx and Frederich Engels
International Publishers
Originally published in 1848 and continually published since

The crisis of capitalism grows, and so does the demand for *The Communist Manifesto*. Sales and readership of *The Communist Manifesto* has soared since the 2008 world-wide Great Recession and is now the second most widely published book in the world after *The Bible*. (The first parts of the Bible were written in the 8th - 7th centuries before the birth
of Christ and the modern Bible with the New Testament was completed within the first century after the birth of Christ.) The Bible has had a nearly 26-century head start.

Majorities in a number of countries believe that socialism is superior to capitalism. Of course, the capitalists, even though in the minority, don't want to give up their power. Marx and Engels described this dynamic 169 years ago. While some of the categories of people have left the historical stage since the days of Marx and Engels, the main dynamic has remained. Here's a sample:

"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society or in the common ruin of the contending classes."

Feudalism gave way to capitalism. Slave labor gave way to so-called "free" labor, open racist oppression and repression gave way to more subtle forms of exploitation, with some gains in freedoms. The struggle for fundamental change is long and arduous. There were two steps forward and one step back. In some places, socialism replaced capitalism. More setbacks took place, but anti-capitalism and pro-socialism is on the rise again today. Working people are organizing to resist the exploitation and oppression of their capitalist employers and the capitalist system. Workers formed unions and made gains. But employers fought back, and worked to weaken the unions and push down the entire working-class -- wage workers that Marx and Engels call the proletariat.

Marx and Engels explained this back-and-forth dynamic, which still holds true today:

"Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time. The real fruit of their battles lies, not in the immediate result, but in the ever-expanding union of the workers." When the union movement united with the predominately working-class Black freedom movement the greatest gains were made for both groups, all workers (passage of Social Security, the National Labor Relations Act, Voting Rights Act, Medicare and more), and for society as a whole.

**Socialism and Democracy**

Marx and Engels explained the road to the future: "The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense ma-
ority, in the interest of the immense majority." When this movement achieves political power they embark on the road to expanded democracy for all, and socialism -- a society were goods and services are produced to meet the needs of all the people, not to enrich a small class of the billionaire capitalist elite.
**Become a Member Today!**

**Why I Joined CCDS**

*By Paul Krehbiel*

I joined the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism because:

1. I wanted to be a part of an organization that was bigger than myself. I had been involved in many progressive, labor, anti-war, anti-racist and left campaigns but I felt a need to work together with other like-minded people to multiply my efforts.

2. I wanted to be a part of an organization that I agree with and feel at home within. There are many organizations on the left, and many do good work. But I felt at home in CCDS because it is an organization that is guided by principles and analysis that I agree with. CCDS is guided by Marxism but is not dogmatic, and is open to and supportive of the ideas of many other thinkers, and the actions of a wide array of social justice activists.

3. I wanted to be a part of an organization that is thoughtful, and encourages deep probing and questioning, and lively but friendly debate and discussion.

4. I wanted to be a part of an organization where members are rooted in mass movements and constituencies, and are really rooted among and with the American people and their organizations.

5. I wanted to be a part of an organization that gives special attention to the most exploited and oppressed, African Americans and other people of color, women and others who suffer discrimination. I want to be a part of an organization that is multi-racial, and reflects the diversity of the people of our country, knowing that it is right and makes us stronger.
6. I wanted to be a part of an organization that gives special attention to the working-class, especially the labor movement and all working people.

7. I wanted to be a part of an organization that believes in coalitions, knowing that the left and people's movements are stronger when we work together in alliances, and is actively working to bring these alliances into being.

8. I wanted to be a part of an organization that believes in democracy, and uses deeply democratic practices, inclusiveness and transparency in all areas of its work.

9. I wanted to be a part of an organization that knows how to link reform and revolution, that understands how to fight for immediate popular reforms today in a way that lays the groundwork for achieving something better, ultimately a socialist society.

10. I wanted to be a part of an organization that believes in international solidarity, especially with working people and the oppressed all over the world, and those who have freed themselves from the domination of oppressors, both foreign and domestic.

11. I wanted to be a part of an organization that has a general path forward and is creative. It's important to have a plan to achieve a better society, and also to recognize that it is a work in progress. CCDS encourages creativity, and testing different ideas and approaches as necessary steps to progress along the road to real freedom.

12. I wanted to be a part of an organization that is made up of a lot of nice people, people who have mutual respect for each other, help each other, and become good friends with each other. CCS respects the individual, and the collective. It's a lot easier and more enjoyable to work in that kind of organization.

That's CCDS. Join me and many others. Join CCDS today.

**Being a socialist by your self is no fun and doesn't help much. Join CCDS today--$36 regular, $48 household and $18 youth.**

**Better yet, become a sustainer at $20 per month, and we'll send you a copy of Jack O'Dell's new book, 'Climbing Jacobs Ladder,' drawing on the lessons of the movement in the South in the 1950s and 1960s.**

SEE TEAR-OUT FORM ON NEXT PAGE
Mail-In Membership Form

To pay by check or money order, fill out the membership application below and mail to:

CCDS Membership Department
6422 Irwin Ct.
Oakland, CA 94609

Make checks payable to "CCDS"

First Name: ____________________________________________
Last Name:_____________________________________________
Address 1: __________________________________________
Address 2: __________________________________________
City: _________________ State:___________ Zip:__________
Country: ________________________________________________
Organization: ____________________________________________
Phones: _________________________________________________
Email: _________________________________________________

Check the Membership Level that applies to you.

Low Income/Student/Unemployed: Yearly Membership__$ 18.00.
Individual/Single: Yearly Membership__$ 36.00.
Household/Family: Yearly Membership__$ 48.00

To join online, go to:
http://www.cc-ds.org/join_form.html