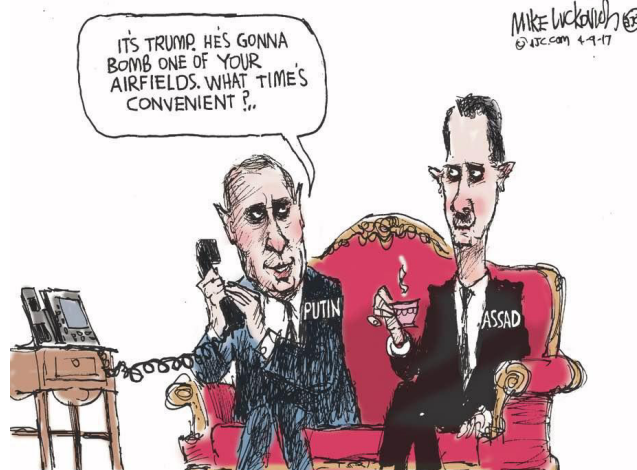


May Day!

Workers of the World Unite to Smash Fascism and Imperialism! End Capitalism and Build Socialism to Stop Climate Catastrophe!

Comrades, International Workers Day, or Mayday, has been celebrated since 1886, three years after the death of Marx. But what are we celebrating? This year is 200 years since Marx's birth, 180 years since the Communist Manifesto, 100 years since the Russian Revolution and 80 years since the foundation of the Fourth International. There is plenty to celebrate. But where is the 'spectre of communism' haunting the bourgeoisie today? True, the bourgeoisie fear communism. They fear the revolutionary proletariat as their 'grave diggers'. But we, the international workers, have yet to turn that fear into the reality. Mayday has become less than a celebration of victorious revolutionary advances and more of a ritual occasion for the bureaucratic leaderships of the labour movement to hold 'Sunday speeches'. Meanwhile the masses resistance to the rise of counter-revolution and fascism all over the world is isolated, and defeated.

We should remember that 'Mayday' is also an international emergency call sign. This is how we should 'celebrate' Mayday, by disrupting the ritual and calling for international workers to unite in action to overcome a global emergency of climate collapse and human existence. Everywhere capitalism is in crisis. It can no longer rule in the same old way. In fact every day capitalism survives only by destroying humanity and nature. And workers will no longer submit to extreme exploitation without fighting back. There is no way out for the bourgeoisie other than destruction and barbarism. To survive as a dying mode of production, capitalism is thrashing about destroying everything that has been won over centuries. It threatens to destroy humanity and nature unless stopped by the global socialist revolution. It is clear that for workers to live and humanity to survive, capitalism must die. But where is the international proletariat rising up to smash capitalist imperialism, and to build world socialism?



Syria: Revolution or fascist genocide

This is no more obvious than in Syria, the Paris Commune of the 21st Century, where the promise of the Arab Spring has been driven back to near defeat by the combined forces of counter-revolution. The bosses fear more than anything the spread of a victorious Arab Revolution setting an example to the rest of the world's workers - the imperialist powers and their murderous client regimes have resorted to fascist genocide. Whole cities and regions have been turned into bloody rubble because the Syrian Revolution has been ignored and isolated from any campaign by the international working class to join the revolution arms in hand. Most of those who claim to be international socialists have turned out to be social chauvinists and social imperialists. They condemn the popular Arab Revolution as a counter-revolution against Western democracy. The two imperialist blocs led by the US and by Russia have combined forces to smash the leading armed edge of the Arab and international revolution, by propping up a fascist dictator, and the servile Western 'left' has provided a 'left' cover for genocide.

This Mayday we are into the 8th year of the Syrian civil war and the approaching defeat of the revolution which will be a defeat also for both the Arab revolution and the world revolution. So we must ask what are the prospects

for the international revolution right now. Let's reject Mayday as a ritual 'celebration' and make it a call to a global emergency. Then we can act to overcome that emergency by organising international workers as a revolutionary force able to defend every basic democratic right being destroyed by imperialism in its death throes and rebuild the 'world party of socialism' called for by Trotsky in 1938 based on the Transitional Program.

This means fighting for a Marxist program that can guide workers in every fight for their most basic rights and needs, across the bridge to the formation of soviets and militias, all the way to socialist insurrection and a world federation of workers states. For example, in Syria we need an international party strong enough to mobilise military support for the revolution for basic freedom and link it to all other Arab resistance. It means uniting the Palestinian revolution to defeat the Zionist settler state with the workers movements in every other country. We need international brigades in Syria, and militant uprisings against the imperialist ruling classes threatening world war.

In other 'hot points' where the crisis is bringing workers to their feet to fight, that new international party has to have the forces to intervene with a program that works to advance the revolution against the counter-revolution and make it 'permanent'. The forces of counter-revolution are the imperialist ruling classes, their client states ruled by national bourgeoisie factions and their political parties, and the treacherous fake 'left' of all shades that always sides with the bourgeoisie against socialist revolution.

Under today's crisis conditions, the imperialists and their client lackeys are exposed as naked class enemies. The fake 'left' however provides a left cover to fool the workers. They are the most dangerous enemies. We must ex-

pose and defeat these bosses' agents in our ranks. In every revolutionary situation where workers are mobilising they are on the side of the class enemy, demobilising the masses. Let's illustrate this by using examples that demonstrate the way forward in both semi-colonies and imperialist nations.

Zimbabwe, South Africa and Africa

The African continent alongside other semi-colonial continents like Latin America and Asia (apart from Japan and China) have been hard hit by the double burden of capitalism and imperialism. The over reliance on the export of raw materials and trapped as cheap labour havens causes acute suffering for the workers and the common poor. The dictatorial and openly ruthless regimes in most African states make it difficult for the common masses to fight for their interests and against dictatorship, poverty, capitalism and imperialism. So, as we celebrate International Workers day or May Day it is important to appreciate that workers, poor peasants and the poor oppressed and exploited masses can conquer a good life only through socialism which must inevitably come through the strategy of permanent revolution.

Two countries can help illustrate the condition of the working class and poor masses in Africa. In Zimbabwe the workers are under intense attacks by the post-Mugabe pro-austerity bourgeois regime that is delicately balancing between western and eastern imperialism. A 2016 Supreme Court judgement, despite nominal 'reversals', has made it easier for employers including the government to fire workers without compensation or real chances of redress. Over 30,000 workers have lost their jobs as a result of this ruling championed by the current President of the main opposition party, Movement for Democratic Change (MDC Alliance). As a result of the judgement and the intransigence of the bosses, workers have been forced to resort to militant actions such as those at the National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ) and Grain Marketing Board (GMB) where workers staged prolonged pro-

tests at the companies headquarters. Workers at the Hwange Colliery and ZESA (a public utility power company) are currently engaged in a vicious struggle to get their overdue wages and allowances. But most importantly, the strikes by doctors and nurses has brought to the fore the true colours of the regime, despite claims that this is a "new era". Nurses were summarily dismissed before being reinstated. In a clear show of what workers have to expect from this government it displays for imperialism its willingness to continue Mugabe's alliance with imperialism and to crush workers struggles

In South Africa the situation is even more delicate. The formal political independence of 1994 has failed to change the lives of the poor masses that are still faced with exploitation and poverty. The reformist African Nationalist Congress (ANC) party and its partners have failed to resolve the key aspects of apartheid which include subordination of the masses to the interests of imperialist investment enforced by the state, racism and exploitation of local and migrant labour as well as the continued plunder of natural resources. Despite a constitution that was hailed by imperialism and their middle class and petit bourgeois surrogates, the material conditions of workers and the poor masses has remained dire forcing workers, communities, students and poor peasants to rise in revolt. The most notable and watershed revolt of the suffering masses was the Marikana strike which resulted in the murder of workers by the state in collaboration with capitalist mine owners. The fight for a living wage, better working conditions and the unfettered right to strike has taken centre stage in the class dynamics of the state. The strike by bus drivers has dragged into the third week as workers reject slave wages and attempts at dividing the working class.

Zimbabwe and South Africa to a large extent reflect the current situation in most African states in relation to the conditions of the workers, poor peasants and poor masses. Slave wages, land privatisation, commodification of education and services, plunder of local resources, rampant corruption and dictatorial regimes are the

hallmarks of African societies. May Day gives us the opportunity to take stock of our position as workers and the common poor and be able to chart a way forward that ensures a better life for the masses. Only independent mass action of the working class and oppressed can win a better life. For this to happen workers have to be militantly organised and armed with a revolutionary strategy and program.

Brazil and Latin America

In Brazil and Latin America, considered a "backyard" by US imperialism, the workers and oppressed people resisted neoliberal policies with militant class struggle in the streets. The reformist Left channeled this fight into parliamentary socialism or "socialism of the XXI century", placing in power several populist Popular Front governments which continued to apply neoliberal policies and the dictates of imperialism.

The global crisis of capitalism has hit Latin America, and Brazil in particular, shaking governments that attack the working class as a way to resolve the crisis. The economic instability, political and social, is growing. Far from meaning "stability", the return of the traditional rightist governments in Argentina and Brazil is met with the growing discontent of the working class, with their living conditions deteriorating, being hit by unemployment, "reforms" that remove their rights, and repression.

Unable to mitigate the economic crisis in Brazil, the ruling capitalists could no longer afford the luxury of the popular front. Thus Lula and the Workers Party (PT) suffered a "coup" by their bourgeois allies. Vice President Temer, in power today now has low approval ratings, faces protests, strikes and occupations of workers and social movements in the struggle for better conditions of life and work and against the "reforms" that remove rights such as the pension reform. The PT, even suffering the maneuver that led to the impeachment of Rousseff and Lula in prison, continues to defend the popular front and acts in the labor movement through the Unified Workers Central (CUT) and trade unions, demobilizes workers (as in

the dismantling of the general strike against the welfare reform) and channels the struggle into bourgeois democracy and the elections in October. The Socialism and Liberty Party (PSOL), in alliance with the reformist leader of the MTST (Homeless Movement) entered into the Popular Front, along with PT and the “democratic” bourgeoisie in the struggle for “democracy” and “sovereignty” during the government attacks and the growth of the extreme right and fascism.

The solution for the workers and oppressed peoples of Brazil and Latin America is the independent political struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie and imperialism. We must build the revolutionary party that fights for the organization of rank and file committees of all kinds: grassroots, factory, tenants’ and price committees, neighborhood committees, and workers self-defense guards that prepare the General Strikes to win in the struggle for the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and a true socialism. The Popular Front does not fight fascism, it paves the way for fascism. The so called left-wing governments in Latin America apply the imperialist policy and harshly attack the working class. Conflicts with the US government like Venezuela’s do nothing to break with imperialism, and the linkage with the increasing imperialist bloc of China/Russian no way means “sovereignty” or “anti-imperialism.”

Latin American workers need to break with the reformist leaderships, which divide workers, prevents class solidarity, as is shown by the isolation of the Syrian masses’ revolution against Al Assad’s regime and how the restoring of capitalism in Cuba supports the repressive government of Venezuela. The Popular Frontists all together denounce as “C.I.A. agents” the workers in Nicaragua fighting against the government’s pension reform, just like Assad labels his revolutionary opponents agents of the west. This same “left” defends the Popular Front in Brazil against the right and the threat of dictatorship.

USA

Every “disaster capitalism” calamity visited upon the world by the federal government is an index of the decline of U.S. imperialism. The seldom seen side of ‘populist nationalism’ is its inherent autarchy. The retreat from such minimal world consensus as is represented by the Paris Accords is a pennant on the Titanic smokestack! The missile attack by the U.S., Britain and France on Assad’s empty facilities only highlights the growing ineffectuality of the U.S.-led bloc while Trump on more typical occasions calls for U.S. withdrawal, leaving Syria to Russia. Crooks of the new “swamp” have more personal interests to satisfy and are getting theirs while those “qualified” to look out for U.S. imperial interests are fired by Trump. Ideologues replace professionals and the U.S. loses market share. This results in trade war, the prelude to world war. And Trump floats the idea of becoming a Bonaparte for life after hearing of Xi’s lifetime appointment. Nothing Trump says or tweets is a joke, but signals that he knows the various reactionary options. The Tendency of the Rate of Profit to Fall has U.S. imperialism by the short hairs.

Bourgeois talking heads won’t tell you the real effects of a 10% drop of stock market prices in the U.S. These losses have taken place post tax cut, i.e. THIS YEAR. They take place while investment lags and almost all economists say corporations are hoarding cash. Trump threatens protectionism while flip flopping on TPPA and NAFTA. None of his moves hide the fact that the recovery is an empty shell that keeps tens of millions of working poor people and their families in an endless cycle of poverty while wages have stagnated for decades. Workers often need to take two or three jobs just to pay the rent, while the ruling class continues its assault on meager and humiliating public assistance programs. The institutional hatred and state repression of the working poor and people of color is magnified by environmental racism and housing costs which trap people in zones of danger to their health. The lead poisoning of the water in Flint Michigan is just the tip of the iceberg of industrial pollutants

toxifying life sustaining elements of the environment. Meanwhile, it is only a harbinger of the environmental threat the survival of capitalism inescapably poses to human and other species’ survival in the near future. The capitalists prepare for World War III, yet insanely retail the ICBMs of North Korea and reactors in Iran as the gravest dangers facing humanity to those who follow their kept media. They incite the MAWAs (Make America White Again mob) against immigrants and jail refugees while putting the recovery of Puerto Rico from a century event hurricane on rations, and all the “friends of labor” have to say is vote for us in November. Workers need our own party now, not some day!

Some recognition that piles of money sit idle has resulted in revolts of the base in some organized sectors, revolts the bureaucrat/Democrats have so far been able to run around in front of. Thus the United States has seen outbreaks of social and class struggles. The 2011 Wisconsin struggle, followed by Occupy and the Longshore ILWU EGT struggles, the Ferguson stand off, the self-defense actions of the Black and Brown communities nationwide that launched #BlackLivesMatter, the fight of the First People’s Water Protectors against the Dakota Access Pipeline, pre and post Charlottesville mobilizations against alt-right fascists, the women’s marches and #MeToo movement, the broad defense of immigrants with social-media-organized spontaneous direct actions at the airports against the Muslim Ban and against torture committed at San Francisco Airport by Homeland Security, and the spread from state to state of teachers strikes and a growing resurgence in class struggle organizing and strike action by nurses and airline workers as we march on May Day.

While Zionism doubles down in its daily war against Palestinian lives, Israel can no longer count on the unconditional support from Americans of Jewish heritage who seek out and march in solidarity with their Palestinian comrades. Yet a blood oath is still required of the labor bureaucracy which is tied to the imperialist Democratic Party’s projects including

unwavering support for Israel, Saudi Arabia and the ruling class's never-ending wars against workers abroad and at home, both overt and covert. Likewise the labor bureaucracy is do-or-die committed to the idea that police are workers and not the slave patrols who daily terrorize Black and Brown communities. Today's struggles provide a glimpse of what could be, except at every turn they are limited or derailed due to lack of revolutionary leadership. The pro-capitalist trade union bureaucracy behaves as if the power of the workers and the oppressed is small and has negligible possibilities beyond legalistic self-defense. And everywhere the bureaucrats are willing to sacrifice your right to healthcare, even in otherwise victorious strikes!

They permit no self-consciousness about how successful their strategy has been. It is a free fall cataclysm. The rights of the midwest labor movement which used class struggle methods to build the Teamsters and the CIO are mostly history now, ignored by labor officialdom and contained among arcane academics and nostalgic Reds. This is exactly because class struggle methods of combating the exploiters are treated as impossible to carry out today.

Not only the strategy but the psychology the bureaucracy projects is a supine weakness! The Trump administration teeters legally even as it carries out the real bourgeois program of "disaster capitalism," slashing every protection the masses have won since the 1870s and now even threatening the existence of public education. Trump's presidency really is only sustained at this point by public relations. Both parties are guilty of defending it with faint damnation: it becomes clearer all the time that Democrats are not interested in impeaching Trump this year, talking increasingly that they will not seek to impeach him next year, while many echo the former FBI chief and now celebrity Comey who wants the voters to sort Trump out in 2020. This talk is fine with leaderships of central labor councils who never have struggled for impeachment, despite Nixon lawyer John Dean calling the present crisis "Watergate on steroids." They

organize labor walks for Democrat candidates. And the Democrats' entire project is now transparently the cooptation of the masses' self-defense movements!

The masses are hungry for direct action, but this is constantly used for politically limited pressure street protests and election campaigning. The "socialist" left is not able to contest for leadership. They refuse to fight for a workers party, as they tail after, or like the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), outright support Democratic Party liberal politics and the labor bureaucracy. The worst of them, the Assad/Putin socialists, also abandon the Marxist program for world socialist revolution as they gush over the brutal Syrian dictator Assad and promote Syrian conspiracy theories that would make Alex Jones blush. The fake left therefore loses whatever credibility it ever had with American workers and oppressed people and could not mobilize any real numbers of them in the April "anti-imperialist" actions following Trump's missile attack stunt.

The revolutionary fight to defeat U.S. imperialism at home and abroad, the main enemy of the international international working class, also means linking up to the workers struggles in the Middle East and everywhere in the fight for world socialist revolution, not abandoning them to their own brutal comprador bourgeoisie. As for the anarchists, they are largely mute on smashing the state as they engage in "propaganda of the deed" militant but non-violent street actions, thinking they will eventually replace the capitalist state by building democratic assemblies and a utopian alternate society within the current capitalist system.

The leadership of the class is up for contest as demonstrated in the rank-and-file actions of the teachers in right to be enslaved states. To defeat the ruling class and fight for social-

ism, we have to defeat the fake leaders of the working class who keep driving us back into the Democratic Party in our unions and in our mass movements. **The fight for working class political independence leads through the formation of rank and file class struggle committees in the unions challenging to bring class struggle methods back.**

The present moment is a rare historical opportunity for workers to organize their own party, to see colossal corruption and perfidy for what it is and to see that what is required is uncompromising class struggle and the fight for a revolutionary socialist political program, the understanding of the class-for-itself political tasks of fighting for humanity's future.

Socialism is the last, best and only hope against the drive for imperialist war and climate destruction!

For a New Revolutionary Workers International Based on Trotsky's 1938 Transitional Program : the World Party of Socialist Revolution!

- LCC, May 1st, 2018

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