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VOICE OF REVOLUTION

Publication of the U.S. Marxist-Leninist Organization

May 12, 2017

USMLO 3942 N. Central Ave, Chicago, IL 60634



May Day 2017 : 1-18

MAY DAY 2017

Stand with the Peoples of the World Against U.S. Wars and for Rights

U.S. Marxist-Leninist Organization (USMLO)

The U.S. Marxist-Leninist Organization salutes the many workers and youth organizing actions across the U.S. on May Day, International Day of Working Class Unity and Struggle. The many

immigrants that are part of the single U.S. working class are playing a key role, opposing attacks on their rights and organizing to block efforts to divide workers. Their call for **Stand with Peoples of the World • 3**



All Troops Home Now : 19-20

**NO TO CRIMINAL WARS AGAINST
AFGHANISTAN, SYRIA, YEMEN**

All U.S. Troops Home Now

The U.S. is planning to send another 5,000 troops to Afghanistan, including large numbers of Special Forces, notorious for their assassinations and other Black Ops. According to the Trump administration, a "review" by the Pentagon, State Department,

intelligence agencies and other government agencies said more troops will enable U.S. forces to work "closer to the front lines" and better "negotiate." Trump has not yet approved the increase in troops. Currently there

All Troops Home Now • 19



Palestinian Hunger Strikers : 21-24

END U.S. FUNDING FOR ISRAELI CRIMES

Support Palestinian Prisoners' Hunger Strike Resistance Is a Right!

About 1,700 Palestinian political prisoners organized a mass hunger strike on April 17, Palestinian Prisoners' Day. As of May 12, strikers entered their 26th day on strike, with more joining as the strike

grows. The strikers continue to face repression by Israeli forces, including being forced to stand for long hours and threats of the torture of force-feeding the prisoners. While

Palestinian Hunger Strike • 20

WE ARE ONE HUMANITY FIGHTING FOR OUR RIGHTS

May edition of ***Voice of Revolution***

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I • May Day 2017

a “Day Without Immigrants” for “dignity, respect, and permanent protection,” is being widely supported and serving to strengthen the united resistance in defense of the rights of all. We salute workers across the country and worldwide as they reject the many attacks on their rights and demand justice.

In the U.S., with the many banners demanding *No Ban, No Wall, Sanctuary for All* actions are also bringing to the fore the internationalist spirit of May Day. There can be no wall between workers of the U.S. and Mexico. There can be No Ban of Muslims, No Ban of refugees from the countries the U.S. has invaded and devastated with war, like Syria, Yemen, Libya and Somalia. No Deportations, No Ban! This fighting spirit also reflects the contributions of the workers from many lands that come to the U.S. and become part of the working class, contributing to its militancy and strength.

The ruling circles are working hard to divide the workers, using racism and religion and immigrant status. Trump’s call to Make America Great is an effort to pit workers here against workers abroad, so as to gain support for aggressive U.S. wars. Supposedly security at home is to be gained through war and aggression, it is to be gained on the backs of workers abroad. The broad organizing to revitalize May Day as an International Day of Unity with all workers stands against these efforts. Through having flags of many countries present, through rejecting attacks both at home and abroad, U.S. workers are saying we are one with the peoples of the world, fighting together for rights!

In building international unity, issues of war and peace come to the fore. The threat of broader war is increasing, as the U.S. rulers are desperate to hold onto and expand their empire. This makes strengthening the role of youth and workers in opposing U.S. wars and aggression all the more important. It is one of the most important contributions to be made to the peoples of the world and for the security of young workers and students

at home. They are the ones to be sacrificed and sent to war, forced to commit untold crimes, to submit to the racism and injustice that is the U.S. military and U.S. wars.

It is not an accident that Trump’s ban targets countries the U.S. has bombed. It



is not an accident that there is a striving to build a wall between workers of Mexico and the U.S. and to justify detention camps for families. Detention camps for families today are camps for all who resist and fail to pass a “national security” check tomorrow. Checkpoints initially used to profile and target immigrants are already becoming checkpoints by police in African American neighborhoods. It is a government of police powers, which are arbitrary and imposed with impunity that is operating and that requires submission and a docile workforce.

This May Day is a time not only to oppose the vicious attacks against immigrants and refugees and all workers, but also to organize against war and for an anti-war government. It is a time to advance the independent politics of the working class. It is not a problem of lining up behind one faction among the rulers, an effort reflected in the claim that Hillary is now part of the resistance. The problem is advancing the pro-social anti-war agenda of the workers, of organizing as an independent political force. Let the hundreds of May Day actions serve to strengthen this fight for the new, for a pro-social, anti-war direction for the country.



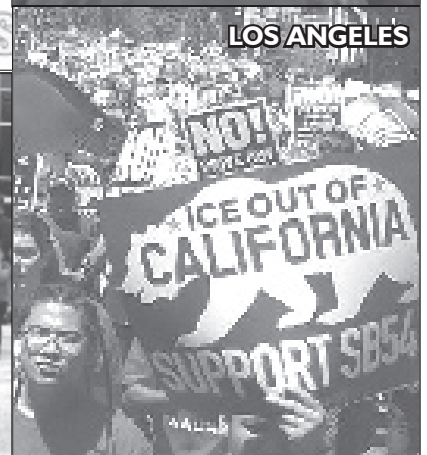
MAY DAY 2017: U.S.

SEATTLE



INDIANAPOLIS

LOS ANGELES



PHOENIXVILLE, PA



CHICAGO



SAN FRANCISCO

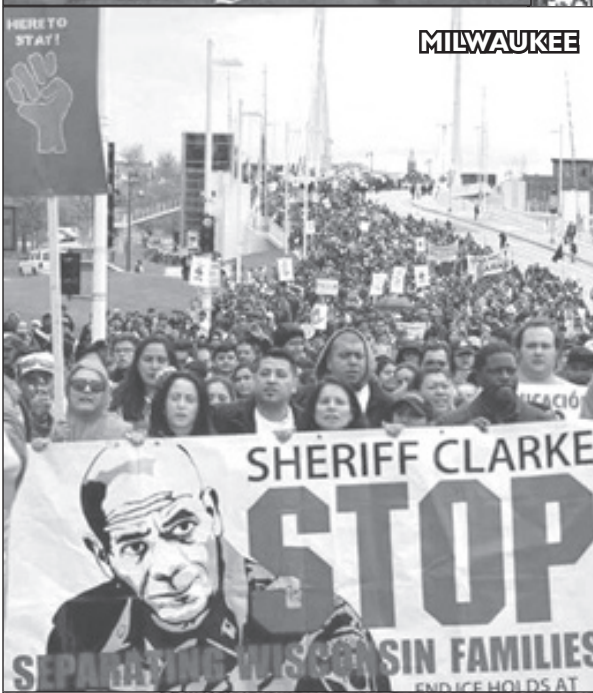


LAS VEGAS



HOUSTON

MAY DAY 2017: U.S.



MAY DAY 2017: WORLD

HAITI



PUERTO RICO



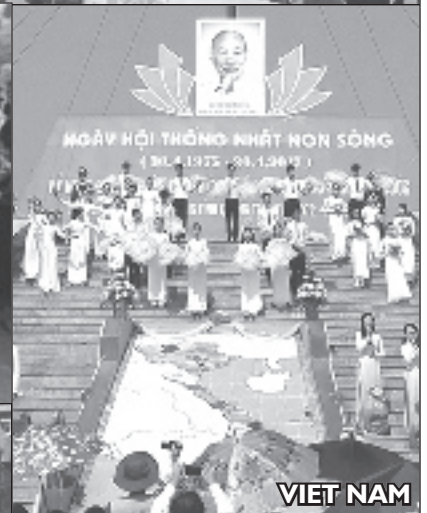
CUBA



MEXICO



ECUADOR



VIET NAM



IRELAND



CAMBODIA

MAY DAY 2017: WORLD

INDIA



TURKEY



SYRIA



LEBANON



SOUTH AFRICA



DEMOCRATIC PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF KOREA

MAY DAY AROUND THE WORLD

Militant Affirmation of Rights and Sovereignty

Worldwide May Day actions were marked by bold actions to defend rights, affirm national sovereignty and ensure a peaceful and bright future for the peoples in the face of neo-liberal nation-wrecking, imperialist intrigues, aggression, occupation and war.

May Day 2017 in Canada and Quebec was marked by workers' militant actions in various sectors to highlight the struggles they are facing and call for the unity of workers to act as a powerful force in defense of their rights and the rights of all. As well, at annual May Day marches and social and cultural events throughout the country, working people expressed their aspirations for peace internationally and condemnation of imperialist intervention, opposition to efforts by the ruling elite to divide the working class and demands for people's empowerment and a new direction for the economy.

In Havana, Cuban workers and youth marched militantly through Revolution Square behind a banner reading "Our Strength Is Our Unity." President Raúl Castro and other members of the country's leadership presided over the activities. Ulises Guilarte de Nacimiento, Secretary General of the Cuban Workers Federation (CTC) addressed the gathering. Granma reports:

"Fifty thousand youth led the parade of workers in the capital on May Day which was dedicated to them this year, as the present and future of the homeland."

"Cubans are motivated to march today by the Revolution's social conquests, its continuity into the future, and the challenges of building a more just, prosperous, and sustainable society.

In Puerto Rico, May Day was marked by a national strike to reject U.S. oppression and the wrecking of the economy. Dr. Héctor L. Pesquera Sevillano, Co-President of the Hostosiano National Independence Movement said, "With the imposition of the fiscal control board [in 2016], the U.S. Congress wants to subject us to the most base conditions of existence, reminding us that we are its colony."

In Mexico, workers demonstrated against the neo-liberal reforms of the Peña Nieto government and the impunity in the disappearances and murders of the Ayotzinapa 43 and many others. At the U.S. embassy in Mexico City, people denounced the Trump administration's proposed border wall and other attacks on the Mexican people.

In Tegucigalpa, Honduras, the main May Day rally was addressed by former president Manuel Zelaya (ousted in a U.S.-backed coup in 2009) where the main banner denounced foreign interference in Venezuela.

In Colombia, workers expressed opposition to the Santos' government's neo-liberal economic and labor policies and put their weight behind the demand for the implementation of the peace accords.

In Venezuela, on the eve of May Day, President Nicolás Maduro announced that the government is raising the minimum wage 60 per cent and increasing food stamps by 15 per cent to protect workers from the effects of the economic war being waged against the

Bolivarian Revolution by reactionary opposition forces as well as the U.S. imperialists. Similarly, the country's three million pensioners will receive a special bonus. Recent achievements of the Bolivarian Revolution include the 71.9 million free medical exams carried out since 2003 through the Barrio Adentro Mission in cooperation with Cuba, as well as 1.6 million homes for the poor built by the Great Venezuelan Housing Mission since 2011. A mass May Day rally in Caracas affirmed these achievements and the legacy of the late Hugo Chávez, as part of the revolutionary forces' fight to win popular support and defeat the intensifying attempts at counterrevolution.

In Brazil, May Day actions followed the massive April 28 national strike of some 40 million workers against the coup government of Michel Temer, its brutal anti-people austerity and profound corruption. May Day activities highlighted this historic achievement -- the largest such mobilization ever -- and affirmed the workers' and people's opposition to the coup government.



In Europe, the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), in its May Day statement summed up the situation facing the working class of Europe and the instability and danger posed by unfolding developments. The statement said in part:

"... the striving for empowerment of the working class is what has always forced open the door to progress. Today, more than ever, the working class continues to fight for an economy that provides for all and for justice, peace and freedom. This is why the ruling elite and their media are using this election, just as they used the Referendum on Brexit, to push a massive disinformation campaign to deprive the working class and people of their own outlook on the basis of which they can find their bearings and make an advance."

The Trades Union Council held its May Day demonstration in London, England, with calls to defeat the Conservative government of Theresa May in the June 8 election. Union centrals and collectives of workers took part in large May Day rallies and marches throughout the European continent.

On May Day in Syria, the Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA)

reported that workers reiterated support for the Syrian Arab Army's heroic sacrifices through their determination to keep up production despite the circumstances. The continuity of work and production sends a powerful message that terrorists will never win or undermine Syrians' willingness to defend the homeland, said the workers. The General Federation of Trade Unions, and the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry, in cooperation with all ministries and governmental bodies concerned are doing their utmost to bolster the steadfastness of the working class and guarantee workers' rights in the public and private sectors so they can perform their duties to the fullest extent and contribute to the process of rebuilding their country, SANA stated. Chairman of the General Federation of Trade Unions Jamal al-Qaderi hailed the workers' steadfastness amidst the economic war, unjust sanctions and devastation to the factories and infrastructure. The National Leadership of the Baath Arab Socialist Party issued a statement stressing that Syria's workers have always been the main pillar for development and a symbol of sacrifice, with a rich history of heroic struggle side by side with farmers and other classes in Syrian society.

In Vietnam, celebrations were held to mark May Day as well as the 42nd anniversary of the Southern Liberation and National Reunification Day (April 30, 1975) that also marks the historic victory of the Vietnamese people over the U.S. imperialists.

In south Korea, workers held mass actions amidst the political crisis following the impeachment of former president Park Guen-hye and broad opposition to the U.S. imposition of its terminal



high altitude area defense (THAAD) missile defense system that is part of the nuclear arms race to aggress the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), China and Russia. Meanwhile, across the DPRK, workers took time off and held political, cultural and athletic events at their places of work where they were joined by senior Workers' Party and state officials. This air of calm, despite the histrionic threats being issued by the U.S. imperialists, reflects the confidence of the workers in their own achievements through their political unity, steadfastness and industriousness under the leadership of the Workers' Party, that has built a modern society that provides the material conditions to guarantee the rights of all and the means to keep the U.S. imperialists at bay.

In the internationalist spirit of May Day, we provide in the following pages news and views on May Day, elections and struggles from countries of the Americas and Europe.

May Day Salute to the Workers of All Lands!

Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist)

Unite to defend the rights of all and build the new!

Led by the working class struggle for emancipation and nation-building on a new historical basis, the working and oppressed people all over the world are in action to defend their rights and open a path to society's progress. The Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) sends revolutionary greetings to the workers of all lands on this May Day 2017.

May First 2017 is especially auspicious because it falls in the year of the centenary of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia and the beginning of the first sustained nation-building project of the modern working class. The historic victory in depriving the imperialist bourgeoisie of Russia of its power to wage war and deprive the Russian working class and peasantry of their rights for land, peace and bread, and their own nation-building project still inspires working people because they know *It Can be Done!*

May Day finds the working class in North America engaged in struggles throughout the continent to defend its rights and organize to build the new. The working class of Mexico, Canada and the United States has an important role to play in defeating the U.S.-led Fortress North America and opening a path forward to the elimination of U.S. imperialist global aggression, occupation and exploitation.

U.S. imperialism has emerged as the most dangerous

aggressor, with military bases throughout the world waging war against the peoples, depriving them of their sovereign right to be, and threatening nuclear annihilation of those who resist. The working class of North America is charged with a special responsibility to deprive the U.S. imperialists and their flunkies in Mexico and Canada of their power to wage war. The working class is determined to make Mexico, Canada and the U.S. zones of peace and beacons of hope and progress for the world instead of war criminal states spreading global death, destruction and backwardness.

In Canada, the working class is striving to defend its rights and working and living conditions. It upholds its aim of emancipation through strengthening its independent politics and the building of its own political headquarters, media and all manner of institutions. The determination of the working class to defend its rights at work and throughout society is matched with its aim and resolve to bring the new into being as a necessary step towards emancipation.

CPC(M-L) hails all those sections of the Canadian and Quebec working class engaged in combat including workers in forestry, mining, other industrial and manufacturing sectors, the service industry and public sector, and steelworkers at Stelco, Algoma Steel and CEZinc who have launched the militant slogan: No Means No!

For the working class to affirm its rights and agree to equilibrium in relations of production, which must include the right to determine its wages, benefits, pensions and working conditions, it must have the power to say No!

No! to the ruling oligarchs who are throwing in the mud the just expectations of the working class for security while working and in retirement.

No! to the use of dictate, arbitrariness and police powers to defraud the workers of the pensions and benefits that belong to them by right.

No! to the denial of the right to employment and the continued existence of the anti-worker labor market, which should already be consigned to the museum of hated antiquities alongside the slave market.

No! to the anti-social offensive and its destruction of social programs, privatizations and constant downward pressure on Canadian standard wages and living conditions.

No! to death and injuries at work and workers left to fend for themselves.

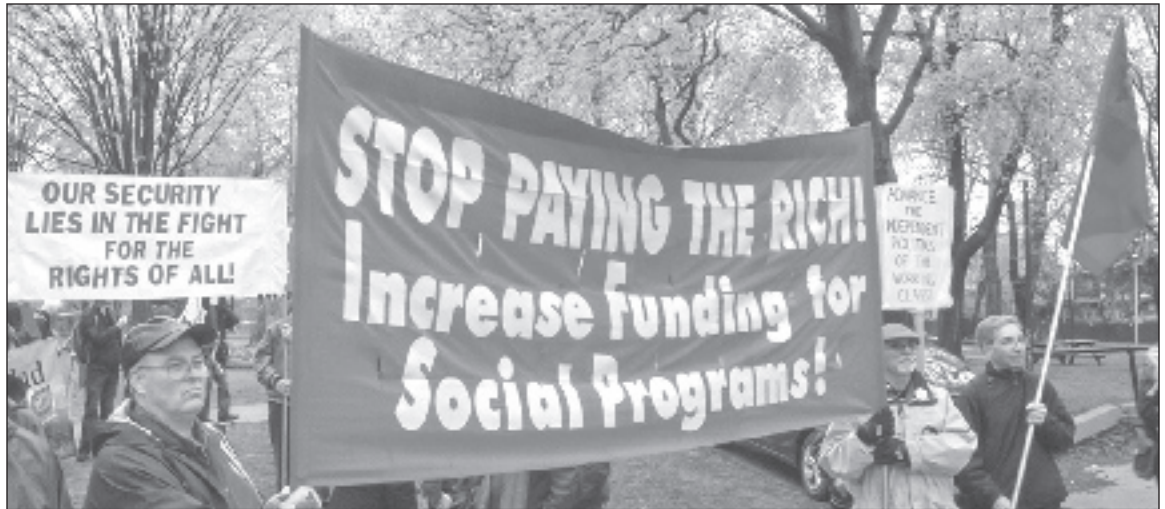
No! to paying the rich!

No! to predatory and imperialist war!

No! to rulers who refuse to be held to account by the ruled and instead hide behind the fraud of disinformation, cartel party politics and a discredited political and electoral system that needs democratic renewal.

The determination of working people to defend and affirm the rights of all and build the new is unyielding. Their No Means No!

The working class and its political headquarters and



institutions declare that they will not bow down to the negation of their rights. They are determined to forge a new direction for the economy and politics that serves working people and society, guarantees the rights of all and opens a path towards emancipation. The working class and its allies will find a way forward to a new form of governing through laws where people are guaranteed the rights they hold by virtue of being human and can elect their peers so that the rulers and the ruled become one and each can hold the other to account for their actions.

The current ruling imperialist elite have proven themselves unfit to rule. Their wars of aggression, constant attacks on the rights of all and refusal to solve the problems of the economy and political system reveal to one and all their incapacity to govern. The self-serving narrow aim of the oligarchs to serve their private interests and empire building is unsustainable. The socialized economy requires forms of cooperation with a broad aim to serve the well-being of the people and general interests of society. The working people need empowerment and democratic renewal to sort out problems in politics, the economy, and their relations at work and generally in society.

In a similar spirit to the heroic Russian workers and peasants who one hundred years ago smashed through the barriers of imperialist war and repression to build the new, the Mexican, Canadian and American working class will not rest until it brings into being nation building projects of their own making suitable for the twenty-first century.

On this May First 2017, the working class declares with utmost conviction that its rights are inviolable and the time is overdue to organize to deprive the ruling imperialist elite of their power to deprive the people of their right to decide and control all those affairs that affect their lives.

All out for empowerment, democratic renewal and an anti-war government!

Long live May Day, a day the international working class affirms boldly and publicly its determination and central decisive role to defend the rights of all and build the new!



JUNE 8 ELECTION CAMPAIGN STARTS IN BRITAIN

Urgent Need to Develop the Independent Politics of the Working Class and Uphold the Rights of All!

Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

On April 18, British Prime Minister Theresa May announced her decision to call a general election on June 8. The following day a majority of Members of Parliament (MPs) in the House of Commons approved this plan. Dissolution of Parliament took place on Wednesday, May 3.

What does the Prime Minister think these elections will accomplish? Will they “secure the strong and stable leadership the country needs to see us through Brexit and beyond,” as she says?

The referendum on Brexit (British exit from the European Union) sorted out none of the contradictions within the ruling class. How does May propose that a general election will sort them out? It will not. It is just another desperate attempt to use her control of the state apparatus to wipe out contending factions within the financial oligarchy while keeping the working class and people in check. It has nothing to do with finding a way forward consistent with the needs of the working people who live in England, Scotland, Wales or Ireland or providing Britain with an aim consistent with the needs of the people for peace and an end to the plunder of their resources and destruction of the productive forces, let alone the peoples of the world.

The election call and campaign reveal the deep all-sided crisis in which Britain but also France and all members of the European Union (EU) are mired as a result of the stranglehold of the monopolies and dangerous inter-imperialist contention for control over Europe. After the referendum on the EU in June last year which led to the resignation of Prime Minister David Cameron and the “coronation” of Theresa May, the government has continued to further align Britain with the U.S. imperialists in their own striving to control Europe and take over Asia.

As for the fraud of what are called the Brexit negotiations, these elections will not sort out the interests of different sets of oligopolies and monopoly interests which are fighting it out, using everything at their disposal. This includes the armed forces and NATO and the covert methods and dirty tricks in the arsenal of what are called intelligence agencies. In this respect, Theresa May faces deep divisions within the Conservative Party itself which the elections will also not sort out.

Neither elections, nor the Party system itself nor Parliament function in the way they were designed to do a century and



more ago. They were designed to sort out differences between the factions of the ruling class organized into the two main traditional political parties so as to reach reasonable accommodations, while maintaining the working class and people in check, tied to their apron strings. Since then, the working class won the right to vote but, despite establishing a political party of its own, the system which is said to be representative blocks them from coming to power.

But the striving for empowerment of the working class is what has always forced open the door to progress. Today, more than ever, the working class continues to fight for an economy that provides for all and for justice, peace and freedom. This is why the ruling elite and their media are using this election, just as they used the Referendum on Brexit, to push a massive disinformation campaign to deprive the working class and people of their own outlook, on the basis of which they can find their bearings and make advance. The working people require a political movement which expresses the demands of the working class for an end to the regime which refuses to recognize their rights on any front whatever — whether to a livelihood, security in retirement, healthcare, education, housing and peace of mind, as well as peace by withdrawing Britain from NATO and all military adventures around the world.

In the context of Brexit, Theresa May spoke about the priority of “economic certainty.” It is the last thing the election is likely to bring. The problems of the economy will not be solved by any of the competing sets of oligarchs, who make their fortunes based on plundering the state treasury, speculating on financial markets and wiping each other out.

The demand of the working class for manufacturing to serve

the needs of the economy is not on the agenda and it is not a matter of good or bad policies of good or bad politicians. The ruling elite is now also haunted by the fact that “post-Brexit” they stand to lose the City of London as a center of finance capital. This problem is in fact nothing new, merely resurfacing at this time in the competition with Germany and the U.S. to control Europe’s and the world’s financial markets and transactions.

In this regard, the sun set on the British Empire long ago. Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair promised to Make Britain Great Again on the basis of the destruction of even the conception of a society that is responsible for the well-being of its members and assaults on the entire British working class. This has been coupled with continued brutal dispossession of the peoples of Scotland, Wales and Ireland, the rest of Europe and Asia, Africa and even Latin America and the Caribbean.

The alleged choice that May presents between stability and strong government or chaos is the same call that was made by David Cameron. It is a desperate hope that by strengthening the arbitrary authority of police powers, the people will submit their wealth willingly to the moloch of finance capital. But the working class and peoples of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland say No! They have continued to express their own demands, independent of the in-fighting between this and that faction of the ruling class. To blame the people for the backward ideological beliefs of the rulers and demand that they choose between one faction and the other will not succeed in staunching the people’s striving for empowerment, justice and peace.

To divide the people and disorient them, the rulers have launched a vicious campaign of denigrating the stands and

character of Jeremy Corbyn. This too is done to destroy the Labor



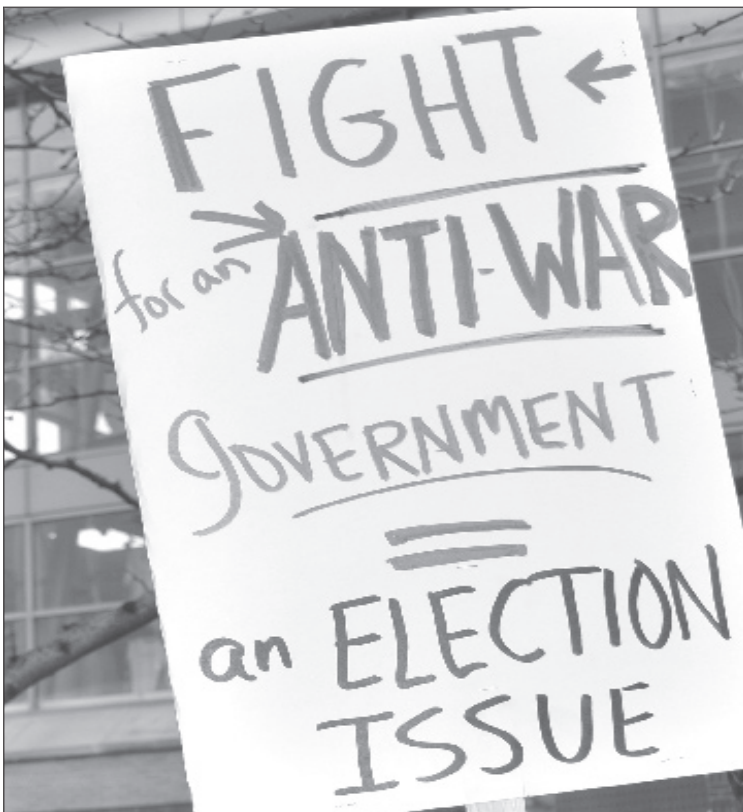
Party and disorient the working class and people. It shows that the main target of attack in these elections is the working class and all those who want to open a path to progress and demand their right to have a say over all the affairs which affect their lives. It

is to make sure the slogan for a change in the direction of the economy does not get off the ground and the anti-war movement is smashed. The call for “strong government,” for the use of unfettered police powers, will not sort out the climate of anarchy and violence, which accompany the destruction of the public authority which was established after World War II. All attempts to deny and criminalize the people’s right of conscience under the guise that this is what causes instability, must be opposed.

Let us also use this election to defeat all attempts to blame the working class and people for the warmongering, chauvinist, racist and anti-people stands which the ruling class itself espouses. Let us step up our demands for the right to healthcare and education, for the right to pensions and a decent standard of living, for a change in the direction of the economy, against the dictates of the plutocrats and oligopolies and the state that serves them, for the security of the people which lies in the fight for the rights of all, and for the recognition of the rights of all citizens and residents which comprise Britain and of the peoples of Scotland, Wales and Ireland as well as for an anti-war government.

These are dangerous times.

*All Out to Develop the Independent Politics of the
Working Class and Uphold the Rights of All!
Workers of All Countries, Unite!*



MAY 7 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN FRANCE

Election Further Aggravates Crisis of French Nation-State

Christian Legeais, TML Weekly



Demonstration in Paris says “NO!” to the state of emergency, January 30, 2016. (LDH)

The second and final round of France’s Presidential election took place on Sunday, May 7. For the first round held on April 23, the official results published by the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic, determined that Emmanuel Macron and Marine Le Pen received the most votes (24.01 per cent and 21.30 per cent, respectively) and compete in the second round. Emmanuel Macron won the second round, defeating Le Pen.

Far from contributing to the resolution of the social, economic, cultural and political problems which plague French society, the election results further aggravate the crisis in which the French nation-state is mired. In the first place, it is indisputable that the two contending candidates deprive the working class of its own voice in this election. On the elections themselves, there is nothing free or fair about them. They are being held under a government of police powers, in the conditions of a state of emergency, which has become permanent after two years. The stated purpose of this *état d’urgence* is to “reclaim lawless areas” (“zones de non-droit”) — working class cities and suburbs — and to pacify resistance to the neo-liberal agenda. The Ministry of the Interior reinforced this state of emergency for the first round of voting. More than 50,000 police officers and gendarmes (including 12,000 for Paris alone) with 7,000 Sentinel Operation soldiers were mobilized to “secure” the 67,000 polling stations. This is one quarter of the total number of law enforcement personnel in France, and the same scenario was repeated during the second round on May 7.

The problems and contradictions plaguing France have

stood unresolved since the end of the Second World War and in particular since the national liberation struggle of the Algerian people. The contradictions resurfaced with a vengeance with the collapse of the Soviet Union, which was supposed to prove the superiority of Western democracy and end the Cold War. Far from it, the neo-liberal agenda adopted and the nation-wrecking it engendered has compounded all the problems by further enshrining, instead of eliminating, the privileges the police powers enforce.

Current problems stem from the arrangements that were brought into being following World War II. The U.S. imperialists imposed the Marshall Plan and NATO on Europe with the avowed aim of dominating the continent, conquering new markets and, within the framework of the Cold War, containing communism.

The state and the Constitution of the Fifth Republic are themselves illegitimate. They emerged from a military *coup d’état* in Algiers on May 13, 1958, with the aim of keeping Algeria French and crushing the national liberation struggle of the Algerian people. The institutions of the Fifth Republic are based on the crushing of the aspirations of the French people expressed in the Constitution of 1946 which said, “In the morrow of the victory achieved by the free peoples over the regimes that had sought to enslave and degrade humanity, the people of France proclaim anew that every human being, without distinction of race, religion or creed, possesses sacred and inalienable rights.” The Constitution of 1946 further proclaimed, “as being

especially necessary to our times the political, economic and social principles” enumerated as the duty to work and the right to employment, the right to belong to the union of one’s choice, the right to strike, nationalization of national public services, the right to protection of health, material security, rest and leisure and the right for children and adults to instruction, vocational training and culture.

This Constitution lies in tatters, but the rulers do not want to heed the calls for its renewal coming from the base of French society, which is fighting for the dignity of labor and demanding that the rights of all be upheld. On the contrary, changes to the constitution are considered for purposes of making government of police powers permanent and “lawful.” This contempt of democratic principles will never legitimize the rulers’ attacks on the working class and its organizations. Nor will it legitimize the anti-social offensive against the working people in the cities and countryside, the criminalization of their struggles for the recognition of their rights, the imprisonment of trade union leaders, the state-organized racist attacks on the working class that get blamed on the people who are called xenophobic and racist, the ghettoization of people of Maghrebian and African origin or the criminalization and social exclusion of youth and the “suburban crisis.”

Today, conflicts within the ranks of the rulers are very sharp. One faction represents financial interests that are striving to control the French state to secure a base which can compete with Germany in particular and directly exploit the country’s resources and markets, as well as those of the neo-colonial French empire. Not only German capital is fishing in troubled waters but also the U.S. imperialists who want a candidate who favors their interests. They are attempting to either smash France as a competitor or control France so as to dominate Europe through the aggressive NATO alliance as well as through the European Union. They want France as a springboard for the domination of Asia as well as to deprive it of and usurp its influence and interests in the Middle East and Africa.

European Union Serves Domination

The creation of the European Union had similar aims. Through the pooling of European markets, the basis of which was the reconstitution of the big monopoly pre-war coal and steel cartels, the founders of the European Union, in particular the French monopolies, sought to protect their colonial empires, especially on the African continent. At present, the development of the European Union is taking place through the transfer of state sovereignty to supranational bodies, such as the European Commission, as well as warmongering blocs, alliances and coalitions such as NATO. It signifies the abandonment of the sovereignty of the peoples and of countries to the moloch of international finance capital and the grave dangers that lie ahead. This includes the slaughter of the African peoples the imperialists are planning under the social-Darwinist and neo-Malthusian arguments that overpopulation is the cause of crises including migration, wars and starvation.

In the name of a free market within the European Union, the

privatization of all public services and assets required by modern societies is proceeding at a rapid pace. Everything nationalized in the aftermath of the World War II is now either privatized already or in the course of being privatized, including railways and communications. Under the impetus of the European Commission, in the name of the unification of labor standards in the European Union and the modernization of markets, neo-liberal anti-worker laws such as the 2016 Labor Law are imposed and French jurisdiction stands for nothing.

Election a Fraud

The French election is a fraud because it is not the people who define the agenda and provide France with an aim that serves them. The system whereby the only role for the people is to mark a ballot to hand over their political right to govern themselves to alien class forces will not legitimate the election result. The election is providing no alternative to the current state of affairs. Pitting two factions which serve alien class interests against each other in order to keep the working class in check shows that even when the old two-party system is finished, its form continues to be used to deprive the people of any say over the candidates selected and to make sure that their program does not represent the people’s striving for empowerment.

In fact, the official vote count after the first round, including spoiled and blank ballots, shows that more than 65 per cent of voters choose neither Macron nor Le Pen for the second round and that these two candidates obtained only slightly more than 35 per cent of the registered vote. Counting the abstentions, it means that the candidates of the oligarchy were imposed on 80 per cent of registered voters.[1]

Macron’s Plan to Make France Great Again

The program of Emmanuel Macron is to Make France Great Again by establishing a new “contract of rights, duties and responsibilities.” His new contract is based on denial of rights to destroy all social gains. Macron’s program is the continuation of the program of Margaret Thatcher, who he admires — increasing the anti-social offensive based on the “free market,” which says that society has no responsibility to its members. It is not a program to solve the crisis and change the situation in favor of the people.

Macron’s discourse on “the spirit of French conquest,” a phrase he pulled out during the May 3 election debate, is a discourse of empire-builders, a continuation of the same neo-liberal program that has deepened the crisis of French nation-building. Despite this, he is called a centrist and the election in France is presented as a clash of ideologies with Marine Le Pen representing what is called the “extreme right xenophobic” position.

The program of Marine Le Pen is to renew this “spirit of French conquest” and restore the French dream (“roman national”). She says “the winds of history have turned” and order must be restored in France. Marine Le Pen represents the spirit of pre-revolutionary France, the *état c’est moi* spirit of Louis XIV, with her slogan, “In the name of the [French] people.” Her agenda of empire to “restore order to our country by re-conquering the

lost territories of the Republic” is against the call of history. She says she will “put [the] economy back in order by valuing labor; reorganizing our social system by rejecting the globalization of benefits; restore order to the state by restoring its authority, its means (justice, police, defense).” Such a program does not even pretend to address the need of the French people to establish a new regime so that they can govern themselves directly instead of giving the power of representation to others who govern through the police powers.

This dream of a “pastoral” France is a figment of Le Pen’s imagination and a fraud to establish a government of police powers favoring specific private interests. France was never pastoral for the peasantry, which was subjected to the most oppressive feudal yoke before the creation of the Republic and to capitalist oppression since then.

Today, French farmers are at the mercy of international finance capital and its man-eating free trade agenda, not “foreigners.” It is moribund capitalism that maintains feudal relations to expropriate the peasantry and migrant workers on a global scale. Marine Le Pen pits her retrogression into a pastoral past against the “modernization” of Macron into a hopeless future. Both support the use of unfettered police powers to maintain the order of the oligopolies against the working class and people. This is not only precisely what keeps the people of France without power to effect change which favors them, but also points the way forward — that the working class must constitute the nation at long last and vest sovereignty in the people and unite with all others on the world scale on the basis of their common cause.

Nation Building on Proletarian Internationalist Basis

Free trade and protectionism are two sides of the same coin. The current disputes over membership in the European Union are in fact a reflection of the dangerous inter-monopoly and inter-imperialist contradictions over control of resources, spheres of influence and zones for the export of capital and labor. Elections based on national forms which no longer function are utterly incapable of sorting these contradictions out. The solution to free trade is not “protectionism” and the solution to neo-liberalism is not old forms of the welfare state. The solution is for the working class to constitute the nation and engage in nation-building on a modern, proletarian internationalist basis and unite the workers of all lands to take up their historic responsibility to vest sovereignty in themselves, not the propertied interests which today operate as oligopolies rampaging all over the world leaving death and destruction in their wake.

To change the direction of the economy to serve the people, the working people are striving to take charge of their own affairs by advancing their own programs and demands. Only this will settle scores with the rotten and desperate forces based on



Demonstration in Strasbourg, France opposes NATO

old colonial and new neo-colonial imperialist values which have seized power through force and fraud.

Fight is Between the Old and the New

In 1871, the Paris proletariat rose up in arms and created the Paris Commune, a mighty historic attempt to establish its own rule. The Paris Commune was brutally crushed by enlisting the help of the conquering Prussian army which ushered in a period of dark reaction.[2]

The content of French rule has not changed since that reaction seized the upper hand, no matter what forms have been brought into being to keep the content in place. The claim that the fight in France is between “extreme right” and “centrist” solutions is a fraud. The fight is between the Old and the New. To accuse the people of xenophobia and extreme right beliefs, or to try to mobilize them behind neo-liberal so-called centrist candidates and fraudulent movements such as Emmanuelle Macron’s En Marche cannot change the fact that these are not the alternatives to the present crisis in which the French nation-state is mired. It makes no sense to persist in seeing the problem as an antagonism between right-wing, extreme right-wing, center and left ideologies and policies, since this does not correspond to reality.

We are confronted with a particular historical moment. The old forms established in the constitutions of the bourgeois nation-states as created in the 18th and 19th centuries, and which gave birth to the kind of civil society that was necessary for the bourgeoisie to protect its property rights at that time, have outplayed their role, are exhausted and no longer function.

In this French election, the financial oligarchs are embroiled in a life-and-death competition to seize power as they have been time and again in the past, through forms which include multi-party elections and a legislature which, in the language of the French revolution, is called a National Assembly. This competition time and time again brought the propertied classes to power, not the people who shed their blood to overthrow their oppressors and win empowerment for themselves.

Civil society, with its hundreds of organizations, institutions and agencies is today reduced to government of police powers

to keep the people's movement for empowerment in check. Governments of police powers mean that all rights as recognized in the previous period, all forms such as the legislatures and civil society organizations, all laws, no longer enforce any aim of nation-building but only the narrow private interests of the biggest financial oligarchs. The promise of the French revolution of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity lies in tatters. What are called the traditional parties have been shown to be incapable of functioning and, for that matter, not fit to rule. They are not only corrupt, but above all else unable to provide France with a goal that fulfills its needs and the needs of its people in the 21st century.

Build the Alternative

What these elections show is not the "impossible choice" with which the working class is said to be confronted. The bankruptcy of the French institutions and state of the oligopolies shows that the only choice is to take up the alternative. The working class must lead the people to bring about political renewal and a modern constitution which truly vests sovereignty in the people. A genuine political movement of the people will achieve this historic task.

The big bourgeoisie is so desperate that it manufactures movements without motion, said to be a "renewal" and "the expression of the popular will." Such is the En Marche "movement" of Emmanuel Macron which, should he win, then needs to be implanted in the National Assembly to claim legitimacy for the mandate to serve the moloch of capital ruling over France in its competition with German capital and U.S. striving to control Europe. It is the height of absurdity and incoherence.

The workers and people of France demand a new system capable of fulfilling their need for nation-building based on the affirmation and defense of the inalienable modern rights of all.

Grave dangers lie ahead for the French people and the peoples of Europe who already suffered two cataclysmic world wars. The peoples of the world should take heed and unite to bring in the New.

Notes

1) The party system divides the people to keep them out of power. Even the results of the First Round of the French election could have been very different if the Socialist Party, which since the beginning of the election with its candidate Benoit Hamon was unable to increase support, withdrew in favor of Jean-Luc Mélenchon. This would potentially have given Mélenchon, said to be the candidate of the left, nearly 27 per cent of the vote, thus eliminating Marine Le Pen from the second round. A second round between what "financial analysts" and the corporate media called the radical left and the center was to be avoided at all costs, which is why it was important for the candidate of the Socialist Party who garnered 6.2 per cent of the vote to stay in the race. He can now claim election expenses from the public purse.

2. The independent French state was in fact established under the French kings, Louis XIII (1601 - 1643) and Louis XIV (1638 - 1715). Its independence from the Vatican was expressed

eloquently when Louis XIV declared in 1655, "L'État, c'est moi!" and on this basis created a centralized state unprecedented in history under Comptroller Jean-Baptiste Colbert. Control of New France was taken out of the hands of Cardinal Richelieu's "Compagnie des Cents Associés" and placed under Royal Administration in 1663, with a Minister of the Marine, an Intendant, a military Governor and a "Sovereign Council." The French Revolution one hundred years later in 1789 with its slogan of *Égalité, Liberté, Fraternité* brought into being the bourgeois nation-state. In the name of the people it vested sovereignty in the propertied classes, not the Crown.

The French state which was brought into being by the French Revolution conferred citizenship based on nationality but, even then, never recognized the right of the *sans culottes* to govern. It did not confer citizenship rights to its colonial subjects in the French Antilles or North Africa, including Algeria and, to this day, the racism of the French state against north Africans and immigrants which it considers "undesirable" is one of its distinguishing features.

France then went through a series of revolutions and restorations of monarchy, and then a *coup d'état* in February 1848 by Louis Napoléon Bonaparte about which Marx wrote in The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte :

"On December 2 [1848] the February Revolution is conjured away as a cardsharp's trick, and what seems overthrown is no longer the monarchy but the liberal concessions that had been wrung from it through centuries of struggle. Instead of society having conquered a new content for itself, it seems that the state has only returned to its oldest form, to a shamelessly simple rule by the sword and the monk's cowl. [...] Society seems now to have retreated to behind its starting point; in truth, it has first to create for itself the revolutionary point of departure — the situation, the relations, the conditions under which alone modern revolution becomes serious."

Marx concluded:

"Bourgeois revolutions, like those of the eighteenth century, storm swiftly from success to success; their dramatic effects outdo each other; men and things seem set in sparkling brilliants; ecstasy is the everyday spirit; but they are short-lived; soon they have attained their zenith, and a long crapulent depression lays hold of society before it learns soberly to assimilate the results of its storm-and-stress period. On the other hand, proletarian revolutions, like those of the nineteenth century, criticize themselves constantly, interrupt themselves continually in their own course, come back to the apparently accomplished in order to begin it afresh, deride with unmerciful thoroughness the inadequacies, weaknesses and paltriness of their first attempts, seem to throw down their adversary only in order that he may draw new strength from the earth and rise again, more gigantic, before them, recoil ever and anon from the indefinite prodigiousness of their own aims, until a situation has been created which makes all turning back impossible, and the conditions themselves cry out:

Hic Rhodus, hic salta!

Here is the rose, now dance!"

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN ECUADOR

Citizens' Revolution Prevails over Oligarchy

Lenín Moreno prevailed in the second round of votes in the Ecuadorian presidential election on April 2. Moreno won with 51 per cent of the vote to 49 per cent for Guillermo Lasso, a banker. Nearly 12.5 million Ecuadorians in the country cast a vote (nearly 80 per cent of eligible voters) along with almost 400,000 overseas citizens.

Moreno is known for fighting for the rights of people with disabilities and is former UN Special Envoy for Disability and Accessibility and former Vice-President of Ecuador with the Alliance PAIS party of outgoing President Rafael Correa. According to reports, Moreno is the first paraplegic head of state. The new administration will be inaugurated on May 24.

Moreno pledged to continue the expansion of social programs, pro-social policies and stand in defense of the sovereignty of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean that characterized the past ten years of Ecuador's Citizens' Revolution and the Correa presidency. This has led to more than one million people being lifted out of poverty and greatly expanded public health care and education.

President Correa said of the results, "The revolution has triumphed again in Ecuador. The right has lost, despite its millions and its media." Ecuadorian Foreign Minister Guillaume Long stated that the result "is a positive endorsement of our plan to create a more equal Ecuador. We have made great strides in social progress in the past decade and we will now continue to do so for the next four years."

Moreno's election is a defeat for the U.S. imperialists and

local oligarchy. Both hoped to follow the constitutional coup in Brazil and electoral coup in Argentina against progressive forces with a takeover of Ecuador, a member of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our Americas (ALBA) and leading country in other mechanisms for regional cooperation such as the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and Union of South American Nations (UNASUR). Brazil and Argentina have since been used as players in the U.S. imperialist attacks against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela through the Organization of American States and other organizations.

Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro said of the victory, "Conscious of the importance of the historic moment, the Ecuadorian people dealt a strategic, continent-wide blow to the powers that be, led by the [U.S.] State Department, which have once again failed in their obsessive attempt to destabilize the progressive governments in the region." Cuban President Raúl Castro congratulated Moreno on the victory, stating that it will "initiate a new stage of the Citizens' Revolution and will continue the commitment of this sister nation to the unity and defense of the sovereignty of Our America."

Voice of Revolution congratulates Lenín Moreno and the people of Ecuador for prevailing at a time when the U.S. has stepped up its efforts to undo all the achievements of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, first and foremost the affirmation of sovereignty. Consolidating the Citizens' Revolution in Ecuador is an important contribution to defending the peoples of the continent and their movements.

Venezuelans Mobilize in Defense of Bolivarian Revolution

More than a million Venezuelans marched in the capital, Caracas and throughout the country on April 19 in defense of the country's sovereignty and Bolivarian revolution against foreign intervention, violence and destabilization, led by the U.S. April 19 marked the 207th anniversary of the beginning of Venezuela's war of independence against Spanish colonial rule.

Demonstrators chanted, "They will not return!" in reference to the former domination of Venezuela by the imperialists and the rich. Reports said the mobilization was the largest in recent years, a rejection of efforts by the U.S. imperialists, the Organization of American States and the regional oligarchy to instigate chaos and overthrow the government of Nicolás Maduro.

Speaking in Caracas, President Maduro called on Venezuelans to prepare for a complete, peaceful and democratic victory over coup attempts. He said the mass mobilization marked a triumph over attempts by foreign-sponsored groups to incite violence in the anti-government actions also planned for that day.

President Maduro said that there are three reasons that U.S.-

aligned forces have stepped up their violence and calls for foreign intervention: fresh support from the new Trump administration in the U.S.; improvements in the economic situation inside the country; and the failure of the opposition-controlled National Assembly to address any of the problems facing Venezuelans. Maduro also took the opportunity to state his support for holding regional elections throughout the country when a date is determined by the National Electoral Council.

Mobilization Overcomes Provocations

Two deaths in the context of the anti-government protests taking place at the same time bore the hallmarks of an organized provocation to incite further violence and destabilize the country, something seen in the previous U.S.-backed coup attempts in Venezuela in 2002 as well as more recently in the "Maidan" *coup d'état* in Ukraine in 2013.

Nineteen-year-old Carlos Moreno was not a protestor but was shot and killed on April 19 in the vicinity of a demonstration and rumors were quickly spread throughout opposition protests

that he had been killed by armed government supporters. The killing of Paola Andreina Ramirez, a 23-year-old woman who likewise was not participating in protests, was immediately blamed on “Chavistas” in Venezuela’s privately owned media.

Venezuela’s Ombudsman Tarek William Saab called for a full investigation into the deaths and punishment for the guilty. He also announced that a suspect in the killing of Ramirez had been arrested. Saab also announced that a member of Venezuela’s Bolivarian National Guard, Niumar José Barrios, who was killed the same day, had been shot by a sniper, along with another National Guard member who survived.

These tragic events were used to fuel further organized counter-revolutionary violence at anti-government demonstrations, including attacks on police and public buildings with molotov cocktails, slings and other weapons, as well as throwing glass jars and bottles at pro-government demonstrators which led to the hospitalization of one woman. In the days leading up to April 19, public buildings were vandalized including a high school, a community health center, subsidized food markets and government ministries.

A Factor for Peace

President Maduro called the mobilization of Venezuelans in support of the Bolivarian Revolution a point in favor of peace in the country. “When the Bolivarian people are in the street, there is peace,” he said. “Today the coup plotters tried to take power again and we have again defeated them, the corrupt right-wing and the interventionists.”

A joint statement in advance of the April 19 Bolivarian marches was issued by U.S.-backed governments in Latin



America — many of which are notorious for violent repression of protests such as Honduras, Mexico, Argentina and Colombia — calling on the Venezuelan government to “ensure the right to peaceful protest” and “avoid violence.” A subsequent statement by the U.S. State Department supported the call and referred to “the undermining of democratic institutions and practices,” while Organization of American States Secretary General Luis Almagro issued his own statement calling Venezuela a “repressive regime.”

Venezuelan Foreign Minister Delcy Rodriguez pointed out the hypocrisy of these governments criticizing human rights in Venezuela. She affirmed that Venezuela, unlike these governments, can show the whole world a participatory democracy that affirms human rights. Rodriguez noted that the foreign intervention in Venezuela is not simply to remove its president, but to undermine and reverse its nation-building project and example to the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Voice of Revolution condemns all U.S. interference and threats, including efforts to use the OAS against Venezuela and all those in the Americas defending sovereignty. We salute the efforts of the Venezuelan working class and people who, facing repeated pressure and interference by the U.S. are going all out to defend their Bolivarian Revolution and nation-building project. *Voice of Revolution* calls on all to oppose U.S. efforts to impose regime change and to be active in denouncing any attempts by the U.S. to violate Venezuela’s sovereignty and justify more intervention.

Hands Off Venezuela!



Visit our website: usmlo.org

I • All Troops Home Now

are about 13,000 foreign troops attempting to suppress the people of Afghanistan, the large majority, more than 8400, U.S. troops.

American officials said that 3,000 to 5,000 additional troops, including hundreds of Special Operations forces, could be sent. The U.S. is also insisting that NATO send thousands of more troops. Trump is expected to make a decision about sending more troops before a May 25 NATO meeting in Brussels.

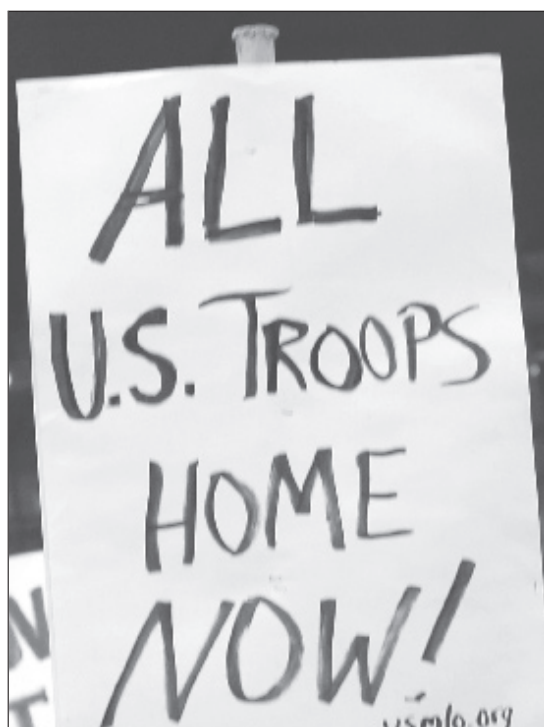
Despite 15 years of criminal war against the people of Afghanistan, the U.S. has solved no problem, whether with 100,000 troops as it previously had, or now, or with adding more troops. It is not a solution. It has brought massive death and destruction. The solution lies with bringing all U.S. troops home. The people of Afghanistan have made clear, now and historically, that they will continue their just resistance and refusal to be conquered.

Planned Bombing of Yemen Port

Recent reports indicate that the U.S. backed and funded Saudi-led military coalition bombing Yemen for more than two years is preparing an offensive on the Yemeni port city of Hodeidah. This is a war crime as it is directed against civilian infrastructure. The port supplies nearly 90 percent of Yemeni imports of food. Any attack on the port will have devastating consequences, cutting off vital supplies from the 19 million food-insecure Yemenis, seven million of whom currently depend on aid to survive. Even so Defense Secretary James Mattis is now asking for direct military support for the U.S. organized Saudi war coalition.

The U.S. has backed and is responsible for the current intervention in Yemen, beginning March 2015. Thousands of civilians have been killed, millions are now on the verge of starvation, and the war crimes of indiscriminately bombing schools, hospitals, marketplaces, weddings and funerals have occurred — all supported and funded by the U.S. The U.S. has sold Saudi Arabia well over \$20 billion in advanced weaponry since the start of the intervention, and continues to assist with intelligence and logistical support. It continues to conducting mid-air refueling of Saudi warplanes so massive bombings can continue uninterrupted. The entire attack is aggressive, illegal and like all U.S. wars, whether through its direct intervention or use of proxies, solve no problem.

Far from ending this brutal attack on the Yemenis, the Trump administration is currently in talks with Saudi Arabia



for yet another arms deal worth tens of billions of dollars, including sale of precision-guided munitions.

The U.S. is also stepping up its intervention in Syria, with more forces on the ground. Everywhere, it is pursuing a course of more violence and aggression, refusing to accept that a people organized and fighting for a just cause, whether in Viet Nam or Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Yemen, will defeat the military might of the U.S.

Fight for an Anti-War Government

The current U.S. war government and war economy is devastating to the peoples here and abroad. It serves empire for the oligopolies and the death and destruction it requires. These crimes solve no problem and serves to undermine the ability of the peoples to sort problems out in a

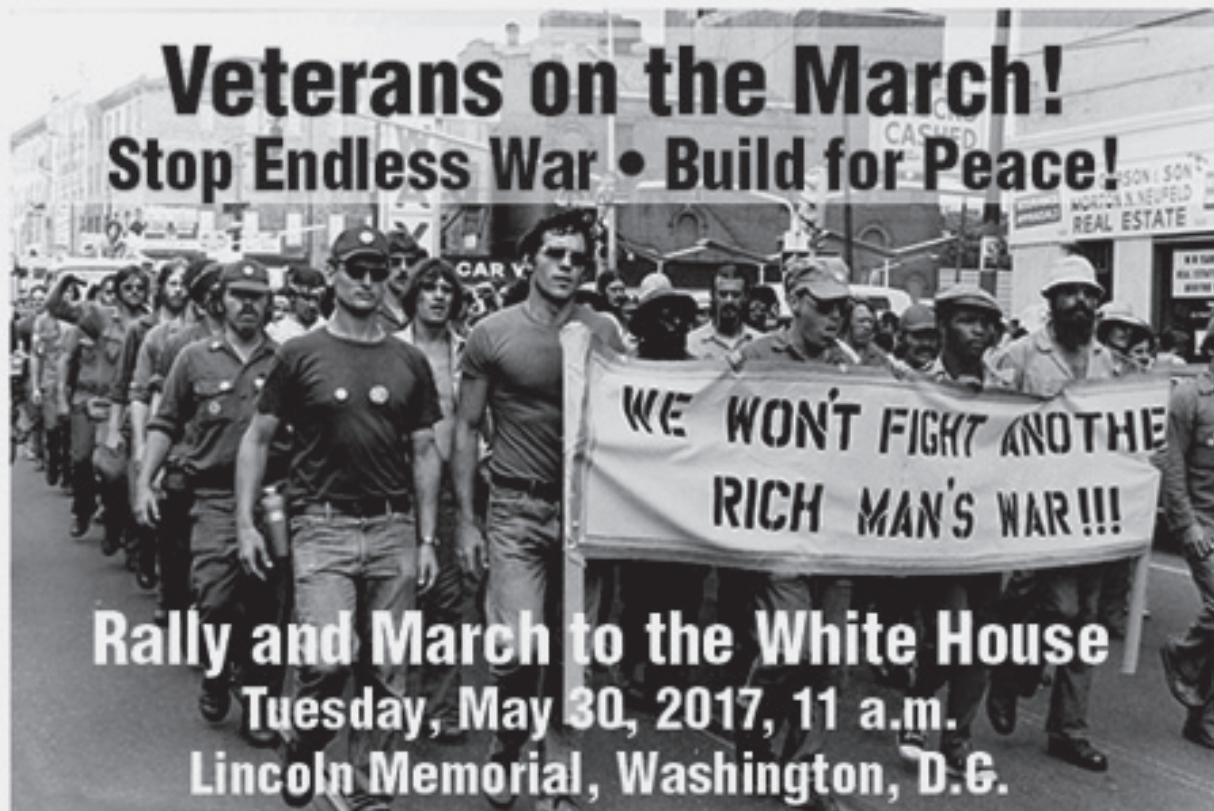
manner that favors them.

In the U.S. in particular it is necessary to step up the efforts to unite and fight for an anti-war government. This is a key aim that unifies the fighting forces and provides a way forward that contributes to peace here and worldwide.

Steps that can be taken include organizing deliberations small and large on elimination of nuclear weapons and presidential authority for using them; discussions on issues of war and peace and the need to *Bring All Troops Home Now*. They include organizing at high schools and campuses against the increasing efforts by the military to recruit youth for war and instead build an anti-war alternative and anti-war committees.

It includes taking a consistent, principled stand against all U.S. aggression and war preparations and working to develop fraternal relations of mutual respect and benefit, strengthening ties with the fighting forces worldwide. This is especially true in relation to ties with Mexico as Canada, as the U.S. strives to put all the human and natural resources of North America at its disposal for war. North America needs to be a zone for peace!

It includes bringing the need for an anti-war government forward at the any rallies and actions taking place as it is an issue directly related to the environment, to the many refugees, to immigration, to education as jobs impacted by the war economy and the push to block thinking and the fight for rights. A war government needs youth and workers willing to submit and follow orders. Progress requires thinking human beings defending rights! Organizing for an anti-war government contributes to a new direction much needed here and abroad.



Donald Trump and his administration are intent on destroying this planet with utter disregard for our children and grandchildren. Veterans cannot be silent. Join Veterans For Peace in Washington, D.C., on May 30 to make our collective voices heard loud and clear, and to take a stand for sanity, peace and justice.

Veterans For Peace Demands Peace at Home, Peace Abroad:

1. Dismantle the U.S. Empire at Home and Abroad
2. Close U.S. Bases on Foreign Soil; Bring the Troops Home
3. Ban Nuclear Weapons
4. Redirect the Pentagon Budget; Money for Education, Healthcare, Infrastructure and Sustainable Green Energy
5. Dismantle Corporate Control of our Government
6. Dismantle the School-to-Prison/Military Pipeline
7. Stop Persecution of Migrants, Immigrants, and Refugees
8. End Sexism and Gender Discrimination in the Military
9. Respect and Honor First Nation Sovereignty and Treaties
10. End Racism and Racist Violence

Endorsers: ANSWER Coalition, CODEPINK Women for Peace, Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space, Iraq Veterans Against the War, United National Antiwar Coalition, World Beyond War, World Can't Wait

VeteransForPeace.org

"War is a racket: A few profit, the many pay!"

—Major General Smedley Butler, USMC

I • Palestinian Hunger Strike

actions in the U.S. and around the world have provided support for the strikers, showing the sentiment of the people to defend Palestine, the U.S. government continues to stand behind Israel, providing funds and political protection.

At present, a total of 6,440 Palestinians are held in Israeli jails, including many children and youth, detained for even the smallest acts of defiance against the occupation. Addameer, the Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, informs that more than 800,000 Palestinians have been imprisoned or detained by Israel over the past 50 years.

In an April 17 press release, Addameer reports on the hunger strikers' demands and calls for international support:

"The hunger striking prisoners' demands include: family visits, proper medical care, end to Israel's practice of detaining Palestinians without charge or trial in so-called administrative detention and stopping the use of isolation [solitary confinement]. As the strike begins, Addameer Prisoner Support urges supporters of justice around the world to take action to support the Palestinian prisoners whose bodies and lives are on the line for freedom and dignity.

"The issue of Palestinian prisoners and detainees held in Israeli prisons and detention centers transcends one of individual human rights; it is also one of collective rights of an entire people — the Palestinian people, who continue to be deprived of the right to self-determination and sovereignty — basic fundamentals of international law. All Palestinian political prisoners — regardless of their alleged political affiliations or charges — are entitled to fair trial guarantees under international humanitarian law and international human rights laws. Palestinian political prisoners and detainees are systematically subjected to torture and ill-treatment with continued impunity — highlighting the need for more solidarity actions from people around the globe to call for immediate release of all Palestinian political prisoners, long-denied their basic rights."

The U.S. is directly responsible for the continued Israeli occupation of Palestine, providing billions in military funding and unending political backing and justifying repeated Israeli actions, including against Palestinian youth, as "self-defense." Palestin-



ians are painted as the criminals, when it is the U.S. and Israeli governments that are the biggest terrorists.

People in the U.S. are familiar with the claim of self-defense, as it is also commonly used by police to justify their killings of unarmed youth, especially African Americans. So too with mass incarceration and unjust treatment of prisoners, including use of solitary confinement, lack of medical care and denial of family visits. Indeed, U.S. prisoners regularly support Palestinian hunger strikers just as Palestinian prisoners have supported U.S. hunger strikers.

Defending Palestinian resistance and the hunger strikers is an integral part of the fight to oppose all U.S. wars and occupation and an important factor for peace. *Voice of Revolution* salutes the hunger strikers in Palestine and joins in demanding, *End the Occupation Now! End All U.S. Support for Israel!*

26TH DAY OF PALESTINIAN PRISONERS' HUNGER STRIKE

Strikers Confront Repression Behind Bars

Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network, May 12, 2017

Palestinian prisoners entered their 26th day of hunger strike in Israeli jails on Friday, May 12. 1500 Palestinian prisoners launched the hunger strike, called the Strike for Freedom and Dignity, on April 17, Palestinian Prisoners' Day. The strikers have a number of demands that focus on basic human rights, like an end to solitary confinement and administrative detention, imprisonment without charge or trial, an end to the denial of family visits, appropriate medical treatment and health care, the right to distance higher education. [...]

Ma'an News reported that negotiations between the strikers

and the Israel Prison Service might be beginning shortly; previously, the prison administration has refused to conduct negotiations with the leadership of the strike. [...]

Prisoners are reportedly suffering from severe dehydration, low blood pressure and inability to move in a number of places. In the Eshel prison, hunger strikers were isolated in the sections of criminal prisoners and subject to numerous raids by repressive forces. In addition, 47 sick prisoners on hunger strike were reportedly transferred from Nitzan Ramle prison to a so-called "field hospital." Palestinian prisoners are also facing the threat of

forced feeding from Israeli officials, including far-right internal security minister Gilad Erdan.

In Nitzan Ramle prison, around 70 hunger strikers are facing serious health conditions and are subject to punitive treatment including isolation, denial of access to recreation, frequent repressive raids, confiscation of salt and blocking of the windows to prevent sunlight from entering their cells. In Nafha prison, the media committee for the strike reported that multiple repressive units had invaded the cells of the strikers and beaten striking prisoners and sprayed tear gas after striking prisoners did not stand during inspection. Samer Abu Diak, one hunger striker held in the prison, told a lawyer at his legal visit that prisoners are repeatedly transferred inside the prison as a means of inducing stress and pressure on strikers, saying, “Prisoners do not stay in a room for more than three days.”

Meanwhile, the Handala Center for Prisoners reported that 32 of the striking prisoners in section 3 of Ashkelon prison have declared a boycott of medical examinations in protest of the repeated raids and attacks by repressive forces, including forcing the striking prisoners to stand, handcuffed, in the middle of the prison yard from 8 am to 4 pm.

As the struggle inside the prisons deepened, Palestinians continued to protest to support the strikers and international efforts in solidarity with the strike continued to grow. In South Africa, a series of prominent government ministers and officials have joined a 24-hour hunger strike in solidarity with the Palestinian

prisoners. In Paris, participants in a solidarity hunger strike organized a demonstration, posted materials about the Palestinian prisoners, and participated in a vigil outside Pizza Hut, and were visited by Jean-Louis Chalanset, the lawyer of Georges Ibrahim Abdallah, among others.

In Brussels, students at the Universite Libre de Bruxelles and the Universite Catholique du Louvain – Alma participated in a 24-hour hunger strike with tents and displays informing the student population about the struggle of the Palestinian prisoners. Striking students in Puerto Rico protesting austerity plans that threaten education also displayed their solidarity with the strike. Also in Chicago, the US Palestinian Community Network and other organizations held a large open solidarity tent with the prisoners and a one-day hunger strike.

Protests are being organized on Friday, May 12 in New York City, where Samidoun will again protest to support the hunger strikers; actions are also taking place in Sacramento and Santa Clara. London, Madrid, Lyon, Paris, Brussels, Dungannon, Edinburgh, Kildare, Porto, cities throughout Chile, and more are also hosting demonstrations to support the prisoners.

Samidoun urges the organizing of events and actions to support the prisoners, rallying at federal buildings and public squares. These actions around the world will help to underline the global support for Palestinian political prisoners in their struggle for freedom, and the struggle of the Palestinian people for liberation.

Palestinian Leaders Call for ‘Week Of Rage’ as Israel Explores Force Feeding Hunger Strikers

Maan News, May 6, 2017

Palestinian leaders of the mass hunger strike that entered its 20th day on Saturday, May 6, have called for a “Week of Rage” against the Israeli occupation, in response to reports that Israeli authorities are seeking to import foreign doctors into Israel to force feed the hunger strikers, as Israeli doctors have aligned themselves with international ethics on force feeding that prohibits doctors from carrying out the act.

“Our people should unleash their anger and clash uninterruptedly with the Israeli occupation at seam zones,” the prisoners’ leadership said in a statement, referring to unilaterally declared zones around Israel’s separation wall where Palestinians are not permitted to enter.

The statement, which was conveyed by the Media Committee of the Freedom and Dignity Strike — a joint committee formed by the Palestinian Prisoner’s Society (PPS) and Palestinian Committee for Prisoners’ Affairs, also called upon the Palestinian people to “blockade Israeli embassies all over the world and continue to organize rallies and sit-ins and to crowd in sit-in tents in Palestinian cities and villages.”

“Any attempt to force feed any hunger-striking prisoner will be treated as an attempt to execute prisoners. We will turn these prisons into battlefields with our bodies, armed with our will and

determination. We count on our people, along with the Arab and Islamic nations, and all the free people of the world to stand by our side,” the prisoners’ added.

The statement also urged the unions of Palestinian and Arab doctors to launch a worldwide campaign warning Israeli doctors of the consequences of “involvement in the crime of force feeding prisoners.”

Before the strike was launched, Israeli Minister of Public Security Gilad Erdan ordered the establishment of a military hospital to ensure that hunger-striking Palestinian prisoners were not transferred to civilian hospitals — which have so far refused to force feed hunger striking Palestinian prisoners.

While the Israeli Supreme Court recently decided force feeding hunger-striking prisoners was constitutional, Israeli doctors have sided with internationally accepted medical ethics that regard the practice as a form of torture.

Palestinian prisoners’ solidarity network Samidoun warned that it was “highly possible” that Erdan’s field hospital proposal was an attempt to impose mass force feeding on striking Palestinian prisoners outside of the civilian medical framework.”

Head of the Palestinian Committee of Prisoners’ Affairs Issa Qaraqe said on May 6 that “any doctor of any nationality that

takes part in force-feeding hunger-striking prisoners” will be legally pursued.

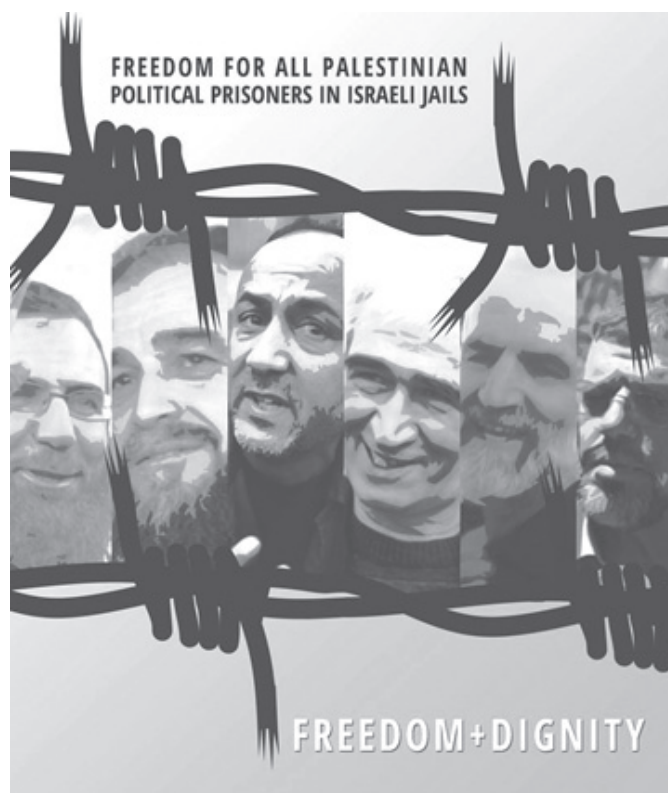
Qaraqe said that applying force-feeding is a crime and jeopardizes the lives of prisoners, adding that the participation of any doctor in force feeding violates international laws and ethics, citing the 1991 Declaration of Malta adopted by the World Medical Assembly, which specifically stated that force feeding is not ethically acceptable when dealing with hunger strikers, even when the goal is to provide assistance to their health conditions.

He called upon all countries not to send doctors to Israel to take part in the force-feeding.

Initially called for by Fatah leader Marwan Barghouti and other Fatah-affiliated prisoners, Palestinian prisoners from across the political spectrum have since joined the strike. The hunger strikers have denounced the torture, ill treatment, and medical neglect of Palestinian prisoners at the hands of Israeli authorities, as well as Israel’s widespread use of administrative detention—internment without trial or charges.

Israeli authorities have detained approximately one million Palestinians since the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 and the subsequent occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip in 1967, according to a joint statement released on Saturday by Palestinian organizations.

According to prisoners’ rights organization Addameer, some 6,300 Palestinians were held in Israeli custody as of March.



Call to Organize: Palestinian Prisoners Week of Action – 14 to 24 April 2017

Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network

Every year, on 17 April, Palestinian prisoners, the Palestinian people, and supporters of justice and liberation for Palestine all over the world mark the International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian Prisoners.

This date is one of protests, rallies, marches, forums and actions to commemorate, support and build solidarity for the struggle of imprisoned Palestinians. In 2017, we join with the Palestinian prisoners’ movement in urging all organizations and people of conscience to organize actions for Palestinian freedom between 14 and 25 April 2017 in commemoration of Palestinian Prisoners’ Day.

There are approximately 7,000 Palestinian political prisoners behind Israeli bars today: women, men, children and elders. Nearly 600 of them are held in administrative detention, imprisonment without charge or trial, while others face military courts with a conviction rate of over 99%. Hundreds of Palestinian children, as young as 12 years old, are held in Israeli prisons. Palestinian political leaders, including PFLP General Secretary Ahmad Sa’adat, Fateh leader Marwan Barghouti, and Samira Halaiqa and 11 more members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, are held behind bars.

This year, thousands of Palestinian political prisoners have

announced that they will launch a hunger strike beginning on 17 April to achieve a list of demands, including an end to the prohibitions and cuts to family visits, proper medical care and an end to medical neglect and an end to isolation and administrative detention. This strike comes five years after the collective Karameh strike of 2012, and is once again a critically important struggle for justice. On Palestinian Prisoners Day, this week of action is an important time to support the Palestinian prisoners’ movement and leadership in struggle.

Every day, Palestinian prisoners are on the front lines of struggle, facing torturous interrogation, nighttime raids, solitary confinement and relentless attacks on their rights at the hands of Israeli occupation forces. Those attacks are aided by international and corporate complicity, support and profiteering. Palestinian Prisoners’ Day is a critical time to stand against state and corporate complicity with Israeli imprisonment of Palestinian political prisoners.

End U.S. Funding for Israel

Every year, the United States provides over \$3 billion in military aid to Israel. The European Union includes the Israeli National Police in research projects to further develop interrogation tech-

niques, like LAW TRAIN. The US, Canada, UK and EU regularly defend Israeli oppression and occupation in international forums and even attempt to block Palestinians from seeking redress in international courts. The United States' demands pressured the UN Secretary-General to remove a report by UN ESCWA on Israeli apartheid throughout occupied Palestine. This means that these states are partners in the imprisonment, isolation and torture of Palestinian prisoners.

Corporations like Hewlett-Packard profit from the imprisonment of Palestinians; HP corporations have contracts to run and maintain the biometric ID system that subjects Palestinians to checkpoints and the Apartheid Wall, as well as the databases of the Israel Prison Service.

British-Danish security corporation G4S sold off its Israeli subsidiary after massive BDS pressure internationally, but continues to invest in the Israeli police's training institute, Policity. And it continues to profit from the deportation of migrants and imprisonment of children in the US, UK and elsewhere, among the prison corporations that profit from the mass incarceration of Black people and the targeting of oppressed communities.

Internationally, Georges Ibrahim Abdallah, Lebanese Arab struggler for Palestine, has been imprisoned in French jails for 33 years. The demand for freedom for Georges Abdallah is part and parcel of the Palestinian prisoners' movement. In the United States, the Holy Land Five are serving sentences of up to 65 years in prison, while longtime Palestinian struggler and community leader Rasmea Odeh will soon face deportation after her legal case has come to an end. On Palestinian Prisoners Day, we demand justice for all of these strugglers and prisoners for Palestine. [...]

Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network urges all organizations and groups that support justice, liberation and Palestinian freedom to organize events from 14-25 April in support of Palestinian prisoners, the prisoners' movement's collective hunger strike and demands, and the demand to end security coordination. 2017 is a year in which we mark 100 years of the Balfour declaration and colonization; 70 years of al-Nakba; 50 years of extended and intensified occupation. This is also the year to struggle for Palestinian freedom and support liberation for Palestinian political prisoners!

Take Action!

Send your events and actions to us at samidoun@samidoun.net, on Facebook, or use the form to tell us about your actions. We will be publishing an international list of events and actions for Palestinian Prisoners' Day.

Some initial materials and posters are provided below; Palestinian youth organizing the End Security Coordination campaign have also provided materials, available here. Below are some ideas for events and actions in your community:

1. Support Palestinian Students! Palestinian students are facing



imprisonment, raids on their universities and invasions of their student councils. As we issue this call, Palestinian student Kifah Quzmar has been denied access to a lawyer, under harsh interrogation for 20 days. Fellow Palestinian student Istabraq Yahya Tamimi is under interrogation as a member of Bir Zeit's student council. On campuses around the world, this week of action is a critical time to hold events, organize solidarity strikes, petition and pass resolutions to free Kifah Quzmar and hundreds of imprisoned Palestinians denied access to their education.

2. Hunger Strike for Justice! Palestinian prisoners have announced plans for a mass hunger strike beginning 17 April for a series of demands, including an end to prohibitions and cuts to family visits, proper medical care and treatment and an end to isolation and administrative detention. Organize an event, demonstration or one-day hunger strike tent in solidarity with the prisoners' strike.

3. Cut Complicity! In the United States, 15 April is not only two days before Palestinian Prisoners' Day – it's also Tax Day, a great occasion to protest the US' billions in annual aid to Israel. Palestinian Prisoners' Day is also an important time to challenge programs like LAW-TRAIN or joint police training exercises, which work to build racism and oppression while providing cover to the violations of Palestinian human rights.

4. Build the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Campaign! Palestinian Prisoners' Day is a great occasion to build your BDS campaigns against Israeli products in your community, or for academic, cultural and sports boycott. Buying and selling Israeli goods, or engaging in partnerships with Israeli cultural or academic institutions, means going into partnership for the imprisonment and torture of Palestinians. While Palestinian students are imprisoned and denied education, cultural workers are locked up and football players are imprisoned instead of on the field, BDS campaigns can help support Palestinians struggling for freedom.

5) Boycott HP and G4S! Highlight the role of corporations involved in – and profiting from – the political imprisonment of Palestinians by the Israeli occupation. Demand your university, institution or local government stop contracting with HP so long as it provides the technology for apartheid and imprisonment in Palestine.