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VOICE OF REVOLUTION

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For an Anti-War Government : 1-7

IRAN, KOREA, AFGHANISTAN SHOW

Organize for an Anti-War Government and Peace Economy

Demonstrations, forums, pickets, petitions are all being used across the country to oppose U.S. wars. For Iran and Korea the demand is for peaceful political solutions, not military ones. For Afghanistan, Iraq,

Syria and Yemen, the calls are to *Bring All U.S. Troops Home* and stop these crimes of aggression. As congress debates increases for Pentagon spending, to \$700 billion a year, the

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Cancel Debt, Pay Reparations : 8-14

RECONSTRUCTION BY AND FOR PUERTO RICANS

Cancel the Debt Now! Pay Reparations for U.S. Colonialism

The people of Puerto Rico are showing their resilience and determination to rebuild their country in their image, despite the refusal of the U.S. government to immediately cancel the debt and pay reparations

for more than 100 years of the crime of colonialism. Far from fully funding reconstruction and paying reparations — the debt owed to Puerto Rico—the U.S. is imposing

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Freedom for Palestine : 15-17

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF BALFOUR DECLARATION

Freedom for Palestine Resistance is a Right

November 2, 2017 marks the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, where the British colonizers promised Palestine to the Zionists. Israel was to be their colonial garrison in the Middle East. The British were promising land that did not belong to

them, and was filled with Palestinians, who had long lived in the area, to the Zionists.

The U.S. has since taken over as the protector, arms supplier and funder of Israel and its genocide and occupation of Palestine. Israel

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I • Anti-War Government

people are demanding a different, anti-war direction. For many it is clear that the U.S. government, defending and protecting the U.S. state and its drive for world empire, is a pro-war, anti-social government. The economy is a war economy that serves private interests and puts a stamp of militarization on all of life.

The issue of organizing for a new direction for the economy and political affairs, an anti-war, pro-social direction is of vital importance. This need for the new, for a new electoral proves that enables the people to choose their candidates and set their

agenda so as to achieve an anti-war government, is a subject for broad discussion and debate, at the many actions, conferences, on campuses and in workplaces.

An anti-war government requires a peace economy, one directed toward meeting the rights of the people, abroad and at home. Thought and debate needs to go into what such an economy would look like, so as to harmonize both the human and natural environment. One thing for certain, it would be an economy that contributes to peace and blocks the war machine.

Hands Off Iran! Demand Political Not Military Solutions

President Trump took action against Iran, saying he would not certify Iran's compliance with the 2015 nuclear agreement, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA. The certification is required by law, every 90 days and October 15 was the deadline. Trump has twice certified Iran as being in compliance with the JCPOA but has now decided not to do so. He is also urging Congress to pass legislation within 60 days to re-impose sanctions, an action directly against the agreement. Both actions are seen as steps towards war with Iran and are being widely opposed, across the country and around the world.

Trump is refusing to certify even though the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has confirmed that Iran is in compliance. Secretary of Defense General Mattis has also said maintaining the JCPOA is in the U.S. "national security interests." The division on the matter within the executive is indicative of the crisis U.S. ruling circles are contending with. Their mechanisms for resolving differences, such as a functioning Congress, political parties and elections, are no longer serving to do so. The factions within the executive and within and between the executive, the military and the intelligence agencies contend and collude, like mafia cartels. And the contention and collusion are such that the president, as Commander in Chief, is openly contradicted by the military. All of which creates a dangerous situation, increasing the potential for broader war.

The same holds true on an international level. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was negotiated and signed by the five permanent UN Security Council members (U.S., Britain, China, France, Russia,) plus Germany (P5+1) and Iran. The response from the European Union to Trump's action was to say he alone cannot eliminate the agreement and that the EU would uphold it. France

and Germany in particular have their own interests in Iran, as they do in Syria and have long contended with the U.S. That this contention is heating up is evident in the EU response and their readiness to contend with Trump on the matter. As High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini said minutes after Trump said he would not certify Iran's compliance, "It is not a bilateral agreement, it does not belong to any single country and it is not up to any single country to terminate it." She added, "We cannot afford, as international community — as EU for sure — to dismantle a nuclear agreement that is working and delivering, especially now."

In attempting to justify his actions, Trump continued the U.S. approach of "you are with us or you are with the terrorists." This is notable in that it is the U.S. that determines who is and is not a terrorist. In his speech October 13 Trump said Iran "remains the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism, and provides assistance to al Qaeda, the Taliban, Hezbollah, Hamas, and other terrorist networks." He added, "This regime has fueled sectarian violence in Iraq, and vicious civil wars in Yemen and Syria." In this manner, Iran is branded the terrorist while the U.S., the world's biggest terrorist with its drone attacks, assassinations, bombings and use of chemical weapons like white phosphorous and depleted uranium, is supposedly the world's protector. As well organizations like Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Palestine are branded terrorist, while Israel, which with U.S. backing repeatedly carries out massacres and genocide, is not. Iran is blamed for wars in Yemen and Syria, when it is the U.S. that is responsible, including funding and arming terrorist groups in Syria. Trump is not concerned here with whether he is believed on these issues. Rather that the dictate of the U.S. deciding is accepted. All must submit, including the EU,



to the U.S. deciding who is and is not terrorist or face the U.S. wrath, as is occurring with Iran and Korea.

Trump's actions also show that the U.S. has no solutions other than use of force. Diplomacy and political solutions are eliminated in a situation where rule of law has been eliminated and a government of police powers imposed. Police powers by definition are the arbitrary use of force with impunity against any and all who do not submit to U.S. dictate.

As the wars and U.S. aggression have all shown, use of force is no solution and only further intensifies difficulties. For political

solutions to prevail the people must advance their own independent politics and anti-war stands. Iran, for example, has called for a nuclear-free Middle East and supports the recent UN treaty banning nuclear weapons and criminalizing having them and using them. Let all join Iran in supporting a nuclear-free Middle East! Let all also join effort to organize for an anti-war government in the U.S. and a political process that opens the way for an anti-war government. Diplomacy and political solutions are needed and it is the people's own organizing efforts that are required to achieve them.

UN Watchdog Reaffirms Iran's Compliance With Nuke Deal

Andrea Germanos, Common Dreams, October 30, 2017

We should not allow the (nuclear deal), as an important achievement, to be undermined, says Iranian president.

As the Trump administration continues to jeopardize the deal, the United Nations nuclear watchdog reiterated October 29 that Iran is complying with its commitments made in the 2015 nuclear accord.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Yukiya Amano made the remarks in Tehran, where he met with high-level officials including Iranian President Hassan Rouhani. "I requested that Iran ... fully implement the nuclear-related commitments. This (was) the main thrust of the meeting in Iran ... Regarding the activities of our inspectors, they are discharging their responsibility without problem," Amano said.

Amano echoed the statement on October 30 in Abu Dhabi, where a UN conference on nuclear energy was taking place. He said, "The IAEA can state that such nuclear-related commitments are being implemented."

Al Jazeera describes Amano's latest "verification of compliance" as "a moment of vindication for Iran and another international rebuke of the White House."

Rouhani, for his part, said October 29, "We should not allow the (nuclear deal), as an important achievement, to be undermined, and we must consolidate this important international commitment with full cooperation."

Roughly two weeks ago, President Donald Trump decertified the deal, punting the issue to Congress and sparking warnings that the move was "a recipe for disaster." As Reuters previously noted, "none of the other signatories to the deal—Britain, France, Germany, Russia, China, Iran, and the European Union—have cited serious concerns, leaving the United States isolated."

The administration's apparent position is also out of step with the public's. A CNN poll this month revealed that two-thirds of Americans are opposed to the U.S. ditching the deal.

Iran's Rouhani: Any Action Against Nuclear Agreement Would Undermine Global Peace

Press TV, October 14, 2017

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has warned that any action against the historic nuclear agreement between Iran and the P5+1 [U.S., China, Russia, France, Britain plus Germany] group of countries — known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) — would undermine regional and international security and stability.

"Harming the JCPOA is [tantamount to] harming the security and stability of the region and the world," Rouhani said during a Saturday meeting with the Swiss ambassador to Tehran, Markus Leitner, who submitted his credentials to the Iranian president.

He said "breaking the negotiation table in no skill" and expressed hope that the European Union would block "erroneous moves" aimed at disturbing international peace and cooperation. "Today, we are in a very sensitive and important situation and this critical situation does not concern only Iran and the P5+1

countries," he said.

He added that the consequences of the ongoing sensitive situation would affect the entire region and the world, saying, "The JCPOA has brought more peace to the region and the world."

The Iranian president stressed the importance of resolving international conflicts through dialogue.

Iran has cooperated with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and is determined to continue such cooperation, he further said.

Rouhani reaffirmed the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear activities and emphasized that Tehran would not violate the JCPOA so long as the other signatories to the deal remained committed to their obligations.

The Swiss ambassador, for his part, said his country supports the landmark nuclear deal and urged all sides to fully implement

ORGANIZE FOR AN ANTI-WAR GOVERNMENT

their commitments under the JCPOA.

The Iranian president's remarks came a day after U.S. President Donald Trump refused to certify the 2015 international nuclear agreement and warned he might ultimately terminate it, in defiance of other world powers and undermining a landmark victory of multilateral diplomacy.

Trump said he chose not to certify that Tehran was complying with the JCPOA and added that his goal was to ensure Iran would never obtain a nuclear weapon.

While the U.S. president did not pull Washington out of the nuclear deal, he gave Congress 60 days to decide whether to reimpose economic sanctions against Tehran that were lifted under the pact. Rolling back sanctions would put the US at odds with other signatories to the accord and the European Union.

JCPOA proves effectiveness of dialogue in crisis settlement

In a meeting with the Greek ambassador to Tehran, Dimitri Alexandrakis, Rouhani said the European Union (EU) countries have played a constructive role in implementing the JCPOA.

"The JCPOA has proved that dialogue and cooperation are the best way to solve international differences and they are in the interest of the international community, including Europe and the United States," the Iranian president added.

The Greek ambassador, who submitted his credentials to the Iranian president, said all parties to the international nuclear accord must implement it.

It is imperative that any side refraining from fulfilling its commitments be explicitly told that they are making a mistake, Alexandrakis said.

Shortly after Trump officially announced that he would not certify the JCPOA, European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said the U.S. president was not in a position to terminate Iran's nuclear deal with world powers.

"To my knowledge there is not one single country in the world that can terminate a UN Security Council resolution that has been adopted, and adopted unanimously, and implemented, and verified," she said.

EU should safeguard JCPOA, use chance of cooperation

The Iranian president also on Saturday said the JCPOA had opened doors to negotiations on various regional and international issues. He made the remarks in a meeting with the new ambassador of Nor-

way to Tehran, Lars Nordrum, who submitted his credentials to the Iranian president.

Rouhani expressed hope that all member countries of the EU, including Norway, would play their constructive role in safeguarding the JCPOA and making use of the opportunities created after implementation of the deal to boost cooperation.

Nordrum, for his part, said many Norwegian companies believed that the nuclear deal had created great opportunities to enhance cooperation with Iran. He added that his country supported full implementation of the JCPOA and called on all sides to remain committed to their promises under the deal.

Meanwhile, in a meeting with the new ambassador of the Czech Republic to Tehran, Svatopluk Cumba, the Iranian president said the JCPOA had created a better atmosphere for cooperation between Iran and European countries.

"We believe that the nuclear agreement contributes to sustainable peace, security and stability in the region and across the world," Rouhani added. The Czech diplomat, for his part, said issues would be settled only through negotiations and mutual respect.

Trump's threat to terminate the nuclear deal comes as the U.S. has a history of quitting international pacts and organizations. This is not the first time that the international community witnesses efforts by the Trump administration to renege on a multilateral agreement. Trump withdrew the US from the Paris Climate Agreement in June and has ordered the U.S. to withdraw from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) next year.



United Against War: Korean Americans Speak Out

zoominkorea.org, October 17, 2017

Donald Trump recently responded to Secretary of State Rex Tillerson's mention of direct communication channels with North Korea by tweeting, "I told Rex Tillerson, our wonderful Secretary of State, that he is wasting his time trying to negotiate with Little Rocket Man." He went on, "Save your energy Rex, we'll do what has to be done!"

Americans are increasingly worried about a possible nuclear war with North Korea. But some appear unconcerned about the potential fallout, as, in the (in)famous words of Trump, "If thousands die, they're going to die over there."

To Korean Americans, such callousness is dehumanizing to the people of Korea and Asia Pacific. The so-called "thousands over there" are our families and friends. A war in Korea would be devastating to Koreans in the diasporas around the world and will almost certainly involve the surrounding region, including China, Japan, and Guam.

On October 10, HOBAK (Hella Organized Bay Area Koreans) invited Korean Americans to join a conversation via twitter about U.S. militarism and provocations in Korea and around the world:

As tensions continue to rise, and threats of war continue, it is critical to uplift Korean voices and their stories, and to ground ourselves in more comprehensive analyses of the current situation. HOBAK is hosting this online Twitter chat to create a forum for Koreans in the diaspora to connect and speak on their perspectives on militarism, war, and US imperialism – and the generations of impacts that exist, past, present, and future. We are witnessing the lack of comprehensive information in the media, even progressive media, as well as the lack of centering of Korean voices. Join us to hear from those that call for demilitarization, and who are demanding another pathway forward that promotes peace, reunification, and self-determination of the Korean people!

The invitation elicited over a hundred tweets in one hour.

Korean Americans speak out against war and for #KoreanPeace

Trauma stemming from war and division continues to be buried as the broader U.S. public and media willfully forget the history of the Korean War.

Hyejin Shim of HOBAK referenced a 2003 International War Crimes Tribunal, which presented findings by the Korea Truth Commission on U.S. atrocities in Korea from 1945 to 2001. The findings included the U.S. military's "gross and systematic violence committed against women in northern and southern Korea,



Demands: 1. We opposes warmongering, military intimidation, and Trump's military focused foreign policies 2. Abolish hostile policies toward North Korea & Sign the Peace Treaty 3. Withdraw THAAD, which threatens peace in East Asia.

characterized by mass rapes, sexual assaults and murders."

Shim and Christine Ahn also noted that U.S. militarism continues to displace South Korean people from their homes and communities.

On October 7, Korean Americans joined a protest in New York against U.S. wars abroad. Juyeon Rhee of Nodutdol for Korean Community Development spoke at the rally of several hundred people:

"What did the U.S. say about a war on the Korean Peninsula? It said that the war would happen over there, not here. We, as Koreans living in the United States, must come together with a unified voice to oppose Trump's war."

Rhee and others called on the Trump administration to stop its provocations against North Korea and end its wars in the Middle East, including Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen. The rally also expressed solidarity with the Palestinian people in their fight for self-determination and the people of Puerto Rico in the wake of Hurricane Maria and the U.S. government's failure to respond, which has left the people there with no access to food and clean water.

Puerto Rican activists talked about the current situation as rooted in the history of the U.S. colonial occupation of Puerto Rico:

"Puerto Rico has been a colony of the United States for 119 years. We are not suffering from a debt crisis. We are not suffering from a hurricane relief crisis. We are suffering from a colonial crisis. The same forces that occupied Palestine, the same forces that occupied Haiti, the same forces that are pushing imperialism around the world, these are the same forces that repress Puerto Rico."

Actions Across the Country Oppose U.S. Wars and Aggression

From October 2 – 8, 2017, dozens of actions took place across the country demanding an end to the criminal war in Afghanistan and opposing all U.S. wars and threats against Korea. The demonstrations marked the 16th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan. Forums, film showings and many demonstrations were united in demanding *All U.S. Troops Home Now!* as the path forward.

It is clear that more troops are no solution and only contribute further to the violence, anarchy, death and destruction imposed wherever the U.S. invades. Under the Obama administration, increased U.S. troop strength was increased to 100,000. At the same time, there were 40,000 troops from other NATO countries in Afghanistan as well as 88,000 U.S. paid mercenaries. Despite this buildup of occupation forces, the U.S. was not able to stop

the broad and determined resistance of the people of Afghanistan, as is also the case in Iraq, Syria and Yemen. The wars are solving no problem. The many actions stood with the peoples worldwide in resisting U.S. aggression and calling for political solutions, without use of force.

When Trump took office, the U.S. bombed Afghanistan with the largest non-nuclear bomb ever used. Now again more troops and Special Forces are being sent in and more bombings unleashed.

Military might is not the solution. Ending the wars is what contributes to peace, as demonstrators in city after city demanded, representing the anti-war stand of the majority of people, here and abroad.

Not a Dollar More for War!

Bring All U.S. Troops Home Now!

U.S. Push for Massive Military Spending and Global Domination

Mike Ludwig, October 25, 2017

The American Enterprise Institute (AEI), an influential neoconservative think tank with close ties to the architects of the invasion of Iraq and other Bush administration wartime policies, released a report last week calling for a sweeping expansion of the nation's global military footprint and budget increases at the Pentagon that would exceed congressional caps by \$672 billion over the next five years.

Daniel Gouré, a conservative commentator and vice president at the Lexington Institute, called the report a “must read for Trump’s national security team.” The report could have considerable influence on the White House, which issued an executive order in January directing federal agencies to “pursue peace through strength” by rebuilding and modernizing the United States armed forces.

In fact, Vice President Mike Pence gave a speech at AEI on October 24, declaring that the Trump administration is working with Congress to pass the “largest investment in our national defense since the days of Ronald Reagan.”

The Trump administration has struggled to build a cohesive foreign policy and staffers often look to think tanks and the military itself for guidance. Trump has already placed military generals in top cabinet positions and left the armed forces with considerable decision-making power over how to proceed with the war in Afghanistan.

The AEI report is also intended for Congress, which is working to reconcile differences between the House and Senate versions of the annual National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The legislation outlines defense spending for the next fiscal year, and the bills would authorize up to \$640 billion in base defense spending and an additional \$60 to \$65 billion for overseas combat missions in countries such as Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq.

The bills would provide \$30 to \$40 billion more than President Trump originally requested. AEI argues defense spending should

be increased to \$679 billion in 2018 in order to provide “credible down payments on rebuilding the armed forces.”

The U.S. already spends more on its military than any other country by a long shot. The Pentagon accounts for more than half of discretionary domestic spending, which is the money allocated by Congress each year. When the costs of incarceration and drug and immigration enforcement are factored in, the U.S. “militarized budget” sucks up 64 percent of discretionary spending, according to the National Priorities Project. [...]

AEI argues that domestic programs such as Social Security and Medicare “eat up” too much of the nondiscretionary budget, and Congress should shift some of this money to overseas military deployments in order to achieve its “three theater strategy” for asserting U.S. power across the globe.

AEI says the policymakers must return the military to “a much more robust permanent forward posture” and move away from “rotational deployments” in three main global “theaters” where U.S. interests lie: Europe, Asia and the Middle East. Protecting the homeland and U.S. economic interests, according to AEI, requires building a larger empire abroad. [...]

As news broke this week about the CIA expanding its bloody and covert missions to hunt down the Taliban in Afghanistan, Matthew Hoh, a senior fellow with the Center for International Policy who resigned from a State Department position in protest over the Obama-era escalation in Afghanistan, said current CIA operations are “direct descendants” of US-sponsored death squads in Latin America.

“The results will assuredly be the same: war crimes, mass murder, torture and the terrorization of entire communities of men, women and children in their own homes,” Hoh said in a statement. [...]

I • Cancel the Debt

yet more debt, providing loans instead of grants for reconstruction.

The people of Puerto Rico and those in the diaspora are not waiting for the U.S., they are taking matters into their own hands. In Puerto Rico collective actions of all kinds are taking place. Collectives of medics, engineers, agricultural workers and more are being organized and taking initiative to provide relief and rebuild. Those with expertise in the energy field are also demanding that the outdated electric grid not be rebuilt and instead new renewable sources of energy, like solar, be developed. Many in Boston, Buffalo, Chicago and New York City are joining in these efforts, gathering supplies, organizing volunteer brigades, joining efforts by the unions to send nurses, truck drivers, engineers, building trades workers and more.

All are contending with the colonial dictate of the U.S., which is insisting that the Wall Street financiers get their payments. The just demands of the people are to *Cancel the Debt Now! Stop Paying the Rich and Fully Fund Recovery! Pay Reparations for Crime of Colonialism!*

In the typical colonialist fashion of “white man’s burden,” President Trump has repeatedly blamed Puerto Ricans, portraying them as unable to govern or decide what is needed. Puerto Ricans on the island, in New York State and throughout the country are responding by organizing themselves and demanding their rights, as a nation and as human beings. It is their right to decide and self-determination is the way forward, as the people themselves are showing.

The problem is not simply a lack of funding, which must be provided in full now! The problem is and has been U.S. colonialism, which has long distorted the Puerto Rican economy and long imposed genocide against her people, including using Vieques as a bombing range and forced sterilization of a large portion of women. It is this colonialism that is behind the Control Board imposed so as to guarantee debt payments to the financiers. It is this colonialism that is behind the U.S. blocking aid from many countries of the world, including Venezuela and Cuba. It is this colonialism that must end so that rebuilding can be by and for Puerto Ricans.

The facts of this government-made disaster are evident, including:

- More than 80 percent of the population remain without electricity more than a month after Maria hit.
- About 28 percent of the population has no running water



Demonstration in Puerto Rico: No to the Debt, Yes to Reconstruction!
Down with the Vultures!

and those that do have been told it is unsafe and must be boiled, even though there is no electricity to do so.

- Twenty out of 51 sewage-treatment plants are not functioning.
- Close to half of the hospitals are without electricity. And while a floating state-of-the-art hospital, the USNS Comfort is just offshore, only 33 of the 250 beds are being used, nearly two weeks after the ship arrived.
- About 80 percent of agricultural lands were destroyed
- At least 50 are dead and more than 100 missing and likely dead
- More than 100 bridges in Puerto Rico were damaged by Maria and 18 have been closed indefinitely leaving entire communities stranded. Only initiative by the people themselves is overcoming this problem.

Colonialism is a crime. Instruments like the Control Board dictating debt payments are a crime — it is the U.S. that owes Puerto Rico for the hundreds of billions it has stolen over the years, for the crime of colonialism. Now is the time to strengthen the independent organizing in defense of rights, in the U.S. and in Puerto Rico. By relying on the people’s efforts and developing recovery in the image and interests of Puerto Rican’s themselves, this crisis can be resolved in the people’s favor.

Maria and Our Puerto Rican Flag

Julio A. Muriente Pérez, *MINH*, October 28, 2017

With Maria, the tricolor symbol and the concrete, material reality have been fused as a single expression. Precisely, what gives meaning to symbols, what makes the idea of flag-nation-country relevant is, ultimately, its possible materiality.

Our flag is everywhere, proud and well planted. In the houses, ramshackle or without scratches; in shops, the same as fast food as in hardware stores or gas stations; in trucks that drag vans or debris, in vehicles of the Electric Power Authority and other public or private companies; in cars, on lapels, in press and television ads; here and in the diaspora. Wherever there is a Puerto Rican.

Omnipresent.

The flag of Puerto Rico has become the slogan that defines wills and purposes in this tough situation that we are experiencing, following the passage of hurricane María and the corroboration of an energy-communication-transport-etc infrastructure, stuck like mud.

Patriotism converted into a unanimous feeling is the engine that moves mountains. It can advance things more than any government management, any institutional assistance, any promise. It is exacerbated by the contempt or mockery of the bosses, is encouraged by the incompetence of officials, is inflamed by the deception, lies and corruption.

If the country has been rising by our hands, it has been mainly thanks to that love of the Nation, demonstrated by a population that has not been willing to wait with outstretched hands. That she is organizing herself, here, there and everywhere. This organizing is solving fundamental needs with solidarity and in a self-managed, joint manner.

By stripping ourselves of the greenness, Maria has left visible the skeletons of our reality. Let's face it and assume responsibility for a future that is not only greener but more ours. (Carmen Dolores Hernández, *El Nuevo Día*, October 25, 2017)

We have the capacity to rebuild a different country if we work for that. (Estrella Baerga Santini, *The New Day*, October 26, 2017)

Of course we appreciate the help you give us, wherever you come from. Of course, there are supposed to be some obliga-



tions of the United States government, which after all took over and has benefited from Puerto Rico's colonization for 119 years. Of course, the initiatives of our compatriots abroad have an extraordinary value.

Trump has repeated to us to the point of fatigue that we are incapable of building the material homeland in freedom; that we have no choice but to keep under the wing of the U.S. mother hen and eat whatever she puts out.

But with Maria we are demonstrating the enormous falsity of that perverse argument, of the eternal and inevitable impotence. Every time someone raises a national flag in their home, in their car or on the highest mountain, they are sending a message to the world that we are capable of fighting, of building and of prevailing. That we are not beggars or subjects, that we are proud sons and daughters of this Caribbean and Latin American land. That, in any case, our war is not against nature — of which we are an essential part — but against subordination and subjugation.

That we have an idea of what it is to rebuild, that is not satisfied with putting down zinc plates or straightening roads. That we do not have a blue-tarp awning mentality. We want to make a country different from the U.S. “modernizing” farce that Maria swept away.

We want to rebuild in freedom and, contrary to what has happened for so long, do things well done. So that our beloved flag, which so thrills us in these difficult days, continues floating alone, joyful, loving, throughout the Nation. (*Taken from endi.com*)

Hand in Hand Our Nation Rises

Comité Pro Derechos Humanos de Puerto Rico, October 28, 2017

A warm embrace of affirmation and commitment!

The Committee for Human Rights of Puerto Rico, recognizing the praiseworthy work done by people in sectors that have barely received official assistance to survive, has established an economic bank based on contributions from individuals and friendly entities.

We are working with groups and individuals who want to channel their contributions to places where it is guaranteed that they will reach the hands of those most in need. So far these modest but valuable contributions have been given for the

construction of roofs of houses in the neighborhoods of Venezuela, Buen Consejo and a community in Utuado, among others.

We invite you to join this effort by sending contributions on behalf of the Human Rights Committee PR: Apartado 192783 San Juan Puerto Rico 00919-2783 or deposit to the bank account: Scotiabank # 503-111026450.

For your information the Committee will keep a record of invoices and photos of all expenses related to the distribution as well as the construction work.

Hand in hand our nation rises.

Reflection from #PRontheMap Trip to Puerto Rico

Raquel Reichard, #PRontheMap, October 14, 2017

After spending six days with the PR On The Map team in Puerto Rico, I have returned to New York. I am still processing what I saw because, speaking honestly, the situation is very grave, but I do know that I am thankful to everyone who donated and helped make this trip possible, including Rosa Clemente, who organized it, and that I am deeply saddened by the crises I witnessed firsthand on the island and angered by the false picture the Trump administration and the mainstream media are painting.

I read that officials are saying the death toll is at 45. That same afternoon I talked with a man named Tomas, the owner of Funeraria Javariz in Aguadilla, and he called it nonsense, telling me 30 people in his municipality alone have passed away because of the hurricane.

People are dying. Without electric power, the sick are unable to take their insulin or use nebulizers. Nearly all of the people I spoke with have not received any aid from FEMA. In two areas where I visited that government “help” had arrived, a part of Naranjito and a part of Vega Baja (I say “part” because authorities often hit just a few homes or neighborhoods in towns and then check it off), I was told officials refused to bring water up the mountains or rocky hills, forcing the people to walk down and get it — most of whom are elderly and physically cannot make the trek.

They are starving. They are thirsty and drinking unsanitary water because the heat is unbearable. Yet the donations sent by people from the U.S. and around the world have still not been released to the people. The excuse we were told: there is no one to inspect the packages. Many, especially those who lost parts of their homes or whose houses were completely destroyed and are now living on the streets or with neighbors, are depressed. Considering the lack of physical aid they are receiving, I am not hopeful that they will be getting the help they need for their mental health. There have already been two reported suicides because of the distress. I have no doubt that number, if not already higher, will increase. In addition to homes, many lost businesses and numerous are out of jobs.

Outside of the humanitarian crisis, which I have sadly just barely touched on, the land itself is a heart-shattering sight. If you have never been to Puerto Rico before Hurricane Maria, I am afraid you may have missed the chance to see one of the most beautiful islands in all the world. El Yunque, the island’s treasured rainforest, has been obliterated. Gone with it will likely be species of trees and birds, some that only existed in Puerto Rico. But that is not all. The lush greenery across the island, especially on the mountains, is now brown. Lifeless palm trees bow or lie alongside roads. From above, parts of the island appear black. At night, the choir of coquis did not sing as loud as usual. On the San Juan street where we spent our nights, there was only one lullabying us to sleep.

The people are mad. From college students in the capital to



the forgotten jibaros on the mountains, Puerto Ricans are aware that the U.S. has once again failed them. Throughout the island, people in different regions, of various ages and all races told me the U.S. exploits them, that the U.S. does not care about them and that its colonial relationship is killing them. They call it abuse. These are everyday people.

As Donald Trump literally tweeted that Puerto Ricans want everything done for them, what I saw were people — single mothers, children, elderly, students and the ill — who were not receiving any help from the U.S. and, while they still hoped and believed they deserved it, did not expect it to come.

I saw the Puerto Rican people helping the Puerto Rican people, and when I say that I include the masses of Dominicans who also call Puerto Rico home. I saw a middle-aged man who used several cables to connect his generator to seven homes in his barrio. I saw a woman who served seven of her neighbors food, which she cooks with rain water, with pots that on any other day would be adequate for just a family of four. I saw an elder who goes to other towns to get water to bring back, not just for himself, but for all of his community. I saw a woman who purchased a \$3.99 24-bottle case of water for \$18.99, not for herself, but for the elderly lesbian couple who lives next-door so that they stop downing their medicine with contaminated water. I saw teenagers cutting down trees to clear roads in their neighborhoods. I saw an old man who had been directing traffic on a mountain because no one else was coming to do it. I saw neighbors fixing each other’s roofs.

Every day I saw the people, everywhere, taking care of one another. These same people even offered me their own very limited water and food. In six days, I saw one governmental truck clear up a road — and that remains the only aid I witnessed on behalf of the U.S. That is not to say there is no U.S. presence, but their role is questionable. Little effort is being made to save lives. I saw two FEMA boxes, one from a mayor and one from a family. They consist of a couple Chef Boyardee cans and a

couple small cans of salchichas along with about five packets of snacks. Depending on where you live, you get four bottles of water or a whole pack. There is one box per family, regardless of size, and it is only provided one time. That box is devoured in an hour, if not minutes, and then that's it. While that is what is happening, a Puerto Rican sergeant, conflicted by his love for his people and following orders he does not believe will help them, told a member of our team that this is not what U.S. relief usually looks like, and that he does not understand why this is what it is in Puerto Rico. I personally spoke to a man who worked for FEMA for 20-plus years, and he told me this was the worst aid he had ever seen in his career.

At the risk of sounding like a conspiracist, I must still say what I am seeing: genocide. The U.S. has a long and very real history of attempting, and carrying out, the execution of the Puerto Rican people, and this, to me, is what that looks like in 2017. The U.S. wants a Puerto Rico without Puerto Ricans — this is clear.

I am a Boricua of the diaspora, and that is crucial for me to note. After six days on the island, I get to return to New York,

to running water, to vegetables and fruits, to open restaurants, to light, to AC, to Netflix, to ATMs, to feminine hygiene products, to communication, to life as I have always known it. I get to write about the situation instead of experiencing it every day.

I have the privilege of thinking about buying land on the island instead of being forced to leave it to (barely) survive in places like Orlando, Philadelphia, New York, New Jersey, Boston, Virginia, Tampa and Miami (all places I have heard people considering moving to). But I also spent my childhood years in Puerto Rico, in the lush that once was Moca, and while my Spanish is subpar and my geographical knowledge even worse, my ties to the land and to the people are very real, as I am sure it is for all of us who once lived on, or maybe just visited, the island. Please hold your Puerto Rican family and friends tight. Show them all the love and support that you can, because we all really need it right now, and I am sure we will for a very, very long time. And, if you are able to, join us in our fight. We have been a part of just about every social justice movement in the U.S. and we need you now more than ever.

Que Viva Borikén Libre!

TO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Immediate Large-Scale Just Recovery and Relief Aid Package for Puerto Rico

Presente.org

We demand that members of Congress pass an immediate, substantial federal Just Recovery and Relief Aid Package for Puerto Rico that incorporates this vision, and includes:

- Full debt relief for Puerto Rico, so that it can recover with dignity.
- Permanent lifting of the *Jones Act*, an unfair law that has delayed relief to Puerto Rico and has kept the cost of living high due to the exorbitant cost of shipping goods to the island. The devastation in Puerto Rico will require unrestricted access to imported goods and resources for any foreseeable future and the free movement of relief for an indefinite period.
- A transparent decision-making process for the distribution of resources, and in the long term, investments in towns and districts where they are most needed, including for individual homeowners.
- A complete assessment of all Puerto Rico's infrastructure: energy-grids, transportation, communications, water, sewage facilities, and other resources.
- Review of zoning codes and ordinances for urban and rural development to assure that they are updated and take into account the changing environment that will bring increased and stronger future disasters, climate-induced and otherwise.
- Detailed screening for environmental justice concerns, including mapping of Superfund sites, dams, and other potential public health hazards, as well as site prioritization for environmental quality testing of water, soil, and air.
- Relief and rebuilding should comply with Executive Order

12898, which directs federal agencies to identify and address the disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their actions on minority and low-income populations. The order directs each agency to develop a strategy for implementing environmental justice, and is intended to promote non-discrimination in federal programs that affect human health and the environment, as well as provide minority and low-income communities access to public information and public participation. To this end, we call for coordinated relief actions on the ground that incorporate FEMA, EPA, NIEHS, DOT, DOE, and all relevant federal agencies in a strategic and concerted way, that is inclusive, transparent, and maximizes public input, from earliest planning through implementation and evaluation.

- Designation of sufficient funds and technical support for Puerto Rico to develop, with the sectors that have been most impacted, a plan that incorporates renewable energy, flood-resistant infrastructure, and environmental assessment to restore local agro-ecological farms and the ecology of the island, in ways that assure a more sustainable, equitable, and secure life for all residents.

- Any plan undertaken should serve to put Puerto Rican workers back to work as soon as possible, providing training and protection from environmental pollution they may encounter while carrying out their work of rebuilding Puerto Rico. Regeneration should be in the hands of Puerto Ricans, led by Puerto Ricans, and for Puerto Ricans.

Why is this important?

On September 20, Hurricane Maria, a powerful Category 4 hurricane with 150 mph winds, struck Puerto Rico full force only days after the Irma storm. More than a month later, Puerto Rico's 3.4 million residents are suffering intensely in what has quickly become a major humanitarian and environmental justice disaster. The delivery of aid to Puerto Rico has been delayed, in part because of the *Jones Act*, a 1920 law that prohibits freight delivery to Puerto Rico on non-U.S. ships. The Act was recently repealed for 10 days but has now been reinstated.

The potential for great loss of life increases daily. Water, food, and medicine have become extremely scarce and material aid is bottlenecked by bureaucracy at the ports. 70,000 people were evacuated from an area near a failing dam that had not been inspected since 2013. Puerto Rico is home to 23 Superfund sites — industrially polluted areas that have been identified as too

dangerously contaminated for humans and livestock to inhabit or use. These, and many other toxic sites were flooded, adding to the multiple sources of danger Puerto Ricans currently face. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has ceased operations, removing its workers because it has deemed the island “too hazardous.”

Science states that climate catastrophes are going to intensify. We have deep concerns about the breach of the democratic process needed to respond to the Puerto Rican people in this state of emergency and—in the long term—to rebuild Puerto Rico in a way that future storms will not decimate it again.

This is not business as usual or an opportunity for Wall Street to make money off of vulnerable communities. This moment requires a proactive vision, strong coordination, and a regenerative economic and environmental approach to the crisis, informed by the people of Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico's Dual Crises Show Its Territorial Status Is the Worst of Both Worlds

Dan Beeton, InsideSources, October 29, 2017

Puerto Rico is suffering shortages of food and water, where only 21.6 percent of grid electricity and 71.58 percent of running water have been restored. Almost a month since Hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico, most of the island is without power, many lack safe drinking water, and about half the population does not have cell phone service, making it difficult to relay urgent needs. Professionals worry about disease outbreaks and new health crises emerging.

The federal government response has been scandalous. President Trump's treatment of Puerto Rico, in contrast to hurricane-hit Florida and Texas, has raised suspicions of racist indifference, or of other motivations for deliberate neglect.

Trump infamously touted the disaster's low death toll, yet people continue to die of preventable causes as the relief effort dawdles, hampered by the resumption of the *Jones Act* — which allows only U.S. flagged ships to deliver goods — and other political calculations in Washington.

The response has been lacking in part because Puerto Rico is not a U.S. state. Nor is it an independent country, in which case it would be free to receive aid unhampered by U.S. restrictions.

The island's colonial status goes back to the Spanish-American War, when U.S. forces invaded Puerto Rico and claimed the territory. The U.S. gave Puerto Ricans citizenship a few decades later, so that they could serve in the U.S. military in World War I, but no voting representation in Congress.

This second-class citizenship and neglect is now hampering Puerto Rico's ability to recover from a historic double crisis. Aside from the remarkable lack of initiative to get aid to people in need, Trump has blamed Puerto Ricans for their current (pre-hurricane) economic crisis, and has complained that Puerto Rico's disaster is hurting his plans for the federal budget.

Puerto Rico's debt woes — its other crisis — are not “largely of their own making,” as Trump tweeted. Rather, it was the U.S. Congress that passed the *Jones Act*, as well as NAFTA, WTO and other trade legislation that hampered the Puerto Rican manufacturing sector.

Congress repealed Section 936 of the U.S. tax code that had provided tax breaks to U.S. companies producing goods in Puerto Rico, and more recently imposed the unelected Financial Oversight and Management Board on Puerto Rico, which now makes the most important economic policy decisions for the island. The board has pushed an economic austerity plan that has hampered recovery. [...]

Since it is not an independent country, Puerto Rico is unable to consider monetary and fiscal policy options that might allow economic recovery. These might include driving a hard bargain with its creditors, who have barely paused in demanding full repayment of the debt, even though it is clear that Puerto Rico will not be able to repay it. Congress is heaping on more debt with financial aid in the form of loans.

One reason Puerto Rico racked up substantial debt was because it had to borrow to fund its Medicaid program, and here again we see how Puerto Rico is punished by its territorial status. Rather than reimburse the island's Medicaid program at the 55 percent rate as it does for other territories, or the 83 percent rate that Puerto Rico would receive were it a state, the U.S. government capped reimbursement at \$300 million per year — less than a 15 percent rate. The *Affordable Care Act* offered a one-time grant of \$6.4 billion to Puerto Rico in 2013, but the money is now running out, and there is currently no funding for next year.

Even worse, Puerto Rico's Medicaid needs are greater because its poverty rate is 46 percent, compared to 15 percent for

the U.S. Yet it will cost the U.S. government more to not fund Puerto Rico's Medicaid shortfall than if it does fund it. Why? Health care costs in Puerto Rico are less expensive than on the U.S. mainland.

If Congress approves Medicaid funding for Puerto Rico, it will be far less costly than were those same Medicaid patients to move to the mainland and get treated here. Yet more Puerto Ricans will keep out-migrating as the island continues to suffer neglect and

its economy continues to limp along. A Medicaid crisis would be another factor pushing people to leave for the States.

Under the status quo, neither a state nor independent, the island's residents seem to be experiencing the worst of both worlds.

(Dan Beeton is international communications director at the Center for Economic and Policy Research.)

Mold is Blanketing Puerto Rico Making it Difficult for Many to Breathe

DailyKOs, October 31, 2017

The unfolding humanitarian crisis in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria barreled over the island is only getting worse. Alarm bells are being rung from humanitarian organizations on the ground that the deteriorating conditions are seriously impacting human health and survival. Warnings from the front lines are summarized in the excerpts below.

Coco McCabe writes for OXFAM.

"It's an emergency that a month in should not be an emergency — but it is," said Thompson, presenting a series of real-life scenarios that Puerto Ricans have been grappling with since driving rain and winds of 155 miles per hour took down the island's entire electrical grid on September 20. Without electricity, a great deal of daily life grinds to a halt: there is no light at night, no fans or air conditioners to cool sweltering rooms, no easy way to charge phones or access the internet, no reliable way to keep hospitals running — the list goes on.

What would you do, Thompson asked, if your elderly mother, wheel chair bound and desperately needing food and water, was stuck on the 17th floor of an apartment building in San Juan with no working elevator?

Or, what if the hurricane had drenched everything inside your house including all the mattresses, forcing you and your children to sleep on the floor where rats could be scampering? Or what if you lived in the countryside, stuck on the far side of a collapsed bridge, and you had no way to get drinking water because the storm knocked out your community's delivery system? There is no bottled water anywhere and a relief convoy has not visited in days. What would you do?

Not everyone is suffering, Thompson pointed out. Those with money have options: They can get a hot meal in a restaurant; they can buy fuel for their cars and generators; they can purchase dry sheets and towels for their homes—and their homes, better built to begin with, may still have their roofs.

"Tarps are desperately needed right now," said Thompson, noting that one rural woman she encountered had relied on her sister in



the Dominican Republic, where more than 40 percent of the population lives in poverty, to send her one. "Some kind of lighting system is badly needed. There are all kinds of things you can't get--insect repellent, [a type of] batteries."

But with the rainy season here, tarps top the list for some community leaders who are doing all they can to help ensure people have shelter. Thompson described the efforts of one woman who has been trying to get tarps for about 800 homes in different communities outside of San Juan: The woman approached the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, which sent her to speak to the mayors of the communities. The mayors didn't have tarps, so she went back to FEMA. No luck again. So next she called the tarp manufacturing compa-

nies in the US, and hit a dead end there, too.

"She has been up and down for these communities and has not been able to get these tarps," said Thompson.

Those efforts are playing out against a new worry for families whose homes have been exposed to the elements: mold.

"A lot of times in hurricanes people forget to talk about just how hard it is to clean out your house, and the mold," said Thompson. "It's an increasing problem. People are just beginning to realize it." Chlorine is what people need to try and tackle the problem, but the supplies are restricted.

"You need a whole kit to take mold off," said Thompson. "You need to educate people about that. And so how do you do that when there is no communication?" She said the public health department will need to organize a full effort to address the mold issue.

"It seems everywhere you come up against another insurmountable problem," Thompson added.

According to the National Institute of Health "Mycotoxins are secondary metabolites produced by microfungi that are capable of causing disease and death in humans and other animals. Mycoses range from merely annoying (e.g., Athlete's Foot) to life-threatening (e.g., invasive Aspergillosis). Primary pathogens affect otherwise healthy individuals with normal immune systems. Opportunistic

pathogens produce illness by taking advantage of debilitated or immune-compromised hosts. . . . The majority of human mycoses are caused by opportunistic fungi.”

“Mycoses are frequently acquired via inhalation of spores from an environmental reservoir. Skin contact with mold-infested substrates and inhalation of spore-borne toxins are also important sources of exposure.” (Bennett and Klich).

Diseases associated with inhalation of spores include toxic pneumonia, hypersensitivity pneumonia (characterized by inflammation of the lungs which can lead to scarring of the lungs, an irreversible condition that decreases lung capacity), sinusitis, tremors, chronic fatigue syndrome, kidney failure, biofilm, hair loss, skin conditions, vision disturbances, neurologic disturbances, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, internal hemorrhaging, and abnormal liver levels. Exposure to mold, according to the Florida Department of Health, can cause cognitive problems such as memory loss and mood swings. In some individuals, these can lead to depression, fatigue and loss of interest in everyday activities. Mycotoxins can cause sleep disturbances and if left untreated, can lead to neurological problems such as impaired balance and difficulty walking.

Asthmatics in Puerto Rico Warned of Mold Exposure Risks in Hurricane Damaged Buildings

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that just under 8% of all people in the United States currently have asthma. However, for residents of Puerto Rico, that percentage jumps to as high as 19% of the population according to some studies.

For those with asthma, managing their condition with treatment options from their healthcare provider and avoiding asthma triggers are all important steps for their well-being and long-term health. Unfortunately, due to all the damage caused by Hurricanes Maria and Irma, there are now countless residential, commercial and institutional properties across the islands that have considerable mold contamination. This is due to water damage and elevated indoor humidity levels, exacerbated by a lack of air-conditioning and mechanical ventilation caused by power outages.

“Exposure to elevated levels of mold can act as an asthma trigger for many who suffer from the condition,” said Harry Pena, President of Zimmetry Environmental. “We are coming across mold and other microbial issues in many of the properties we are called upon to inspect and provide our expertise. Recognizing the full extent of contamination, writing remediation protocols, overseeing mold removal activities, and performing post remediation clearance testing are all important activities we are currently involved with. These actions help to ensure mold and other indoor air quality issues don’t become a problem a few months from now for people living, working or going to school in these damaged properties.”

Harvard Medical School News interviewed Michael Charness, Chief of Staff of the VA Boston Healthcare System and HMS Profes-

sor of Neurology who recently returned from the island.

HMN: What was the situation on the ground?

MC: Many homes in Puerto Rico were destroyed or severely damaged, some roads remain impassable, electrical power is unavailable across most of the island, food, potable water and basic amenities are scarce, and communication by phone, text, or email is difficult or impossible.

In addition to the immediate need for food, water, shelter and communication, this situation has profound implications for the health and wellbeing of 3.4 million of our fellow Americans. Diabetes and hypertension are highly prevalent in Puerto Rico and are readily treatable with medication. But what if you can’t reach your doctor to prescribe a medication because the phones don’t work? What if you can’t fill a prescription, because you’re not receiving your paycheck, the ATMs aren’t functional and you can’t afford your prescription co-pay? What if you do obtain your insulin, but you can’t keep it cold, because refrigeration requires electricity and you don’t own a generator?

HMN: What are the long-term consequences of that lack of infrastructure?

MC: As the days and weeks pass without the restoration of electrical service and communications, Puerto Ricans are running out of medications for myriad treatable conditions. Over time, the population burden of preventable illness, including the long-term complications of diseases such as diabetes and hypertension — blindness, neuropathy, kidney failure, heart attack, and stroke — will increase. While we were there, in the very early days of this crisis, we were already seeing the harbingers of this looming health care crisis — systolic blood pressures above 250 and blood sugars above 500 in patients who simply ran out of medication. The impact of this catastrophe on the health of Puerto Ricans will be felt for years.

HMN: What kind of care do people with these chronic illnesses need?

MC: Many people require home health services to stay alive. Home ventilators and oxygen concentrators require electricity. Patients dependent on tube feedings require a reliable source of specialized food and medical equipment. Patients with end stage kidney disease require regular dialysis. How will these services be provided? In the face of a collapsed infrastructure, public health agencies in Puerto Rico have been stretched thin in their attempts to meet these needs.

Finally, because there is no power, most hospitals in Puerto Rico remain in service only with the electricity generated by diesel generators. Fuel delivery remains erratic, and generators that were never meant to operate for more than a few days have been running, sometimes continuously, for weeks. Not surprisingly, generators fail sporadically, abruptly removing entire hospitals from the health care grid and leaving acutely ill patients with limited options until fuel

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remains an armed garrison, a weapon against the Palestinians and all those rising in resistance in the region, such as the Lebanese and Syrians.

The Palestinians marked the anniversary with demonstrations, demanding the Right of Return for all those displaced when Israel was founded and since. Palestinians are among the world's largest refugee population as a result of U.S./Israeli aggression and occupation. The Right of Return for Palestinians has systematically been affirmed by the United Nations, and blocked by the U.S. and Israel.

Israel is also stepping up its attacks on Palestinians, including use of administrative detention, which is when Palestinians,

including elected officials and children, are jailed indefinitely without charges or trial. Demonstrations in the U.S. and Palestine are supporting current hunger strikers opposing indefinite detention and demanding their immediate release.

Despite every effort by the U.S. and Israel to exterminate the Palestinians and remove them from the area entirely, the Palestinians have persisted in their resistance and just demands for their national and social rights. It is by ending the occupation and ending U.S. backing and financing of Israel that peace can be found in the region. The Palestinians have a right to resist occupation, the right to return and the right to build their own country on their land as they see fit.

Balfour Declaration: A Convergence Of Zionist Ambition And The British Imperial Enterprise

James Zogby, President, Arab American Institute

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, in which Great Britain's Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour stated in a note to his colleague, Lord Rothchild, that, "His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object..."

Zionists have long viewed this document as a "promissory note" giving a Great Power "seal of approval" to their quest to establish a state in Palestine. They will, therefore, be celebrating this anniversary. In reality, however, there is nothing to celebrate.

The Balfour Declaration was nothing more than a shameful display of the arrogant self-interest of the colonial mindset and its racist insensitivity to the rights of indigenous peoples. In effect, Balfour promised to give away the rights for a land to which Britain had no legitimate claim against the wishes of the people who lived there.

The declaration did not come out of the blue. It had a history and a political and cultural setting that was grounded in a meeting of the minds of both the Zionist movement and the British colonial enterprise.

For their part, Zionists sought a homeland where they could construct their national community away from the pogroms of Europe. After failed attempts to plant their roots in other locales, they set their sights on Palestine, which one of their leaders, Israel Zangwill, described as "a land without a people ... for a people without a land."

Even after it became all too clear that Palestine had a people who rejected their aspirations to create a Jewish home, the Zionist leaders were undeterred. Zeev Jabotinsky noted:

"If you wish to colonize a land in which another people are already living, you must provide a garrison or find a benefactor to maintain the garrison on your behalf ... Zionism is a colonizing adventure ... it stands or falls on the question of armed force."

The benefactor they turned to was Great Britain. To the British, they sold themselves as the ideal colonial agent—in the

words of Max Nordau, "a people more industrious and more able than the average European, not to speak at all of the inert Africans."

Hertzl described his effort as creating a colony that could serve as "a rampart of Europe against Asia ... an outpost of civilization against barbarism." While Jabotinsky carried this further arguing that "as the loyal bearers of Western culture" the Zionist colony would "expand the British Empire even further than intended by the British themselves." At one point, Hertzl even consulted with Cecil Rhodes, "a colonial expert," on how to win British support for their venture.

The British needed little convincing. At stake was their interest in protecting their position in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Suez Canal, and access to trade and the resources of the Gulf and the East. Building on their model of establishing "companies" to act as their "agents" (as they had done in Africa and South Asia), as early as 1876, Lord Shaftesbury addressing Parliament observed:

"Syria and Palestine will before long become very important ... The country needs capital and population. The Jews can give it both. And has not England a special interest in promoting such restoration? It would be a blow to England if either of her two rivals should get hold of Syria ... Does not policy there ... exhort England to foster the nationality of the Jews and aid them to return ... To England then naturally belongs the role of favoring the settlement of Jews in Palestine.

Building on this theme, a few years before the Balfour Declaration was issued, a prominent British military analyst wrote:

"On general strategic grounds it is exceedingly desirable that the present too constricted frontiers of Egypt be extended ... that a buffer state be established in Southern Syria ... and that if this buffer state became [our] dominion or genuine colony it would be a source of great strength ... and the only possible colonizers on a great and worthy scale are the Jews."

The fit between the British and Zionist designs was so perfect that Max Nordau later commented that if political Zionism hadn't existed, "Britain would've invented it."

With the issuance of the Balfour Declaration, Britain was making clear its intent to not only foster a Jewish home, but, more to the point, a colonial outpost that would project and protect its interests in the Eastern Mediterranean.

What was to happen to the Arab inhabitants of that land was of little consequence to either the British government or the Zionist movement. The second part of the declaration read, “It

being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of the non-Jewish communities in Palestine.” But as the history of that region played out, it became clear that neither Britain nor the Zionists had any intention of allowing the Arabs to stand in the way of their colonial enterprise.

Demonstration in New York City Calls for Freedom for Palestinian Hunger Strikers

Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network, November 3, 2017

Activists in New York City protested on Monday, October 30 to urge freedom for Palestinian prisoners on hunger strike. Bilal Diab, 32, and Hassan Shokeh, 29, have been on hunger strike since 17 October and 14 October, respectively. They have been joined on hunger strike by Hamza Bouzia and Musab Said. Diab, Shokeh and Bouzia are all refusing food to protest their “administrative detention,” imprisonment without charge or trial.

The protest, organized by Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network, took place outside the Best Buy electronics store in Union Square. It also demanded that Hewlett-Packard (HP) companies end their contracts with Israeli prisons, military and security forces and other occupation infrastructure, urging a boycott of HP consumer products, including computers, tablets, printers and ink, until the corporation stops its profiteering from the oppression and occupation of Palestinians. It comes as part of a growing global boycott campaign targeting HP for its complicity in Israeli occupation and apartheid.

The protest also took place the day following Israeli missile strikes that killed 12 Palestinians in Gaza in a tunnel near Khan Younis. Participants in the demonstration expressed their outrage at the occupation strikes, demanding an end to the siege on Gaza and the constant Israeli threat of war against Palestinians in the besieged Strip.

Protesters carried signs with images of Diab and Shokeh. Diab previously conducted a 78-day hunger strike along with fellow administrative detainee Thaer Halahleh, in 2012, winning his freedom. He was seized again by occupation forces on 14 July and ordered once again imprisoned without charge or trial. He launched his hunger strike after an Israeli court denied his appeal on October 17.

Shokeh was also re-arrested on September 29, less than one month after being released from Israeli prisons on August 31, and ordered once again imprisoned without charge or trial. Along with Bouzia, Diab and Shokeh are demanding their immediate release from imprisonment without charge. They are among 450 Palestinians – out of a total of 6,200 Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli jails – held in administrative detention.

Administrative detention orders, which are indefinitely renewable, were first introduced to Palestine by the British colonial mandate, and later continued by the Israeli occupation.



The British origins of administrative detention were particularly resonant this week, as protesters also marked the 100th anniversary of the Balfour declaration in which British foreign minister Arthur Balfour expressed the official support of Britain for the Zionist movement in Palestine and put that support into action through the colonial mandate.

Samidoun activists joined many other organizations, including the NY4Palestine coalition of which they are a part, for a protest and march condemning British and Zionist colonization of Palestine on Thursday, November 2, marking the 100th anniversary of the Balfour declaration. A full report on the #Balfour100 protest in New York is forthcoming.

Samidoun is also an endorser of a protest on 3 November, called “No Trump Day,” which is part of a global day of action organized by Korean activists against U.S. threats of war against North Korea. It will also conduct a study on the Balfour declaration and Zionist colonization of Palestine with imperialist support on 5 November. Supporters of Palestine and the Palestinian people are welcome to attend.

The Real Reasons Trump is Quitting UNESCO

Jonathan Cook, Palestine Chronicle

At first glance, the decision by the Trump administration, followed immediately by Israel, to quit the United Nation's (UN) cultural agency seems strange. Why penalize a body that promotes clean water, literacy, heritage preservation and women's rights? Washington's claim that the UN's Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is biased against Israel obscures the real crimes the agency has committed in the U.S. eyes.

The first is that in 2011 UNESCO became the first UN agency to accept Palestine as a member. That set the Palestinians on the path to upgrading their status at the General Assembly a year later.

It should be recalled that in 1993, as Israel and the Palestinians signed the Oslo accords on the White House lawn, the watching world assumed the aim was to create a Palestinian state.

But it seems most U.S. politicians never received that memo. Under pressure from Israel's powerful lobbyists, the U.S. Congress hurriedly passed legislation to pre-empt the peace process. One such law compels the United States to cancel funding to any UN body that admits the Palestinians.

Six years on, the U.S. is \$550 million in arrears and without voting rights at UNESCO. Its departure is little more than a formality.

The agency's second crime relates to its role selecting world heritage sites. That power has proved more than an irritant to Israel and the U.S.

The occupied territories, supposedly the locus of a future Palestinian state, are packed with such sites. Hellenistic, Roman, Jewish, Christian and Muslim relics promise not only the economic rewards of tourism but also the chance to control the historic narrative.

Israeli archaeologists, effectively the occupation's scientific wing, are chiefly interested in excavating, preserving and highlighting Jewish layers of the Holy Land's past. Those ties have then been used to justify driving out Palestinians and building Jewish settlements.

UNESCO, by contrast, values all of the region's heritage, and aims to protect the rights of living Palestinians, not just the ruins of long-dead civilizations.

Nowhere has the difference in agendas proved starker than in occupied Hebron, where tens of thousands of Palestinians live under the boot of a few hundred Jewish settlers and the soldiers who watch over them. In July, UNESCO enraged Israel and the U.S. by listing Hebron as one of a handful of world heritage sites "in danger." Israel called the resolution "fake history."

The third crime is the priority UNESCO gives to the Palestinian names of heritage sites under belligerent occupation.

Much hangs on how sites are identified, as Israel understands. Names influence the collective memory, giving meaning and significance to places.

The Israeli historian Ilan Pappé has coined the term "memoricide" for Israel's erasure of most traces of the

Palestinians' past after it dispossessed them of four-fifths of their homeland in 1948 – what Palestinians term their Nakba, or Catastrophe.

Israel did more than just raze 500 Palestinian towns and villages. In their place it planted new Jewish communities with Hebraic names intended to usurp the former Arabic names. Saffuriya became Tzippori; Hittin was supplanted by Hittim; Muijadil was transformed into Migdal.

A similar process of what Israel calls "Judaisation" is under way in the occupied territories. The settlers of Beitar Ilit threaten the Palestinians of Battir. Nearby, the Palestinians of Sussiya have been dislodged by a Jewish settlement of exactly the same name.

The stakes are highest in Jerusalem. The vast Western Wall plaza below Al Aqsa mosque was created in 1967 after more than 1,000 Palestinians were evicted and their quarter demolished. Millions of visitors each year amble across the plaza, oblivious to this act of ethnic cleansing.

Settlers, aided by the Israeli state, continue to encircle Christian and Muslim sites in the hope of taking them over.

That is the context for recent UNESCO reports highlighting the threats to Jerusalem's Old City, including Israel's denial for most Palestinians of the right to worship at Al Aqsa.

Israel has lobbied to have Jerusalem removed from the list of endangered heritage sites. Alongside the US, it has whipped up a frenzy of moral outrage, berating UNESCO for failing to prioritize the Hebrew names used by the occupation authorities.

UNESCO's responsibility, however, is not to safeguard the occupation or bolster Israel's efforts at Judaisation. It is there to uphold international law and prevent Palestinians from being disappeared by Israel.

Trump's decision to quit UNESCO is far from his alone. His predecessors have been scuffling with the agency since the 1970s, often over its refusal to cave in to Israeli pressure.

Now, Washington has a pressing additional reason to punish UNESCO for allowing Palestine to become a member. It needs to make an example of the cultural body to dissuade other agencies from following suit.

Trump's confected indignation at UNESCO, and his shrugging off of its vital global programs, serve as a reminder that the U.S. is not an "honest broker" of a Middle East peace. Rather it is the biggest obstacle to its realization.



The Great Revolution that Provided Solutions Valid for Today

The Great October Socialist Revolution took place 100 years ago November 7. It brought forward the new, ushering in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution. It firmly settled scores with the old, refusing to accept the institutions and state of the old and instead embarking on a path to build the new, a new that empowered the people and advanced the cause of socialism and the emancipation of all humanity. It is an example for all today, as it shows the necessity to address the political, economic and cultural problems of the day and provide them with solutions.

The U.S. Marxist-Leninist Organization salutes the October Revolution and all the workers and communist worldwide defending rights and organizing to follow its path. We are confident that the path forward it forged is a path forward for workers and oppressed peoples today and one that will enable the peoples to emerge victorious.

One feature of the revolution is that it provided a solution to imperialist war, by withdrawing from it. It was said this could not be done, but with the leadership of the Communist Party, the Bolsheviks, it was accomplished. This firm stand against imperialist war, at a time when many forces supported war, was a vital solution. It is valid today, at a time when every effort is being made to justify imperialist war, in the name of the war on terrorism.

It is said the U.S. cannot withdraw and bring troops home because supposedly the peoples are not able to govern themselves, provide themselves with solutions of their own making. Far from it, it is U.S. invasions, wars, aggression and interference that have unleashed violence, destruction and chaos. U.S. wars are no longer for political purposes, which is also why political solutions are not provided. Rather they are for the destruction of the human productive forces. Whatever the U.S. cannot control, it destroys.

The solution required is withdrawal, is *Bringing All U.S. Troops Home Now*, not tomorrow. U.S. wars have solved no problem and the broad demand of the majority in the U.S. is to end them all now. It is to stop funding war, which at present involves almost \$700 billion yearly, even more when all the internal police agencies and prisons are included.

Defending and funding rights abroad and at home is needed. It is a solution the October Revolution also provided, as it advanced the rights of workers, women, peasants and stood with the peoples of the world. This was evident in the sacrifice and leadership provided during socialist construction, in WWII and to all the oppressed peoples fighting for their liberation.

Solutions on the Issue of Democracy

The October Revolution also provided solutions on the issue of democracy, organizing to empower the people themselves. Today it is said that U.S.-style democracy is the best humanity can accomplish, even though its undemocratic and racist character is evident for all to see. The brutal racist police killings continuing with impunity are such that black athletes are once again taking their stand, refusing

to stand for the anthem and taking a knee instead. This action, initially of football players was followed by many, including women's basketball and soccer players, university students, fraternities, little league teams. Its significance lies in targeting the anthem, a symbol of the U.S. state. It is directed not only against Trump, but rather against the impunity of the state.

The U.S. state from its beginning has been based on racism and genocide and impunity to use force against the peoples. This U.S.-style democracy is mired in deep crisis, as is evident in the fact that the election did not resolve conflicts within the ruling circles and nor did it provide legitimacy to the government. On the contrary, the conflicts within the executive and between it and the military are increasing and played out in public, while the rejection of the democracy among the people is increasing.

In this regard, the example provided by the October Revolution in building the Soviets and developing new governing structures at all levels while also developing self-defense committees is one to follow. The revolution did not rely on the old institutions. It did not rely on the notion that if the old institutions are filled with better people, with better values, then democracy will prevail. On the contrary it took up the work of building the new, a democracy of their own making. This too is what is required today in the U.S. The old institutions enshrine the old property relations, the old ensemble of relations that keep the people out of power and keep the war economy going. A new direction for political affairs is needed and it is the working class that can formulate and advance this new direction, guided by its communist party.

Every effort is being made to divert from the need for the new, to embroil everyone in being reactive, to Trump, to the latest investigation, to whatever tweet or message is promoted. We are to be diverted from the crisis of the rich, their democracy, their war economy — and the need for solutions.



As part of this, the attack on communism and its supposed failure are being promoted. This is done to deprive people of an outlook, a way of looking at the world that enables them to bring about the changes needed by the times. Supposedly the undemocratic and corrupt U.S.-style democracy is the End of History, meaning the end of development of politics and political institutions. There is supposedly no alternative to this system, only a choice to make it better — with great pressure at present to run people for office, get more women to run, get more progressives to run, etc.

An undemocratic system that enshrines private interests and their power to rule cannot be made democratic. Its pro-war, anti-social character is imbued in every pore. It is a system stacked against the people and designed to keep them out of power and block any discussion or consideration of their anti-war, pro-social agenda.

A rigged poker game cannot be made better by having better players at the table. It is rigged, that is its quality. The same can be said of U.S.-style democracy, which is in deep crisis and of no use to anyone in this modern day. As the example of the October Revolution brought forward, what is needed is a new democracy, a new direction, one that settles scores with the old rather than conciliating with it.

While those who took up the October Revolution were told their country was too backward to succeed, in the U.S., though conditions are very different, this same chorus that revolution cannot succeed because our working class is too backward can also be heard. Workers are too bought off, or too comfortable, or too ignorant, etc. In fact we are home to a modern and advanced working class. And we are increasingly united with the workers of Canada and Mexico in rejecting the direction of the giant oligopolies. The problem that exists for

solutions is the development of the communist party of the single U.S. working class to lead the struggle for revolution and socialism.

The communist party is painted as undemocratic and an instrument to oppress the workers and communism itself as a failure. The rulers attempt to block the alternative of communism because it deprives them of all their privileges and smashes inhuman relations based on ownership of property. The aim in discrediting communism and spreading endless disinformation about it is to block the working class from discussing and formulating what can be done to build the new, to provide a new direction for political affairs. What is needed to put political power in the hands of the people so that their demand for an anti-war government and pro-social peace economy can be realized. And this insistence that there is no alternative is being done at a time when U.S.-style democracy has been reduced to its police powers. There is no rule of law, only the brutal exercise of police powers. This requires the criminalization of speech and dissent at home and war and aggression abroad.

The U.S. Marxist-Leninist Organization send its revolutionary greetings to the communists of all lands, to the workers of all countries, to all those defending rights and standing against U.S. imperialism. The internationalism of the October Socialist Revolution is also a vital part of the solutions it provided, one that shines bright to this day. We too in the U.S. are playing our part to advance the cause of revolution and socialism and are confident that here and worldwide the tide will turn. Guided by the theory of Marxism-Leninism, the working and oppressed peoples of the world will open the path for the progress of society and the emancipation of humanity. History is on our side and it is the peoples that will emerge victorious.

The Greatest Revolution that Shook the World

Statement of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist)

The greatest revolution that shook the world and ushered in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution took place one hundred years ago on November 7, 1917. The Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) salutes this revolution with full conviction that the transition from capitalism to socialism is inevitable. We are confident that the working and oppressed peoples of the world will find their emancipation only with a repeat of the Great October Socialist Revolution. The conditions of imperialism which gave rise to the Great October Revolution still exist at this time. There is still the contradiction between imperialism, and the oppressed peoples and nations; among the imperialist countries and monopoly groups; and between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. As long as these conditions exist there will be struggle to resolve them.

Today the reactionary forces that overthrew the first state in the hands of the working people are in profound crisis. To divert from their crisis and the need for solutions, they continue to use a Cold War portrayal of communism to deprive people of an outlook on the basis of which they can bring about the changes they require. For these reactionary forces, communism is a brutal dictatorship because it deprives them of all their privileges and smashes inhuman relations based on ownership of property. They consider the corrupt and defunct liberal democracy to be the End of History.

Attempts are made to divert from the deep crisis in which the bourgeois democracy is mired to make sure the working class does not formulate what can be done to change the direction of the economy and create new arrangements that favor the working class and people. Meanwhile, the liberal democracy has been reduced to its police powers. This requires the criminalization of speech and dissent at home and war and aggression abroad.

The Soviet Union played a crucial role in the defeat of Nazi-fascism and Japanese militarism. The victories of World War II were such that the peoples the world over were marching to the drumbeat of peace, freedom and democracy, looking towards communism to affirm their rights and win national liberation. Following World War II, in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean as well as the imperialist heartlands, the reputation of communism was very high. People were making great advances in their struggles for emancipation and to end colonial and imperialist domination. To stem this advance, the Anglo-American imperialists launched the Cold War to snuff out the peoples' struggle for their rights. Institutions of international subversion and aggressive military alliances were set into motion to stop any attempts at progress. A vast international campaign of lies and distortions was launched to sow doubt about communism and the Soviet Union which had given great hope

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and inspiration to all peoples fighting for national liberation and social emancipation all over the world. The imperialist agencies introduced bourgeois politics into the workers' and communist movement. Based on gossips about personalities and events, the aim was and continues to be, to deprive the working class of its own outlook.

To this day, the reactionary forces continue to claim that socialism failed in the Soviet Union because there is some inherent flaw in it. What that flaw is, they do not say. This speculation leads some to suggest that scientific socialism is fine in theory but does not work in practice. How can it be that what is sound in theory does not work in practice? This is an unsound proposition and again they do not explain. The speculators also go to great lengths to convince themselves that socialist revolution and socialist construction are phenomena of the past. Socialism and communism, according to them, are finished once and for all. They suggest that the complete restoration of capitalism in the Russian Federation and elsewhere is an irreversible trend.

These speculators overlook how life unfolds. Dialectics teach that the advance of something necessarily involves overcoming the resistance of the old, and ushering in the new on this basis. Capitalism is old while socialism is new. Only socialism can resolve the contradictions inherent to the present conditions and create the new society.

The bourgeoisie, nonetheless, does not wish to admit that not only do the same conditions of imperialism exist at this time, but that the situation has become worse. The collapse of the Soviet Union contributed to the crisis of capitalism in a big way. All the claims that shock therapy would eliminate the problems of the capitalist system have nothing to show, despite putting much of the blame for these problems on socialism and communism. The conditions in the countries which formed the Soviet Union as well as the former people's democracies in eastern Europe are worsening with the rise of poverty, unemployment, dislocation of the economy and all manner of crime and chaos in political and cultural affairs. This is also the case in the so-called western democracies where the destruction of the social contract and welfare state arrangements and all the ills of modern capitalism are destroying the fabric of the societies. The vain hope dangled in front of the eyes of the working class that the "benefits" of the so-called radical reforms would one day reach the working masses vanished long ago. The living and working conditions of the people continue to steadily deteriorate.

The Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) is of the opinion that socialism suffered a setback because of the failure to bring about the social and political reforms necessary to develop the leading role of the working class in the economic, political, cultural and other affairs of the society. In place of socialist reforms, capitalist reforms were introduced as of the mid-1950s. The content of the relations between people in the process of production was transformed from one which favored the people into one that favored a ruling caste which systematically usurped power by destroying the organs of people's power. A new bourgeoisie arose from the upper echelons of the party, state, army, police and the overthrown exploiting classes.

As the period of retreat of revolution set in worldwide and the initiative passed into the hands of the reactionary forces, even the conception of society was withdrawn by Margaret Thatcher. Along with this retreat, a vicious anti-social offensive was unleashed which has destroyed the arrangements of a civil society whereby the aim of society is to look after the well-being of the people. Nation-wrecking has become the order of the day. Private interests organized into oligopolies have taken over the functions of the state power and run rampant all over the world. It is incumbent upon the working class to take up its leading role by beginning all over again. Starting from the present, the working class is working out a plan of action which serves its own interests and those of the society. It is striving to give rise to a pro-social trend. It has to involve the masses of the people in discussion and debate as to the kind of system which should replace the present rotting system of capitalist wage-slavery and imperialist enslavement, destruction, aggression and war. In this regard, the experience of socialist revolution and construction during the 20th century is crucial to achieving success.

At this time of retreat of revolution, when the inter-imperialist contradictions are sharpening, when more and more peoples and nations are awakening to the dangers posed by imperialism to their countries, and when the working class is raising the banner of the pro-social trend against the bourgeoisie, it is incumbent on all revolutionary Marxist-Leninist forces to work out the theory and practice of the revolution. This is the time to prepare, to get ready for the time when the conditions will be ripe for the decisive battles. During this preparation and while dealing with the problems of theory and practice, the working class must not lose sight of the strategic road, the road opened by the victory of the Great October Revolution guided by Marxism-Leninism. This road is still valid and mandatory for all under the present conditions.

The Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) takes this opportunity to send its revolutionary greetings to the Communists of all lands, to the workers of all countries, to the Cuban people who are fighting in defense of their revolution and to the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea who are fighting for their independence and the reunification of their homeland, to the Vietnamese people and all peoples fighting for the rights of all, all over the world. We salute all fighting forces and call upon them to carry on with confidence for the tide will change and the surging days of a revolutionary flow will come again. Things will turn around and our successes of today will be transformed into final victory.

Guided by the theory of Marxism-Leninism, workers of all countries will be able to work out their own theory and practice according to their own concrete national and international conditions, and mount the barricades of struggle for the victory of world revolution. The working and oppressed peoples of the world will open the path for the progress of society and the emancipation of humanity.

*Hail the 100th Anniversary of the
Great October Socialist Revolution!*

*Support the Struggle of All Working and Oppressed Peoples
and Nations for Their Rights!*

Workers of All Countries, Unite! Glory to Marxism-Leninism!

Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution

V.I. Lenin, 1921

The fourth anniversary of October 25 (November 7) is approaching. The farther that great day recedes from us, the more clearly we see the significance of the proletarian revolution in Russia, and the more deeply we reflect upon the practical experience of our work as a whole. Very briefly and, of course, in very incomplete and rough outline, this significance and experience may be summed up as follows.

The direct and immediate object of the revolution in Russia was a bourgeois-democratic one, namely, to destroy the survivals of medievalism and sweep them away completely, to purge Russia of this barbarism, of this shame, and to remove this immense obstacle to all culture and progress in our country.

And we can justifiably pride ourselves on having carried out that purge with greater determination and much more rapidly, boldly and successfully, and, from the point of view of its effect on the masses, much more widely and deeply, than the great French Revolution over one hundred and twenty-five years ago.

Both the anarchists and the petty-bourgeois democrats (i.e., the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who are the Russian counterparts of that international social type) have talked and are still talking an incredible lot of nonsense about the relation between the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the socialist (that is, proletarian) revolution. The last four years have proved to the hilt that our interpretation of Marxism on this point, and our estimate of the experience of former revolutions were correct. We have consummated the bourgeois-democratic revolution as nobody had done before. We are advancing towards the socialist revolution consciously, firmly and unswervingly, knowing that it is not separated from the bourgeois-democratic revolution by a Chinese Wall, and knowing too that (in the last analysis) struggle alone will determine how far we shall advance, what part of this immense and lofty task we shall accomplish, and to what extent we shall succeed in consolidating our victories. Time will show. But we see even now that a tremendous amount — tremendous for this ruined, exhausted and backward country — has already been done towards the socialist transformation of society.

Let us, however, finish what we have to say about the bourgeois-democratic content of our revolution. Marxists must understand what that means. To explain, let us take a few striking examples.

The bourgeois-democratic content of the revolution means that the social relations (system, institutions) of the country are purged of medievalism, serfdom, feudalism.

What were the chief manifestations, survivals, remnants of serfdom in Russia up to 1917? The monarchy, the system of social estates, landed proprietorship and land tenure, the status of women, religion, and national oppression. Take any one of these Augean stables, which, incidentally, were left largely uncleansed by all the more advanced states when they accomplished their bourgeois-democratic revolutions one hundred and twenty-five, two hundred and fifty and more years ago (1649 in England); take any of these Augean stables, and you will see that we have cleansed them thoroughly. In a matter of ten weeks, from October 25 (November

7), 1917 to January 5, 1918, when the Constituent Assembly was dissolved, we accomplished a thousand times more in this respect than was accomplished by the bourgeois democrats and liberals (the Cadets) and by the petty-bourgeois democrats (the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries) during the eight months they were in power.

Those poltroons, gas-bags, vainglorious Narcissuses and petty Hamlets brandished their wooden swords — but did not even destroy the monarchy! We cleansed out all that monarchist muck as nobody had ever done before. We left not a stone, not a brick of that ancient edifice, the social-estate system (even the most advanced countries, such as Britain, France and Germany, have not completely eliminated the survivals of that system to this day!), standing. We tore out the deep-seated roots of the social-estate system, namely, the remnants of feudalism and serfdom in the system of landownership, to the last. “One may argue” (there are plenty of quill-drivers, Cadets, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries abroad to indulge in such arguments) as to what “in the long run” will be the outcome of the agrarian reform effected by the Great October Revolution. We have no desire at the moment to waste time on such controversies, for we are deciding this, as well as the mass of accompanying controversies, by struggle. But the fact cannot be denied that the petty-bourgeois democrats “compromised” with the landowners, the custodians of the traditions of serfdom, for eight months, while we completely swept the landowners and all their traditions from Russian soil in a few weeks.

Take religion, or the denial of rights to women, or the oppression and inequality of the non-Russian nationalities. These are all problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The vulgar petty-bourgeois democrats talked about them for eight months. In not a single one of the most advanced countries in the world have these questions been completely settled on bourgeois-democratic lines. In our country they have been settled completely by the legislation of the October Revolution. We have fought and are fighting religion in earnest. We have granted all the non-Russian nationalities their own republics or autonomous regions. We in Russia no longer have the base, mean and infamous denial of rights to women or inequality of the sexes, that disgusting survival of feudalism and medievalism, which is being renovated by the avaricious bourgeoisie and the dull-witted and frightened petty bourgeoisie in every other country in the world without exception.

All this goes to make up the content of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. One hundred and fifty and 250 years ago the progressive leaders of that revolution (or of those revolutions, if we consider each national variety of the one general type) promised to rid mankind of medieval privileges, of sex inequality, of state privileges for one religion or another (or “religious ideas,” “the church” in general), and of national inequality. They promised, but did not keep their promises. They could not keep them, for they were hindered by their “respect” — for the “sacred right of private property.” Our proletarian revolution was not afflicted with this accursed “respect” for this thrice-accursed medievalism and for the “sacred right of

private property.”

Reforms a By-Product of Revolutionary Activities

But in order to consolidate the achievements of the bourgeois-democratic revolution for the peoples of Russia, we were obliged to go farther; and we did go farther. We solved the problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in passing, as a “by-product” of our main and genuinely proletarian-revolutionary, socialist activities. We have always said that reforms are a by-product of the revolutionary class struggle. We said — and proved it by deeds — that bourgeois-democratic reforms are a by-product of the proletariat, i.e., of the socialist revolution. Incidentally, the Kautskys, Hilferdings, Martovs, Chernovs, Hillquits, Longuets, MacDonalds, Turatis and other heroes of “Two-and-a-Half” Marxism were incapable of understanding this relation between the bourgeois-democratic and the proletarian-socialist revolutions. The first develops into the second. The second, in passing, solves the problems of the first. The second consolidates the work of the first. Struggle, and struggle alone, decides how far the second succeeds in outgrowing the first.

The Soviet system is one of the most vivid proofs of how the one revolution develops into the other. The Soviet system provides the maximum of democracy for the workers and peasants; at the same time, it marks a break with bourgeois democracy and the rise of a new, epoch-making type of democracy, namely, proletarian democracy, or the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Let the curs and swine of the moribund bourgeoisie and of the petty-bourgeois democrats who trail behind them heap imprecations, abuse and derision upon our heads for our reverses and mistakes in the work of building up our Soviet system. We do not forget for a moment that we have committed and are committing numerous mistakes and are suffering numerous reverses. How can reverses and mistakes be avoided in a matter so new in the history of the world as the building of an unprecedented type of state edifice! We shall work steadfastly to set our reverses and mistakes right and to improve our practical application of Soviet principles, which is still very, very far from being perfect. But we have a right to be and are proud that to us has fallen the good fortune to begin the building of a Soviet state, and thereby to usher in a new era in world history, the era of the rule of a new class, a class which is oppressed in every capitalist country, but which everywhere is marching forward towards a new life, towards victory over the bourgeoisie, towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, towards the emancipation of mankind from the yoke of capital and from imperialist wars.

Revolution of the Slaves Against the Slave Owners

The question of imperialist wars, of the international policy of finance capital which now dominates the whole world, a policy that must inevitably engender new imperialist wars, that must inevitably cause an extreme intensification of national oppression, pillage and the strangulation of weak and small nationalities by a handful of “advanced” powers — that question has been the keystone of all policy in all the countries of the globe since 1914. It is a question of life and death for millions upon millions of people. It is a question of whether 20,000,000 people (as compared with the 10,000,000 who were killed in the war of 1914-18 and in the supplementary

“minor” wars that are still going on) are to be slaughtered in the next imperialist war, which the bourgeoisie are preparing, and which is growing out of capitalism before our very eyes.

It is a question of whether in that future war, which is inevitable (if capitalism continues to exist), 60,000,000 people are to be maimed (compared with the 30,000,000 maimed in 1914-18). In this question, too, our October Revolution marked the beginning of a new era in world history. The lackeys of the bourgeoisie and its yes-men — the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, and the petty-bourgeois, allegedly “socialist,” democrats all over the world — derided our slogan “convert the imperialist war into a civil war.” But that slogan proved to be the truth — it was the only truth, unpleasant, blunt, naked and brutal, but nevertheless the truth, as against the host of most refined jingoist and pacifist lies. Those lies are being dispelled. The Brest peace has been exposed. And with every passing day the significance and consequences of a peace that is even worse than the Brest peace — the peace of Versailles — are being more relentlessly exposed. And the millions who are thinking about the causes of the recent war and of the approaching future war are more and more clearly realizing the grim and inexorable truth that it is impossible to escape imperialist war, and imperialist peace (if the old orthography were still in use, I would have written the word *mir* in two ways, to give it both its meanings) [In Russian, the word *mir* has two meanings (world and peace) and had two different spellings in the old orthography. — Translator] which inevitably engenders imperialist war, that it is impossible to escape that inferno, except by a Bolshevik struggle and a Bolshevik revolution.

Let the bourgeoisie and the pacifists, the generals and the petty bourgeoisie, the capitalists and the philistines, the pious Christians and the knights of the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals vent their fury against that revolution. No torrents of abuse, calumnies and lies can enable them to conceal the historic fact that for the first time in hundreds and thousands of years the slaves have replied to a war between slave-owners by openly proclaiming the slogan: “Convert this war between slave-owners for the division of their loot into a war of the slaves of all nations against the slave-owners of all nations.”

For the first time in hundreds and thousands of years that slogan has grown from a vague and helpless waiting into a clear and definite political program, into an effective struggle waged by millions of oppressed people under the leadership of the proletariat; it has grown into the first victory of the proletariat, the first victory in the struggle to abolish war and to unite the workers of all countries against the united bourgeoisie of different nations, against the bourgeoisie that makes peace and war at the expense of the slaves of capital, the wage-workers, the peasants, the working people.

This first victory is not yet the final victory, and it was achieved by our October Revolution at the price of incredible difficulties and hardships, at the price of unprecedented suffering, accompanied by a series of serious reverses and mistakes on our part. How could a single backward people be expected to frustrate the imperialist wars of the most powerful and most developed countries of the world without sustaining reverses and without committing mistakes! We are not afraid to admit our mistakes and shall examine them dispassionately in order to learn how to correct them. But the fact remains

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that for the first time in hundreds and thousands of years the promise “to reply” to war between the slave-owners by a revolution of the slaves directed against all the slave-owners has been completely fulfilled -- and is being fulfilled despite all difficulties.

We have made the start. When, at what date and time, and the proletarians of which nation will complete this process is not important. The important thing is that the ice has been broken; the road is open, the way has been shown.

Gentlemen, capitalists of all countries, keep up your hypocritical pretence of “defending the fatherland” — the Japanese fatherland against the American, the American against the Japanese, the French against the British, and so forth! Gentlemen, knights of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals, pacifist petty bourgeoisie and philistines of the entire world, go on “evading” the question of how to combat imperialist wars...The first Bolshevik revolution has wrested the first hundred million people of this earth from the clutches of imperialist war and the imperialist world. Subsequent revolutions will deliver the rest of mankind from such wars and from such a world.

Laying Economic Foundations for the New

Our last, but most important and most difficult task, the one we have done least about, is economic development, the laying of economic foundations for the new, socialist edifice on the site of the demolished feudal edifice and the semi-demolished capitalist edifice. It is in this most important and most difficult task that we have sustained the greatest number of reverses and have made most mistakes. How could anyone expect that a task so new to the world could be begun without reverses and without mistakes! But we have begun it. We shall continue it. At this very moment we are, by our New Economic Policy, correcting a number of our mistakes. We are learning how to continue erecting the socialist edifice in a small-peasant country without committing such mistakes.

The difficulties are immense. But we are accustomed to grappling with immense difficulties. Not for nothing do our enemies call us “stone-hard” and exponents of a “firm line policy.” But we have also learned, at least to some extent, another art that is essential in revolution, namely, flexibility, the ability to effect swift and sudden changes of tactics if changes in objective conditions demand them, and to choose another path for the achievement of our goal if the former path proves to be inexpedient or impossible at the given moment.

Borne along on the crest of the wave of enthusiasm, rousing first the political enthusiasm and then the military enthusiasm of the people, we expected to accomplish economic tasks just as great as the political and military tasks we had accomplished by relying directly on this enthusiasm. We expected — or perhaps it would be truer to say that we presumed without having given it adequate consideration — to be able to organize the state production and the state distribution of products on communist lines in a small-peasant country directly as ordered by the proletarian state. Experience has proved that we were wrong. It appears that a number of transitional stages were necessary — state capitalism and socialism — in order to prepare — to prepare by many years of effort — for the transition to communism. Not directly relying on enthusiasm, but aided by the enthusiasm engendered by the great revolution, and on the basis of personal

interest, personal incentive and business principles, we must first set to work in this small peasant country to build



solid gangways to socialism by way of state capitalism. Otherwise we shall never get to communism, we shall never bring scores of millions of people to communism. That is what experience, the objective course of the development of the revolution, has taught us.

And we, who during these three or four years have learned a little to make abrupt changes (when abrupt changes are needed), have begun zealously, attentively and sedulously (although still not zealously enough) to learn to make a new change of front, namely, the New Economic Policy. The proletarian state must become a cautious, assiduous and shrewd “businessman,” a punctilious wholesale merchant — otherwise it will never succeed in putting this small-peasant country economically on its feet. Under existing conditions, living as we are side by side with the capitalist (for the time being capitalist) West, there is no other way of progressing to communism.

A wholesale merchant seems to be an economic type as remote from communism as heaven from earth. But that is one of the contradictions which, in actual life, lead from a small-peasant economy via state capitalism to socialism. Personal incentive will step up production; we must increase production first and and at all costs. Wholesale trade economically unites millions of small peasants: it gives them a personal incentive, links them up and leads them to the next step, namely, to various forms of association and alliance in the process of production itself.

We have already started the necessary changes in our economic policy and already have some successes to our credit; true, they are small and partial, but nonetheless they are successes. In this new field of “tuition” we are already finishing our preparatory class. By persistent and assiduous study, by making practical experience the test of every step we take, by not fearing to alter over and over again what we have already begun, by correcting our mistakes and most carefully analyzing their significance, we shall pass to the higher classes. We shall go through the whole “course,” although the present state of world economics and world politics has made that course much longer and much more difficult than we would have liked. No matter at what cost, no matter how severe the hardships of the transition period may be — despite disaster, famine and ruin — we shall not flinch; we shall triumphantly carry our cause to its goal.

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