

Buffalo Forum



Local Publication of the
U.S. Marxist-Leninist Organization

Workers of all countries, unite!

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April 21, 2017

Vol. 21 #4

BUFFALO JOINS DEMONSTRATIONS IN 50 CITIES

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



Immediately after the Trump administration bombed Syria on April 6, more than 50 demonstrations were organized on April 7 and in the following days in cities and towns across the country. Buffalo was among those taking action, with demonstrators lining the sidewalk at Elmwood and Bidwell. Many cars honked in support of the demand, *Hands Off Syria!* Signs also

included the call to organize for an anti-war government as a just aim of the people to secure peace and contribute to the well being of the peoples here and abroad.

All the major cities, from Tampa to Washington, DC to New York City, to Boston, to Chicago, Minneapolis, Albuquerque, Houston, Los Angeles and more joined in **Actions Oppose U.S. Wars • 4**

APRIL 29 ACTIONS

To Protect Mother Earth, End Criminal U.S. Wars

The Pentagon is the world's single largest polluter and single largest user of oil. U.S. wars are crimes, against the peoples and the environment. This makes stopping the U.S. war machine one of the most significant actions to take to protect both the natural and

human environment. U.S. criminal wars are harmful to both. Their continuation and expansion poses even greater threats to all, at home and abroad.

Buffalonians will be joining many thousands demonstrating

April 29 Actions • 3

NYC, DC, CITIES NATIONWIDE

Join May Day Actions

Tens of thousands of workers and youth, many immigrants, both documented and undocumented, are organizing for actions on May 1, International Day of Working Class Unity and Struggle. The call has gone out to take the day off from work and from school and join in united actions to defend the rights of immigrants and all

workers. Demonstrations are planned in hundreds of cities and town on Monday, May 1, including all the major cities across the country, east, west, north and south. It is to be a day without immigrants, a day of united struggle expressing the collective strength in defense of rights. It is a day in **Join May Day Actions • 12**

END U.S. FUNDING FOR ISRAELI CRIMES

Support Palestinian Prisoners' Hunger Strike Resistance Is a Right!

As many as 1,700 Palestinian political prisoners are now on a mass hunger strike that began on April 17, Palestinian Prisoners' Day. At present, a total of 6,440 Palestinians are held in Israeli jails, including many children and youth, detained for even the smallest acts of defiance against the occupation. Addameer, the Prisoner

Support and Human Rights Association, informs that more than 800,000 Palestinians have been imprisoned or detained by Israel over the past 50 years.

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

"The hunger striking prisoners'

demands include: family visits, proper medical care, end to Israel's practice of detaining Palestinians without charge or trial in so-called administrative detention and stopping the use of isolation [solitary confinement]. As the strike begins, Addameer Prisoner Support urges supporters

Support Palestinian Hunger Strikers • 10

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The national paper of the U.S. Marxist-Leninist Organization. VOR works to raise the level of political discussion in society by taking stands that provide a way forward, oppose the chauvinism and racism of the U.S. state, and advance the interests of the working class and people. VOR also reports on the organizing work to build the alternative by Creating Politics of Empowerment. Together It Can Be Done! Read, write and distribute VOR.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

WATER WALKERS DEFEND MOTHER EARTH

Friday April 21, 6pm

**Cattaraugus Creek Water Walkers — Native Foods Potluck Dinner
and Social at the Saylor Community Building
1520 NY-438 Irving, NY 14081**

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1873752522885594/>

Saturday April 22 Water Walk

Water is Life Earth Day, Sunrise to Sunset

**Sunrise: Water Ceremony at 6am 10282 Rock Springs Road, West
Valley, NY Walk starts West Valley Nuclear Waste Facility To Mouth
of Cattaraugus Creek at Sunset Bay**

Potluck dinner to follow.



MARCH FOR SCIENCE

SCIENCE FOR PEACE AND PROGRESS NOT WAR

April 22, 1pm Soldiers Circle, March to Delaware Park for Rally

from the March for Science webpage:

The March for Science is the first step of a global movement to defend the vital role science plays in our health, safety, economies, and governments. The March for Science champions robustly funded and publicly communicated science. We unite as a diverse, nonpartisan group to call for science that upholds the common good and for political leaders and policy makers to enact evidence based policies in the public interest.

The March for Science is a celebration of science. It is not only about scientists and politicians; it is about the very real role that science plays in each of our lives and the need to respect and encourage research that gives us insight into the world.

There is no Planet B. Join the #MarchForScience.

I • APRIL 29 ACTIONS

in Washington, DC and worldwide April 29, and again on May 1, the demand to *Defend the Rights of All Abroad and at Home, Stop U.S. Wars! Bring All Troops Home Now!* are essential.

Stopping the war machine is a task that falls primarily to the people of the U.S. and is integral to efforts to contend with climate change. It is also crucial to efforts to build fraternal relations of mutual respect and benefit with the peoples of the world. The issues of the natural environment cannot be separated from the issues of U.S. wars and empire building. It is a matter of humanizing both the natural and human environment. This can be done in part by taking up the aim to develop an anti-war government, where we the people govern and decide. The broad sentiment of the people here and abroad is against war and for rights; it is against U.S. aggression and for solving problems without the use of force, solving them by removing U.S. troops and utilizing dialogue, diplomacy and actions that defend rights.

We are currently contending with a situation where a government of laws — with a functioning Congress and political parties and rule of law — no longer exists.

Instead there is a government of police powers, which are arbitrary and where government acts with unfettered impunity. In this situation, appealing to a dysfunctional Congress has little place. This is evident in the continued broad support by Congress for funding the war machine and failure, since the advent of nuclear weapons, to exercise its power to declare war. This power has long been usurped by the presidency, as Obama's drone warfare and Trump's recent bombings of Syria and Afghanistan show. These police powers are also evident in Trump's executive orders, which continue in large part to be implemented on the ground — despite court rulings to the contrary. Many, including citizens, are being detained, harassed and profiled, at the border. ICE is profiling and setting up checkpoints on the streets of New York, as well as detaining people at courthouses from New Jersey to Los Angeles. The situation demands developing the independent politics and agenda of the people, in their own interests.

Demonstrations can play a vital role in strengthening the organized character of resistance and in building common thinking



on the way forward. To do so, the content of what we are for is essential. And we are for a government that opposes war, that stops militarization of life, stops impunity for crimes abroad and at home and stands up for the rights of all. We are for an antiwar government and taking steps today in that direction — including raising the necessity for such a government at the many actions occurring across the country. It includes standing against the military in our schools. It includes advancing a stand of principle against all U.S. aggression, whether against Syria, Korea, Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq — all U.S. aggression. Taking up the aim of an anti-war government serves both to block the U.S. war machine and protect our Mother Earth. Join these efforts now!

Peoples Climate March Will Surround the White House

People's Climate Movement, April 18, 2017

The Peoples Climate March announced it will “literally” surround the White House as part of its mass mobilization in Washington, DC on Saturday, April 29th. Tens of thousands are expected to converge on DC from virtually every state in the country. In addition, more than 290 sister marches are planned across the country and around the world.

“At 2pm on April 29, tens of thousands of people will encircle the White House in Washington D.C. to directly confront Donald Trump and challenge those who are pursuing a right-wing agenda that destroys our environment while favoring corporations and the 1 percent over workers and communities,” said Paul Getsos, National Coordinator for the Peoples Climate Movement. “This administration continues waging attacks on immigrants, Muslims, people of color and LGBTQIA people everyday.

This moment will be the highlight of a day that will begin with a march leading from the Capital to the Washington Monument.”

The Peoples Climate March will begin near the Capitol, travel up Pennsylvania Avenue, and then surround the White House Grounds from 15th Street in the East to 17th Street in the West, and Pennsylvania Avenue in the North to Constitution Avenue in the South. The march will close with a post march rally, concert and gathering at the Washington Monument.

“After 100 days of this administration, it's our time to show our resilience, to show that we're still here, that we're only getting stronger, that we're multiplying and that we're never giving up on justice, or on the people,” said Angela Adrar, executive director of the Climate Justice Alliance. “The Peoples Climate March is about building and deepening connections and

linking the intersectionality we need in this moment. On April 30th, our movement will be stronger and more prepared to rise than on April 29th but we will need everyone to rise together.”

“Around this country, working people understand that we don't have to choose between good jobs and a clean environment; we can and must have both,” said Kim Glas, executive director of the BlueGreen Alliance. “We will build a clean economy, where everyone can breathe their air and drink their water and that leaves no one behind.”

(The Peoples Climate Movement is a coalition of indigenous, youth, Latino, environmental, racial justice, economic justice, faith-based and immigrant groups and labor unions demanding an economy and a government that works for working people and the planet.)

I • ACTIONS OPPOSE U.S. WARS

demanding an end to U.S. bombings of Syria and to *Bring All U.S. Troops Home Now!* Many signs opposed all U.S. wars as crimes against the peoples and rejected government claims that bombing is a “humanitarian” action.

Conditions in Syria, like those in Yemen, Iraq and Afghanistan, have greatly worsened with U.S. occupations and bombings. The U.S. is largely responsible for the massive refugee crisis and for ongoing crimes. The demonstrations reflect the anti-war sentiment of the peoples and their drive to resolve problems without the use of force.

Many also took the stand to defend Syrian sovereignty and the right of the people of Syria to determine their own affairs without U.S. interference. It is up to the people of each country to resolve problems of governance, including in the U.S. More bombings, escalating military actions, threatening possible world war, all solve no problem. As the actions brought out, what is needed is to *Bring All U.S. Troops Home Now!*

This was further confirmed in demonstrations to oppose U.S. threats against Korea, particularly putting the U.S. THAAD missile system in south Korea. A successful national tour provided information about the broad resistance in south Korea to THAAD and the threat it poses to the region — gaining support across the country.



On-going demonstrations by Koreans and many worldwide against U.S. threats of a first strike nuclear action against Korea also underline the need to end the U.S. occupation of Korea and sign a peace treaty as steps towards peace.

Additional demonstrations opposed the U.S. bombing of Afghanistan using a massive bomb (MOAB) that killed close to 100 people, many civilians. Emergency protests beginning on April 14 took place around the world — in Kabul, Afghanistan as well as in Boston, New York City, Washington, DC, Minneapolis, Los Angeles and in Toronto, London, and Vienna.

Referring to the MOAB, an April 14 statement issued by Afghans United for Justice pointed out:

“The bomb is not just a weapon to target people underground. It is a tool for psychological warfare. It is a weapon of mass destruction. It is a blast that destroys whatever is in its path for miles and causes severe hearing damage. At the time of this writing, an ongoing fire still rages due to the blast.

“Along with the short-term damage and injury, Nangarhar province will be affected for generations to come from the toxic effects left behind by the bomb in its air, water, and soil. War is an environmental and health issue that affects us all. Our entire planet is saturated by toxins due to these bombings in the long term because we share the same atmosphere.

“Though the U.S. military, in collaboration with the Afghan government, claimed to target only ISIS operatives, the truth is that the innocent people living in Nangarhar will endure the effects of this bomb for decades to come. [...]

“This bomb, like the drones, air strikes, night raids, and the destruction that came before it, is used as a tool for



warfare that prevents the stability of people living in provinces all across the country. We must demand accountability for this war crime. Afghans have suffered 16 years of this so-called ‘War on Terror’ illegally waged by the US and its allies. This war has worsened the chances for world peace. The MOAB was nicknamed as the ‘Mother Of All Bombs’ but there is nothing mothering about this or any bomb. Mothering is about reproducing and protecting life — not killing and destroying it.

“In 2016, when President Obama was still in office, the U.S. dropped at least 1,337 bombs on Afghanistan, while the international community claimed the country was safe and forced thousands of refugees to return. And since Donald Trump took office, there were more than 150 strikes dropped on Afghanistan, with more than 100 airstrikes in just the first two weeks of April. The use of the MOAB bomb signals an escalation in an already protracted and vicious war that has cost Afghans their homeland.”

As many continue plans to strengthen the antiwar movement, through demonstrations, conferences and forums to encourage serious political discussion, work to build the alternative of an anti-war government is increasing.

FIGHT FOR AN ANTI-WAR GOVERNMENT



The 'Mother Of All Bombs' Is Big, Deadly – And Will Not Lead to Peace

Medea Benjamin, CodePink for Peace

Trump dropped the biggest non-nuclear bomb ever used in Afghanistan on Thursday. Just where is this escalation going?

"I'm really very good at war. I love war, in a certain way," bragged candidate Donald Trump at a campaign rally in Iowa. With the escalation of US military involvement in Syria, the record number of drone attacks in Yemen, more U.S. troops being sent to the Middle East and, now, the dropping of a massive bomb in Afghanistan, it looks like Trump may indeed love war. Or at least, love "playing" war.

In Syria, Trump went for 59 Tomahawk missiles. Now, in Afghanistan, he has opted for a "super weapon", the second largest of the U.S. military's non-nuclear bombs. This 21,600-pound explosive, never before used in combat, was used to blast a bunch of tunnels and caves in an Afghan province near the border of Pakistan.

Officially called a Massive Ordnance Air Blast Bomb (MOAB), its nickname – "the mother of all bombs" – reeks of misogyny, as no mother loves bombs.

The military is still assessing the results of the MOAB blast and insists that it "took every precaution to avoid civilian casualties." But given this weapon's colossal size and power (simulator calculations show the effects of the bomb reaching as far as a mile in each direction), damage to the surrounding area is probably enormous.

In an unconfirmed report, a parliamentarian from Nangarhar, Esmatullah Shinwari, said locals had told him one teacher and his young son had been killed. One man, the MP recounted, had told him before the phone lines went down: "I have grown up in the war, and I have heard different kinds of explosions through 30 years: suicide attacks, earthquakes different kinds of blasts. I have never heard anything like this."

The idea that the U.S. military can vanquish the enemy with ferocious air power is certainly not new, but history tells a different story. The U.S. military dropped over seven million tons of

explosives in south-east Asia and still lost the Vietnam war.

In the first days of the Afghan war, we were told that U.S. airpower was no match for the "ragtag, poor, uneducated Taliban religious fanatics." Indeed, we saw the precursor to the MOAB used right after the U.S. invasion in 2001. It was the so-called Daisy Cutter, named after the shape of the crater it leaves, weighing 15,000 pounds.

The U.S. military also dropped 5,000-pound bunker busters to blow up caves where Osama bin Laden was hiding in the Tora Bora mountains. The Bush administration bragged that this awesome airpower would ensure the Taliban's demise. That was 16 years ago, and now the U.S. military is not only fighting the Taliban but ISIS, which first appeared in 2014.

So, are we really supposed to believe that releasing the deadly power of the MOAB will be a game changer? What will happen when it becomes clear, yet again, that airpower is not enough? There are already about 8,500 U.S. troops in Afghanistan. Will Trump drag us deeper into this endless war by granting the U.S. Afghan commander, General John Nicholson, his request for several thousand more troops? [...]

This "mother of all bombs" and Trump's newfound penchant for war will



not help Afghan mothers, many of whom are widows struggling to take care of their families after their husbands have been killed. The \$16 million cost of this one explosion could have provided over 50 million meals for Afghan children.

Alternatively, with Trump's original playbook of "America First" – a phrase which originated with isolationists and Nazi sympathizers in the 1940s – the money spent on this one bomb could have helped American moms by easing Trump's proposed cuts in the after-school programs so critical for their children.

Trump is careening the world down a reckless and dangerous path, not only deepening U.S. involvement in ongoing conflicts but threatening new ones with nuclear powers from Russia to North Korea.

Perhaps it is time for a new resistance movement called MOAB: the Mothers of All Babies, where women come together to stop this misogynist, war-loving president from blowing up all our babies by starting World War III.

White House Rally Opposes Threats of a New War Against Korea

Coalition of Korean Americans

The Task Force to Stop THAAD in Korea and Militarism in Asia and the Pacific (StopTHAAD.org) has just completed a nationwide speaking tour featuring the Rev. Sounghey Kim, co-chair of the Seongju Struggle Committee to Stop THAAD deployment, to increase knowledge among people in the United States about the struggle against the deployment of the U.S. THAAD missile system to Korea.

The tour visited nine cities, including a demonstration outside the White House.

Anti-war activists, members of the Korean American community, and people who have been newly brought in to the progressive movement by the wave of anti-Trump actions were eager to learn more about this crucial international issue and show solidarity with the struggle of the people of Korea as the danger of a new Korean War escalates.

Rev. Sounghey Kim has been at the forefront of the fight against the THAAD deployment since July 2016, when the U.S. and South Korean governments first

announced the deployment plan. She has been a part of the daily candlelight protests in Seongju and the recent overnight prayer sit-in's on Jinbat Bridge, which leads to the site selected for the THAAD deployment.

The Task Force urges the U.S. government to pursue all possible avenues for reducing tensions on the Korean peninsula by re-engaging in diplomacy with North Korea and to resolve conflicts in the Asia-Pacific region peacefully, through diplomacy and dialogue.



No to U.S. Missile Defense in Korea

StopTHAAD.org

The United States intends to deploy its Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system in South Korea. The announcement, however, has intensified military tension in the Asia Pacific region and huge numbers of South Korean people are protesting this deployment.

Stop THAAD in Korea and Militarism in Asia and the Pacific is a coalition of U.S. based organizations working to build a movement to stop THAAD deployment in South Korea, and pressing for diplomatic engagement to reduce militarization and tensions throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

- We urge the U.S. government to rescind its decision on THAAD deployment in South Korea.
- We urge the U.S. government to pursue all possible avenues for reducing tensions on the Korean peninsula by re-engaging in diplomacy with North Korea.
- We urge the U.S. government to resolve

conflicts in the Asia-Pacific region peacefully, through diplomacy and dialogue.

In addition to the five member organizations of the Task Force to Stop THAAD in Korea and Militarism in Asia and the Pacific, 90 organizations and 80 individuals have signed their names in endorsement of the "No U.S. Missile Defense in Korea" statement below.

No to U.S. THAAD Missile System

On July 7, 2016, the U.S. and South Korean governments announced a joint decision to deploy the U.S. Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile system in South Korea.

The two governments assert, without serious evidence and contrary to expert opinion, that the THAAD system will protect South Korea from the threat of North Korean missiles. For example, the U.S. Congressional Research Service finds that THAAD is unlikely to shield South Korea

since it is designed to counter high altitude missiles, not those that North Korea would likely use against South Korean targets.

Moreover, the decision to deploy THAAD in South Korea, and to continue with last summer's U.S.-South Korea war games, occurred in spite of offers by North Korea to freeze its nuclear weapons programs if Washington and Seoul would stop the war games. North Korea has since continued testing its ballistic missiles; it conducted its fifth nuclear explosion, September 9, 2016, and continues to pursue its goal of fitting a nuclear warhead on top of an ICBM missile.

The U.S. THAAD deployment in South Korea is part of the U.S. "pivot" to the Asia Pacific. It expands the already significant network of U.S. "missile defense" systems encircling China and Russia. These systems give the United States a significant, although fleeting, military advantage in any future

No U.S. Missile Defense in Korea • 8

Dialogue With North Korea Is The Only Sensible Path

Korea Policy Institute

An Interview with Hyun Lee of Zoom in Korea

Janine Jackson: The *Washington Post* suggests that people in Seattle and San Francisco “should be worried” about being hit by a ballistic missile from North Korea, citing an analyst who described such an event, a bit cryptically, as “a looming threat but not a current threat.” We’re joined now by writer and activist Hyun Lee of Zoom in Korea, a project of the Solidarity Committee for Democracy and Peace in Korea. She’s also a Fellow at the Korea Policy Institute.

What, historically, have been the US’s intentions or goals with regard to North Korea, and have those changed?

Hyun Lee: So, many people in the United States do not realize that the U.S. has maintained the threat of a nuclear attack

against North Korea for decades. From 1958 to 1991, the U.S. had hundreds of nuclear weapons in the southern half of the Korean peninsula, in South Korea. So at that time, North Korea’s countermeasure to deter a U.S. nuclear attack was to forward deploy all of its conventional forces near the DMZ.

In 2001, when George W. Bush came to power, many things changed. There were technological advancements, and he also made doctrinal changes, centered around very high-tech, precision-capable weapons that gave the US preemptive strike advantage. He named North Korea part of the “Axis of Evil.” He also listed North Korea as one of seven countries that were potential targets for a US preemptive

strike in the US Nuclear Posture Review. So then, in response to that, North Korea had to develop a new kind of deterrent, and that’s when it seriously turned to developing nuclear weapons, and its first nuclear test was in 2006.

Since that time, what the United States has tried to do is stall North Korea’s nuclear development, tying it up through negotiations that basically went nowhere, at the same time constantly threatening to bring about North Korea’s collapse, through sanctions that were crippling its economy, and also military exercises that were very provocative. They simulate war plans that now include the decapitation of the North Korean leadership, and include

Dialogue with north Korea • 9

8 • NO U.S. MISSILE DEFENSE IN KOREA

confrontation since they give the United States military the potential to neutralize an opponent’s ability to retaliate. The expansion of this network appears to reflect a broader U.S. decision to change its military posture from one of deterrence to that of first strike.

The determination of the US government to use an expanding regional military presence to boost its regional political influence comes at high cost. For example, this strategy intensifies regional military tensions, fuels a new arms race, and increases the possibility of a new war on the Korean peninsula. In doing so, it also undermines the national sovereignty and democratic aspirations of people in other countries, in this instance those in South Korea.

A growing number of South Koreans are fighting to block deployment of the THAAD system in their country. They correctly fear that its deployment will draw their country into an anti-Chinese alliance with the United States and Japan, embolden militaristic and anti-democratic political forces in their own country, and exacerbate tensions between North and South Korea. They also worry about

the negative health effects that appear associated with the operation of the THAAD radar system. Also of concern is the cost of the THAAD system—estimated at \$1.3 billion, plus an additional \$22 million each year for operating and sustaining it — will be borne by South Korean and U.S. taxpayers.

Very little is known in the United States about THAAD and the opposition of South Koreans to its deployment in their country, and of recent diplomatic overtures by North Korea to reduce tensions on the peninsula. Yet, its deployment should also be of concern to people in the United States. We also will suffer if our country again goes to war. And even if the worst is avoided, the continuing development of new and more destructive weapons systems draws precious resources away



from needed domestic social programs.

After decades of disastrous military engagements abroad, we need a new approach. We urge the U.S. government to move away from policies that escalate military tension and redraw Cold War-era lines in favor of policies that seek to resolve conflicts, peacefully, through diplomacy and dialogue. Toward that end, we urge the U.S. government to rescind its decision on THAAD deployment in South Korea, and to pursue all possible avenues for reducing tensions on the Korean peninsula by re-engaging in diplomacy with north Korea.

8 • DIALOGUE WITH NORTH KOREA

nuclear first strike.

US/North Korean relations during the Obama administration was a contest between Obama's policy of "strategic patience," which is basically waiting and preparing for the eventual collapse of the North Korean regime, and then North Korea's policy called byungjin, which was making parallel progress in economic development, and also developing its nuclear deterrence capability.

Towards the end of Obama's presidency, the consensus in Washington was that strategic patience had basically failed. North Korea obviously has not collapsed. On the contrary, many people who have been there recently come back and report that they've made progress in their economic development, and now experts are warning that North Korea will soon have, if it doesn't already have, the capability of launching an ICBM with a miniaturized nuclear warhead that can strike the continental United States. Kim Jong-Un's New Year's speech earlier this year contained a message that basically they were ready to test-launch an ICBM.

So that is basically how we got to this situation. The U.S. and South Korean militaries are now developing and also deploying missile defense capability. The aim of that is basically neutralizing North Korea's nuclear weapons. So now, in response to that, what North Korea is doing is developing countermeasures that can evade the missile defense system, and that is what the recent missile tests have been about. It is this basic back-and-forth of U.S. developing nuclear first-strike capabilities, and North Korea developing deterrence capabilities.

And we have become very confused in the United States, because the mainstream media like to exaggerate the North Korean nuclear threat, but we never get news of what the U.S. has been doing over the past decades. And we should be very clear that what this is all about is actually U.S. nuclear first-strike advantage against North

Korea, and North Korea reacting to that by developing its deterrence capability.

JJ: In the U.S. media, as you have said, it is always North Korea taking the provocative action and the U.S. responding, and that is getting it backwards, you think.

HL: You know, there is a double standard in U.S. condemnation of North Korean missile tests, because the U.S. also continuously tests ballistic missiles. In 2015 alone, the U.S. flight-tested the Minuteman 3 ICBM from California, from the Vandenberg Air Force Base, five times in 2015 alone. So, I mean, every country has a sovereign right to test its weapons capability. That is how you know if it works or not, and that is precisely what North Korea is doing. So we should also note that there is a double standard there. [...]

China has made very clear to the United States that if it wants cooperation in North Korea, it should first reverse its very controversial decision on the deployment of the THAAD anti-missile system in South Korea, that is right now in the process of being deployed, and it is a very controversial issue. It probably will be on the agenda of the summit this weekend. China considers the THAAD system, based in South Korea, a threat to its security, because the radar that comes with the system can be used for surveillance activity on Chinese missiles.

And so far, the Trump administration has been very aggressive in pushing THAAD deployment forward. Meanwhile, people in South Korea have been opposed to it, and are protesting every day outside the deployment site. [...]

JJ: That moves me to the final question, because I would like to talk about other



ways forward. We know media get into saber-rattling mode, and it gets very difficult to hear other voices. What possible ways forward do you see for those who seek an end to the conflict?

HL: The only sensible path at this point is dialogue: sitting down with North Korea and coming up with a fundamental solution to the crisis. We should note that last year in July, North Korea basically put out a statement that was not picked up or noticed by the Western media. But it laid out the terms for denuclearization, and all of the conditions that it laid out had to do with removing the threat to its sovereignty that is posed by U.S. nuclear weapons. That gives an indication that that is what the North Koreans are fundamentally interested in resolving.

So a fundamental solution in my mind would be, first of all, ending the annual provocative war exercises that the United States military does every year in South Korea, abandoning the U.S. nuclear first-strike prerogative, and then signing a peace treaty that will bring closure to the unended Korean War, eventually leading to the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the Korean peninsula.

In exchange, North Korea would halt its nuclear weapons development — meaning no more tests, no more nuclear tests or no more missile tests, basically capping it — and a commitment to nonproliferation. In my mind, that is the only sensible path to resolve the current situation.

*Visit our website: **usmlo.org***

CALL TO ORGANIZE:

Palestinian Prisoners Week of Action – April 14 to 24

Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network

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

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

There are approximately 7,000 Palestinian political prisoners behind Israeli bars today: women, men, children and elders. Nearly 600 of them are held in administrative detention, imprisonment without charge or trial, while others face military courts with a conviction rate of over 90%. Hundreds of Palestinian children, as young as 12 years old, are held in Israeli prisons. Palestinian political leaders, including PFLP General Secretary Ahmad Sa'adat, Fateh leader Marwan Barghouti, and Samira Halaiqa and 11 more members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, are held behind bars.

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

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

End U.S. Funding for Israel

Every year, the United States provides over \$3 billion in military aid to Israel. The

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

Corporations like Hewlett-Packard profit from the imprisonment of Palestinians; HP corporations have contracts to run and maintain the biometric ID system that subjects Palestinians to checkpoints and the Apartheid Wall, as well as the databases of the Israel Prison Service. British-Danish security corporation G4S sold off its Israeli subsidiary after massive BDS pressure internationally, but continues to invest in the Israeli police's training institute, Policity. And it continues to profit from the deportation of migrants and imprisonment of children in the US, Britain and elsewhere, among the prison corporations that profit from the

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of justice around the world to take action to support the Palestinian prisoners whose bodies and lives are on the line for freedom and dignity.

"The issue of Palestinian prisoners and detainees held in Israeli prisons and detention centers transcends one of individual human rights; it is also one of collective rights of an entire people — the Palestinian people, who continue to be deprived of the right to self-determination and sovereignty — basic fundamentals of international law. All Palestinian political prisoners — regardless of their alleged political affiliations or charges — are entitled to fair trial guarantees under international humanitarian law and international human rights laws. Palestinian political prisoners

and detainees are systematically subjected to torture and ill-treatment with continued impunity — highlighting the need for more solidarity actions from people around the globe to call for immediate release of all Palestinian political prisoners, long-denied their basic rights."

The U.S. is directly responsible for the continued Israeli occupation of Palestine, providing billions in military funding and unending political backing and justifying repeated Israeli actions, including against Palestinian youth, as "self-defense." Palestinians are painted as the criminals, when it is the U.S. and Israeli governments that are the biggest terrorists.

People in the U.S. are familiar with the claim of self-defense, as it is also

commonly used by police to justify their killings of unarmed youth, especially African Americans. So too with mass incarceration and unjust treatment of prisoners, including use of solitary confinement, lack of medical care and denial of family visits. Indeed, U.S. prisoners regularly support Palestinian hunger strikers just as Palestinian prisoners have supported U.S. hunger strikers.

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

Why We Are on Hunger Strike in Israel's Prisons

Marwan Barghouti, Palestinian leader and parliamentarian, April 16, 2017, New York Times

HADARIM PRISON, Israel — Having spent the last 15 years in an Israeli prison, I have been both a witness to and a victim of Israel's illegal system of mass arbitrary arrests and ill-treatment of Palestinian prisoners. After exhausting all other options, I decided there was no choice but to resist these abuses by going on a hunger strike.

Some 1,000 Palestinian prisoners have decided to take part in this hunger strike, which begins April 17, the day we observe here as Prisoners' Day. Hunger striking is the most peaceful form of resistance available. It inflicts pain solely on those who participate and on their loved ones, in the hopes that their empty stomachs and their sacrifice will help the message resonate

beyond the confines of their dark cells.

Decades of experience have proven that Israel's inhumane system of colonial and military occupation aims to break the spirit of prisoners and the nation to which they belong, by inflicting suffering on their bodies, separating them from their families and communities, using

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mass incarceration of Black people and the targeting of oppressed communities.

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

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

Take Action!

Below are some ideas for events and actions in your community:

1. Support Palestinian Students! Palestinian students are facing imprisonment, raids on their universities and invasions of their student councils. As we issue this call, Palestinian student Kifah Quzmar has been denied access to a lawyer, under harsh interrogation for 20 days. Fellow Palestinian

student Istabraq Yahya Tamimi is under interrogation as a member of Bir Zeit's student council. On campuses around the world, this week of action is a critical time to hold events, organize solidarity strikes, petition and pass resolutions to free Kifah Quzmar and hundreds of imprisoned Palestinians denied access to their education.

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

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

4. Build the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Campaign! Palestinian Prisoners' Day is a great occasion to build your BDS campaigns against Israeli products in your

community, or for academic, cultural and sports boycott. Buying and selling Israeli goods, or engaging in partnerships with Israeli cultural or academic institutions, means going into partnership for the imprisonment and torture of Palestinians. While Palestinian students are imprisoned and denied education, cultural workers are locked up and football players are imprisoned instead of on the field, BDS campaigns can help support Palestinians struggling for freedom.

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



II • WHY WE ARE ON HUNGER STRIKE

humiliating measures to compel subjugation. In spite of such treatment, we will not surrender to it.

Israel, the occupying power, has violated international law in multiple ways for nearly 70 years, and yet has been granted impunity for its actions. It has committed grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions against the Palestinian people; the prisoners, including men, women and children, are no exception.

I was only 15 when I was first imprisoned. I was barely 18 when an Israeli interrogator forced me to spread my legs while I stood naked in the interrogation room, before hitting my genitals. I passed out from the pain, and the resulting fall left an everlasting scar on my forehead. The interrogator mocked me afterward, saying that I would never procreate because people like me give birth only to terrorists and murderers.

A few years later, I was again in an Israeli prison, leading a hunger strike, when my first son was born. Instead of the sweets we usually distribute to celebrate such news, I handed out salt to the other prisoners. When he was barely 18, he in turn was arrested and spent four years in Israeli prisons.

The eldest of my four children is now a man of 31. Yet here I still am, pursuing this struggle for freedom along with thousands of prisoners, millions of Palestinians and the support of so many around the world. What is it with the arrogance of the occupier and the oppressor and their backers that makes them deaf to this simple truth: Our chains will be broken before we are, because it is human nature to heed the call for freedom regardless of the cost.

Israel has built nearly all of its prisons inside Israel rather than in the occupied territory. In doing so, it has unlawfully and forcibly transferred Palestinian civilians into captivity, and has used this situation to restrict family visits and to inflict suffering on prisoners through long transports under cruel conditions. It turned basic rights that should be guaranteed under international law — including some painfully secured through previous hunger strikes — into privileges its prison service decides to grant us or deprive us of.

Palestinian prisoners and detainees

have suffered from torture, inhumane and degrading treatment, and medical negligence. Some have been killed while in detention. According to the latest count from the Palestinian Prisoners Club, about 200 Palestinian prisoners have died since 1967 because of such actions. Palestinian prisoners and their families also remain a primary target of Israel's policy of imposing collective punishments.

Through our hunger strike, we seek an end to these abuses.

Over the past five decades, according to the human rights group Addameer, more than 800,000 Palestinians have been imprisoned or detained by Israel — equivalent to about 40 percent of the Palestinian territory's male population. Today, about 6,500 are still imprisoned, among them some who have the dismal distinction of holding world records for the longest periods in detention of political prisoners. There is hardly a single family in Palestine that has not endured the suffering caused by the imprisonment of one or several of its members.

How to account for this unbelievable state of affairs?

Israel has established a dual legal regime, a form of judicial apartheid that provides virtual impunity for Israelis who commit crimes against Palestinians, while criminalizing Palestinian presence and resistance. Israel's courts are a charade of justice, clearly instruments of colonial, military occupation. According to the State Department, the conviction rate for Palestinians in the military courts is nearly 90 percent.

Among the hundreds of thousands of Palestinians whom Israel has taken captive are children, women, parliamentarians, activists, journalists, human rights defenders, academics, political figures, militants, bystanders, family members of prisoners. And all with one aim: to bury the legitimate aspirations of an entire nation.

Instead, though, Israel's prisons have become the cradle of a lasting movement for Palestinian self-determination. This new



hunger strike will demonstrate once more that the prisoners' movement is the compass that guides our struggle, the struggle for Freedom and Dignity, the name we have chosen for this new step in our long walk to freedom.

Israel has tried to brand us all as terrorists to legitimize its violations, including mass arbitrary arrests, torture, punitive measures and severe restrictions. As part of Israel's effort to undermine the Palestinian struggle for freedom, an Israeli court sentenced me to five life sentences and 40 years in prison in a political show trial that was denounced by international observers.

Israel is not the first occupying or colonial power to resort to such expedients. Every national liberation movement in history can recall similar practices. This is why so many people who have fought against oppression, colonialism and apartheid stand with us. The International Campaign to Free Marwan Barghouti and All Palestinian Prisoners that the anti-apartheid icon Ahmed Kathrada and my wife, Fadwa, inaugurated in 2013 from Nelson Mandela's former cell on Robben Island has enjoyed the support of eight Nobel Peace Prize laureates, 120 governments and hundreds of leaders, parliamentarians, artists and academics around the world.

Their solidarity exposes Israel's moral and political failure. Rights are not bestowed by an oppressor. Freedom and dignity are universal rights that are inherent in humanity, to be enjoyed by every nation and all human beings. Palestinians will not be an exception. Only ending occupation will end this injustice and mark the birth of peace.

International Support for Palestinian Prisoners on Hunger Strike

World Federation of Trade Unions

On the occasion of the Palestinian Prisoners' Day on 17th of April, the World Federation of Trade Unions, representing 92 million workers in 126 countries all over the world, expresses its firm internationalist solidarity with the more than 6700 Palestinians, including 389 children and 56 women, currently imprisoned by the Israeli occupation forces.

We strongly denounce the imprisonment of the Palestinian people by Israel, the inhumane detention conditions and the acts of abuse like the violent beatings against our Palestinian brothers and sisters and we demand the immediate release of all Palestinian prisoners and the end of Israel's arrest campaigns, aggressiveness and occupation of the Palestinian territories.

Ex-Robben Island Political Prisoners (EPPA, South Africa)

The EPPA, together with all freedom loving people and progressive forces inside South Africa will embark on a number of solidarity activities in support of the fight for better living conditions in all Israeli apartheid jails.

We unconditionally support all the demands made by our brothers and sisters in those dark prison cells and strongly condemn the illegal detention of women and children, as well as all political prisoners incarcerated in Israeli prisons.

The EPPA calls on all political prisoners and detainees to unite and fight against these draconian laws of arbitrary detention without trial and an end to solitary confinement and demand the following rights, under the auspices of the United Nations and The International Committee of the Red Cross.

- The right to education, books and all reading material
- The right to better medical aid
- The right to family visits, especially contact visits on a weekly basis
- The right to nutritious food, and letters from families
- The right to play sports, music and partake in cultural activities
- The right to cook their own food as

we did on Robben Island.

A mass, coordinated hunger strike is a powerful and legitimate weapon to use against the Israeli prison authorities and for the prisoners' demands for basic human rights in prison.

The EPPA further appealed to the Red Cross, and the International Defense Aid Fund, to intervene on behalf of the prisoners and ensure that the Geneva Convention protocol on the rights of prisoners of war was observed by the Israel Prison Authorities – as was done by the humanitarian organizations when the apartheid government controlled South Africa.

The association wishes to extend revolutionary greetings to one of the Palestinian icons, a freedom fighter, a political prisoner of conscience and a revolutionary leader, Marwan Barghouti.

We strongly believe that Comrade Marwan, who is leading the hunger strike, will turn it into a decisive victory for all political prisoners.

Jewish Voice for Peace

Saluting the Palestinian Prisoners On Hunger Strike

A prisoner hunger strike is a protest of the last resort.

This week, over 1000 Palestinian prisoners launched the largest collective hunger strike in years, on the occasion of marking 50 years of military occupation and nearly 70 years of Israel's displacement and imprisonment of Palestinians. Their demands are simple, including: reinstating visitation rights, installing phones, improving medical care, and ending solitary confinement and administrative detention (the practice of holding prisoners for indefinite periods without charge or trial).

Since the occupation of 1967, roughly 20 percent of the Palestinian population has been imprisoned by the occupying power at one point or another. The Palestinian prisoners organization Ad-dameer reports that Israel currently holds approximately 6300 Palestinian political prisoners, including 300 children and approximately 56 women as well as an

estimated 500 Palestinians in administrative detention (including 2 children).

This hunger strike comes in a long tradition of hunger strikes and prisoners' strikes as nonviolent protest tactics used by movements for liberation around the world.

As Marwan Barghouti wrote in *The New York Times* this week: "Decades of experience have proved that Israel's inhumane system of colonial and military occupation aims to break the spirit of prisoners and the nation to which they belong, by inflicting suffering on their bodies, separating them from their families and communities, using humiliating measures to compel subjugation. In spite of such treatment, we will not surrender to it."

As Barghouti noted, Israel has a tendency to brand all forms of resistance to its military occupation as terrorism, a tendency evidenced by Israeli MK Michael Oren calling the op-ed itself a "journalistic terror attack." As punishment for publishing the op-ed, Mr. Barghouti was placed in solitary confinement.

In a legal system where all forms of protest are being criminalized, it is not surprising that the Israeli Prison Service stated that strikes and protests will be punished, or that Israeli forces fired tear gas and rubber-coated bullets at protesters in solidarity with the strike outside Ofer prison, or that the Israeli state is refusing to negotiate with the striking prisoners.

As Jewish Voice for Peace launches Deadly Exchange, a national campaign to end Israeli and U.S. law enforcement exchanges, we acknowledge our government's role as a partner in the repression and punishment of political prisoners in Palestine, and its own contemporary and historic repression of political prisoners. We oppose the rubber-coated bullets and teargas in Palestine, just as we oppose its use at Standing Rock.

Striking under the banner of Freedom and Dignity for a future free of occupation and oppression, we salute the brave women, men and children who are participating in and supporting the hunger strike.

Half of Detainees at For-Profit ICE Prison Join Hunger Strike

TelesurTV, April 14th, 2017

As the administration of President Donald Trump ramps up deportations and continues to build its capacity for increased mass detentions and deportations, hundreds of incarcerated immigrants have rapidly joined a hunger strike to protest conditions they describe as abusive, exploitative, and filthy. The strike at Tacoma, Washington's Northwest Detention Center (NWDC) – now in its fifth day – has garnered national attention, highlighting the inhumane treatment of detainees held in private for-profit prisons contracted by ICE. The facility houses more than 1,500 civil detainees awaiting deportation or immigration hearings. Over 700 have joined the hunger strike so far.

Detainees have complained about the poor quality of food, exorbitant commissary prices, lack of recreational facilities, restricted medical care access, and overall poor standards of hygiene at the detention camp. The immigrant detainees are also demanding an increase in pay – they are currently only given \$1 per day for performing menial volunteer work at the complex.

On April 15, community solidarity group NWDC Resistance announced that 70 women had joined the strike, complaining of terrible food and being forced to wear dirty, used underwear. The women, like many other locked-up immigrants, have also complained that their court proceedings face perpetual delays, leaving them no choice but to stew in the facility's horrendous conditions.

"We came here fleeing from our countries so that we could be heard and to ask for help," one detainee said in a translation of a hand-written note included with the statement. "We are not criminals."

NWDC Resistance spokeswoman Maru Mora Villalpando said community support for the hunger strike has been strong since detainees began refusing meals April 10. Outside the facility, migrant justice advocates and community members, as well as the relatives of the detainees, have been camping out under tarps.



For-profit prison companies' stocks have surged since the election of Donald Trump, with GEO Group stock alone doubling from \$23 per share on Election Day to \$48. On April 13, the Trump administration announced that its first contract for a new detention facility would be awarded to GEO for the construction of a 1,000-bed, \$110 million detention camp in Conroe, Texas. The move coincided with an announcement that the company faces a class-action lawsuit from detainees in Aurora, Colorado, for violating federal anti-slavery laws by forcing prisoners to take on janitorial tasks and other jobs under threat of solitary confinement.

A majority of the immigrant detainees at the Tacoma prison are Mexican nationals. Organizers see the NWDC detainees' actions as part of a much broader struggle for freedom stretching across the continent – a struggle whose interconnectedness is made all the more clear by the common use of the hunger strike tactic.

Villalpando explained that detainees gained inspiration from a hunger strike by nurses in the Mexican state of Chiapas, whose two-week strike resulted in a victory after the government agreed to their demands for benefits, unpaid wages and proper supplies of medicine.

"The hunger strike is not a tool that is used lightly," Villalpando said. "When people use their own health to fight, to put

their lives on the line, this just shows the extreme conditions they are dealing with and the urgency of their demands."

She also noted that on April 13, inmates at Riverside, California's Robert Presley Detention Center launched a strike to denounce unfair treatment and the abuse of solitary confinement policies. [...]

The NWDC Resistance encampment was recently visited by Nestora Salgado, a former Mexican political prisoner and naturalized U.S. citizen who spent over two years in jail for organizing autonomous, community-led armed self-defense forces in the state of Guerrero to combat drug cartels and the state forces behind them. In 2015, she went on a hunger strike for over a month.

"We wanted people on the inside to know that they had Nestora's support," Villalpando said. "Her experience, her leadership is such an example to us all."

"Latinos, Chinese and Haitians all together, fighting," Villalpando said, explaining the national origins of the detainees. "This is giving them strength."

Hunger striker and musician Juan Manuel Barajas, of popular regional Mexican music group Raza Obrera, performed a song written while incarcerated at the Northwest Detention Center. "We are united and we won't stop - we need to be treated fairly, we are humans beings, not animals"

May Day: A Day Without Immigrants

Movimiento Cosecha

Movimiento Cosecha is a nonviolent movement activating the migrant community and the public at large to fight for permanent protection, dignity, and respect for all immigrants in the United States. Developed by organizers who watched immigration reform stall in Congress for over a decade, Cosecha is taking a new approach. We believe that in order to win real protection for our communities, we need to mobilize millions of active supporters. We are fighting for a new day of justice, reconciliation and unity for our immigrant communities.

Our work honors and draws from the legacy of other social movements in this country. We are students of the thousands of farmworkers who, under the leadership of Dolores Huerta, Larry Itliong and Cesar Chavez, fought back against labor exploitation. We have learned from the millions of African Americans who challenged the racism of Jim Crow and fueled the Civil Rights Movement. Building on this tradition, Cosecha views non-cooperation as our best tactic for building popular support and securing real victories for the 11 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S.

Why We Are Striking

Time and time again our community is called upon to vote for the next Deporter-in-Chief, whether Obama or Trump, who will shape immigration policy for the next

four to eight years. Each election, we are promised that if we vote for the Democrats, they will give us immigration reform. When their promises go unfulfilled — when Obama deports 3 million immigrants or when Trump expands his power to deport and terrorize our communities — what do we do? We strike.

Long enough have we voted, marched in DC, and gone to court to protect the morsels of protection that we have; longer still have we endured pain as our communities are exploited, unrecognized, shamed, and torn apart.

Let us be clear. We are not striking to make the Republicans like us or to pass legislation that is in our favor. We are not striking because we want to remove Trump's oppressive executive orders. We are striking because our fight is not in DC — it is in every home, business, and industry that takes advantage of our labor and consumption. By striking, we make it clear that this country cannot function without immigrants. We build confidence that through non-cooperation, we can force this country to recognize us



and realize that it depends on us. It is not until the United States accepts that it cannot sustain itself without immigrant labor that we will be able to win permanent protection, dignity, and respect.

On February 16th, the immigrant community demonstrated their readiness and willingness to self-organize. The first Day Without Immigrants made waves all over. Now, Cosecha is pushing to organize a series of intensifying strikes.

We will start with one day, but we are going for seven — a week without immigrants. We will end with dignity, respect, and permanent protection.

I • JOIN MAY DAY ACTIONS

unity with workers of all countries, who are also taking actions in their interests.

Many of the actions are opposing Trump's recent executive orders, standing to say *No Ban, No Wall, Sanctuary for All, No Detentions, No Deportations, No Human Being is Illegal*. The recent brutal raids by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and profiling at the border are being denounced. Workers are demanding that the dignity of labor be respected and withdrawing their labor as a means to defend their dignity.

Given that the ban is targeting not only Muslims but specifically those countries that the U.S. has invaded and attacked in various ways, the issue of standing against U.S. wars is also being addressed. The racist character of the U.S. state, whether reflected in profiling at the border, unjust detentions of families of immigrants and refugees, criminalization of whole communities, or in mass incarceration and police killings, is being opposed.

The actions also are not primarily directed at Congress and legislation. Rather

they are serving to build up the resistance and strengthen organized links among all those resisting. Organizers are traveling from city to city to meet with groups of workers and develop local actions. Various alliances of workers, such as among restaurant and food workers, are joining in. There is recognition that the struggle does not end with actions May 1, but rather that they are a means to further develop unity and advance the fight to defend the rights of all.

All Out for May Day!

Many Thousands of Workers Will Strike May 1, Organizers Say

Cora Lewis, BuzzFeed News

Almost 350,000 service workers plan to strike on May 1, a traditional day for labor activism across the world. Tens of thousands of members of a California branch of the Service Employees International Union will participate in the strike. “We understand that there’s risk involved in that,” David Huerta said, “but we’re willing to take that risk in order to be able to move forward.” Since Donald Trump’s election, there has been no shortage of wildcat strikes by groups disproportionately affected by his administration’s policies. According to a coalition of groups involved in the strike, more than 300,000 food chain workers and 40,000 unionized service workers have said they will walk off the job so far.

Huerta’s union chapter represents tens of thousands of workers, including janitors, security officers and airport staff, while the Food Chain Workers Alliance, which represents workers throughout the food industry, says hundreds of thousands of its

non-unionized members have committed to striking.

“We are a workforce made up mostly of immigrants, women, African Americans, and indigenous people,” wrote the alliance in a statement announcing the strike. “Without workers, who does Trump think will harvest the crops, craft the food, transport it to market, stock the shelves, cook in kitchens, and serve the meals?”

Speaking by phone from Milan, Missouri, organizer Axel Fuentes, of the Rural Community Workers Alliance, reported that a thousand workers at a pork plant in the town will be striking May 1, most immigrants and refugees. [...] On May Day, the majority of workers at the local Smithfield meat processing plant have pledged not to go into work, shutting down operations. They also plan to keep their children home from school and not to shop, he said.

The Restaurant Opportunities Center (ROC) United, a food industry worker

advocacy group, will also be participating in the strike, according to Saru Jayaraman, its co-director. ROC United and its network of restaurant owners and workers were instrumental in organizing the recent Day Without Immigrants protest, which shuttered hundreds of restaurants in cities across the country. [...]

The plans for May 1 this year, and the organizations pushing them, highlight the role of labor groups that are not unions, which can move faster than their larger, richer institutional peers. Jayaraman, from ROC United, said groups like hers have more flexibility to call for their members to stop work, while established unions feel a need to tread carefully. [...]

The same migrant and immigrant constituency that struck May Day 2006 will mobilize this year, joined by the Black Lives Matter movement, native sovereignty rights groups, and organizations like Voces de La Frontera and Movimiento Cosecha.

May Day Moratorium: A Call for Nationwide University Action

We face a moment of great uncertainty. Elements of the social safety net and basic rights provisions are being rescinded and amended more swiftly than they can be challenged through traditional legal and legislative interventions. Millions of immigrants live under daily threat of separation from their families and communities by intensified ICE raids.

Many of the attacks we face directly affect the university. The arts, humanities, and sciences face not only funding cuts but an assault on the concept of free inquiry itself. Climate change data is being removed from the public domain, university budgets are being held hostage by state governments and the threat of political retaliation by the federal government, white supremacists have been emboldened to commit hate crimes on our campuses, and basic facts have diminishing import in the national debate.

May Day 2017 will be a day of struggle against the Trump administration and the structural conditions under which it originated. A day in which workers across the

country, waged and unwaged, will strike, march, rally, boycott, and make our voices heard against the sexism, racism, xenophobia, and homophobia of this administration and against the global system of production that makes it possible. This charge will be led by immigrant workers, hundreds of thousands of whom have already pledged to strike. We call on the academic community to live up to the promise of higher learning by halting business as usual on May Day.

While the nation’s workforce pauses to engage in a day of action, universities must pause as well; for staff, adjuncts and student workers on our campuses know well the severity of neoliberal policies while students are already facing the terror of ICE raids.

We call on universities nationwide to engage in a moratorium on university operations this May Day so that students, staff, and faculty — domestic and international, documented and undocumented — can engage in a day of demonstrations and teach-ins in solidarity with A Day

Without Immigrants. We call on university administrators and faculty to cancel classes, close offices, and postpone maintenance to demonstrate our solidarity with immigrant workers and our support for thoughtful strategies of resistance.

As administrators, we pledge to place a moratorium on all normal university operations to allow faculty, staff, and students to participate in this momentous day of civic engagement, with pay and without retaliation.

As faculty, we pledge to hold teach-ins or join our students participating in protests in lieu of regular coursework.

As staff, we pledge not to work and to afford our student workers the same opportunity.

As students, we pledge to attend teach-ins, demonstrations, and marches instead of classes.

And as members of the university community as a whole, we pledge to take action to defend all those who face retaliation for their participation in the moratorium and other May Day strike actions.