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Trump's Victory: Analysis & Perspectives

by Michael Pröbsting

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The Meaning, Consequences and Lessons of Trump's Victory

On the Lessons of the US Presidential Election Outcome and the Perspectives for the Domestic and International Class Struggle

By Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, 24 November 2016

INTRODUCTION

Trumph's victory in the US presidential election opens a new era both for US as well as global politics. It qualitatively accelerates the reactionary offensive of the ruling class as well as the rivalry between the Great Powers. Similarly it will provoke new upsurges of mass resistance both domestically and abroad. In short, the Trump Era will deepen the fundamental instability of the capitalist world order and hasten massive political and economic explosions. Without doubt this event will have tremendous implications for all those fighting against the capitalist tyranny of the monopolies and Great Powers,

as it offers new opportunities, as well as dangers, for the revolutionary struggle.

Shortly after the announcement of the outcome of the US presidential election we published a first commentary about Trump's victory.¹ In the following article we will discuss the results of the election in more detail. We will also elaborate our thoughts on the consequences of the future Trump administration, both for the US as well as for the international class struggle. Finally we will discuss the main lessons as well as the perspectives for progressive activists from a revolutionary Marxist point of view.



Contingent of the Austrian Section of the RCIT at a pro-Refugee demonstration on 26 November 2016

I. THE ELECTION OUTCOME

The outcome of the US presidential election has been a surprise and shock to many. The most right-wing and reactionary candidate for several decades – probably since Barry Goldwater ran in 1964 – defeated an opposition composed of the organized workers’ movement, the Afro-American and Latino mass organizations, and even the majority of the ruling class (as was reflected in the opposition to Trump not only in the Democratic Party, of course, but also within the Republican Party’s establishment).

Naturally, such an outcome needs to be explained in its own right, but this is also crucial in order to elaborate an analysis of the character of the future Trump administration and new attacks on the US working class as well as on the international working class which we can expect.

1. Trumps Elected President despite Losing the Popular Vote

The first statement which we have to make relates to the fact the Clinton and not Trump won the largest plurality of the votes! While all the votes still have not been counted (in itself a testimony about the backward character of US “democracy”), Clinton currently leads Trump by more than 2 million votes (64,223,958 to 62,206,395 million votes or 48.1% to 46.6%)! ²

David Wasserman, the editor of *Cook Political Report* who is closely monitoring the counting at the polls, has commented that, as those states which still have not been fully counted are states with a strong lead for Clinton, it is possible that, when the final results are attained, Clinton may have an even bigger lead.

This is, in fact, a powerful example how undemocratic America’s praised “democracy” is. This anomaly is the result of the reactionary “Electoral College” system which gives very different weight to the votes of people in different states. Concretely, small and rurally-dominated states have proportionally more weight than bigger and more urban states.

Characteristically, when the “founding fathers” devised the Electoral College system and wrote it into the Constitution of 1787, they justified it by arguing that the purpose was “to prevent mob rule”!

As a side note we call attention to the fact that this is not the first time that the winning candidate received fewer votes than the runner up. In the 2000 presidential elections, the Democratic candidate Al Gore received more votes than the elected President George W. Bush.

Furthermore, nearly 100 million eligible voters stayed away from the polls on Election Day, i.e., about 43% of the eligible voters. This means that Trump was elected by receiving only 26.8% of the eligible voters.

Not only does this demonstrate the undemocratic nature of the institution of the US presidential election but it potentially could also prove to be a factor in that it could potentially undermine the democratic legitimacy of Trump’s election in the eyes of large sectors of the people, and might encourage protests against his administration in the future.

2. An Important Lesson: Bourgeois Democracy is Essentially Undemocratic

In addition, we shouldn’t forget another aspect of the undemocratic character of US democracy. At least 11 million undocumented migrants – who are not US citizens, of course -- had no chance of participating in the vote. But neither could those millions who are victims of the “felony disenfranchisement” – the reactionary law which bans prisoners and ex-felons from participating in elections. As a consequence of this draconian law, about 6.1 million US citizens are not allowed to vote. ³ Among them the share of black people is particularly high, as they are a primary target of state repression. As a result, 13% of the adult black male population does not have the right to vote! ⁴

Finally, there is a massive disparity in the rate of voting based on class and ethnicity. While participation in the elections was high among the wealthy, it was much lower among the lower strata of the working class (See Figure 1 and 2).

Sean McElwee, a social scientist who published a number of studies on the relation of income and voting, reports: “After studying 30 years of data at the state level, William Franko, Nathan Kelly and Christopher Witko could not find any year in which low-income voter turnout was higher than high-income voter turnout. Recent research by Benjamin Page, Larry Bartels, and Martin Gilens suggests that the super-rich members of the top 1 and .1 percent turned out to vote in 2008 at a whopping 99 percent. This compares to only 49 percent turnout for citizens earning less than \$10,000. In midterm elections, the voting gap is even more pronounced. In 2010, only 26.7 percent of citizens earning less than \$10,000 voted, while 61.6 percent of those making \$150,000 voted. Voter turnout is heavily biased towards high-income voters.” ⁵ Concerning the presidential election in 2012, McElwee found out that 80.2% of those making more than \$150,000 a year voted, while only 46.9% of those making less than \$10,000 voted. ⁶

Likewise, voting participation is much higher among the white population than among Afro-Americans and Latinos. In Figure 3, which compares voting rates in congressional elections from 1978 to 2014, we can see that whites’ participation was always higher than that of other groups. In 2014, 45.8% of the whites voted, but only 40.6% of the blacks and 27% of the Latinos. ⁹

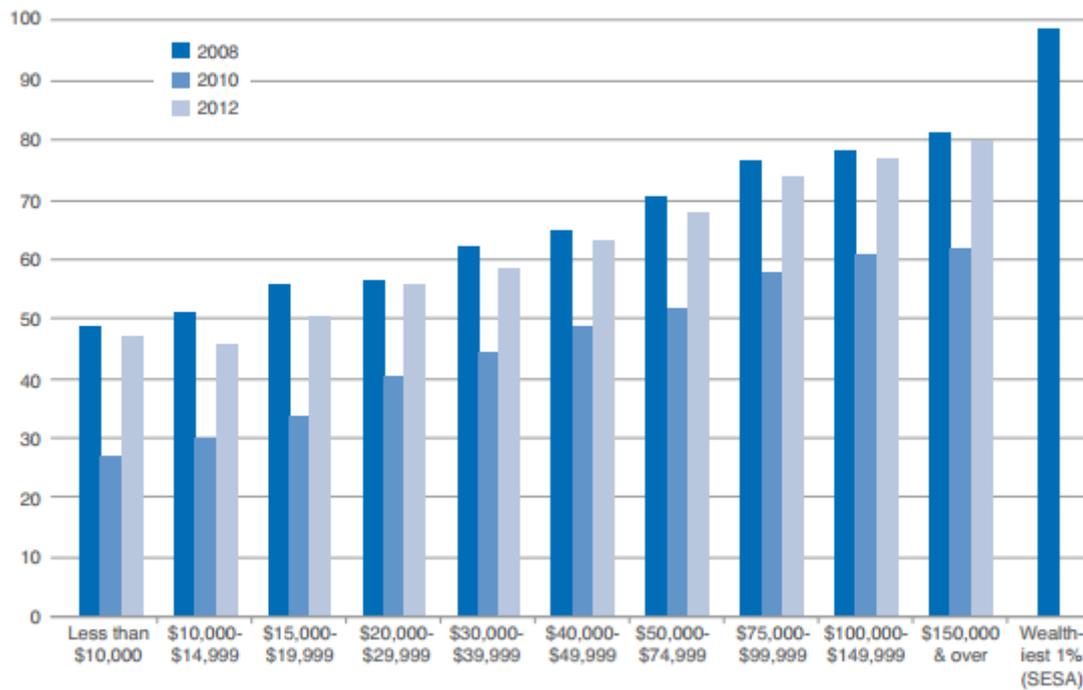
The reason for this gross inequality is that the share of middle class and wealthy people is much higher among whites than among Afro-Americans and Latinos, and for middle class and wealthy people it is much easier to be registered to vote.

It is therefore unsurprisingly that, in general, non-voters have a more progressive outlook than voters. A number of reports show that voters are more likely to oppose unions, government-sponsored health insurance and federal assistance for schools than non-voters. ¹¹

In short, the US presidential election is a powerful demonstration that bourgeois democracy – even in the so-called “motherland of democracy” – is undemocratic. It gives advantages to the dominating and wealthy classes and groups relative to the broad mass of the people, i.e.,

Figure 1. Voters Turnout, by Household Income, 2008-2012 ⁷

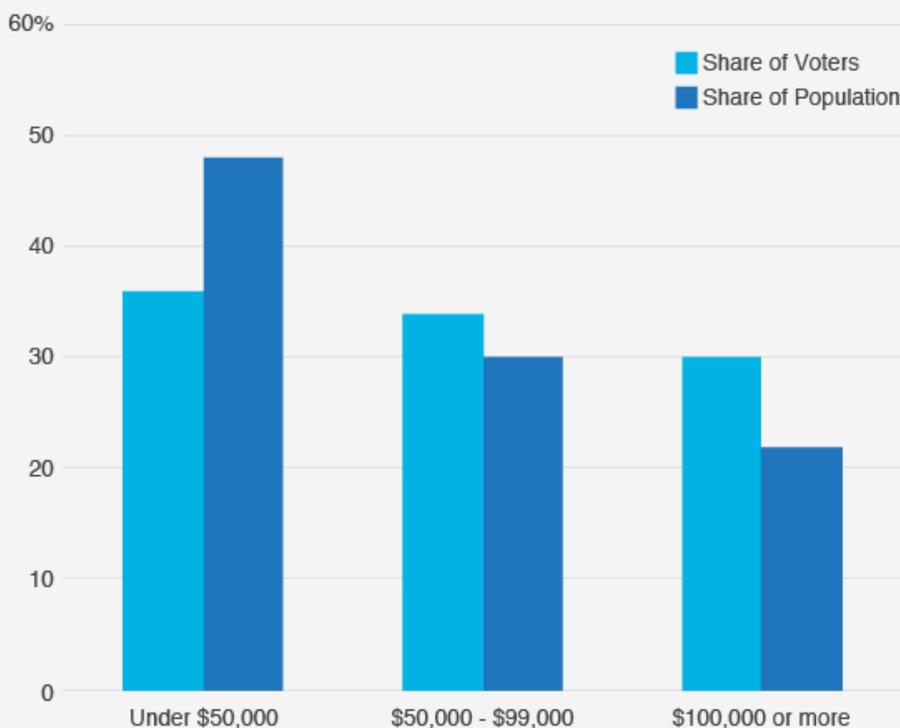
Figure 1. Voter Turnout, by Household Income, 2008 - 2012



Source: Census Data, Supplemented by SESA 2013

Figure 2. Share of Voters and Share of Population, by Household Income, 2014 ⁸

Low-Income Americans Less Likely to Vote in 2014 Midterm



the working class and the oppressed.

Those who want to fight for authentic democracy must have no illusions about the nature of bourgeois democracy, which has always been and can only be undemocratic, as it grants privileges the wealthy and discriminates the poor and oppressed. Real democracy can only exist in society where the means of production as well as the media are not privately owned by small minority but are collectively owned and controlled by the laboring population.

3. Why Did Trump Win?

How did the Working Class and the Oppressed Vote?

There are clear differences in the voting behavior between the different classes and social layers as well as the different national/ethnic groups. According to US election exit data compiled by CNN, among white voters – who made up 70% of the total election votes – 58% voted for Trump, while 37% cast their ballot for Hillary Clinton. By gender, among white men, 63% voted for Trump and 31% for Clinton. Among white women, 53% cast their ballot for Trump and, perhaps surprisingly, only 43% for Clinton.

African-Americans, who made up 12% of the vote, overwhelmingly supported Clinton (88%; 8% voted for Trump). Latino voters, who made up 11% of the vote, largely supported the Democratic candidate too (65%; 29% voted for Trump).¹²

When we classify voters by income, we see that among those who earn less than \$30,000 a year Clinton led by 53%-41% and among those with an income of \$30,000 – \$49,999 by 51%-42%. These two groups represent nearly half of the total population (but not the voters!), and the majority of the lower and middle strata of the working class, as we showed above in Figure 2. However, Trump received a majority of the votes – albeit here the race was relatively close – among the middle and higher income groups, i.e., the upper layer of the working class, the middle class and the bourgeoisie (see Table 1).

Liberal journalists around the world attributed Trump's victory to support he received from "uneducated" workers. We will deal with the voting behavior of the white working class more in detail below. For now we only want to refute the myth that education level in itself was a decisive factor in favor of Trump. It is true, as is seen in Table 2, that white voters without a college degree voted overwhelmingly for Trump (67% to 28% for Clinton). A smaller majority among white college graduates also voted for Trump (49% to 45% for Clinton). However, among the non-white college graduates Clinton won decisively (71% to 23% for Trump) and among non-whites without a college degree her lead was even greater (75% to 20%) – despite the so-called "lack of education" of the latter.

These statistics show that the most important factors in voting preferences were not education but class and national/ethnic background.

Millions of Workers and Oppressed Deserted the Democratic Party (But Didn't Vote for Trump)

Since the elections the liberal intelligentsia tends to accuse the white male working class as being responsible for Trump's triumph. This is, of course, nothing else but an attempt to deflect attention from the real culprit of the electoral outcome: Clinton and the Wall Street-connected Democratic Party establishment.

First, the major shift in this election was *not* a rise in votes for the Republican Party's candidate but rather the collapse in support for the Democratic Party's contender. Look at the numbers: the Republican candidate in 2008, John McCain received 59.9 million votes (or 26.5% of the electorate). Mitt Romney got 60.9 (25.9% of the electorate) in 2012. And Donald Trump received, as we showed above, 62.2 million votes or 26.8% of the electorate. So we see that the Republican contender garnered, more or less, the same number of votes in the presidential elections of 2008, 2012 and 2016!

On the Democratic side, the picture was very different. Barack Obama received 69.4 million votes in 2008 and 65.9 million votes in 2012. However, Hillary Clinton got only 64.2 million votes on 9 November – 5.2 million less than Obama in 2008 despite a growing number of potential voters!

The explanation for this rapid decline is very simple. The Obama administration disappointed many of workers and ethnic minorities. During the 8 years of the Obama administration, employment declined to unprecedented levels (i.e., unemployment rose dramatically, something which the official figures hide). Nearly all of the new jobs which have been created since the Great Recession in 2008/09 – 11.5 million out of 11.6 million jobs – have gone to the minority of employees with some college education.¹⁵

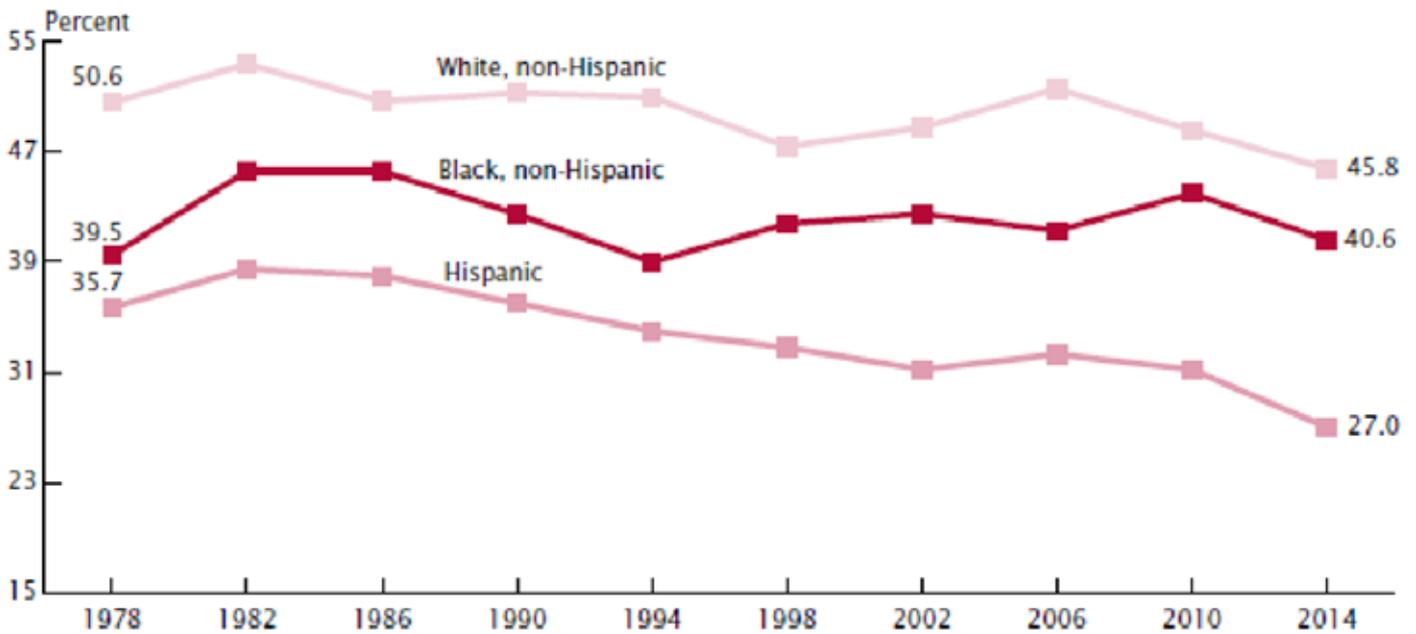
At the same time, real wages declined for most people. American working and middle-class households experienced a serious decline in income from 1999 to 2014. Nationally, the median income of middle-income households decreased from \$77,898 in 1999 to \$72,919 in 2014, a loss of 6%. The median incomes of lower-income households even fell by 10% – from \$26,373 to \$23,811 – over this period.¹⁶

During the Obama presidency, the situation of black people didn't improve at all – despite having a "black" president. For example, the official unemployment rate for blacks averaged 8.7% in the first six months of 2016 compared with an unemployment rate of 4.3% for whites. This 2-1 ratio is still the same as 10 or 20 years ago.¹⁷ Another indicator is the ongoing massive incarceration of black people (as well as the Latino minority) which has not lessened at all under the Obama administration. A recent study reports: *"If current trends continue, one of every three black American males born today can expect to go to prison in his lifetime, as can one of every six Latino males – compared to one of every seventeen white males."*¹⁸ This national oppression is also manifested in the widespread killing of Afro-Americans by the police that continued during the Obama administration and which resulted in mass uprisings in Ferguson, Baltimore and other cities, as well as in the emergence of the #BlackLivesMatters movement.

Likewise, mass deportations of undocumented migrants

Figure 3. Voting Rates in Congressional Elections by Race and Ethnicity: 1978 to 2014¹⁰

Voting Rates in Congressional Elections by Race and Ethnicity: 1978 to 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 1978–2014.

Table 1. Voting Preferences by Income Groups, Presidential Election 2016¹³

	<i>Clinton</i>	<i>Trump</i>
Less than \$30,000	53%	41%
\$30,000 – \$49,999	51%	42%
\$50,000 – \$99,999	46%	50%
\$100,000 – \$199,999	47%	48%
\$200,000 – \$249,999	48%	49%
\$249,999 and more	46%	48%

Table 2. Voting Preferences by Education, Presidential Election 2016¹⁴

	<i>Clinton</i>	<i>Trump</i>
White College Graduates	45%	49%
White without a College Degree	28%	67%
Non-White College Graduates	71%	23%
Non-White without a College Degree	75%	20%

rose to record levels under the Obama administration. Since 2009, when Obama took office, about 2.5 million immigrants have been deported according to newly released Department of Homeland Security data – a figure similar to the one Trump has announced (see Figure 4).¹⁹ As a result, it's hardly surprising that many Latinos feel betrayed by the Democratic Party.

Figure 5 provides a more long-term view and shows that mass deportations started in 1990s with the taking of power by the Democrat Bill Clinton and have risen uninterruptedly since then, irrespective of the president's party affiliation.

Furthermore, Trump's plans for mass deportations will be assisted by the huge mass of personal information which the Obama administration has already collected from young migrants – yet more proof that workers and oppressed must not trust the state!²²

Bruce A. Dixon, the managing editor of the *Black Agenda Report*, has pointedly remarked:

*„But Hillary's decades-long record as a tool of banksters, billionaires and one-percenters was so well established in the public mind that Imaginary Hillary was a difficult sell, not credible. (...) All in all, Democrats were the authors of their own defeat this presidential election. Hillary couldn't campaign against the one percent because her party is a party of the one percent. Hillary Democrats including Bernie himself after the convention could no longer acknowledge joblessness, low wages, lack of housing, permanent war or the high cost of medical care or they'd be campaigning against themselves. Donald Trump didn't win because of some mysterious upsurge of racism and nativism. He won because Hillary Clinton's campaign was even less inspiring and less competent than his own, and worked hard to snatch its own defeat from the jaws of victory. America might not deserve President Donald Trump. But Hillary Clinton didn't deserve to win.”*²³

In addition, the Obama administration didn't rescue millions of people – including many of the white middle class – from the consequences of the financial collapse in 2008/09. Instead, Obama helped to bail out the banks which massively increased public debt.

In short, the main reason for Trump's victory is not a growth of support for the Republican Party or for Trump, but rather the substantial loss of support for the Democratic Party and its contender, Hillary Clinton. Millions of workers and oppressed are repelled by this

party and view them as inextricably linked with the super-rich elite – as Clinton's leaked speeches to Goldman Sachs demonstrated. Consequently they either didn't go to the polls or they voted for a third party.

Reactionary Support for Trump among Sectors of the White Working Class

However, all these facts should not divert our attention from the fact that Trump – as an extreme right-wing populist candidate of the Republican Party – managed to receive substantial support among sectors of the white working class, as his high share of white voters (67%) without a college degree indicates (see Table 2). It's vital for Marxists to understand this in order to effectively fight the reactionary cancer of racism inside our class.

It is crucial to take a number of factors into account. First, a substantial portion of white workers and poor does not live in the big cities but rather in smaller cities. Hence, the big cities have a substantially higher share of black and Latinos than the country-wide average. It is therefore hardly surprising that Trump was decisively defeated in all big metropolises like Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco or Chicago. As we can see in Table 3 Trump received only 35% of the vote in cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants. At the same time he dominated in the more rural areas where white workers are more strongly represented.

So the absence of a multi-national composition of the working class and the backward, rural character of these areas certainly was one important factor in explaining why such a right-wing demagogue like Trump could win so much support among sectors of the white workers.

Furthermore, these areas have often depended on jobs provided by a single or only a few corporations. So when the capitalists closed such enterprises and moved their production to the semi-colonial countries of the South where they could exploit workers with lower wages, this had devastating effects on the workers in these regions as in many cases they were unable to find another job.

Trump tried to address the hopes of many workers by advocating protectionism as a means of creating new jobs. He became famous in addressing the shift of jobs from the US to Mexico and the water crisis in Flint by saying: *“It used to be, cars were made in Flint and you couldn't drink the*

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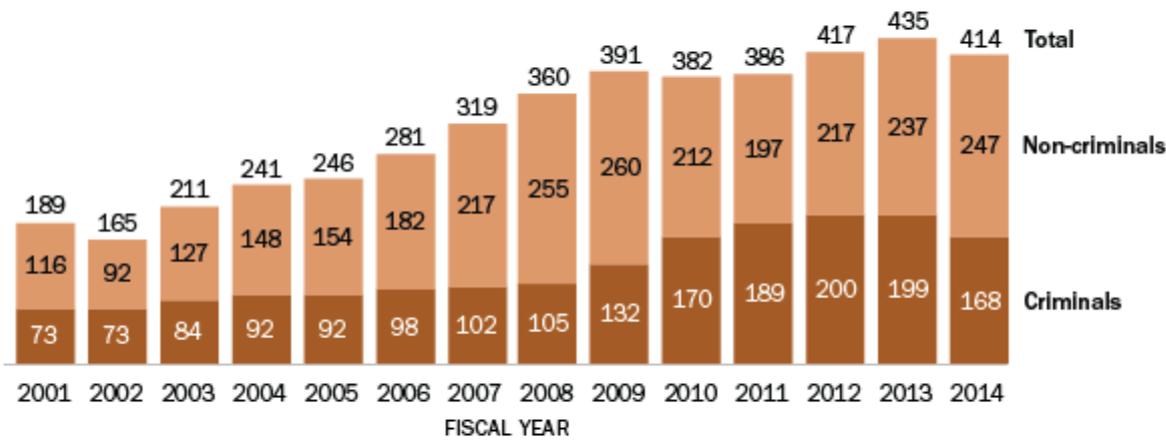
Table 3. Voting Preferences by Residence, Presidential Election 2016 ²⁴

	<i>Clinton</i>	<i>Trump</i>
City over 50,000	59%	35%
Suburbs	45%	50%
Small City of Rural	34%	62%

Figure 4. Deportations by U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2001-2014 ²⁰

Deportations by U.S. Department of Homeland Security

in thousands, by fiscal year

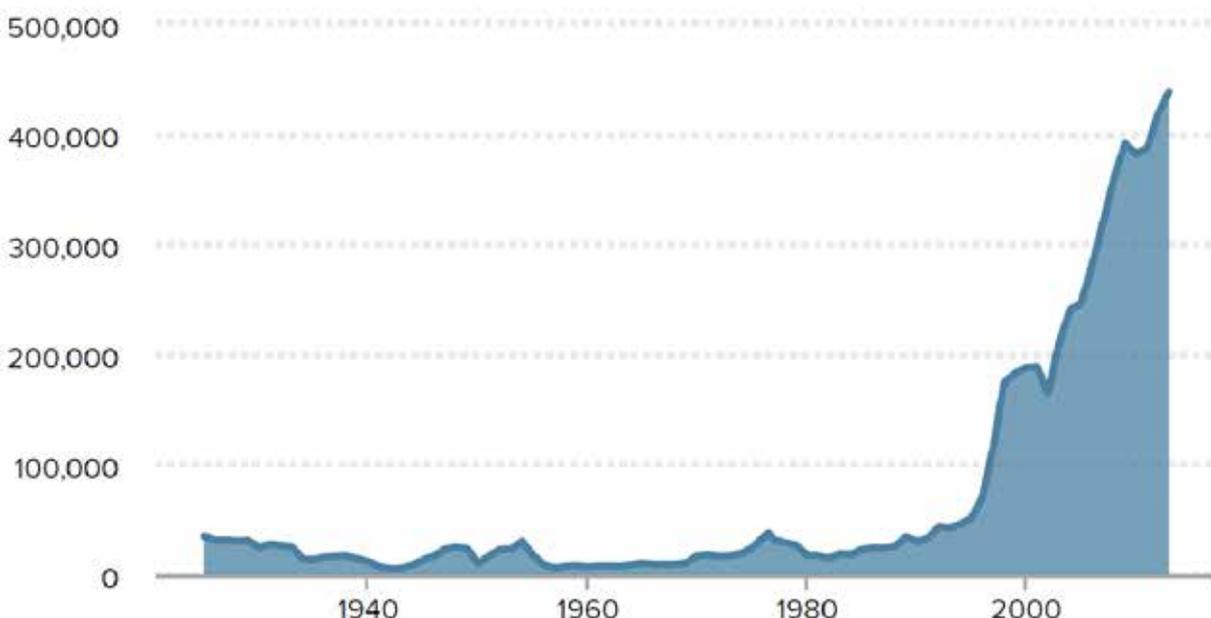


Source: Data for 2001-2004 come from U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: 2010*. Data for 2005 to 2014 come from U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: 2014*.

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Figure 5. Total deportation of non-U.S. citizens, 1925–2013 ²¹

Total removal of non-U.S. citizens out of the country, 1925–2013



water in Mexico. Now, the cars are made in Mexico and you cannot drink the water in Flint. That's not good," he said. "We shouldn't allow it to happen," he said. "They'll make their cars, they'll employ thousands and thousands of people, not from this country ... and we'll have nothing but more unemployment in Flint." ²⁵

Clinton, on the other hand, didn't show any concern for the fate of these workers and, worse, even went on record as characterizing the coal workers of West Virginia as "deplorable." ²⁶

As a result, Trump managed to get massive support from white workers in several states in the Midwest and Pennsylvania. In Ohio, Iowa, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Minnesota, Trump succeeded in winning over the support of many white workers without college educations, allowing him to win all these states (except for Minnesota). This is remarkable considering that all these states voted Democrat in the previous six presidential elections. Figure 6 and Table 4 depict the massive swing of voters without college educations in favor of Trump in this last election compared with the previous presidential election of 2012.

Therefore, we see that the rise in unemployment and wage losses resulting from the Great Recession of 2008/09 against which Obama's Democratic administration didn't do anything was another major factor that led white workers in these states to put their hopes in the demagogic promises of Donald Trump. This is a phenomenon which we have also witnessed in many other countries in Europe, where right-wing populists like Le Pen or Strache have managed to win over huge support from white workers.

Thus, it's not surprising that the Democratic Party, with its close connection to Wall Street and the corporations, and with all the broken promises of the past 8 years, did not appeal to these workers.

However, there is also a third crucial factor explaining white, working class support for Trump which must not be overlooked: This is the deep-seated chauvinism among white workers against blacks, Latinos and migrants in general. Trump's slogan about car production in Mexico and dirty water in Flint quoted above is not merely a protest about the closure of production sites and the water crisis in a former auto-manufacturing city in Michigan. It is also a glorification of the "good old times" when "we" (i.e., the US-Americans) had a vital car industry and clean water and "they" (i.e., the Mexicans) had no industry and dirty water. In other words, Trump appeals to white workers by praising the times when the US was still "great," indeed "greater" than "backward" Mexico. In short, Trump's inroads into sectors of the white working class demonstrate the aristocratism among these layers – an aristocratism which, in the case of many impoverished white industrial workers, is less a material factor than an ideological remnant of the past, when they were part of the well-paid US labor aristocracy.

This deep-seated reactionary, aristocratic sentiment among sectors of the white working class is also reflected in the fact that Trump's triumph is not a sudden development, but is the result of what has been cultivated during the past two decades. While the Democrats managed to achieve a slight lead (of 1%) among whites without a college degree in 1992 and 1996, subsequently

New Book of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: Marxism and the United Front Tactic Today

The Struggle for Proletarian Hegemony in the Liberation Movement and the United Front Tactic Today.

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a new English-language book – MARXISM AND THE UNITED FRONT TACTIC TODAY. The book's subtitle is: The Struggle for Proletarian Hegemony in the Liberation Movement and the United Front Tactic Today. On the Application of the Marxist United Front Tactic in Semi-Colonial and Imperialist Countries in the Present Period. It contains eight chapters plus an appendix (172 pages) and includes 9 tables and 5 figures. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which give an overview of its content.

The united front tactic is a crucial instrument for revolutionaries under today's circumstances in which the mass organizations of the working class and the oppressed are dominated by social democratic, Stalinist and petty-bourgeois-populist forces.

The purpose of this document is both to summarize the main ideas of the Marxist united front tactic while at the same time explaining its development and modification which have become necessary due to political changes which have transpired in the

working class liberation movement since the tactic's original formulation.

In this book we initially summarize the main characteristics of the united front tactic and elaborate the approach of the Marxist classics to this issue. We then outline important social developments in the working class and the popular masses as well as in their political formations in recent decades. From there we will discuss how the united front tactic should be applied in light of a number of new developments (the rise of petty-bourgeois populist parties, the decline of the classic reformist parties, the role of national minorities and migrants in imperialist countries, etc.). The eight chapters of the book are accompanied by nine tables and five figures.

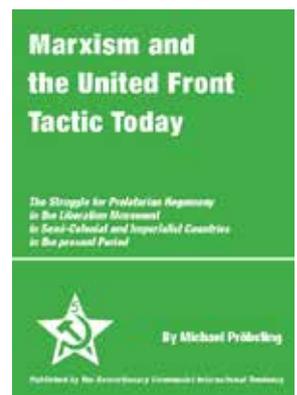


Figure 6. Voters without College Degrees in the Industrial North Swing to Trump in the 2016 Presidential Election²⁷

GOP Gains Among Non-College Degree

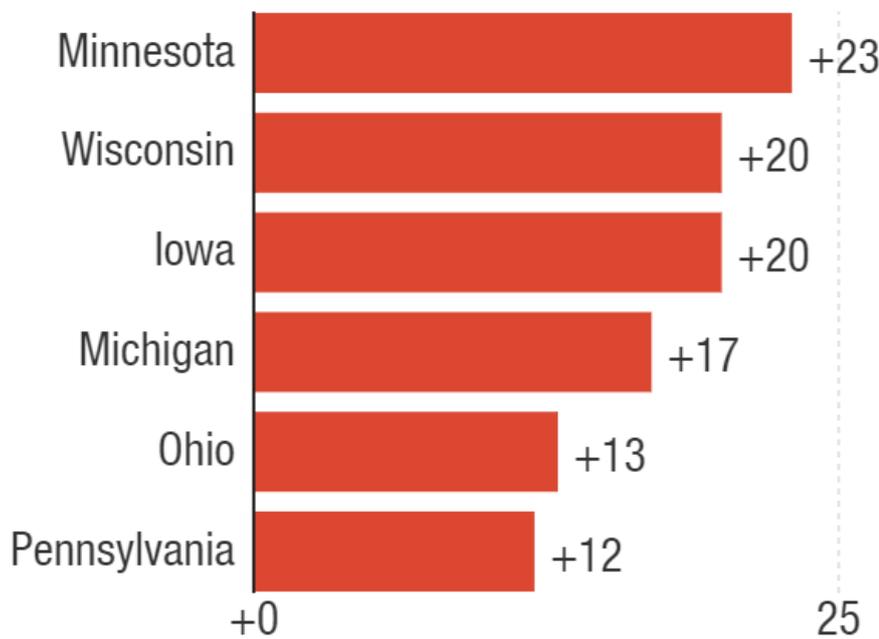


Table 4. Voters without a College Degree in Industrial North, Share of the Total Electorate and Voting²⁸

Minnesota

2012: 53% of electorate, 52-46 Obama
 2016: 44% of electorate, 55-38 Trump (net gain: Republicans +23)

Wisconsin

2012: 58% of electorate, 51-47 Obama
 2016: 55% of electorate, 56-40 Trump (net gain: Republicans +20)

Iowa

2012: 57% of electorate, 52-46 Obama
 2016: 57% of electorate, 54-40 Trump (net gain: Republicans +20)

Michigan

2012: 54% of electorate, 56-43 Obama
 2016: 58% of electorate, 49-45 Trump (net gain: Republicans +17)

Ohio

2012: 60% of electorate, 53-46 Obama
 2016: 56% of electorate, 51-45 Trump (net gain: Republicans +13)

Pennsylvania

2012: 52% of electorate, 57-42 Obama
 2016: 52% of electorate, 52-45 Trump (net gain: Republicans +12)

the Republicans have received a solid majority of this electorate (2000: +17%, 2004: +23%, 2008: +18%, 2012: +26%, 2016: +39%)²⁹. In other words, in these states there has been a long-term advance of reactionary right-wing forces among white workers, one which reached its apex in the 2016 presidential election.

In order to fight reactionary Trumpism among these layers of white workers, socialist must advance an economic offensive which fights for the nationalization of industry under worker control, massive public works programs to create jobs, alongside unambiguous solidarity with the nationally oppressed minorities (which, by the way, are on their way to becoming the majority of the US working class, as we shall show below!). It is clear that the main bearer of such a socialist message will have to be the multinational working class – with its dominant black and Latino sectors – in the large metropolises of the country. While Maoists may *believe* that villages encircle the cities, Marxists *know* that it is the other way round. It is the multinational, heavy battalions of the large metropolises which must take the lead in the struggle for liberation and carry along with them the more backward, mostly white sectors of their class living in the smaller cities and rural areas.

Yet another backward characteristic among large sectors of the white working class in these states is their strong corporatist sentiment. The trade union *United Mine Workers of America* has helped to create a culture in which the coal workers in West Virginia identify their interest with Donald Leon “Don” Blankenship, the millionaire and long-time boss of *Massey Energy Company* – the sixth largest coal company in the United States. Blankenship is a long-time donor to the Republican Party who, as a typical American reactionary, denies the existence of climate change and who, decades ago, associated President Jimmy Carter’s support for energy conservation in the 1970s with the first stage of communism! Blankenship was recently sentenced to a year in prison for conspiring to violate federal mine safety standards – a late consequence of a mine accident in Massey’s Upper Big Branch mine which killed 29 men, the deadliest coal mining accident in American in about 40 years. Characteristically, Blankenship supported Trump during the recent election campaign.³⁰

Furthermore, the election also demonstrated the horrendous state of the US trade unions. Traditionally, these have been subordinate to the bourgeoisie and, in particular, the Democratic Party. Consequently, the political values of the American bourgeoisie are well-rooted among many union members. As a result, Trump did pretty well among many trade union members. According to a CNN poll, Clinton had an 8-point lead among union households nationally. However, this means that 43% of those union members (or, to be more precise, of the households of union members) who went to the polls voted for the most reactionary, chauvinistic candidate which the US has seen for decades!³¹

However, something which in fact points to the potential for addressing workers even in more rurally-dominated states are the results of the various referendums which took place in many states on November 8 in parallel with the presidential election. In nearly all such referenda in states which held them, there has been a positive outcome regarding the issue of raising the minimum wage as well as about decriminalizing the use of marijuana. As a result,

workers in Arizona (where Trump won a majority of votes), Colorado, and Maine will see their hourly wages rise to \$12 an hour—all gains of more than \$3.75 an hour—while the state of Washington’s minimum wage will rise to \$13.50 by 2020, an increase of \$4.03 an hour. A referendum that would lower minimum wages for workers under the age of 18 was roundly defeated in South Dakota (where Trump also won a majority of votes). In addition to these wage hikes, voters in Arizona and Washington also voted in favor of the introduction of mandatory sick-leave measures, a boon for the nearly 45 percent of the American workforce without such paid protection.³²

Referenda about the decriminalization of marijuana use were held in Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Maine, Massachusetts, Montana, Nevada, and North Dakota. In all these states, except Arizona, the electorate voted in favor of decriminalization. This is particularly important in light of the widespread use of the criminalization of marijuana as a tool of oppression against youth in general and, in particular, against young blacks and Latinos.

Without exaggerating the significance of these referenda, we believe they indicate the potential to fight for progressive issues even in the more conservative states.

An Aside on Liberal Academics who Consider the Ordinary People Too Stupid

A particular telling example of the liberal intelligentsia’s arrogance towards the working class is the proposal to limit the voting rights of people who are “uninformed.” This bourgeois elitist idea is currently advocated by various academics like Jason Brennan, author of the book with the telling title *Against Democracy*. In a recently published article about the outcome of the election, Brennan wrote:

*“The real worry, though, is that when we look at the policy platforms of the two major parties, we see that both the Republicans and Democrats push agendas that tend to appeal to the uninformed and disinterested. We can’t quite blame them for that. After all, politicians need to win elections, and to do so, they have to appeal to voters. In a modern democracy, the uninformed will always greatly outnumber the informed. (...) There is no real solution to the problem of political ignorance, unless we are willing to break with democratic politics. (...) In my recent book ‘Against Democracy’, I discuss how we might experiment with epistocracy — where political power is widespread, as in a democracy, but votes are in some way weighted according to basic political knowledge. (...) But each proposal at least takes seriously that universal suffrage and voter ignorance go hand in hand. Trump’s victory is the victory of the uninformed. But, to be fair, Clinton’s victory would also have been. Democracy is the rule of the people, but the people are in many ways unfit to rule.”*³³

Brennan is at least honestly enough to admit that his elitist alternative to bourgeois democracy would be a system privileging the white male middle class and bourgeoisie:

*“If the United States were to start using a voter qualification exam right now, such as an exam that I got to design, I’d expect that the people who pass the exam would be disproportionately white, upper-middle- to upper-class, educated, employed males.”*³⁴

We can expect a rise of such proposals and sentiments among the liberal bourgeoisie in the coming, highly politically unstable period.

II. WHERE IS THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION HEADING?

Naturally, at this stage – a few weeks after the election – it is still not possible to make a very concrete and precise assessment about the future course of the Trump administration. However, the new government's main lines of attack, as well as its inner contradictions, are clearly visible.

As is widely known, Trump's election campaign was characterized by rhetoric around a specific number of issues.

* White chauvinism, Islamophobia (Trump's call to ban Muslims from entering the US, etc.); his anti-immigration policy (calling to build a massive wall along the Mexican border, mass deportation of undocumented migrants, etc.),

* Economic protectionism (claiming he would impose a 45% tariff on Chinese imports; pull out of free trade agreements like TPP, NAFTA and TTIP; leave the WTO, etc.)

* Neoliberal financial liberalization (e.g., reducing corporate taxes from the current level of 35% to 15%; bring about the elimination of Wall Street regulation, including the removal of Dodd Frank Wall Street reform – the anti-bank bailout regulation put into place after the 2008-2009 financial crisis)

* His call to immediately cancel the Climate Change Accord as, according to Trump, climate change "*is a myth created by the Chinese to harm American Manufacturing*" (a quote from the US president-elect!)

* Attacks against social and health care programs (his plan to abolish Obamacare, etc.)

* Attacks on women's rights like abortion

* Calls to reduce obligations arising from long-term alliances with other states (demanding from the EU, Japan and South Korea to raise their defense budgets so that the US can reduce its military expenditures in these theatres; loosening or even abolishing NATO)

* Calls for more military aggression against "Islamic terrorists"

However, Trump never elaborated his plans more concretely or detailed exactly how he wants to achieve these goals. Nevertheless, while it is clear that bourgeois governments usually do not implement all electoral promises, these plans give a clear indication of the direction of the Trump's presidency.

4. What is the Political Class Coalition behind Trump?

In this chapter we will attempt to determine the specific character of the future Trump administration. While most positions of the administration have still not been publicly elaborated, it is likely that it will contain different currents – reflecting the coalition character of the Trump electoral campaign. It currently appears that the Trump administration currently represents an unstable coalition of three main groups (while we naturally take into account the connections and transitions between them): a) the Trump clan itself which is rather characterized by its absence of strong political beliefs; b) the extreme right-wing conservative Republicans (including Christian evangelical fundamentalists and Tea-Party populists); and c) the white supremacist alt-right movement.

The main thrust (and inner contradictions) of the Trump administration will become more vivid if we examine the political coalition behind him. First of all, the Trump family itself is one of the richest families in the country: it has an estimated wealth of \$3.7 billion, based on an empire of 515 enterprises focused on real assets!³⁵ In other words, this clan itself represents a sector of the US monopoly bourgeoisie. Its notorious history of speculation with real assets makes it a prime example of the parasitic nature of America's big capitalists. Naturally, as president-elect Donald Trump does not entertain for a minute his

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willingness to separate himself from his wealth, as has been called for by many in the public to prevent conflicts of interest, but is simply taking steps to transfer the management of his financial empire to his children (who also play a central political role).

Jared Kushner, Donald Trump's son-in-law and a crucial player in the inner circle, is another real estate tycoon whose father spent some time in prison for illegal campaign contributions he made, tax evasion, and witness tampering. (As it is typical in the circles of the super-rich, Jared Kushner was admitted to the Harvard University, not long after his father made a large donation of \$2.5 million in 1998 to the prestigious Ivy League school.³⁶) This background in speculation, together with the fact that no one of the Trump clan has any political experience or any known strong political beliefs – deeper than vulgar racist and sexist prejudices³⁷ – gives the Trump clan, and hence the whole administration, a strong characterization as *adventurists*.

Naturally, the history of political regimes in capitalist societies knows a number of cases of adventurists who ruled a country. But there are adventurists and then again there are adventurists. Hitler and Mussolini certainly were adventurists, but they had strong (and thoroughly reactionary) political beliefs and a record of political activism for many years before they took power. To a certain degree it seems that the Trump clan considers the presidency as just another "project" which should serve the expansion of the family's wealth and influence.

The dominance of the family clan is also underlined by the fact that 4 of the 16 members of the transition team – responsible for the selection of 4,000 candidates to make up the future administration – are Trump's three children and his son-in-law.

Never before has there been such a close fusion between one capitalist family clan and the central political power in the US. This lends the new regime both strength and weakness. Its strength is derived from its not being based on mere a political power which must regularly ensure for itself the support of the country's monopoly capitalists. On the other hand, such a constellation weakens the Trump administration because (a) it discredits his credentials as a "leader and a representative of the "entire people" and (b) it will lead to conflicts with other family clans and factions of the big bourgeoisie.

Beside the family itself, the Trump administration is basing itself on a various extremely conservative and Christian fundamentalist Republicans. Vice President-elect Mike Pence, who also heads the transition team, is the leading representative of this current. He was a long-time member of Congress and Governor of Indiana, a state of 6.6 million people in the Mid-West. Pence is part of the Republican establishment, albeit its extreme right, Christian fundamentalist wing. He introduced a law which allows shops to refuse serving lesbians and gays, and opposes abortion. He is a typical conservative opponent of public social and health security and has supported all free trade agreements. He also unconditionally supported Bush's wars of aggression in the first decade of this century. The prestigious political plog *FiveThirtyEight* rates Pence as the most conservative vice presidential candidate in the last forty years. Given Trump's zero governmental experience and limited political perception, the vice president may

play a more influential role than is usually the case. Pence himself is probably well aware of this as he stated that his role model as vice president would be Dick Cheney, the highly influential vice president who had the ear of his dumbbell president, George W. Bush.

Another important figure in this camp – with links to the alt-right movement – is the newly appointed White House National Security Advisor, retired Lieutenant General Michael T. Flynn. Flynn is a former director of the Defense Intelligence Agency and an early supporter of Trump. He is an unabashed Islamophobic racist who recently joined the board of *Act for America*, an alt-right activist group that has helped introduce bills to ban Islamic Sharia law in nearly two dozen US states.³⁸ He advocates the superiority of "a Judeo-Christian ideology built on a moral set of rules and laws" and openly considers Islam as "a cancer" and a "political ideology that hides behind religion."³⁹ He has claimed that "fear of Muslims is rational."⁴⁰ In his recently published book he states: "We're in a world war against a messianic mass movement of evil people, most of them inspired by a totalitarian ideology: Radical Islam." This "world war" is "probably going to last through several generations." He is an advocate of unconditional support for Israel and its right-wing government, of supporting Egypt's dictator General Sisi, and of waging war against Iran.⁴¹

He is a strong admirer of Ronald Reagan's combination of armament and deterrence with ideological warfare based on "American exceptionalism." Flynn's influence points to a more militarily aggressive foreign policy which looks less for "spreading democracy" and long-term occupations (as was the case in Afghanistan and Iraq) but more short-term wars instead and installing submissive regimes. At the same time, such a policy will be combined with a more open Islamophobic ideology praising the "exceptional American values" – instead of the more liberal model of praising "human rights," "democracy" and "civilization" as the ideological rallying point.⁴²

Jeff Sessions, a Republican Senator from the southern state of Alabama, has been nominated as the president elect's designee for attorney general. He is another extremely conservative and racist Republican who has supported Trump's call for a temporary ban on Muslim immigrants and has suggested that a "toxic ideology" lies at the root of Islam.⁴³ He considers Afro-American civil rights organization like the *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People* (NAACP) and the *American Civil Liberties Union* (ACLU) as "un-American" and "Communist-inspired."⁴⁴ He is on record as having said that he used to think that the *Ku Klux Klan* was "okay, until he learned that they smoked marijuana."⁴⁵

Another important security figure is Mike Pompeo who has been slated by Trump as the next director of the CIA. Pompeo is a Republican congressman from Kansas who was elected in 2010 as a representative of the right-wing Tea Party. Pompeo is – like the entire Trump camp – an advocate of terminating the nuclear accord with Iran. He also co-sponsored a bill to ban the Muslim Brotherhood, which US right-wing conspiracy theorists have accused of plotting to infiltrate the government! It is hardly an exaggeration to call the Trump administration the most Islamophobic government the West has seen since the crusades in the Middle Ages!

Another important figure in this radical conservative

wing of the Republican Party is Rudolph Giuliani, a former mayor of New York City and a law-and-order hardliner. Other representatives of this wing of the Republican Party are the former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich (who led the campaign to bring down then-President Bill Clinton in the late 1990s because of the Monica Lewinsky affair); John Bolton, the former ambassador to the United Nations under President George W. Bush (the “face of Bush’s unilateralist foreign policy” as a commentator noted); and Tennessee Senator Bob Corker.⁴⁶

Reince Priebus, who has been assigned the position of Trump’s White House Chief of Staff, will be an important figure in the upcoming administration. This importance will be due to that of the Chief of Staff position in itself but also because Priebus served as chairman of the Republican Party for three consecutive terms. Hence he is a crucial link for Trump to the party’s establishment. Priebus has “proven” himself in the past by reconciling the party with the right-wing Tea Party movement, i.e., by moving the party to the right as was manifested in the blockade tactics of the GOP against Obamacare which led to the US government shutdown of October 2013.

In addition to these right-wing conservatives from the Republican Party, there is also another force in the Trump camp: the “anti-establishment” white supremacist, so-called “alt-right movement.” Its most important representative is Stephen Bannon who was head of *Breitbart News*, an extreme ultra-right media outlet who became the chief executive officer of Trump’s presidential campaign. Trump has now named him as Chief Strategist and Senior Advisor in the new administration – a highly influential position.

Bannon is such an open white supremacist and extreme right-winger that even John Weaver, a Republican strategist who worked for Ohio Governor John Kasich’s presidential campaign, reacted to the appointment: “The racist, fascist extreme right is represented footsteps from the Oval Office. Be very vigilant, America.”⁴⁷ However, despite his anti-establishment rhetoric, Bannon worked for

Goldman Sachs in the past, and has good connections to Sarah Palin, a darling of the Tea Party movement who was the Republican vice presidential candidate in 2012.⁴⁸

Despite his anti-establishment rhetoric, Trump has close contacts to various Wall Street bankers from among whom he is considering choosing his treasury secretary. Among the prospective candidates for this role are Steven Mnuchin, a former Goldman Sachs official who served as Trump’s campaign finance chief during the 2016 campaign, and JPMorgan Chase chief Jamie Dimon, the leader of the largest of the Big Four banks in the United States.⁴⁹ Another advisor of Trump is David Malpass, a banker who wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* shortly before the crash in 2008 that there is no reason to panic about the financial markets!

To sum up, we reiterate that the Trump administration appears to reflect the coalition character of the Trump electoral campaign. It contains basically three groups: (a) the Trump clan itself which rather lacks strong political beliefs; (b) the very-right-wing conservative Republicans (including Christian evangelical fundamentalists and Tea-Party populists); and (c) the white supremacist alt-right movement.

This character results in the following situation: In the past we have seen a Republican Party which, under the influence of the Tea Party and as an aggressive opposition party to the Obama Administration, shifted to the right. Trump, conducting an extremely chauvinistic and protectionist campaign, alienated the party’s establishment and secured only the support of the extremely conservative wing of the Republicans. However, this right-wing of the party now has to be considered as the “moderate” wing of the administration in face of the alt-right wing led by Chief Strategist Stephen Bannon! True, Trump is attempting to also win over representatives of the Republican mainstream for his administration (like Mitt Romney). But even if he succeeds in this, it is no exaggeration to state that this is truly the most right-wing government in the modern history of the US!

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If we attempt to give a preliminary class characterization of the Trump administration, we must say that it is a coalition which has at its top an important family clan representing a minority wing of the monopoly bourgeoisie, as well as extreme right-wing sectors of the political state apparatus which played only a secondary role in the past. These forces have been joined by the extremely right-wing Tea Party movement and alt-right groups which reflect the desperate and racist sectors of the middle class. These middle class sectors, as well as backward sectors of the working class (many former labor aristocrats), both of which are mostly based in the rural-dominated states of the Mid-West, constitute the foot-soldiers of the Trump “movement”.

However, the above characterization also means that the Trump administration will represent only a clear minority of the ruling class and openly provokes hostility from other factions of the bourgeoisie, from the liberal middle class, as well as from the mass organizations of the working class and the national/ethnic minorities.

It also appears that it will quickly become a highly unstable government, not only because of the opposition of these forces just cited but also because of the tensions between its different composite wings. This has already led to the resignation or purging of several figures linked to the Republican Party’s establishment. Examples for this are former Republican congressman Mike Rogers, who chaired the House intelligence committee, and who left the Trump transition team. New Jersey governor Chris Christie, an early supporter of Trump, was also ditched as the head of the transition team. Eliot Cohen, a senior state department official under George W. Bush, was expelled from the transition team.

5. Trumpism Both as an Adventure and an Objective Necessity for the Bourgeoisie

Let us finally discuss briefly how it was possible that Trump came to power in a “legal” fashion despite the fact that the majority of the monopoly bourgeoisie as well as the people in general opposed his election? We have already elaborated above the bizarre specifics of the US electoral system which make it possible for a candidate to win the presidential election despite losing the popular vote. Here we want to add some political considerations for this turning point in US and world history.

It’s true that the majority of the big bourgeoisie did in fact oppose Trump’s election. However, Trump’s policy of chauvinism and protectionism objectively represents a possible – and in the final analysis even inevitable – response of the US capitalist class to the current and future trajectory of both the world economy as well as US capitalism. As we have pointed out our past analyses of the world economy, globalization has entered a period of decline since the beginning of the Great Recession of 2008, which has manifested itself in the decline of world trade, the rise of protectionism, and the emergence of rivaling trade blocs.⁵⁰ Therefore, rather than introducing a completely new development, Trumpist economics is rather accelerating already existing tendencies.

Furthermore, US imperialism has been in decline for a long time. As we have repeatedly stressed, the US bourgeoisie simply can no longer play the role of the

“world policeman.” Obama tried to cushion this decline by retreating from Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as by strengthening US collaboration with other great Western powers. However, this US decline continues as has become even more obvious with the rise of China and Russia as new great powers. Thus, once again, Trump’s election to the US presidency will only accelerate an already existing tendency.

Likewise, Trump is certainly not responsible for re-launching American class polarization. For many years now we have been witness to the process of impoverishment of vast sectors of the black, Latino and white working class (along with sectors of the middle class). Trump’s neoliberal policy of lowering corporate taxes and cutting social welfare and health care – met with enthusiasm by many capitalists⁵¹ – are merely accelerating a process which already began with the Reagan Era in the early 1980s.

Similarly, racism leading to the regular killing of unarmed black people by (mostly white) police, and the rapid increase of black and Latino people serving time in prison have been an inherent part of US society for a long time. Likewise, the massive arming of US police forces so that they can act as an occupation force against the citizens of their own local jurisdictions is also a process which has been taking place for decades. So again, Trump’s chauvinism and law-and-order bonapartism is an acceleration of an already existing development.

In short, Trump represents the monopoly bourgeoisies’ objectively necessary policy for tomorrow – even though the majority of this class may still not recognize this. Hence, we can say that Trump is, to a certain degree, a “revolutionary” reactionary whose coming to power is in anticipation of the future shocks in store for capitalism and the class struggle.

However, the course of the class struggle cannot be determined in advance. Trump’s gamble is very risky. His provocative and adventurist course of aggression, domestically and globally, without sufficient support by the US ruling class, could backfire and create such a storm of resistance in the face of which his administration could simply crumble. In the end, the Trump clan’s highest priority is ... the wealth and influence of the Trump clan, and certainly not America’s well-being. Faced with the choice between personal wealth and patriotic interests, without a blink they will choose the former. Hence, an impeachment or early resignation of the Trump administration can be no means be excluded.



6. Where will the US go under President Trump?

Naturally, at this stage it is only possible to make predictions about the course and the consequences of the Trump Administration within certain limits. Nevertheless, we think it is possible to stress a few trends when taking into account the central political themes of this administration and its leading figures; the class character of the political coalition on which it is based; the objective contradictions of US imperialism both domestically as well as globally; and the responses we can expect against this administration rooted in the class struggle.

First, the Trump Administration will most likely follow an *aggressive capitalist agenda*, while trying at the same time to implement its avowed program at least to a certain degree. This they must do in order to prove the legitimacy of its campaign and its “new road.” According to the *New York Times*, Steve Bannon, the alt-right representative in the administration and Trump’s official Chief Strategist, has already told people in Mr. Trump’s inner circle that the new administration will only have a short window of opportunity to push through its agenda and therefore should focus first on the priorities that are expected to be the most contentious.⁵² Furthermore, if they do not advance the attempt to consolidate the Republican Party around the “Trumpist” platform they will soon lose much support. Such a development might result in the loss of the reactionary forces currently behind the Trump project, without adding new substantial support from other layers. The result could be – depending on the concrete course of the class struggle – either a crisis, even leading to the collapse of the Trump administration, or at least massive defeats for the Republicans in the next mid-term elections in 2018. Such a development would make the government a lame duck for the second half of its term and, in all probability, lead to its electoral defeat in the presidential election of 2020.

Naturally, an aggressive pushing through of the Trumpist agenda is a risky strategy. If successful, the administration can at least consolidate its popular support, withstand the

first wave of mass protests, and violently put down more militant forms of resistance. In doing so it could convince broader sections of the ruling class that its course of action is the only realistic option. Or, in other words, it can present the rest of the bourgeoisie with a *fait accompli*. In combination with another Great Recession – which in any case is likely to occur in the near future⁵³ – it is reasonable to assume that all the other Great Powers will also resort to a protectionist, chauvinist course of action. Under such circumstances, Trump’s strategy will appear as the only realistic option and gain legitimacy among these circles.

However, as we previously indicated, such an aggressive course of action will virtually guarantee mass protests and may also fail to consolidate the bourgeoisie around the Trumpist project. For example, mass deportations of hundreds of thousands of migrants in the next few months could lead to an explosion of civil unrest. The rhetorical promises of various mayors of New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, etc., who declared their cities as “sanctuaries” (which, of course, they didn’t mean seriously) could encourage mass resistance against deportations.

The US has already experienced a number of important class struggle movements in recent years. The *BlackLiveMatters* movement, the movement for a minimum wage of \$15, the Occupy movement, and more recently the protests of the Standing Rock Sioux against the Dakota Access Pipeline – these are all examples of increasing class struggle during the period of the Obama administration. Now, with Trump’s victory, the masses will have a common, visible and provocative enemy in the person of Trump.

If the resistance proliferates and radicalizes – for example, if it is transformed into mass strikes and occupations as well as militant self-defense against police forces trying to enforce deportations, or armed revolts in black ghettos – this could place the Trump administration before a serious crisis. If, at the same time, the administration pushes sectors of the ruling class away from supporting an “irresponsible” and “destabilizing” government policy, it could quickly open a full governmental crisis. The opening

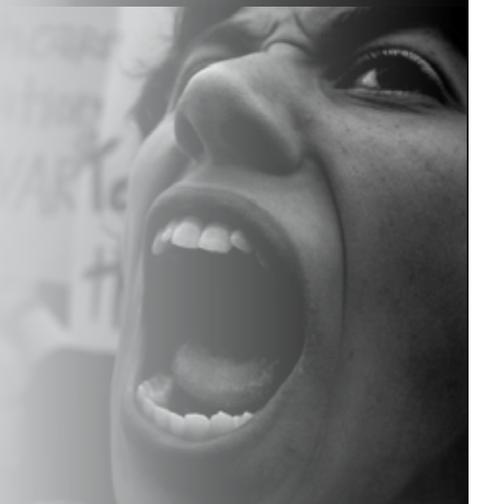
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of another Great Recession, which would demonstrate the failure of Trump's demagogic promises, could also hasten such a development.

Another possible factor which could bring about a governmental crisis would be a major failure of Trump's foreign policy – for example a military adventure against Iran or against, let's say, Al-Shabaab in Somalia if this would result in an embarrassing defeat.⁵⁴

Such a development could open a real crisis of American imperialism reminiscent of the late Nixon era in 1974 or even a pre-revolutionary situation.

For these reasons – and this seems to us to be a second important characteristic of the Trump administration – we think that it will most likely be an *unstable government*. Under such conditions of massive pressure – both from the working class and the oppressed, as well as from sectors of the bourgeoisie – it is quite likely that tensions within the coalition which constitute the Trump administration will increase.

The looming next Great Recession will accelerate these developments even more. Such a recession will unmask the empty demagoguery of Trump by creating even more poverty and unemployment. It will also likely provoke the administration to deflect attention from its domestic failures by either adopting even more outrageous attacks on migrants and black people or by starting another war.

In other words, the Trump administration will be a Molotov cocktail waiting to be ignited. It cannot possibly implement its promises and satisfy all of the sectors from which it garnered its victory: the bourgeoisie, the middle class and the working class. Trump came to power by promising to improve the lives of ordinary Americans. But its program of tax cuts for corporations and armament will increase public debt and will lead to massive cuts in social programs and health care. Trump promised to create jobs, but his administration will not be prepared to make major investments in public infrastructure (except for the military and the police). Its protectionist policy will make imports much more expensive and thereby raise the cost of living for ordinary people and production costs for capitalists. Trump promised "no more Iraq wars" but his militarist policy will inevitably lead the country into additional wars. Trump's reactionary policy against migrants will provoke mass resistance, and the reactionary outlook of his administration will, from the start, make it the most unpopular of governments. Trump's campaign claimed that it wants to make America "great again," but in fact it will only make more visible the US decline as the leading global power. The Trump government will make the US, ever more than before, the most hated country around the world.

New Book!

Michael Pröbsting: Building the Revolutionary Party in Theory and Practice

Looking Back and Ahead after 25 Years of Organized Struggle for Bolshevism

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a book called *BUILDING THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY IN THEORY AND PRACTICE*. The book's subtitle is: *Looking Back and Ahead after 25 Years of organized Struggle for Bolshevism*. The book is in English-language. It contains four chapters on 148 pages and includes 42 pictures. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which give an overview of its content.

A few months ago, our movement commemorated its 25th anniversary. In the summer of 1989 our predecessor organization, the League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI) was founded as a democratic-centralist international tendency based on an elaborated program. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) continues the revolutionary tradition of the LRCI. Below we give an overview of our history, an evaluation of its achievements as well as mistakes, and a summary of the lessons for the struggles ahead. This book summarizes our theoretical and practical experience of the past

25 years.

In Chapter I we outline a summary of the Bolshevik- Communists' theoretical conception of the role of the revolutionary party and its relation to the working class. In Chapter II we elaborate on the essential characteristics of revolutionary party respective of the pre-party organization. In Chapter III we deal with the history of our movement – the RCIT and its predecessor organization. Finally, in Chapter IV we outline the main lessons of our 25 years of organized struggle for building a Bolshevik party and their meaning for our future work.

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**Building the
Revolutionary Party
in Theory
and Practice**

Looking Back and Ahead after
25 Years of organized Struggle for Bolshevism



By Michael Pröbsting

Published by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency

III. GLOBAL CONSEQUENCES: THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ERA

Trump's ascent to power will have major consequences not only on the class struggle in the US, but will also fundamentally reshape global politics economically, politically and militarily. As we said, it has opened a new era for both US and world politics.

The starting point for understanding the rise of Trumpism is the decline of the US as the dominant Great Power. Trumpism implicitly recognizes this decline while at the same time expressing the will of the ruling class to reverse this trend. In fact, the Trump campaign acknowledged this decline in its selection of its key slogan: not "Keep America Great" but rather "Make America Great Again."

We have demonstrated this decline of the US in many of our publications.⁵⁵ To briefly summarize, we will cite here a few facts that reflect the US's rapid decline during the past decade. America's share of global industrial production declined rapidly in a relatively short period – from close to 30% in the early years of the 21st century to less than 20% by 2015 (see Figure 7). Similarly, its share in Global Fixed Capital Investment declined from 20% (2003) to 13% (2013) (See Figure 8).

Finally, the U.S. decline is reflected in the substantial reduction of its share among the world's biggest corporations. A comparison of the *Forbes Global 2000* list shows that in 2003 the US had a share of 776 (38.8%). By 2016, this share had declined by nearly one third to 540 (27%) (See Table 5).⁵⁸

This decline has been mirrored politically in the wrecked US occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq and in the failure of the Obama administration to intervene in the Ukraine and Syria to stop Russia's expanding influence. Yet another manifestation of this decline was the Iran deal after the US unsuccessfully tried to bring down Teheran via sanctions and military threats for decades.

7. The Accelerating Rivalry between the Great Powers

We have said that Trumpism is in fact recognition of the US's decline while at the same time an expression of the determination to reverse this descent. In this sense Trump's victory, which has been acclaimed by both Moscow and Beijing, is also confirms that, geopolitically, Russia and China have become imperialist powers; and this despite the dogged denials of numerous "left" social-imperialists who maintains that the workers' movement should side with Putin and Xi against Washington.

While Trumpism currently has nothing approaching a concrete program, there are nevertheless some axes around which such a program is likely to evolve. The policies of America's past administrations were based on the assumption that Globalization works to the benefit of US imperialism. This was obviously a correct assessment insofar as it enabled US corporations to make huge profits by exploiting cheap labor forces in semi-colonial countries. However, as we have shown, in the end the era

of Globalization has been more beneficial to the US's rivals – first and foremost China – than to America itself.

Trump's program represents a departure from Globalization and a turn towards protectionism. Naturally, Trump is not opposed to trade agreements, but he has promised to more actively use protectionist tariffs in order to better impose US interests on others states. Consequently, the president-elect has already announced that, on the first day of his presidency, he will withdraw from the negotiations on the *Trans-Pacific Partnership* trade deal (TPP) – Obama's main project to advance US hegemony in Asia against China.⁶⁰

It's not difficult to imagine the consequences of such a policy: the provoking of a chain reaction encouraging other Great Powers to speed up the creation of trade blocks which they themselves dominate as a means of protection against their rivals. As we have pointed out in previous documents, for some time this process has already begun. (See, for example, our discussion of the China-dominated RCEP as an alternative to the US-dominated TPP)⁶¹

The result of all this will be a significant disruption of world trade and the entire global economy, and may escalate to major trade wars between the US and China. This, in turn, will have major consequences not only on trade but also in the realm of world finance. As we have pointed out in the earlier documents, China is the most important foreign holder of U. debt – it currently holds \$1.25 trillion (20% of all foreign debts), followed closely by Japan, which holds \$1.13 trillion.

In a major conflict between Washington and Beijing, China will refuse to continue financing the rapidly growing US public debt. Under such circumstances, Beijing will prefer to sell its holdings which would cause tremendous harm to the US. In fact, we have recently witnessed a strengthening of the trend whereby foreign countries are selling off US treasury bonds.⁶² In 2015, central banks sold off a net \$225 billion in US Treasury debt, the highest figure since 1978 (see Figure 9). Trump's protectionist policy will likely accelerate this process and thereby increase difficulties for the US in financing its rising debts.

One consequence of Trump's victory will be that the European Union will have to face, more than ever before, the dilemma of either speeding up its unification or crumbling.⁶⁴ The discussion about the formation of a supra-national EU army is an indication that EU leaders are willing to move towards closer union, even despite Brexit and the rise of right-wing nationalists.⁶⁵

Donald Trump repeatedly stated during his campaign that he plans to finance a massive armament program. In his recently published book, *Crippled America: How to Make America Great Again* he wrote, with the inimitable style of a pubescent narcissist making an entry in his diary:

"There is no one-size-fits-all foreign policy. We need to make our beliefs very clear and let them form the framework of our policy. Everything begins with a strong military. Everything.

*We will have the strongest military in our history, and our people will be equipped with the best weaponry and protection available. Period.”*⁶⁶

One hardly needs a lot of imagination to understand that this will provoke a global chain reaction among rivaling Great Powers which will also massively speed up their armament programs.

This will not only affect the direct rivals, China and Russia, but America's traditional allies as well. This is because Trump is planning to significantly reduce US expenditures for maintaining its troops stationed abroad in Europe and East Asia, as he stated in his book:

*“We defend Germany. We defend Japan. We defend South Korea. These are powerful and wealthy countries. We get nothing from them. It's time to change all that. It's time to win again.”*⁶⁷

The pro-Putinist left has hailed Trump as a “dove” – as opposed to the “warmonger” Hillary Clinton – and some like the fake-left philosopher and star of the petty-bourgeois academic left, Slavoj Žižek, even openly called for his election.⁶⁸ They hope that the Trump Administration will operate a less confrontational foreign policy towards Russia and China.

It is possible that Trump will avoid such confrontations in the first period because of the necessity to consolidate his regime and because he shares Putin's goal of liquidating the Syrian Revolution. However, sooner or later major confrontations between the US and its rivals will become inevitable, because the decline of the capitalist world economy and the accelerating global order will lead to clashes between the Great Powers, as they all struggle to increase their share of the world's wealth at the expense of their rivals.

Furthermore, it is very likely that, as Trump is forced to adapt US foreign policy to the country's loss of hegemony, this will also lead to an expansion of the geopolitical influence of its major rivals. Such a trend may even be strengthened in light of the protectionist policy of the US, which may even encourage semi-colonial countries to align themselves with other powers, like China. This may possibly even include an expansion of the influence of Chinese imperialism inside Latin America, which the US has traditionally considered as its own, exclusive backyard.

8. More Imperialist Wars

Trump has repeatedly announced that the US should only wage wars against enemies which constitute a threat to the U.S. He has criticized Bush's war against Iraq in 2003 and he has urged for more cooperation with Putin in order to liquidate the Syrian Revolution. This has led the Russian and various other governments, as well as the “left-wing” supporters of Putin and Xi, to hope that America led by Trump will become less interventionist and more “peaceful.”⁶⁹

While we cannot exclude that Trump will initially attempt to avoid major military interventions in order to consolidate his regime (Hitler was also a “pacifist,” in terms of foreign policy, in his first years of power), it is clear that his administration will pursue a thoroughly militarist policy. In fact, the appointment of General Flynn, who advocates a “*multi-generational world war against Islam*,” as Trump's National Security Advisor, reflects an agenda of the Trump administration that will make George W. Bush's tenure look like that of a peace dove.

Naturally such a “war against Islam” creates a justification for military operations in wide areas of the globe, from Western and Central Africa to Somalia, the entire Middle East up to Pakistan, Bangladesh and Indonesia.

Such a “war against Islam” has also the advantage from the US imperialist point of view in that it will not *necessarily* provoke a direct clash with the other Great Powers. We should note that not only the US but the EU, Russia and China are also oppressing Muslim minorities at home and waging wars against countries with Muslim populations abroad.

For these reasons the Trump administration will most likely make the “War on Terror” a priority under the pretext of waging war against *Daesh*. In his book Trump wrote: “*Unfortunately, it may require boots on the ground to fight the Islamic State. (...) We could also easily expand air operations to make it impossible for ISIS to ever find safe haven anywhere in the region. (...) However, I have a unique perspective on what action we should take. While ISIS is our most violent enemy, they ended up with oil in Iraq and Syria that we should have taken. That oil, along with ransom and extortion, is funding their army. I've advocated bombing the hell out of those oil fields to cut off the source of their money. This would barely affect the world oil supply, but it would dramatically reduce their ability to fund terrorism.*”⁷⁰

In reality, this would be a war not *only* against *Daesh*, but against various Islamist-led resistance movements

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Table 5 U.S. Share among the World's 2000 Biggest Corporations, 2003 and 2016 (*Forbes Global 2000 List*)⁵⁹

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Share</i>
2003	776	38.8%
2016	540	27%

Figure 7. Rise and Decline of Great Powers: China's and US's Share of the World Industrial Production 1980-2015 (in Percent)⁵⁶

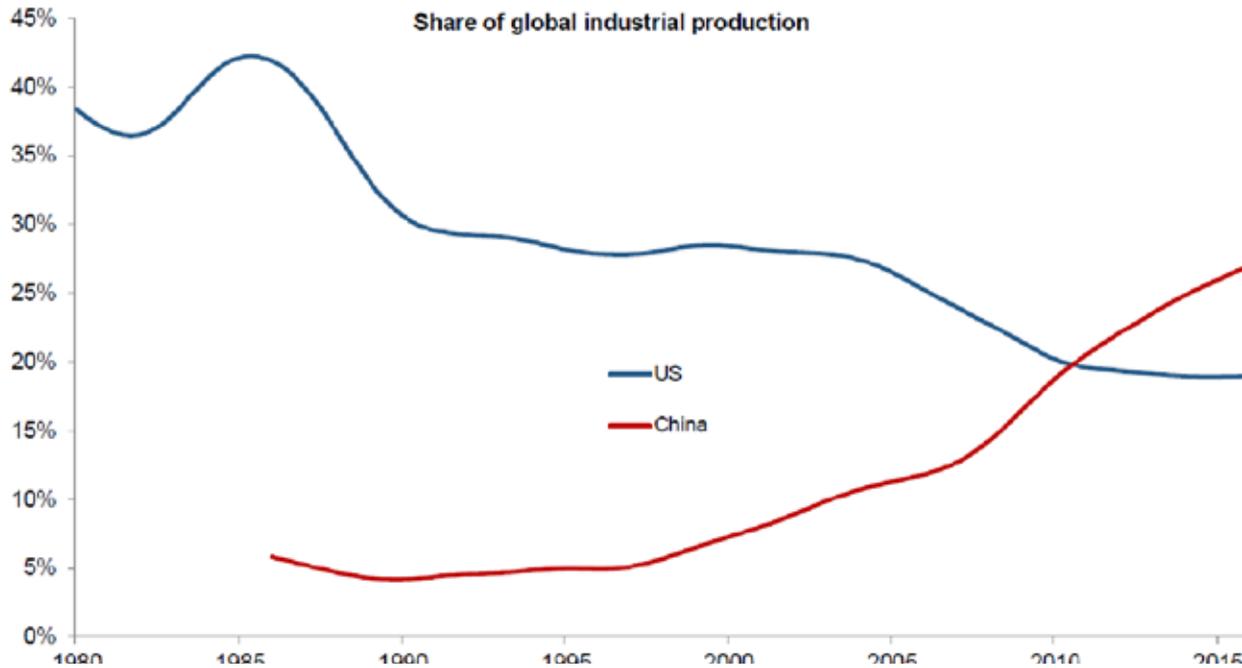
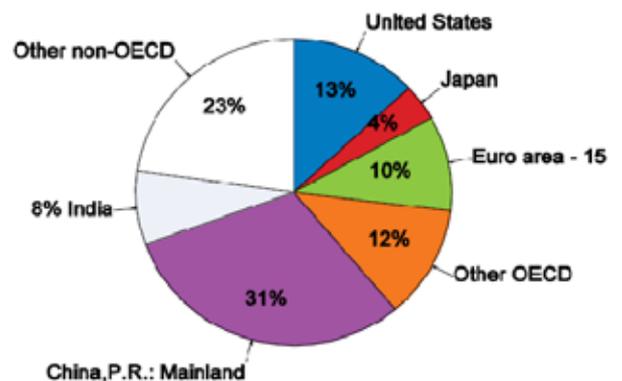
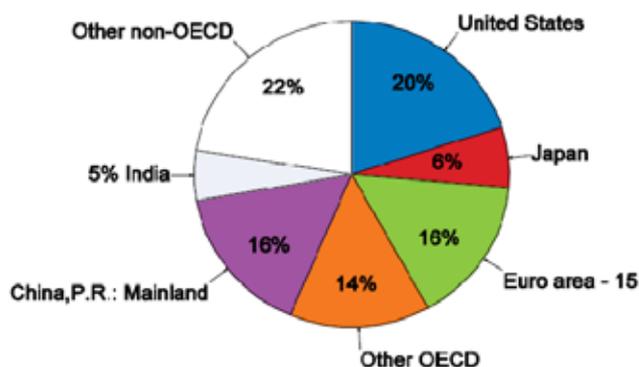


Figure 8. Distribution of Global Fixed Capital Investment, 2003 and 2013⁵⁷

Figure 3.4. Global fixed capital investment has shifted to emerging market economies
In per cent of world gross fixed capital investment

A. Global investment shares in 2003

B. Global investment shares in 2013



Note: Calculations based on PPPs.

fighting against dictatorships and imperialist occupation.

A second major target of Trump's militarism will be Iran – a long-time enemy of US imperialism as well as of Israel. It is hardly surprising that Trump received enthusiastic support – irrespective of his numerous anti-Semitic remarks – from Israel's Netanyahu government, as well as from many right-wing Zionist forces.⁷¹

It is therefore likely that the Trump administration will revoke the nuclear deal with Iran. However, it is unlikely that it will manage to isolate Tehran as neither Russia, nor China and probably not even the EU, will be prepared to follow Washington's confrontational course against Iran. The next possible step in escalation could only involve military threats.

This does not necessarily mean that the US will inevitably attack Iran. It is possible, however, that Trump will encourage and support Israel to attack Iran. Obviously this would provoke major tensions and unrest in the Middle East and beyond.

In general, Trump has made it clear on many occasions that he will increase the unconditional support of the US for Israel and its expansionist plans. This will likely encourage the Zionist state to initiate wars – be it against the Palestinian people in Gaza, against Hezbollah in Lebanon or, as already said, Iran. All of this will provoke major political explosions around the globe and see Israel more isolated and hated than ever before.

It is hardly surprising that Trump's victory was greeted enthusiastically by arch-reactionary dictators like Syria's Bashar al-Assad or Egypt's General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi. The former hopes for a more active collaboration between the US and Russia in order to liquidate the Syrian Revolution. And General al-Sisi looks forward to even stronger support for his bloody repression of people belonging or supporting the Muslim Brotherhood or leftist democratic forces.⁷²

One important change – compared with past US administrations – will be that the Trump's will be much less inclined to purport that it's waging wars to spread "democracy" or defend "human rights." Rather it will much more explicitly and unabashedly defend "American interests," without resorting to the camouflage of some civilizing mission. In other words, Trumpist foreign policy will be similar, to a certain degree, to the neo-conservatives concept of the Bush era, but without the pretensions of spreading "democracy."

In short, the Trump regime will be epitomized by neo-conservatism under conditions whereby the US has lost exclusive global hegemony – in contrast to the Bush era, when the US was stronger and hoped to retain its absolute dominance with an aggressive militarist foreign policy.



9. Reactionary Offensive and the Rise of Chauvinism

The future Trump administration has already threatened to pull the US out of the *Paris climate change accord*, to eliminate the *Environmental Protection Agency*, repeal environmental regulations, and cut climate funding. The president-elect is pushing to revive the fossil fuel industry, in particular the coal industry.⁷³

This is hardly surprising, as Trump – ever an extraordinary fool – has repeatedly called climate change a "myth" or even a "Chinese hoax." Thus, one can read on the American president-elect's Twitter account: "The concept of global warming was created by and for the Chinese in order to make US manufacturing non-competitive."⁷⁴ He even welcomes global warming: "It's freezing and snowing in New York – we need global warming!"⁷⁵ Then-President George W. Bush once remarked that one doesn't need to be very smart to become president of the US. That was certainly an accurate self-characterization, but is even more true in the case of Donald Trump.

Trump's policy of anti-immigration chauvinism and protectionism will also have dramatic consequences for semi-colonial countries – in particular for Latin America. His plans for mass deportation of undocumented migrants, the creation of a wall along the southern US border with Mexico,⁷⁶ and the renegotiation or even abolition of NAFTA will affect these countries in several ways.⁷⁷

Firstly, it will result in massive losses of remittances sent by migrants to their families in countries of origin. In 2013, for example, migrants from Mexico in the US sent more than \$23 billion to their families at home. Families in other countries are also very dependent on remittances – e.g., in the same year migrants in the US sent \$10.84 billion to India and \$10 billion to the Philippines.⁷⁸

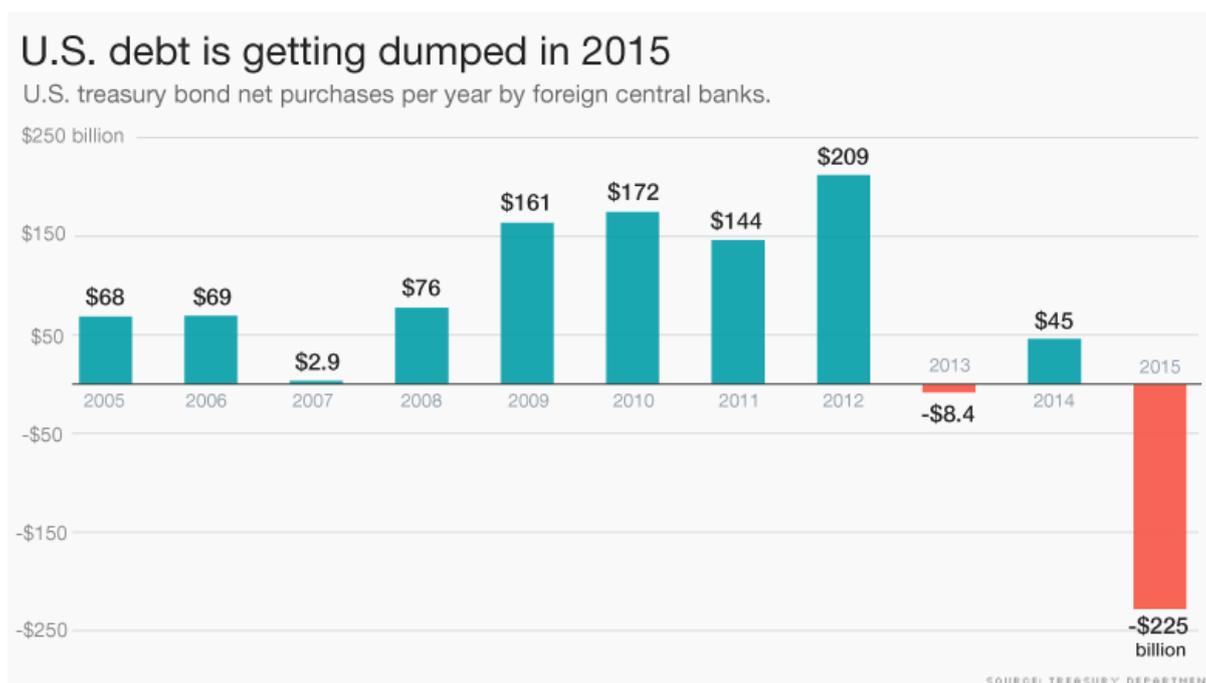
Secondly, mass deportations of migrants back to Mexico will create additional burdens on that country, as these millions of people will have to be looked after by the Mexican state. It will also affect other Latin American countries, as the Mexican government will use the forced return of its own citizens as an excuse to deport migrants from other countries who have settled in Mexico itself.

Regardless of whether Trump abolishes or renegotiates NAFTA, the terms of trade for Mexico in relation to the US will certainly worsen. Unsurprisingly, Trump's victory has already led to a substantial devaluation of the Mexican peso.

In addition, Trump's victory is likely to politically damage the conservative Mexican government of Enrique Peña Nieto. Peña already welcomed Trump in September, during the election campaign, which infuriated many people in his country. The PRI government has already become unpopular and his sympathies for Trump will only increase this.

Furthermore, Trump's victory will undoubtedly strengthen right-wing populist and chauvinist forces in many countries around the world. This was already become evident from the triumphant reactions to the outcome of the US election by Marie Le Pen in France, Geert Wilders in the Netherlands, Golden Dawn Party spokesman, Ilias Kasidiaris, in Greece, Austria's right-wing leader HC Strache, as well as among Israel's right-wing extremists inside and outside of the government.

Figure 9. US Treasury Bond Net Purchases per Year by Foreign Central Banks (2006-2015)⁶³



Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: Greece - A Modern Semi-Colony

The Contradictory Development of Greek Capitalism, Its Failed Attempts to Become a Minor Imperialist Power, and Its Present Situation as an Advanced Semi-Colonial Country with Specific Features

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a new English-language book – *GREECE: A MODERN SEMI-COLONY*. The book's subtitle is: *The Contradictory Development of Greek Capitalism, Its Failed Attempts to Become a Minor Imperialist Power, and Its Present Situation as an Advanced Semi-Colonial Country with Some Specific Features*. It contains six chapters (144 pages) and includes 12 tables, 35 figures and 4 maps. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

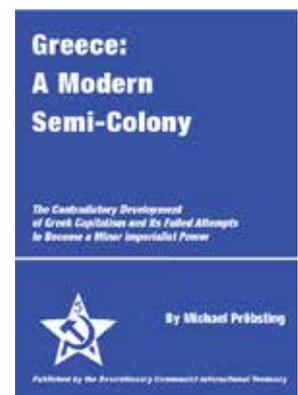
The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which gives an overview of its content.

Greece is at the forefront both of the capitalist crisis in Europe as well as of the class struggle. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that what the Arab Revolution has been for the world in the past few years, Greece has been for Europe.

Subsequently, the question of the class character of Greece is of crucial importance both for the domestic as well as for the international workers movement: Is it an imperialist

state, a semi-colonial country or something else, and what are its specific features?

In Chapter I we outline a summary of the Marxists' theoretical conception of imperialist respectively semi-colonial states. In Chapter II we give a brief historical overview of the development of Greek capitalism. In Chapter III we deal with Greece's failed attempt to become a minor imperialist power. In Chapter IV we outline the historic crisis of Greek capitalism from 2008 until today. In Chapter V we elaborate the most important programmatic conclusions and in the last Chapter we present a summary in the form of theses. The book contains 12 Tables, 35 Figures and 4 Maps. ■



10. The End of the Ideological Superiority of the US as the bearer of “Democracy” and “Human Rights”

The outcome of the US election will also have major ideological consequences. Until now, the US – as a result of its character as the strongest economic, political and military power – could play the role of a “world leader.” This was also reflected in Washington’s global ideological leadership as a “defender of human rights” and advocate of “democracy.” With the Trump administration, such pretenses will come to an end. Nobody can seriously see “The Donald” as a compassionate liberal man caring for the poor and oppressed around the world. Of course, we are fully aware that such liberal, cosmopolitan language was pure rhetoric used by past US presidents to deflect attention from the real goals of US imperialism. But for Marxists it is also important to understand the illusions of sectors of the middle class and how they will be affected by recent developments.

Bill Clinton and Barack Obama (but George W. Bush, hardly not) were able to attract hopes and illusions among millions of middle class people in other countries. They could create a certain kind of “global ideological consensus” among these layers. With Trump this is over.

It is hardly surprising that numerous liberal intellectuals around the world have started to panic since November 8 about the loss of the “leadership of the free world”!⁷⁹

In other words, we think that the US’s decline as the leading imperialist power is also reflected in its loss of ideological hegemony – something which it had a virtual monopoly on for many decades.

11. Acceleration of the Class Struggle

The coming to power of the Trump administration will bring about a massive acceleration of all class contradictions. Immediately after the election, we saw spontaneous mass protests in all major US cities. This will be a government that not only attacks the workers, migrants and poor. It has and is bound to continue to provoke wide sectors of the population – including the liberal middle class – with its chauvinism, sexism and simply outrageous idiocy.

We can expect new upswings of class struggle if and when mass deportations start and if the government launches yet another war. The next Great Recession, waiting in the wings, will accelerate the economic and political contradictions even more.

Furthermore, it is nearly unavoidable that Trump’s foreign policy (rescinding agreement to the climate protocol, protectionism, wars, etc.) will also provoke mass outrage around the globe. We experienced similar developments during the Bush era. Bush’s Iraq war provoked the biggest global mass movement since the Vietnam war, with about 15-20 million people demonstrating around the globe on 15 February 2003 against Bush’s planned aggression. Trump is Bush squared and, as we said above, the new administration is a Molotov cocktail only waiting to be ignited.

In summary, the new era which has commenced with the election of Trump confirms our characterization of the new historic period which opened in 2008, one characterized by the decay of capitalism and the acceleration of the economic, political and military contradictions of the system. As we stated a year ago in our World Perspectives document:

“To summarize, capitalism is in the throes of a historic period of decline which threatens not only the world economy but also the living standard of the popular masses, and even puts the survival of humanity in danger. The current period is characterized by what Trotsky described as a “declining curve of capitalist development”. It is the decay of the productive forces which constitutes the fundamental, the most important factor, for the acceleration of the contradictions between the classes which is so characteristic of the historic period since 2008. It is because of the declining dynamic of capital accumulation and the growth of profits that the bourgeoisie is forced, lest it face ruin, to relentlessly attack the working class. For the very same reason the imperialist bourgeoisie is forced to relentlessly strangle the semi-colonial countries of the South and to wage more and more military interventions and occupations. And it is for the very same reason that the rivalry between the imperialist Great Powers is accelerating, since they have to struggle against one other to gain a larger share of the relatively decreasing production of global capitalist value. Finally, if the imperialist Great Powers are not smashed by revolutionary international working class, their rivalry will lead to World War III. The working class can only end this continuous chain of misery, wars and catastrophes via a world socialist revolution. Rosa Luxemburg’s statement that humanity is faced with the alternative “Socialism or Barbarism” is more relevant than ever. Under the conditions of the early 21st century, the concretization of Luxemburg’s statement means: “Socialism or Widespread Death through Climate Destruction and World War III!”⁸⁰

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IV. LESSONS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR THE STRUGGLE

As we have said, there is no doubt that the ascent to power of the Trump administration will provoke a massive upswing of class struggle both in the US as well as globally. Again, thousands of youth have taken to the streets in large US big cities to protest against the Trump election. However, there is a danger that the public outrage will fizzle out or will be co-opted by bourgeois politicians from the Democratic or Green Party.

The rise of the right-wing chauvinistic forces demonstrates, as always, that if socialists are unable to offer a consistent and internationalist program for struggle, including the founding of an authentic revolutionary party that will be part of a world party, they will certainly not be able to rally and organize the workers, migrants and youth and lead them to defeat Trump and other forces of reaction.

Therefore, it is extremely urgent to draw lessons from past struggles and, in particular, from the recent electoral campaign.

12. Is the Democratic Party – or at least its Left Wing around Sanders and Warren – a Vehicle for the Struggle against Trump?

A first and most crucial lesson is the utter bankruptcy of the classic strategy of mainstream progressive forces in the US: to support the Democratic Party as a “lesser evil” against the Republicans. In fact, the Democratic Party is – like the Republicans – an imperialist party, representing a wing of the ruling class. The Clinton family itself is an excellent example illustrating this point. They are closely tied to the bankers of Wall Street as Hillary Clinton’s speeches before the managers of Goldman Sachs so tangibly illustrated.

In fact, the entire policy of the Obama administration has been thoroughly reactionary. As we showed above, during Obama’s Democratic presidency, wages declined and unemployment rates rose while the incarceration of masses of blacks and Latinos kept apace and the deportation of undocumented migrants rose to record levels.

In a similar fashion, the reaction of both Obama and Hillary Clinton to Trump’s victory demonstrated that the Democratic Party is, first and foremost, a party of the ruling class which is willing to “patriotically” assist the transition to power of even the most reactionary US government for decades! It is revealing that Obama and Clinton did not call upon Americans to protest on the streets, but rather to collaborate with and support the new Administration. Obama declared after meeting Trump that his “*number-one priority in the coming two months is to try to facilitate a transition that ensures our president-elect is successful.*” He added, speaking to Trump, “*I want to emphasize to you, Mr. President-Elect, that we now are going to want to do everything we can to help you succeed—because if you succeed, then the country succeeds.*”⁸¹

Hillary Clinton, too, called to support Trump and

expressed her hope that he “*will be a successful president for all Americans.*”⁸²

The Democratic Party never has been nor will it ever be a party of the working people or an instrument against the ruling class! Once again it has proved that it is a party whose prime responsibility is to maintain the stability of the capitalist order, even if this means handing over power to the most reactionary forces. While the aptness of the following analogy is limited, one is reminded of the attempts of the German Social Democrats to appease the recently appointed chancellor Hitler in 1933 by calling on their supporters to participate in the fascist-organized marches on May Day of that year, or by supporting the Fuhrer’s announced foreign policy in the Reichstag vote on 17 May 1933.⁸³

One of the greatest, if not *the* greatest, obstacles to the struggle for liberation in the US is the subordination of the trade union bureaucracy and the leadership of the black and Latino mass organizations to the parties of the capitalist class – in particular the Democratic Party. It is this subordination which has traditionally resulted in the political exploitation of the workers and oppressed for the electoral goals of the Democratic political apparatus, and has thus so severely hindered them from fighting for their own interests.

The trade union bureaucracy is perhaps the most significant obstacle to liberation of the working class from bourgeois control. In this last election, nearly all AFL-CIO leaders called upon their membership to vote for Clinton – as they have traditionally done for other Democratic Party candidates – and spent millions of dollars to help her advance her campaign. Several leaders like Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), were engaged at length in massive lobbying for Clinton and did everything in their power to destroy the Sanders campaign. Emails released by WikiLeaks show that “*Weingarten promised to act as an attack dog for Clinton against another union that had endorsed Sanders in the primary.*”⁸⁴ The bureaucratic leadership of the *Service Employees International Union* unconditionally supported Clinton, despite the fact that she refused to endorse a \$15 minimum wage that this union had made into its national battle cry.

Some unions and many activists placed big hopes in the campaign of Senator Bernie Sanders who ran for the Democratic presidential nomination as an alternative to Clinton. Sanders waged a left-populist campaign for “*social justice*” and for “*political revolution*” without, however, touching upon the fundamentals of capitalism. As a result, Clinton could only stop him from winning the Democratic nomination by mobilizing the entire party machinery, including the notorious Super PAC’s. Various polls conducted this past summer predicted that, if Sanders would have run as the party’s candidate against Trump, the latter would have been defeated.

However, as we have described in past articles, Sanders is a long-time bourgeois politician who has always understood politics to be game played according to the typical bourgeois parliamentary rules – running for election, filling an office, re-running at the next election, etc. While formally an Independent, Sanders in fact has always collaborated closely with the Democratic Party which he finally joined last year so that he could compete for that party's presidential nomination.⁸⁵

We note in passing that another leading progressive politician, Senator Elizabeth Warren, plays the same role of acting as a left-wing cover for one of the two major capitalist parties.

Sanders' campaign undoubtedly created great enthusiasm among a new generation of activists who want to fight against the ills of capitalism. However, in reality, his candidacy for the nomination only channeled the enthusiasm of his supporters into bourgeois-electoral politics and the Democratic political machinery. In an *Open Letter*, published in the *New York Times* shortly after the election, Sanders wrote:

*"In the coming days, I will also provide a series of reforms to reinvigorate the Democratic Party. I believe strongly that the party must break loose from its corporate establishment ties and, once again, become a grass-roots party of working people, the elderly and the poor. We must open the doors of the party to welcome in the idealism and energy of young people and all Americans who are fighting for economic, social, racial and environmental justice. We must have the courage to take on the greed and power of Wall Street, the drug companies, the insurance companies and the fossil fuel industry."*⁸⁶

Even worse, instead of mobilizing for the already ongoing mass protests in order to stop Trump, Sanders has fostered the dangerous illusion that this arch-reactionary demagogue may indeed be able to act in the interests of the working people, and has even offered to collaborate with him on some issues! As Sanders wrote in the same letter:

"I will keep an open mind to see what ideas Mr. Trump offers and when and how we can work together. Having lost the nationwide popular vote, however, he would do well to heed the views of progressives. If the president-elect is serious about pursuing policies that improve the lives of working families, I'm going to present some very real opportunities for him to earn my support."

Similarly, Senator Warren called upon her party to act as *"the loyal opposition."* Like Sanders, she offered collaboration with Trump:

*"So let me be 100% clear about this. When President-Elect Trump wants to take on these issues, when his goal is to increase the economic security of middle class families, then count me in. I will put aside our differences and I will work with him to accomplish that goal. I offer to work as hard as I can and to pull as many people as I can into this effort. If Trump is ready to go on rebuilding economic security for millions of Americans, so am I and so are a lot of other people-Democrats and Republicans."*⁸⁷

All this is reactionary nonsense! It is as absurd as if a faithful Christian would say, *"OK, if the devil promises to do something good, I am willing to work with him."* This can never happen, because running the government in the interests of the working people would be completely nullify the interests and the political nature of the Trump administration. In fact, all these calls to *"give the Trump*

administration a chance" are nothing but an attempt to halt the mass mobilizations on the streets which want to stop – and not to collaborate with! – the demagogue president to be.

The same bourgeois electoralist approach characterizes two new political organizations – *Our Revolution* and *Brand New Congress* – which have recently been created by prominent Sanders supporters.

In short, Sanders' (and Warren's) objective role is to divert the new generation of radical activists who have entered political life and to channel their energies away from activism on the streets and away from building militant mass organizations and encourage them to act as foot soldiers for the Democrats.

For these reasons, socialists in the US should denounce bourgeois progressive politicians like Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren and warn activists not to join their political projects.

Naturally, this should not be understood to mean the up front rejection of any practical collaboration with supporters of the Sanders (or Warren). Quite the contrary, socialists should recognize that Sanders' call for a *"revolution"* has energized but, at the same time blinded, tens of thousands of honest activists who must be won over to the socialist cause. This will require that socialists prepare solid explanations about the necessity to *combine* a political revolution with a social revolution, and the need to expropriate the corporations and the Donald Trumps, Rockefellers, Zuckerbergs, and the like. This also requires that socialists think about how and when to apply the united front to reach practical collaboration with Sanders and Warren supporters in the mass movements on the streets or inside the trade unions.⁸⁸

However, the unequivocal goal must be to stop all attempts by the bureaucrats working for Sanders and Warren to channel the mass movement into the ranks of the Democratic Party.

13. Break with the Democratic Party – Build a Multi-National Workers Party!

We repeat that, in the opinion of the RCIT, a strategic task of utmost import is to break the trade unions and mass organizations away from the Democratic Party. The workers and oppressed need their own party – independent of any faction of the capitalist class! Socialists should therefore fight within the unions and within the black and Latino mass organization against the leaderships which bind these forces to the Democratic Party.

Socialists should call upon these organizations to support a campaign to build a new *Multinational Workers' Party* that will fight for the interests of the workers and all oppressed (black, Latino and all other national/ethnic minorities, Muslims, women, youth, LGBT, etc.). As revolutionary communists, we would propose a *transitional program* for such a party – starting from the *immediate economic (defense of wages, jobs, etc.) and democratic demands (no deportations, equal wages, equal rights for all migrants – including the right to vote – and minorities, for an electoral reform where all votes are equal and the Electoral College system will be abolished so that the candidate with most popular votes wins the election, etc.) up to the armed self-defense of workers, blacks and Latinos, the expropriation of the capitalist class and the formation of a*

workers government.⁸⁹

Ultimately, for socialists, the adoption of such a program would be a condition for their participation in the formation of such a *Multinational Workers' Party*. Given that the founding of such a party would represent tremendous historic progress, in particular in a country like the US where there never has been an independent mass workers' party, socialists should work within such a party even if it is initially dominated by non-revolutionary forces. However, in such a case, socialists should form a revolutionary faction and work to convince the membership of its program and to fight against any attempts of reformist forces to bureaucratize the party.

Most importantly, such a *Multinational Workers' Party* should fight for these goals via mass mobilizations and organization on the streets, in the workplaces and in the neighborhoods. Instead of focusing on elections, it should concentrate its political work in *organizing mass demonstrations, in building unions and factory committees in the workplaces, and mass organizations of the blacks, Latinos, Asians and poor in the neighborhoods*. It should focus on organizing strikes and boycotts in workplaces, schools and neighborhoods as well as on building self-defense forces against the racist and repressive police.

Naturally, such a new *Multinational Workers' Party* should not stay away from elections based on principle. Quite

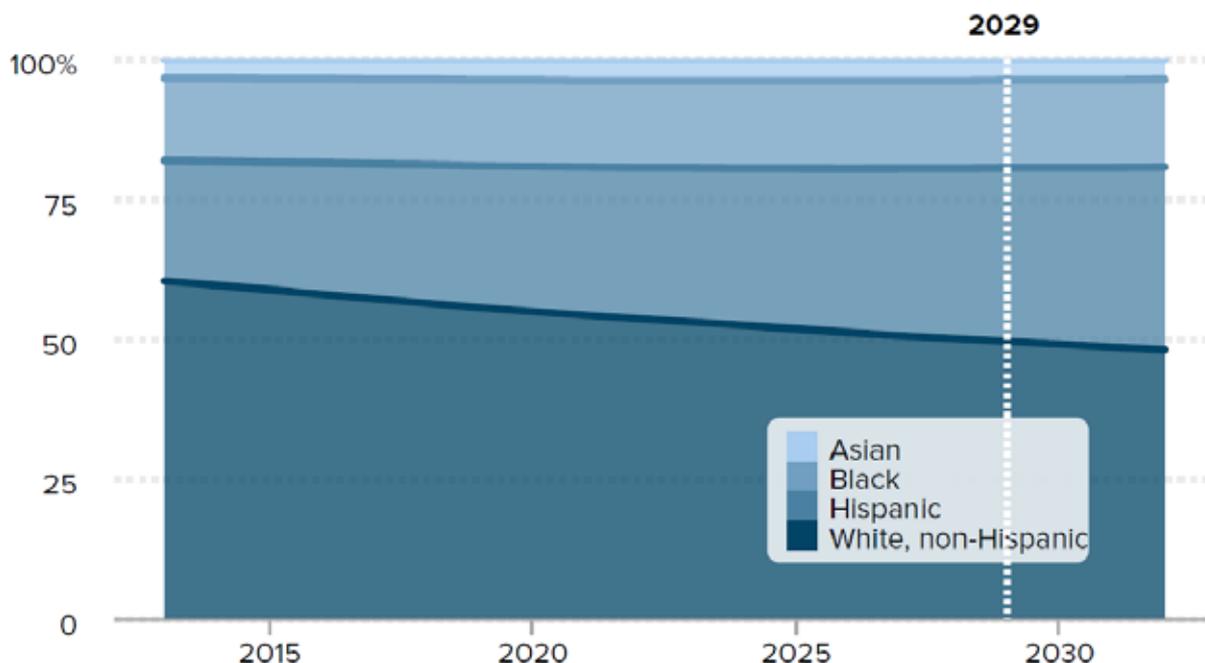
the contrary, it should fight against the Democratic Party during elections in order to help workers and oppressed becoming independent from the capitalist parties. However, the electoral field must only play a subordinate role in the party's political work. All representatives of the party – included those elected to offices – must be under strict control of the party and commit themselves to obey to all collective decisions. They must agree not to earn more than an average worker's wage and to donate the rest of their income to the party.

This brief outline of the RCIT's perspective regarding the strategic task of US socialists, i.e., fighting for a *Multinational Workers' Party*, makes it clear that this will be impossible to achieve without *revolutionizing of the trade unions and the mass organizations of blacks and Latinos*. These organizations are currently dominated by powerful bureaucracies mostly linked, directly or indirectly, to the Democratic Party. Therefore, such a struggle must include the formation of *revolutionary factions* inside such mass organizations, as well as broader, militant *rank-and-file movements*. The concrete course of the struggle will reveal if such a policy of revolutionizing the unions and other mass organizations can be achieved by reforming them, or if the bureaucracies will prefer to expel the revolutionaries, forcing the latter to found – together with the more militant forces from within – new mass organizations.

Figure 10. Majority of US Working Class to Become “Non-White” by 2029⁹⁷

Prime-age working class becomes majority-minority in 2029

Projected racial/ethnic composition of 25- to 54-year-olds in the labor force with less than a bachelor's degree, 2013–2032



14. Is the Green Party a Vehicle for the Struggle against Trump?

Some progressive activists advocate support for a “third party” as an alternative to the Democrats and Republicans. Concretely, this usually means support for the *Green Party* led by Jill Stein. The RCIT maintains that these activists are thoroughly mistaken in such advocacy. As we have explained in our articles on the US election, the Green Party is a pro-capitalist, petit-bourgeois progressive party. Yes, it raises many supportable demands, but at the same time spreads illusions regarding the nature of US imperialism, contending that, without a socialist revolution, it can become a progressive force. The Green Party in the US is comparable today to the Green parties which arose in Europe in their earlier stages, i.e., they represent progressive sectors of the middle class, but are not based on organized support among the working class and the oppressed.

Jill Stein herself has made this clear. Asked whether she would accept a post in a hypothetical Bernie Sanders administration, she answered: “Well, you know, there are Greens who work in the EU in other administrations – that happens all the time.”⁹⁰ And indeed, in Europe we have seen how the Greens have become part of imperialist governments administering neoliberal austerity programs and NATO wars of aggression in Afghanistan and Serbia (e.g., in France and Germany).

The reactionary character of the Green Party is reflected in its leadership’s position on the Syrian Revolution. Instead of supporting the popular rebellion, since November 2015 Jill Stein has publicly called for support of Assad’s and Putin’s effort to liquidate the Syrian Revolution. Here is the statement her campaign published (but which was removed from the Green Party’s website four weeks before the election):

*“Stein said the US should be working with Syria, Russia, and Iran to restore all of Syria to control by the government rather than Jihadi rebels. Collaboration could lead to real success against ISIS. And it would stop the flow of refugees that is reaching crisis proportions in Europe.”*⁹¹

No, the Greens are not a party of the workers and oppressed (in fact, trade unions are not even allowed to become affiliated with the party!). It is a pro-imperialist party of middle class liberals who are dissatisfied with the Democrats. It is not a party orientated to activism, but primarily to winning offices via elections.

For this reason, we believe that centrist organizations like Socialist Alternative (the US section of the CWI) or the ISO (International Socialist Organization) acted in an unprincipled manner when they called their members and supporters to vote for the Green Party at the recent US election.⁹² Such a tactic totally disorients socialist activists, as it encourages them to support a petty-bourgeois pro-imperialist party.

15. The Importance of the National Question – the Multi-Nationalization of the US Working Class

The centrality of the issue of migration in the US electoral campaign, the importance of the *BlackLivesMatters* movement against increasing police repression directed against blacks, and the prominent role which Latino (and black) youth play in the current mass mobilizations against the upcoming Trump administration, all these emphasize once again the crucial role played by the issues of migration and national/ethnic minorities in the imperialist states today. We in the RCIT have emphasized this numerous times, and have insisted that, particularly in imperialist countries, a revolutionary organization must put an emphasis on these issues and strongly orientate towards these struggles.⁹³

While this is not the place to develop an extensive analysis of the situation of the black, Latino and other communities in the US, we do want to note here some points that demonstrate the strategic importance of these issues. Like in most other imperialist countries, the share of migrants in the US population is continuously increasing. This is as result of the desire of imperialist corporations to import cheaper sources of labor as well as the demographic ageing of the imperialist societies.

This development has taken particularly dramatic proportions in the US Taking the labor force as a whole, i.e., without class differentiation, whites make up the majority (about 62%), Latinos represent about 17%, and blacks and Asians account for 12% and 6%, respectively.⁹⁴

Valerie Wilson from the *Economic Policy Institute* published an extremely interesting study only a few months ago.⁹⁵ Defining the working class as that section of the labor force with less than a bachelor’s degree –or 66.1% of the US civilian labor force between the ages of 18 and 64⁹⁶ – Wilson reached the a number of conclusions.

First, a massive change in the national/ethnic composition of the US working class is in progress. Today, whites account for slightly above 60% of the working class, with the Latinos, blacks and Asians following. If the dynamics of the past two decades continue, by the year 2029 the non-white “minorities” will compose the majority of the US working class (See Figure 10).

This proportion of “non-whites” among the working class will increase even faster for the younger sectors of the working class. According to Wilson, the Latino, black and Asian minorities will become the majority of the working class in the 25 to 34 year old age group by 2021 (See Figure 11).

Furthermore, Wilson also draws our attention to the fact that – while unionization is decreasing among all national groups of the US working class – black workers are still the best organized. (See Figure 12)

It is therefore clear, that the issue of national/ethnic oppression of the Latino, black and Asian communities is not an issue of “irrelevant minorities” or “identity politics” but rather a strategic issue in the struggle for working class liberation. This makes the struggle for *revolutionary equality* imperative for all socialists.

So – in addition to important economic demands like *mass actions for higher wages, against sackings, for affordable housing, in defense of free education, etc.* – socialists should also currently advocate an internationalist program in

Figure 11. Older millennial working class becomes majority-minority in 2021 ⁹⁸

Older millennial working class becomes majority-minority in 2021

Projected racial/ethnic composition of 25- to 34-year-olds in the labor force with less than a bachelor's degree, 2013–2032

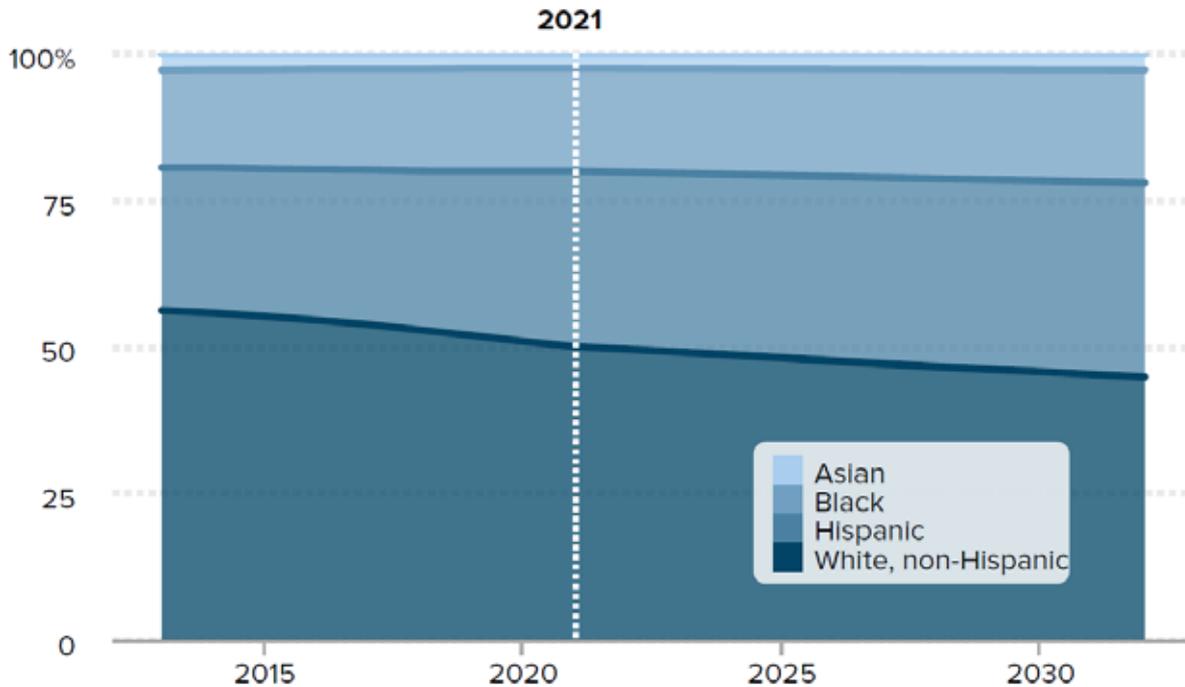
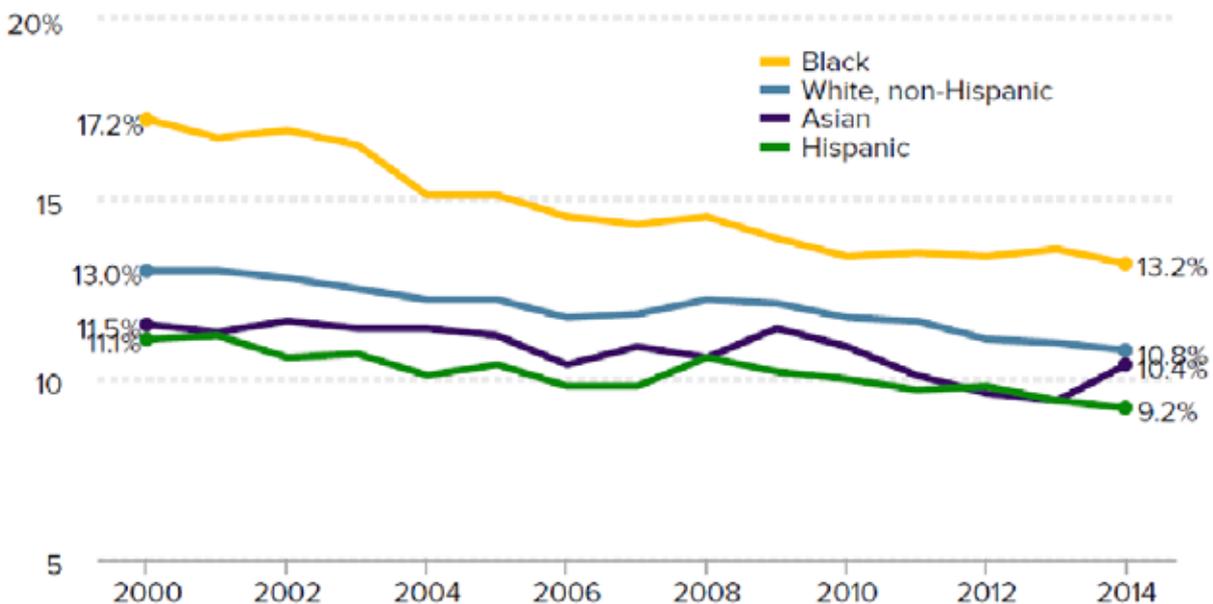


Figure 12. Union membership as a share of total employment, by race and ethnicity, 2000–2014 ⁹⁹

Unionization higher among blacks, even as union density has declined

Union membership as a share of total employment, by race and ethnicity, 2000–2014



solidarity with the black and Latino communities. Such a program should contain, among things, *the struggle against all deportations, against the construction of the wall, for Open Borders, for equal wages, for a public works program to achieve full employment, financed by massive taxes on the rich, for the right to use their native language in education and public administration, etc.*

Such a democratic revolutionary program is the best basis for uniting all national/ethnic groups of the working class and to win the poorer sectors of the white workers over to an internationalist perspective of the class struggle.

It is indeed encouraging to witness, in the current spontaneous mass movement that arose following Trump's electoral victory, numerous signs of multinational solidarity between people from different nationalities. There have even been joint statements of Jewish and Muslim organizations against the rabid Islamophobia of the Trump Administration.¹⁰⁰ Indeed, the ugly combination of right-wing support for Zionist Israel and anti-Semitism within the Trump Administration creates the possibility that many Jews could begin to break with Zionism and Israel.

Finally every revolutionary organization in the US must strongly orientate itself towards building unions and other mass organizations and, most importantly, founding the revolutionary party, while at the same time directing these organizations to mobilizing membership and support among the oppressed layers of the working class.

16. Down with all Great Powers! For the Defeat of US Imperialism in Every Military Conflict against Oppressed People

As we have described, the world situation is increasingly characterized by the rivalry between the imperialist Great Powers – first and foremost the US, the EU, Japan, Russia and China. Any socialist organization – be it in the US or any other country – cannot possibly elaborate a correct tactic without deriving it from a scientific analysis of the imperialist world system. In various studies, the RCIT has shown that, in addition to the old imperialist powers – the US, the Western European powers and Japan – new imperialist powers (Russia and China) have emerged.¹⁰¹ Without a scientific understanding of these developments, socialists will inevitably fail to take a consistent, anti-imperialist stand against *all* Great Powers.

In the coming period, this rivalry between the Great Powers will inevitably be exacerbated with the increase of protectionism – driven forward by the Trump administration.

Trump has and is trying, unfortunately with some success, to rally sectors of the working class behind a chauvinist program hailing economic protectionism as a solution against their misery. In fact, protectionism only divides the international working class, as it links the workers of each country to their national state and hence turns them against one other. Prices will rise as a result of protectionism and the bosses in all countries will use the appeal to patriotism as a tool to force their workers to make “sacrifices” in the interest of “national competitiveness”.

Socialists should strongly oppose all appeals for patriotism and protectionism. Our brothers and sisters are *not* the US bosses – those who have become rich in the past at our expense!

– but the Chinese, Mexican, and workers of every other country! Therefore, more than ever, it is vital to advocate the *international unity of trade unions and the joint struggles of workers.*

Likewise socialists should oppose any punitive tariff (e.g., against China) or politically motivated sanctions (e.g., against Russia) as they are only a manifestation of Great Power rivalry by economic means.

Naturally, this does not mean that American socialists should express any sympathy for the imperialist rulers of the rivaling Great Powers. For example, the support of the Stalinists or the Green Party for Chinese or Russian imperialism – disguised as “anti-imperialism” – is nothing but shameful social-imperialism.

Hence, American socialists must not take a neutral position either towards strikes of Chinese workers against their own bosses or in struggles by Chinese peasants against the dictatorial bureaucracy; neither should they sit on the fence in the case of the Syrian people against the bloody Assad regime its the Russian ally, or of the Chechen people against the Russian occupation. Quite the opposite: US socialists should stand – like all socialists around the world – *for unconditional support for these liberation struggles.*

Of course such international working class solidarity *must not contain any support for the hypocritical US administration* which might verbally express sympathy for the struggles of Chinese, Russian or Syrian people against their rulers.

The second aspect of socialists correctly understanding the nature of imperialism pertains to their *necessary solidarity with the resistance of oppressed people against the imperialist aggression.* This already became clear during the American occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq. The RCIT and its predecessor organization have always stood for the military defeat of the imperialist forces and the unconditional support for the resistance struggle of the oppressed people in these countries. While *we support the resistance struggles despite being led by petty-bourgeois Islamists, we never give any political support for these forces.*¹⁰² Naturally, such a consistent, anti-imperialist tactic must be continued today and in the future, as the US may intensify its military aggression in Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq or if it invades new countries like Somalia.

Likewise, it can be expected that Trump's anti-Latino chauvinism and protectionism will provoke a massive rise of anti-imperialist mass sentiments against “the Gringos” in Latin America. While socialists in Latin America should oppose bourgeois-nationalist ideologies and warn against potential maneuvers by the ruling class of their respective countries to replace their national subordination to the US with one to another Great Power (like the EU or China), they should *call for practical actions directed against American imperialism* (expropriation of US monopolies, material support for the anti-Trump resistance of migrants in the US, etc.).

17. Perspectives for the Spontaneous Mass Movement in the Streets against Trump

The spontaneous mass movement which emerged in major US cities immediately after the announcement of Trump's victory is an impressive and promising phenomenon. It is particularly impressive that this mass movement is one of the youth – particularly many school students – and migrants.

In order to help this movement to become broader and to be sustainable for a long period of time, socialists must participate and intervene in it with a clear strategy for action and organizing. As a first goal, the movement should organize itself towards a *massive popular protest all over the country on 20 January when President Trump is to be inaugurated*. Activists should attempt to organize a *general strike* on this day similar to the general strike declared on May Day in 2006 when the Latino migrants organized a country-wide day of action in which millions participated. When schools and universities are closed down, when enterprises stop work, when millions assemble in the streets in protest against the taking of power by the candidate who lost the popular vote – this would be a major signal and encourage the momentum for protest in the coming months and years.

However, to organize such a day of action – and even *moreso*, to organize a long-term movement of resistance – it is crucial that the spontaneous mass movement be expanded and organized. Socialists should explain to activists that such a spontaneous mass movement, like the one the country is now experiencing, cannot be maintained without being brought to a higher level.

The author of these lines was an active participant in a similar movement in Austria in the spring of 2000. At

that time, a spontaneous mass movement emerged after a right-wing government took power. For several weeks thousands, and sometimes even tens of thousands, of people marched literally every day in the streets of the capital city, Vienna. At the high point of these protests, 300,000 people demonstrated against this government on a single day. These numbers were remarkable for a country of only 8 million residents, of which just 1.6 million were then living in Vienna. However, the movement failed to *organize* these thousands of activists. Furthermore, it failed to expand the movement from marches in the streets to *strikes in the work places and the schools and universities*. (Pitifully, there was only a single, one-day school strike and a failed attempt for a strike at the university in Vienna.) As a result, the movement declined and finally disappeared without achieving its goals.

The RCIT calls upon socialist activists in the US to energetically work for the formation of *committees of action in the schools, universities and workplaces*. It is vital that the movement be expanded *from regular street demonstrations to strike activities and occupations*. In particular, it is important to *push the trade unions to support such actions*. Mass mobilizations with the goal of shutting down the cities on 20 January during the inauguration of President Trump could be the focus around which to build such committees.

Most importantly, *socialists should discuss and unite around a revolutionary program of action for the US*. Without an organization, socialists cannot effectively intervene in this movement. If the socialist prove too weak to influence the direction of this movement, other forces will certainly succeed in doing so and eclipse them. This might be either the “Sanderistas” or other bureaucrats from the Democratic Party. Or this might be autonomist-libertarian forces which will lead the movement towards empty



Contingent of the Austrian Section of the RCIT at a pro-Refugee demonstration on 26 November 2016

militant actions and finally exhaustion. No, only if socialist activists unite in a revolutionary organization with a clear program, elaborated tactics, a joint set of tactics, collective propaganda and agitation, etc. – only then can they shape the mass movement.

Any program for the U.S. must be closely connected with an international orientation and programmatic basis. In fact, the US is probably the best example that national-centered organization is useless in a period like today. The fate of the US is connected with the fate of the world and vice versa. The American working class is more international than ever before and a socialist organization cannot find a correct orientation without an international program and an international revolutionary organization. In our recently published programmatic Manifesto (written before the US election), we stated:

“The world we are living in is in turmoil. Capitalism has entered a period of never-ending crisis. In fact, it is decaying. Climate change, long denied by the big corporations and their puppet governments, is endangering increasingly larger sectors of humanity. The ruling class around the globe is relentlessly accelerating its attacks on the workers and poor. The imperialist Great Powers of West and East, whose mutual rivalry is steadily

*intensifying, are terrorizing the peoples of the semi-colonial world both militarily as well as economically by means of super-exploitation. The oppressed are initiating mass struggles to revolt against this situation again and again, even to the extent of waging armed uprisings and civil wars. But they are being betrayed by their leaderships, who are either selling out the just struggle being waged in exchange for some governmental posts or, if not corrupt, lack a valid program to overthrow the greedy rulers. The coming years will be increasingly marked by a reactionary offensive of the ruling class, but also by mass struggles of the workers and oppressed. This is the time for every person to decide. All who don't want to stand by in indifference; everyone who wants to change the fate of the oppressed, should join the struggle. But he or she should join the struggle not like some blind daredevil, but with a plan, a program and as part of a collective.”*¹⁰³

We believe that these words are even truer after Trump's victory! The RCIT calls upon all revolutionaries in the US to unite on the basis of a revolutionary program and to join us in our international struggle for a socialist world revolution. Comrades, these are historic times! Let us shake the world not only for a day or a week, but let us start a struggle which will leave no stone standing!

Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South

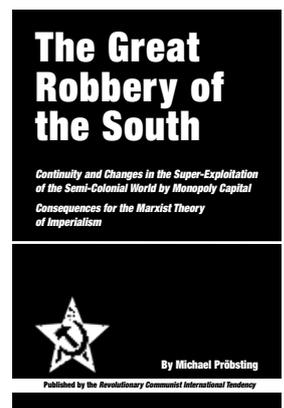
Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a book called *THE GREAT ROBBERY OF THE SOUTH*. The book's subtitle is: *Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital*. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism. The book is in English-language. It has 15 chapters, 448 pages and includes 139 Tables and Figures. The author of the book is *Michael Pröbsting* who is the International Secretary of the RCIT.

In *The Great Robbery of the South* Michael Pröbsting analyses the super-exploitation and oppression of the semi-colonial world (often referred to as the “Third World”) by the imperialist powers and monopolies. He shows that the relationship between the small minority of rich capitalist countries and the huge majority of mankind living in the semi-colonial world forms one of the most important elements of the imperialist world system we are living in. The Great Robbery of the South shows that the past decades have been a complete confirmation of the validity of Lenin's theory of imperialism and its programmatic conclusions. *The Great Robbery of the South* demonstrates the important changes in the relationship between the imperialist and the semi-colonial countries. Using comprehensive material (including 139 Tables and Figures), Michael Pröbsting elaborates that never before

has such a big share of the world capitalist value been produced in the South. Never before have the imperialist monopolies been so dependent on the super-exploitation of the semi-colonial world. Never before has migrant labor from the semi-colonial world played such a significant role for the capitalist value production in the imperialist countries. Never before has the huge majority of the world working class lived in the South – outside of the old imperialist metropolises.

In *The Great Robbery of the South* Michael Pröbsting argues that a correct understanding of the nature of imperialism as well as of the program of permanent revolution which includes the tactics of consistent anti-imperialism is essential for anyone who wants to change the world and bring about a socialist future. Order your copy NOW! \$20 / £13 / €15 plus p+p (21\$ for US and international, £9 for UK, €10 for Europe)



The Author: Michael Pröbsting is a revolutionary activist since 35 years. He is the author of many articles and pamphlets in German and English language. He published books or contributed to books on Rosa Luxemburg (1999), on the World Economy (2008), on Migration (2010) and the Arab Revolution (2011). In addition to *The Great Robbery of the South* and *Cuba's Revolution Sold Out?* he also published in 2014 the book *Building the Revolutionary Party in Theory and Practice. Looking Back and Ahead after 25 Years of Organized Struggle for Bolshevism*. He is the International Secretary of the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency*.

V. SUMMARY THESES

1. The US presidential election ended with the victory of Donald Trump – a racist and extreme right-wing candidate of the Republican Party. His will be the most reactionary government in the history of the US. It marks the beginning of a new political era for both the US and the world.

2. The election's outcome is an example of the undemocratic character of bourgeois democracy in general and of the US electoral system in particular. Trump "won" the election despite the fact that his rival, Hillary Clinton, received more than 2 million votes more than he did! In fact, Trump was elected to office by only slightly more than ¼ of the US electorate.

3. The main reason Trump won was the collapse of working class support for the Democratic Party. While Trump received an amount of votes similar to that garnered by Republican candidates in the recent previous elections, many millions of workers, blacks and Latinos who in the past voted for the Democrats didn't vote because they were disgusted by the misery and repression which they continue to experience after 8 years of an Obama government; and for them, Clinton openly represented the interests of Wall Street and the super-rich.

4. While the majority of the lower and middle strata of the working class, of the blacks and Latinos, who went to the polls, voted for Clinton, the majority of better paid workers, the middle class and the bourgeoisie slightly favored Trump. Worryingly, Trump managed to win the support of sectors of the white working class on the basis of a program of chauvinism.

5. The Trump administration being formed and which will assume power on January 20, represents a thoroughly reactionary government. Given its electoral campaign and its initial announcements, it stands for: (a) White chauvinism, Islamophobia (the call to ban Muslims for entering the US, etc.), anti-immigration policy (building a wall along the Mexican border, mass deportation of undocumented migrants, etc.); (b) Economic protectionism (a 45% tariff for Chinese imports, rejection of free trade agreements like TPP, NAFTA and TTIP, pulling out of the WTO, etc.); (c) Neoliberal financial liberalization (e.g., reducing corporation taxes from the current 35% to 15%, eliminating Wall Street regulation, including the rescinding of the Dodd Frank Wall Street reform - the anti-bank bailout regulation put into place after the 2008-2009 financial crisis); (d) Immediate cancellation of the Climate Change Accord, based on Trump's disingenuous charge that climate change "*is a myth created by the Chinese to harm American Manufacturing*"; (e) Deep attacks against social and health care programs (the plan to abolish Obamacare, etc.); (f) Attacks on women's rights like abortion; (g) Calls to reduce US obligations arising from long-term alliances with other states (e.g., demanding from the EU, Japan and South Korea to raise their defense budgets so that the US can reduce its costs; loosening or even the abolition of NATO); (h) Calls for more military aggression against "Islamic terrorists,"

6. The Trump administration is basically an unstable coalition of three main groups: (a) the Trump clan itself,

which rather lacks strong political beliefs, (b) the very-right-wing conservative Republicans (including Christian evangelical fundamentalists and Tea-Party populists); and (c) the white supremacist alt-right movement.

7. This administration is likely to be an unstable government, as it lacks the support of the majority of all important classes/layers (monopoly bourgeoisie, urban middle class, lower and middle strata of the working class). While the monopoly capitalists certainly are in favor of the proposed radical cuts in corporate taxes, they fear Trump's declared protectionist measures and the end of stable alliances with the EU. The administration's racist and social attacks will likely provoke the mass resistance of workers and oppressed. Likewise, it can face important setbacks by engaging in risky foreign military adventures. A governmental crisis is therefore a realistic possibility.

8. The Trump administration augers the start of a new era in world politics. Its objective basis is the decline of the US as the global hegemon. Trump's program recognizes this decline and at the same time purports to be able to reverse it. The rejection of globalization (expressed in the termination of TPP and most likely TIPP) and the return to a protectionist program is an expression of this development. It is also a confirmation of the objective fact that Russia and China have become great imperialist powers.

9. However, contrary to the hopes of various Stalinists and pro-Putin leftists, Trump is by no means a pro-peace dove. Quite the contrary. His chauvinist and protectionist policies will provoke a further acceleration of the rivalry between the Great Powers (the US, EU, Japan, Russia and China) as all powers will intensify economic and ultimately military warfare against each other. EU imperialism will also be forced to become politically and military independent of Washington.

10. Likewise, Trump's program represents a declaration of a "*multi-generational world war against Islam*" (in the words of General Flynn, Trump's new National Security Adviser). We can expect military intervention in Muslim countries all over the world – starting with collaboration with Russia in liquidating the Syrian Revolution.

11. The new administration will threaten the Latin American countries with mass deportations of Latino migrants, renegotiation of trade agreements to the advantage of Washington, etc.

12. Given the new administration's overt American chauvinism and anti-democratic Bonapartism, from now on the US will no longer be able to play the role of a leading ideological force among the pro-Western and liberal bourgeois and middle classes around the world.

13. Trump's victory will lead to a rise of reactionary, right-wing populist forces around the world. At the same time, it will also provoke an acceleration of the class struggle. There are enormous dangers for the working class, but also important opportunities to advance the struggle against capitalist exploitation and imperialist oppression.

14. The most important lesson of the electoral

campaign and the 8 years of the Obama administration is that the Democratic Party is not and cannot be an instrument to defend the interests of the workers and oppressed. Instead of mobilizing against Trump, Obama and Clinton now call upon all Americans to give this right-wing demagogue “a chance.”

15. Similarly, we have seen that the “left” Democrats like Sanders and Warren may talk like the left, but in reality they are bourgeois politicians who are subordinated to the party’s establishment, primarily orientated to win elections and offices and who have even offered to collaborate with the Trump on certain issues.

16. The trade unions and the mass organizations of the blacks and Latinos must break with the Democratic Party. Their subordination to the interests of the big capitalists who dominate the Democratic Party has been the main factor for the weakness of the resistance against the social attacks and racist oppression in the past decades; and it is precisely this weakness that made it possible for some disorientated workers to now look in hope to Trump.

17. Neither is the Green Party an instrument for the working class struggle. It is a middle class party with a reformist program and mainly orientated to elections.

18. The most important task before socialists now is to fight for the formation of a *Multi-National Workers Party*. Socialists should engage in this struggle in all areas – in the unions, in the mass organizations of the blacks and Latinos, inside the spontaneous mass movement against Trump which has emerged in the streets, etc. Such a party should fight for a *transitional program* – combining immediate economic and democratic demands with the goal of the expropriation of the capitalist class and the creation of a workers government. It should focus not on elections but on mobilizing and organizing the workers and oppressed for the struggle in workplaces, schools and neighborhoods. However, socialists must not be sectarian and should participate in all efforts to drive forward such Multi-National Workers Party even if it initially does not adopt such a program.

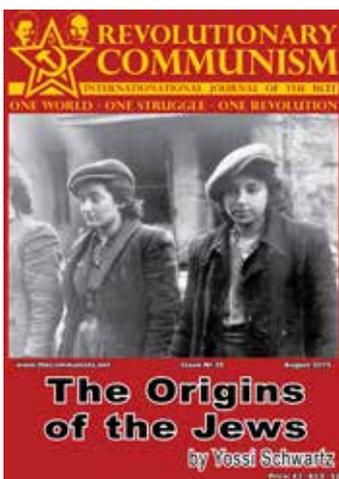
19. Both Trump’s electoral campaign as well as the current spontaneous mass movement against his administration re-emphasizes the strategic importance of the question of the oppression of migrants and black people. They represent a rapidly growing sector of the

working class (already about 40%) and will become the majority in the not too distant future. Socialists must fight for a program for *revolutionary equality* – i.e., complete equality in all areas irrespectively of civil status, language, etc. Likewise they must put an emphasis on winning blacks and Latinos over to mass organizations of the working class and oppressed, as well as for revolutionary organizations.

20. Socialists must fight for a program of consistent anti-imperialism. This means that they must oppose all forms of imperialist chauvinism and protectionism. Likewise, they must not give any support to other Great Powers like Russia or China. They must consistently call for the defeat of US imperialism in all military attacks abroad and support the resistance of the oppressed people under attack even if this resistance is led by petty-bourgeois Islamist forces. While not giving any political support to these forces, they must support their practical struggle desiring for the defeat of US imperialism (as well as that of all other Great Powers).

21. The current spontaneous mass movement against Trump must be fully supported by all socialists. It represents an important opportunity to weaken the new administration by a *massive day of action* on 20 January when the inauguration of Trump as the new President is to take place. However, it is crucial that the movement transcends to a higher, non-spontaneous level and gets organized by building *committees of action in the schools, universities and workplaces*. It is also important to extend the movement *from regular street demonstrations to strike activities and occupations*. In particular, it is important to push the *trade unions* to support such actions.

22. Most importantly, socialists should discuss and unite around a *revolutionary program of action* for the US. Without an organization, socialists cannot effectively intervene in this movement. If the socialist prove too weak to influence the direction of this movement, other forces will succeed in doing so (e.g., Sanders, autonomist-libertarian forces). The struggle of socialists should be closely connected with an *international orientation and programmatic basis*. *The RCIT calls upon all revolutionaries in the US to unite on the basis of a revolutionary program and to join us in our international struggle for a socialist world revolution!*



NEW RCIT PUBLICATION!

The Origins of the Jews

By Yossi Schwartz, July 2015

Chapter I: What are the origins of the Jews?

Chapter II: The Rise of Anti-Semitism

Chapter III: Anti-Semitism and Zionism

Chapter IV: The Russian Revolution:

Bolshevism, the Bund, and Stalinism

FOOTNOTES

- 1 See Michael Pröbsting: US Presidential Election: The Victory of Donald Trump is a Historical Turning Point, 09.11.2016, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/north-america/trump-victory/>
- 2 See David Wasserman: 2016 National Popular Vote Tracker, November 16, 2016, <http://cookpolitical.com/story/10174>. Also see on this BBC: US Election 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/election/us2016/results>.
- 3 Jean Chung: Felony Disenfranchisement: A Primer, The Sentencing Project, October 2016
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"The foundation of Reagan's thinking was a core set of principles founded on a strong commitment to American ideals and recognition of both good and evil."

"We should acknowledge now that this fight against Islamic Extremism is a sociological, psychological and cultural phenomenon, and not a military one AND, as I said earlier, we need to tell the American public, this is likely to last for decades, if not an entire generation."

"Retreat, retrenchment, and disarmament are historically a recipe for disaster."

"We should assail isolationism, any form of American withdrawal, and the fallacy of moral equivalence. But we should also not believe for a second that exporting democracy the world over will work either. However, we should also never be ashamed of our American values."

"We need to embrace American exceptionalism."

"Our adversaries around the world are self-described Islamic militants."

"For that reason, we must always be ready to deploy what Winston Churchill called "overwhelming power." This posture will deter most aggressors most of the time and, when even the best deterrent sometimes fails, it will still defeat them at the lowest possible cost and risk." (Thomas E. Ricks: The text of General Flynn's speech, January 27, 2015, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/01/27/the-text-of-general-flynn-s-speech/>)

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93 On this see, e.g., Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South, e.g. pp. 179-188, pp. 228-240, pp. 385-386; Michael Pröbsting: Migration and Super-exploitation: Marxist Theory and the Role of Migration in the present Period, in: Critique: Journal of Socialist Theory, Vol. 43, Issue 3-4, 2015, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03017605.2015.1099846>; Michael Pröbsting: Marxism, Migration und revolutionäre Integration (2010); in: Revolutionärer Kommunismus, Nr. 7, <http://www.thecommunists.net/publications/werk-7>. For a summary of this study in English, see: Michael Pröbsting: Marxism, Migration and revolutionary Integration, in: Revolutionary Communism, No. 1 (English-language Journal of the RCIT), <http://www.thecommunists.net/oppresed/revolutionary-integration/>

94 U.S. Bureau Of Labor Statistics: Labor force characteristics by race and ethnicity, 2015, September 2016, Report 1062

95 Valerie Wilson: People of color will be a majority of the American working class in 2032. What this means for the effort to grow wages and reduce inequality, Economic Policy Institute, June 9, 2016

96 We are fully aware that this is not a completely scientific definition of the working class. Nevertheless, we think it is a useful and rough approximation. The RCIT's definition of the working class (in contrast to the middle class and the bourgeoisie) can be read in our program as follows:

"The working class (also called the proletariat) is hence the class of wage labourers who live by selling their labour power and don't own any means of production. They are exploited by the capitalist class. The resulting extorted surplus labour forms the basis for their profits and the incomes of the middle layers, whose existence is necessary for the maintenance of the capitalist system. (police, army, smaller managers, sectors of the teachers and intellectuals etc.) Inside the working class there exists top layers (labour aristocracy), which receive certain privileges from the capitalist class. On the other hand there are various lower strata which are particularly oppressed and often super-exploited (migrants, women etc.)" (RCIT: The Revolutionary Communist manifesto, 2012, p. 10, <http://www.thecommunists.net/rcit-manifesto/the-world-we-live-in/>)

97 Valerie Wilson: People of color will be a majority of the American working class in 2032, p. 4

98 Valerie Wilson: People of color will be a majority of the American working class in 2032, p. 6

99 Valerie Wilson: People of color will be a majority of the American working class in 2032, p. 11

100 See on this e.g. Judy Maltz: Trump Effect: Jewish and Muslim Organizations Form New Alliance. A new Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council will work to protect religious minorities' rights as well as other 'issues of common concern.' Haaretz, Nov 14, 2016, <http://www.haaretz.com/world-news/u-s-election-2016/1.753161>. See also Jewish activist vows solidarity with Muslims in the US. Head of Anti-Defamation League pledges to register as Muslim, if Donald Trump creates a database of Muslim Americans. Al Jazeera, 18 November, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/11/jewish-activist-vows-solidarity-muslims-161118165023701.html>

101 See on this RCIT: Imperialism Theory

102 See on this e.g. Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South (Chapter 12 and 13), <http://www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net/great-robbery-of-south-online/download-chapters-1/>

103 RCIT: Manifesto for Revolutionary Liberation, p. 4, <http://www.thecommunists.net/rcit-program-2016/introduction/>

What the RCIT Stands for

The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) is a revolutionary combat organisation fighting for the liberation of the working class and all oppressed. It has national sections in a number of countries. The working class is composed of all those (and their families) who are forced to sell their labor power as wage earners to the capitalists. The RCIT stands on the theory and practice of the revolutionary workers' movement associated with the names of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky.

Capitalism endangers our lives and the future of humanity. Unemployment, war, environmental disasters, hunger, and exploitation are all part of everyday life under capitalism as are the imperialistic oppression of nations, the national oppression of migrants, and the oppression of women, young people, and homosexuals. Therefore, we want to eliminate capitalism.

The liberation of the working class and all oppressed is possible only in a classless society without exploitation and oppression. Such a society can only be established internationally.

Therefore, the RCIT is fighting for a socialist revolution at home and around the world.

This revolution must be carried out and led by the working class, for only this class has the collective power to bring down the ruling class and build a socialist society.

The revolution cannot proceed peacefully because a ruling class never has nor ever will voluntarily surrender its power. By necessity, therefore, the road to liberation includes armed rebellion and civil war against the capitalists.

The RCIT is fighting for the establishment of workers' and peasants' republics, where the oppressed organize themselves in councils democratically elected in rank-and-file meetings in factories, neighbourhoods, and schools. These councils, in turn, elect and control the government and all other state authorities, and always retain the right to recall them.

Authentic socialism and communism have nothing to do with the so-called "socialism" that ruled in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and which continues to do so in China and Cuba, for example. In these countries, the proletariat was and is dominated and oppressed by a privileged party bureaucracy.

Under capitalism, the RCIT supports all efforts to improve the living conditions of the workers and oppressed, while simultaneously striving to overthrow this system based on economic exploitation of the masses.

Towards these ends, we work from within the trade unions where we advocate class struggle, socialism, and workers' democracy. But trade unions and social democracy are controlled by a bureaucracy perniciously connected with the state and capital via status, high-paying jobs, and other privileges. Thus, the trade union bureaucracy is far from the interests and living conditions of

its members, based as it is on the top, privileged layers of the working class – a labor aristocracy which has no real interest in replacing capitalism. Therefore, the true struggle for the liberation of the working class, the toppling of capitalism and the establishment of socialism, must be based on the broad mass of the proletariat rather than their "representative" from the upper trade union strata.

We also fight for the expropriation of the big land owners as well as for the nationalisation of the land and its distribution to the poor and landless peasants. Towards this goal we struggle for the independent organisation of the rural workers.

We support national liberation movements against oppression. We also support the anti-imperialist struggles of oppressed peoples against the great powers. Within these movements we advocate a revolutionary leadership as an alternative to nationalist or reformist forces.

While the RCIT strives for unity of action with other organizations, we are acutely aware that the policies of social democrats and pseudo-revolutionary groups are dangerous, and ultimately represent an obstacle to the emancipation of the working class, peasants, and the otherwise oppressed.

In wars between imperialist states we take a revolutionary defeatist position: we do not support either side, but rather advocate the transformation of the war into a civil war against the ruling class in each of the warring states. In wars between imperialist powers (or their stooges) and a semi-colonial countries we stand for the defeat of the former and the victory of the oppressed countries.

As communists, we maintain that the struggle against national oppression and all types of social oppression (women, youth, sexual minorities etc.) *must* be led by the working class, because only the latter is capable of fomenting a revolutionary change in society. Therefore, we consistently support working class-based revolutionary movements of the socially oppressed, while opposing the leadership of petty-bourgeois forces (feminism, nationalism, Islamism, etc.), who ultimately dance to the tune of the capitalists, and strive to replace them with revolutionary communist leadership.

Only with a revolutionary party fighting as its leadership can the working class be victorious in its struggle for liberation. The establishment of such a party and the execution of a successful revolution, as it was demonstrated by the Bolsheviks in Russia under Lenin and Trotsky remain the models for revolutionary parties and revolutions in the 21st century.

For new, revolutionary workers' parties in all countries!
For a 5th Workers International to be founded on a revolutionary program! Join the RCIT!

No future without socialism!

No socialism without revolution!

No revolution without a revolutionary party!

