



May Day 2018

This year May Day comes at a time when the rich have grown incredibly richer, but they never think they are rich enough. The laws of capitalist production drive them to further boost their profits by increasing the exploitation of the ultimate producers of their great wealth — the working class and Mother Earth herself. But everywhere in the world there's resistance to this. *In France*, there are ongoing strikes by railway workers, airline pilots, medical workers and others against Macron's reactionary labor reforms. *In Nicaragua*, mass protests have just forced the Ortega government to back down from attacks on pensions after it killed more than 30 people. *In Syria*, after one half million deaths, the people continue to fight a tyranny that is directly backed by many outside powers, and tacitly supported by Trump. *And everywhere* there are people in motion against destruction of the environment and global warming.

There can never be a better life for all of the oppressed people without struggles like these.

Hail the teachers' strikes!

The number of strikes in this country has plummeted to record lows. Only 10.7 percent of workers are in unions, and the union misleaders repeatedly side with the employers. But beginning in *West Virginia*, and spreading to *Oklahoma, Kentucky, Arizona and Colorado*, we suddenly have an exciting strike wave. These are states where teachers' salaries are among the lowest in the country, and better salaries and pensions are naturally a central demand. But there have also been demands for more funding of education, e.g., in Oklahoma funding per student has been cut by **30 percent** in just 10 years. Moreover, West Virginia teachers displayed great working-class solidarity when they extended their strike to ensure other State workers got the same 5% increase as they did!

Indeed, there are extremely valuable lessons for *all* workers in these strikes.

First is that the teachers had to take matters into their own hands to build organization outside the teacher's unions in order to pull off their many marches, capitol occupations, sick-outs and other actions, and then to strike. Furthermore, they had to use the independent organization they had built in order to fight strike-smashing by the union leaders. For example, in West Virginia, where the strike was very strong, the AFT and NEA leaders tried to trick teachers into returning to work before their gains were assured, and while deserting their fellow state workers. The teachers said to hell with that, and stayed out.

Secondly, in West Virginia there were good examples of school-teacher activists who identified their struggle as part of the larger class struggle. As one was quoted: "The union wars...We believe we're following in their footsteps. We believe the movement was started years ago through the mine wars. We're just reviving the movement that was started years ago." This consciousness that the present struggles are part of a historic movement that joins all workers against all employers is priceless. It should be taken as a guide to action in every workplace and industry.

Defend the Dreamers! Full rights for all immigrants!

In 2006, Bush's reactionary immigration plan was defeated by millions and millions of people taking to the streets, and by organization of "day without immigrants" strikes. Then, for eight years the Democrats' bills for "comprehensive immigration reform" turned out to be *attacks* on immigrants (that were never passed), while Obama deported some three million people.

Now, using the deportation machine built by Obama, Trump orders more ICE raids. This racist liar Trump points his finger at undocumented immigrants as “rapists” and “bringing drugs” in order to divert anger away from the capitalist causes of unemployment and crime, when immigrant really commit fewer crimes than native-born people and do not “steal jobs.” He reinforces this with constant talk about building his Great Wall on the border with Mexico. And he canceled Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).

But some 700,000 people are protected by DACA, and DACA is very popular among the broad masses of working people. So Trump's order brought thousands into the streets, with Dreamers themselves demanding that the politicians not preserve DACA at the expense of attacking other immigrants, i.e., they wanted a clean Dream Act. But after the Democrats had talked tough about fighting for a clean Act, they began bargaining with Trump for a very dirty one. When they couldn't get that, they caved in to Trump about shutting down the government. This left the Dreamers not knowing what was going to happen to them next, while the ruling class remained split concerning their fate. Now, a Federal Judge has given the DHS 90 days to come up with better legal arguments for the DACA rescission, or else DHS will have to accept and process new as well as renewal DACA applications — which leaves Dreamers in legal limbo for another 90 days at least. Finally, DACA itself is no gift. Dreamers have to stay out of trouble with the law, stay in school or employed, pay all their taxes, pay Social Security—but without ever collecting any government benefits.

The stand of the working class in this situation should be build a militant movement to defend the Dreamers and to *improve* DACA. Along with this we should continue building the movements against deportations and for full rights for *all* immigrants. Trump's racist incitements are designed to make the working class fight among itself while Trump and

his class drive down the conditions of all. Our answer is to unify the working class by standing up for the most oppressed, and in this way be in a solid position to fight the entire Trump-led capitalist onslaught.

March on May Day

May Day is a holiday in which the workers stand in solidarity with the struggles of their class sisters and brothers of every country. That's because we have common interests in advancing all struggles against exploitation and impoverishment, against racial and sexual discrimination and oppression, against tyranny and police murders, against war, against pillage and plunder of the earth. Furthermore, by actively participating in these struggles we transform ourselves, and thereby lay a basis for building a revolutionary movement capable of overthrowing the root cause of the many ills we're confronted with, the capitalist system of production. We encourage all workers and students to join this year's May Day march with these thoughts in mind.

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(Adapted from *Seattle Workers' Voice*, April 27, 2108 - seattle.com.sg@gmail.com)

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