

Unwavering support for the Syrian people's uprising against the Assad tyranny!

For six years the Syrian people have been rising in a powerful struggle against a most barbarous dictatorship. They've endured barrel bombing, chemical weapons, torture, rape, mutilation, and mass execution. Hundreds of thousands have died. 670,000 people are detained in government-run torture facilities. About half the people have been displaced and over a fifth of the population has been forced to flee their homeland.

Yet the Syrian people have persisted and persisted in their fight for freedom. The regime has brought in Iranian, Hezbollah and other sectarian ground forces and the Russian air force to save itself but that hasn't stopped the people. The loss of east Aleppo and other cities last year hasn't stopped them. The armed rebels continue fighting, and every time there's a lull in the war the masses go into the streets demanding the fall of the regime. Moreover, due to casualties, desertions, and resistance to conscription, the Syrian army is a shadow of its former self. Thus, in March the rebels were able to launch offensives in northeastern Damascus and Hama province against Assad and allies, as well as against ISIS in the south of Syria around Daraa. Meanwhile, voices in the Russian establishment have for some time been hinting they want to find a way to wind down their Syrian military involvement.

It is in these conditions that Assad resorted to using nerve gas—probably sarin—in an attack on the town of Khan Sheikhoun, Idlib province, on Tuesday. Some 100 people died as a result, many of them young children. But local Syrians quickly posted heart-rending videos and photographs of what was happening that were broadcast around the world. The result was outrage by working class and progressive people everywhere, and re-enlivenment of the Syrian solidarity movement. And one of the very correct slogans raised by this movement in demonstrations is that Syrians don't need our pity, they need our solidarity!

Solidarity means helping to puncture the lies spread

by *RT* and right-wingers, and also spread by the large number of Assad apologists who call themselves leftists. These lies paint the rising Syrians as al-Qaeda terrorists or pawns of the Western imperialists or both. They deny that Assad used nerve gas in 2013 and again this week. And after six years of evidence to the contrary, they still portray the just uprising of the Syrian people as a “regime change” operation orchestrated from Washington.

Solidarity also means to increase the hatred of our own ruling class by exposing its filthy role in Syria. This has included the U.S. blocking the rebels from getting anti-aircraft weapons that, if they'd had them, they no doubt would have won the rebellion with years ago. It has included the U.S. demanding any rebels it armed and trained not fight Assad, but only ISIS. It has included tacit cooperation with the Assad regime as Russia bombed the rebels and the U.S. bombed ISIS. And the U.S. has acted this way because it has never wanted a decisive victory for the democratic uprising. Instead, its strategy has been to bleed the rebels, and then arrange a “solution” with outside powers that leaves the pillars of the repressive state apparatus in place, while perhaps sacrificing Assad.

The working people of Syria and this country face common enemies. From the days it slaughtered leftists and workers in consolidating power, the Ba'athist dictatorship has always been a representative of the Syrian capitalists and a right-wing nationalist enemy of the working people. And right-wing nationalist bigot Donald Trump—the representative of U.S. capitalism—is a bitter enemy of the American working people. But modern capitalism, and with it, imperialism, is a world system. Within its framework, democratic victories over either Assad or Trump help the people of the other country. More, such victories prepare the groundwork for the struggle for class liberation. The struggle of the Syrian people for liberation from the Assad tyranny is truly our struggle too.

Denounce Trump's hypocrisy — U.S. out of Syria and the Middle East!

The U.S. has been bombing Syrian territory for 2.5 years, and U.S. troops have been deployed there for some time. This has not been an intervention to overthrow the Syrian government, but to attack ISIS and sometimes Islamists who are part of the rebel forces. The Syrian people have suffered thousands of casualties as a result, and just last month around 200 were killed when U.S. airstrikes hit a mosque and a school. Along with this, the U.S. has been murdering many more people in raids in Iraq and Yemen, e.g., killing of up to 240 civilians in just one airstrike last month in Mosul, Iraq.

With this mass murder as a back-drop, it was the height of hypocrisy for Trump to talk of "heinous actions by the Assad regime" in his Wednesday announcement that he was going to strike at Assad. Adding to this was his decriing "small children, and even beautiful little babies" being killed in Assad's horrific gas attack...while leaving out the much larger number of women, children and babies the U.S. has been killing in Syria and the Middle East for decades. Meanwhile, racist Trump bans Syrian refugees from entering the United States.

But Trump wanted to slap Assad for using internationally-outlawed sarin gas. (Assad's usage of barrel bombs, bunker-buster bombs, cluster bombs, white phosphorus, chlorine gas, and vacuum bombs against the masses has been O.K.) Also, knowing he is widely hated by the American people, Trump and his advisers opportunistically seized on the Khan Sheikhoun gassing for domestic political reasons.

So on Thursday, after Trump warned Russia they were going to attack, U.S. warships rained missiles on the Shayrat airbase. Seven people were killed and warplanes, hangars, the control tower and field itself

were damaged. This is the first time the U.S. has purposely hit a Syrian regime target and the repercussions can't be known. But the U.S.-Russian "hotline" continues to operate as Syria and allies bomb the rebelling people while the U.S. bombs ISIS.

The goal of the global and regional imperialists in the oil-rich Middle East is stability: peaceful plunder of its resources and peaceful exploitation of its working people. But this is impossible. The nature of their system gives rise to striving new imperialists whose rivalries lead to wars between themselves and wars with the global imperialists. The rising of ISIS represents this. It has seized territory in the oil-rich region and the U.S., Iraq, Iran and others have responded with a war that is reactionary on both sides. But there is a third side in this war we should support. This is the war of the resisting masses living under the ISIS thumb, and of the Kurdish and Syrian rebel fighters who've fought ISIS from long before the U.S. entrance into Syria.

The dominant groups in the anti-war movement, like ANSWER, either support the Assad tyranny or justify silence against it under the slogan our enemy is at home. But working-class anti-imperialism has always meant rallying support for the struggles of the oppressed people of all countries. It's inconceivable that we can really fight our enemy at home without a liberating outlook, an outlook which must include fighting for the interests of the most oppressed in this country as well as the oppressed people of every country. This weekend in several cities Syrian and other anti-war activists have attended the Assad apologists-led demonstrations to rally the people to this line. This is a welcome development that should be built upon.

Seattle Communist Study Group, April 8, 2017

About our masthead and mailing list

The Seattle Communist Study Group, which is Seattle supporters of the Communist Voice Organization, has long published leaflets under a SCSG masthead. But it is now publishing under a *Seattle Workers' Voice* masthead, with this being Vol. 1, No. 2. This reflects the class issues we wish to raise in the ongoing movement. It also corresponds with the *Detroit Workers' Voice*, which is put out by Detroit supporters of the CVO. And the DWV mailing list, which has previously provided more frequent contact with the CVO than leaflets, is now called the *Detroit/Seattle Workers' Voice* mailing list. We encourage workers and activists to contact us through this list. For more information, see http://www.comunistvoice.org/DSWV_email_list.html

Read **Communist Voice!** *CV* is a journal of revolutionary theory. It exposes the capitalist system, and also tackles controversies facing activists. It upholds real Marxism-Leninism, which has nothing in common with the false "communist" regimes like the former Soviet Union, or China and Cuba, or with Trotskyism, Stalinism or Maoism. For subscription info and to see articles visit: www.comunistvoice.org. Email: mail@communistvoice.org.