

MUNDO OBRERO WORKERS WORLD

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite! workers.org Vol. 67, No. 7 February 13, 2025

Protests demand: Hands off migrants!

By Martha Grevatt
Chardon, Ohio

Over 100 activists from all around Northeast Ohio turned out for a protest outside an immigrant detention center on Feb. 8. Migrant rights supporters from as far away as the west side of Cleveland and from Akron drove an hour or more to say, “No hate, no fear! Immigrants are welcome here!” Chardon, the site of the detention center, is east of Cleveland in Geauga County, where a majority of voters supported Donald Trump for president last November.

When six workers at the Cilantro Taqueria restaurant in Cleveland Heights were arrested by ICE on Jan. 26, they were jailed at the Chardon detention center. Five were released but not until Feb. 5 and only after each of them posted a \$4,500 bond.

Lake County, east of Cleveland and north of Geauga County, also went for Trump. The action was called by Like Minded in Lake County, along with a local organizer, Sarah Tascone. Clearly, there are a lot of people in “Trump Country” that consider it important to speak out against the president’s virulent racism and xenophobia.



WW PHOTO: MARTHA GREVATT

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Hundreds of migrant rights supporters marched on the Seattle waterfront for the second week in a row on Feb. 8. Demonstrators holding flags from several Latin American countries and other activists protested ICE roundups, mass jailings, violations of civil rights and deportations. The high energy march was accompanied by hot rod supporting vehicles on the beach-front street.

— Caption and photo by Jim McMahan



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Join us in the fight for socialism!

Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a multinational, multigenerational and multigendered organization that not only aims to abolish capitalism, but to build a socialist society because it's the only way forward!

Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the neverending quest for ever-greater profits.

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on im/migrants, misogyny, LGBTQIA2S+ oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and impoverishment and lack of hope for the future. No social problems can be solved under capitalism.

The U.S. is the richest country in the world, yet no one has a guaranteed right to shelter, food, water, health care, education or anything else—unless they can pay for it. Wages are lower than ever, and youth are saddled with seemingly insurmountable student debt, if they even make it to college. Black, Brown and Indigenous

youth and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

The ruthless ruling class today seeks to wipe out decades of gains and benefits won by hard-fought struggles by people's movements. The super-rich and their political representatives have intensified their attacks on the multinational, multigender and multigenerational working class. It is time to point the blame at—and challenge—the capitalist system.

WWP fights for socialism because the working class produces all wealth in society, and this wealth should remain in their hands, not be stolen in the form of capitalist profits. The wealth workers create should be socially owned and its distribution planned to satisfy and guarantee basic human needs.

Since 1959, Workers World Party has been out in the streets defending the workers and oppressed here and world-wide. If you're interested in Marxism, class solidarity, and joining us in the fight for a socialist future, please sign up at www.workers.org/join-form and an organizer will get back to you. Or contact a WWP branch near you. □

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'America First' agenda targets world's poor

WORKERS WORLD ★
editorial

Making the ludicrous assertion that the United States Agency for International Development is run by a “bunch of radical lunatics,” President Donald Trump has attempted to end all funding for USAID. A judge has put a hold on the cuts temporarily.

The attacks on USAID are under the banner of “America First,” a slogan employed repeatedly by Trump in his inaugural address and in previous and subsequent remarks. This move represents a crass appeal to vulgar protectionist attitudes.

“America First” has an ugly history, going back to the 1930s and 1940s when the America First Party operated under the leadership of Nazi sympathizers Gerald A.K. Smith and Father Charles Coughlin and right-wing “populist” politician Huey Long of Louisiana. A second America First Party was founded in 2002 by supporters of ultrarightist Pat Buchanan.

But in 2025, what Trump really means is “billionaires first.”

Ironically, the so-called “radical lunatics” at USAID have distributed funds to the Cold Warriors who operate the “National Endowment for Democracy,” which exists to undermine socialism and anti-imperialism around the world. The misnamed “Food for Peace” programs are notorious for using food as a weapon to get impoverished countries to make concessions to U.S. imperialism.

Needless to say, some elements of the ruling class are up in arms about the abrupt elimination of USAID. They fear that this removes a weapon from U.S. imperialism’s arsenal.

Abolishing USAID would also mean an end to programs that have saved lives, including food aid, AIDS/HIV prevention, disaster relief, bed nets that offer protection from malaria and demining programs in Vietnam — where unexploded ordnance continues to kill people 50 years after the Vietnam War’s end.



Federal workers protest job cuts, Feb. 5, 2025, Washington, D.C.

A reported 13,000 workers worldwide will be out of a job. When the federal judge ruled against the USAID cuts it was after a union representing government workers filed a lawsuit.

Under the guise of “keeping the money here,” Trump has taken aim at Earth’s poorest populations. He is essentially giving himself dictatorial powers, with the ability to terminate all kinds of programs he and his sidekick, centibillionaire Elon Musk, deem wasteful. This is a billionaires’ coup in the making. Workers and oppressed people need to mount a fightback.

That doesn’t mean socialists and progressives should clamor for these programs to be restored. The truth is that U.S. imperialism has ruthlessly exploited the people and resources of the Global South for decades and in some cases for centuries. The ruling class owes trillions of dollars in reparations for its crimes against humanity.

It’s time to pay up! Reparations now!

That’s a righteous demand in response to the right-wing attack on aid to oppressed countries. □



Annual Juneteenth demonstration, called by People’s Organization for Progress, demands reparations on June 19, 2023, in Newark, New Jersey.

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USAID: Beware of Yanks bearing gifts

By John Catalinotto

What's hard to keep in mind these days is that just because Donald Trump and Elon Musk are trying to destroy some entity doesn't automatically make that entity beneficial to humanity. That's independent of the Musk/Trump reasons, which are never to benefit anyone but a handful of multibillionaires and mainly themselves.

A case in point is the White House's attack on the U.S. Agency for International Development or USAID. In the course of the first week of February, the administration announced it would shut down the department and placed nearly all of its 13,000 workers worldwide on leave. By Feb. 8, a judge had issued an order blocking the president's executive order, which the Musk/Trump cabal is flouting.

While on paper the judge should have stopped the shutdown, the illegal and unconstitutional attack on USAID continues as of Feb. 10. It is part of the executive's maneuvers to seize all elements of the state apparatus or dismantle government departments that partially aid the working class.

The question remains, what is USAID and what does it do? A look at its history eliminates the illusion that it is some sort of humanitarian foundation.

Founded in 1961

USAID was founded under John F. Kennedy's administration in 1961. Before that time, various departments of the U.S. government — the State Department, the CIA, the Pentagon and others — each funded different aspects of U.S. foreign aid, much of which was military aid. Kennedy said his administration was

creating USAID to get most of those aid programs under one organization and coordinate them.

There should be no confusion about the goal of U.S. foreign aid or of USAID. Whether it is efficient or effective or not, whether it's medical aid or military aid, its goal is to further the interests of U.S. imperialism in the world. For the past few years, USAID has dispensed between \$50 billion and \$70 billion annually — less than 1% of the federal budget. About 10% of this is military aid. Other U.S. departments dispense a little more than half the total U.S. foreign aid.

David Baldwin, a foreign policy expert, when he was a research fellow for the Brookings Institution wrote the book "Foreign Aid and American Foreign Policy: A Documentary Analysis. (New York: Frederick A Praeger, 1966)

He wrote in it that, "... foreign aid is first and foremost a technique of statecraft. It is, in other words, a means by which one nation tries to get other nations to act in desired ways."

Thus, when USAID funds a program of humanitarian aid, such as delivering medicine to control HIV to a country in Africa that otherwise couldn't afford it, it does so with the goal of building business contacts in that country, making it dependent on keeping good relations with the U.S., enabling intervention in critical moments, etc.

In addition, the trade programs of USAID have turned into a major support for exported goods from the U.S. "In a recent year, for example, from 20% to 33% of foreign sales of locomotives, fertilizer and iron and steel were paid for with dollars made available by aid programs."

(From a review of Baldwin's book in the Dartmouth Alumni magazine from 1967.)

While this book was written almost 60 years ago, the foreign aid program's goals have changed little. Then foreign aid was a much larger part of the national budget than it is today, especially non-military foreign aid.

While USAID was created by Kennedy's executive order in 1961, in 1998 Congress passed a law that made it a department independent of the State Department. In the following years, USAID provided an example of how U.S. imperialism combined hard power (a U.S.-NATO 78-day bombing war against what was left of Yugoslavia in 1999) with soft power to restore capitalism to the Balkans with a vengeance.

Intervention in Yugoslavia

USAID intervened in the dismemberment of Yugoslavia when, after the Slobodan Milosevic government of Yugoslavia was overthrown and Montenegro split from Serbia, it announced it would undertake "assistance programs to support economic reform and restructuring the economy ... to advance Montenegro toward a free market economy." (Gregory Elich, "The CIA's Covert War," Covert Action Quarterly, Apr.-Jun., 2001)

USAID ran and runs programs throughout the world. Some of them provided and provide important humanitarian aid. Their abrupt closing may cost millions of lives. But they were created to expand the control of U.S. imperialism, and they have been used in many more instances than discussed in this article to change regimes in a reactionary direction. □

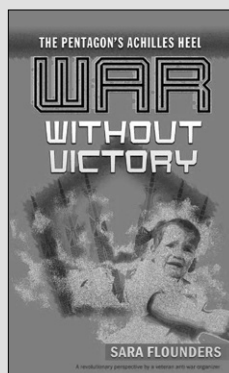
WAR WITHOUT VICTORY

by Sara Flounders

"By revealing the underbelly of the empire, Flounders sheds insight on how to stand up to the imperialist war machine and, in so doing, save ourselves and humanity."

– Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President, U.N. General Assembly, 2008-2009; Foreign Minister, Nicaragua's Sandinista government.

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¿Qué causó el accidente aéreo? El acoso sindical, ¡no la DEI!



Miembros en huelga de la Organización Profesional de Controladores de Tráfico Aéreo (PATCO), que se declararon en huelga el 3 de agosto de 1981 y fueron despedidos dos días después por el entonces presidente Ronald Reagan.

Nadie debería sorprenderse cada vez que Trump se expone como el vil y repugnante intolerante ultraderechista que es.

Aun así, es casi imposible no indignarse.

Un ejemplo es el accidente aéreo del 29 de enero cerca del Aeropuerto Nacional Reagan. Con absolutamente cero pruebas, Trump culpó inmediatamente a los programas de diversidad, equidad e inclusión, supuestamente instituidos por el ex presidente Joe Biden, de permitir la contratación de controladores aéreos menos cualificados.

Señaló específicamente a la Administración Federal de Aviación por «contratar activamente a trabajadores que sufren graves discapacidades intelectuales, problemas psiquiátricos y otras afecciones mentales y físicas en el marco de una iniciativa de contratación de diversidad e inclusión.» (Associated Press, 31 de enero)

Eso es mentira. Una gilipollez racista, sexista e incapacitante.

Uno podría pensar que sería más razonable investigar primero y luego asignar culpas. No este presidente. Si se le da la oportunidad de utilizar como chivo expiatorio a la gente de color, a los inmigrantes, a las mujeres y a las personas oprimidas por su género, a las personas LGBTQIA2S+ o a las personas con discapacidades, Trump lo hará, al margen de los hechos.

MUNDO OBRERO editorial

Tras un breve momento de silencio, Trump se lanzó a su diatriba contra la DEI, mostrando cero compasión por las 67 personas que murieron tras la colisión en pleno vuelo entre un avión de pasajeros y un helicóptero militar. Fue el accidente aéreo más mor-

tífero en Estados Unidos desde el 12 de noviembre de 2001.

Demasiados pocos controladores aéreos

Lo que se ha sabido es que la torre de control del tráfico aéreo que daba servicio al aeropuerto nacional Reagan carecía de personal suficiente. Un controlador supervisaba tanto los aviones como los helicópteros; antes de las 9:30 p.m., normalmente deberían haber sido dos trabajos separados. El accidente ocurrió a las 9:00 p.m. Según Associated Press, «El miércoles [29 de enero] el supervisor de la torre ordenó que [los dos trabajos] se combinaran antes [de las 9:30 p.m.]».

Esto era un accidente a punto de ocurrir. Según el sindicato que representa a los controladores aéreos, National Air Traffic Controllers Association, en un análisis obtenido por el New York Times, «Más del 90% de las 313 instalaciones de control aéreo del país operan por debajo de los niveles de personal recomendados por la Administración Federal de Aviación». Además, «La persistente escasez de personal y una inversión insuficiente en sistemas de seguridad han provocado un número alarmante de choques cercanos entre aeronaves.» (New York Times, 31 de agosto de 2023)

En el capitalismo, los jefes siempre buscan formas de reducir costes mediante la reducción de la mano de

obra. Esto es cierto tanto para los trabajadores del sector público como para los del sector privado.

Además de reducir el número de puestos de trabajo, esta práctica contribuye a un alto nivel de estrés laboral entre los controladores aéreos. Este estrés fue uno de los principales problemas de salud y seguridad en la huelga de 1981 de la Organización Profesional de Controladores de Tráfico Aéreo (PATCO). El entonces presidente Ronald Reagan rompió el sindicato y despidió a todos y cada uno de los miembros del sindicato que no cruzaron la línea de piquete.

Con el tiempo, los controladores que sustituyeron a los miembros despedidos de PATCO se dieron cuenta de que necesitaban un sindicato y formaron NATCA. Los miembros del sindicato se enfrentan a las mismas o peores condiciones de exceso de trabajo y falta de personal que llevaron a la huelga de PATCO.

Una investigación objetiva, si se lleva a cabo, revelaría los hechos en torno a esta tragedia.

Dependerá de los trabajadores y de las personas oprimidas conectar los puntos y darse cuenta de que el recorte de costes capitalista y la búsqueda constante de mayores beneficios, y no la DEI, causaron el mortal accidente aéreo, uno que podría haberse evitado. □

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