

# RAY O' LIGHT NEWSLETTER

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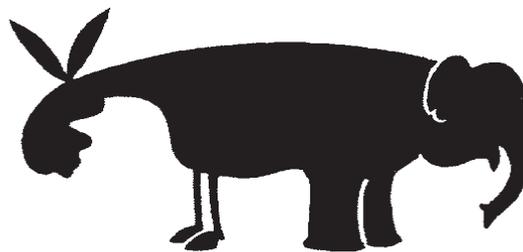
**Let's Stop TPP in its Fast Track!**

## TPP: Economic Embodiment of the U.S. Empire's War at Home and Abroad

by RAY LIGHT

*"Barack Obama is well suited for the difficult task of presiding over an orderly march of the U.S. population to impoverishment in the desperate effort of the U.S. monopoly capitalist and imperialist ruling class to save itself and its hegemonic position in the world capitalist system."*

*("The Tea Party Movement, the Obama Regime and the Growing Fascist Danger in the USA," Ray O'Light Newsletter #59, March-April 2010)*



**"WHAT MANNER OF BEAST IS THIS?!!"**

*©12  
MLC*

Millions of "the 99%" of us have piously and stubbornly clung to the belief that U.S. President Barack Obama has really wanted to do some "good works" on behalf of us — the poor, the working class, the oppressed Afro-American, Latino and other nationalities and the middle class — that is, the overwhelming majority of the people within the U.S. multinational state. According to this belief, it is the monstrous, even demonic, white supremacist Republicans that have blocked the allegedly well-intentioned Democrat Obama at every

turn. For this multitude, the scenario that is currently unfolding around the "Republicrat" efforts on behalf of the U.S. ruling class, the Wall Street capitalists, to have the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) ratified by Congress is **a miracle** that rivals the lions laying down with the lambs! This is especially true because the key link to TPP passage is the granting of Fast Track Authority (FTA) by the Republican-controlled Congress to their supposed "nemesis," Democratic President Obama!

(contd. on p. 2)

## Venezuela and the Hypocrisy of U.S. Empire

by CINDY SHEEHAN

*"Venezuela isn't a threat to the US and the US is not a threat to Venezuela."*

— U.S. President Barack Obama

Obama made that statement on the eve of the recent Summit of the Americas convened in Panama City,

Panama. The statement came out of the Emperor's mouth just one short month after he signed Executive Order (EO) 13692 declaring that Venezuela was "an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States." Now, I know it's rare for any President of the USA (POTUS) to tell the truth about anything, but in the statement above, Obama did state a *half-truth*.

In this piece, I will demonstrate that Venezuela is NOT a threat to the US, and not a threat at all; HOWEVER, the US is not only a major threat to the sovereignty of Venezuela, but also to the planet at large.

(contd. on p. 7)

### Do you know who said it??

**"We are proud of this struggle of tears, of fire, and of blood that...put an end to humiliating slavery that force imposed upon us ....We have known ironies, insults, blows that we have endured morning, noon and evening, just because we are negroes....Together...we are going to show the world what the black man can do when he works in freedom."**

*Hint:* This passionate and eloquent statement was delivered on an historic occasion in the middle of the twentieth century.

—Still stumped? See page 9 for the mystery answer.

Also included in this issue:

**May Day 2015:** ..... pages 10-11  
**Longshore Workers Protest Police Killings** . page 11

(Stop the TPP continued)

What we have witnessed over the past several weeks is the “unusually close cooperation” of the number #1 Republican Party political leader in the country, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, with the number #1 Democratic Party leader, President Barack Obama. And this has occurred after a period when, for most of the six plus years of the Obama Presidency, the two parties have *appeared* to be at each other’s throats and have both *acted* that way.

At the same time, and on the same issue, President Obama has engaged in a war of words with Massachusetts Democratic Senator Elizabeth Warren, his supposed friend and ally. Senator Warren has declared her strong opposition to Congress granting Obama Fast Track Authority for the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP).



Passage of FTA by Congress would in effect tie its own hands, limiting Congress to a yes or no vote on TPP, with no right to alter or amend it. Granting Obama FTA would virtually guarantee in advance that TPP would pass Congress, after six years of top secret TPP negotiations. Furthermore, Obama deceitfully accused Warren of not knowing what she was talking about after he allowed her and other members of Congress to view the current TPP language while prohibiting them from taking notes or quoting from the draft language or having any of their staff members read the voluminous material or sharing the specific provisions with the public in any way.

*What’s going on here?!*

The Revolutionary Organization of Labor, USA (ROL,USA) has had a very different approach to President Obama’s stewardship of the U.S. Empire from the very beginning. In *Ray O’Light Newsletter #59*, we entitled one section, “Obama and the Federal Government Preside over the U.S. Empire in Decline.” Its opening sentence was as follows: “Barack Obama is well suited for the difficult task of presiding over an orderly march of the U.S. population to impoverishment

in the desperate effort of the U.S. monopoly capitalist and imperialist ruling class to save itself and its hegemonic position in the world capitalist system.” We continued: “This march to impoverishment, however, is still only in its beginning stages. And the challenge to the U.S. monopoly capitalist and imperialist ruling class and President Obama to lead the masses of working people and oppressed nationalities in the USA to poverty without us opting to revolt, without us turning to socialist revolution for the way out of our difficulties, will only get more difficult.” (March-April 2010)

### ***-The Lions Lay Down with the Lambs-***

The Democratic Party Regime of President Obama, in coordination with the Republican leadership in Congress — Senator Majority leader Mitch McConnell, House Speaker John Boehner, former Republican Vice Presidential candidate Congressman Paul Ryan, et al. —



House Speaker Boehner, President Obama, Senate Majority Leader McConnell

has undertaken its mass campaign of deception and lies to win Fast Track Authority (FTA) for President Obama on the path to the “legal” acceptance by the U.S. Congress of the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP). In the Senate, the initial major obstacle to Obama’s FTA and TPP was *not* Republican Majority leader Mitch McConnell but Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, *Democratic* Senator from Nevada! In fact, Reid tried to leverage the deep desire of *both* McConnell *and* Obama for Senate support for Fast Track and the TPP into concessions sought from the pro-Obama Republicans(!) by the minority Democrats in the Senate that they were unable to obtain when they had *majority* control of the Senate!

In addition to the Congressional Republican leadership, the “pro Obama” FTA campaign also has had the consistent and energetic support of the normally “pro-Republican” *Wall Street Journal (WSJ)*. In the words of the *WSJ*’s May 6<sup>th</sup> editorial, “Reid Filibusters Obama,” Reid is holding out for “a pork-barrel transportation bill and limits on antiterrorist surveillance.” This editorial points out that Senator Reid was “the main reason trade-promotion authority didn’t pass in the last Congress *despite bipartisan agreement in the Senate Finance Committee.*” (My emphasis, ROL) This editorial also tacitly admits the anti-people character of the TPP itself, stating, “the closer a trade vote gets to the 2016

(Stop the TPP continued)

election year, the harder it will be to pass.” (!) In this *anti-democratic context*, *WSJ* editors support Obama’s role in pushing fast track in order to distance the TPP vote from the people’s popular will, limited as it is, to be expressed at the 2016 ballot box. The *WSJ* editors urged Democrat Obama “to persuade enough Democrats to end run Senator Reid,” the Senate’s top Democrat.

This Wall Street guidance to Obama turned out to be much needed. Beyond Reid’s opposition, as we discussed earlier, the most clear and outspoken Senator opposing the granting of Fast Track Authority for Obama and Wall Street in this period was Massachusetts Democratic Senator Elizabeth Warren. Senator Warren held her own and did not back off of Obama. And the Senate did initially refuse to consider FTA in a May 12<sup>th</sup> vote, with 45 for and 52 against, until Obama strong-armed enough Democratic Senators to begin the debate process two days later.

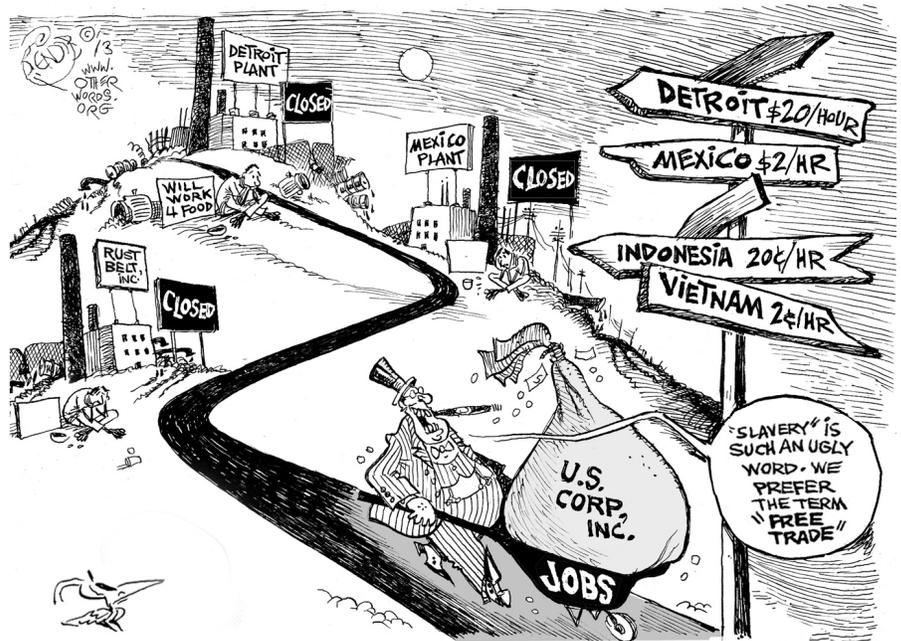
In their remarkably transparent lead editorial on May 18<sup>th</sup>, during the FTA debate in the Senate, the *WSJ* editors took on and openly argued with Republicans in Congress who were reluctant to give Obama fast track authority. The *WSJ* editors first threatened that “politicians who vote against trade agreements are opposing...high paying jobs.” Then, while admitting that Obama was delivering precious few Democratic votes for FTA and TPP, the editors stated that he, Obama, is nevertheless on the Republican side on trade. Furthermore, they argued, “The GOP image as a pro-growth party would suffer a damaging blow if the trade vote fails. So would the reputation of the U.S. around the world ... . If a GOP Congress fails on trade, the message will be that both major parties have lost the will to lead ... that America is choosing decline.” They also argued that it’s better to give Obama, a presidential “short-timer,” fast-track authority since “the next President may be a Republican who needs FTA for his economic-growth strategy. Better to pass it now so he (sic) [the male Republican President] wouldn’t have to spend scarce political capital to pass it in 2017.” (What an admission about the anti-people, anti-worker TPP! They’ll be able to blame Obama for it!) As they had done with President Obama, *The Wall Street Journal* editors gave the Republican Senators clear marching orders.

On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Republican-controlled U.S. Senate passed Fast Track Authority for President Obama! The vote was 62 in favor and 37 opposed, with sixty needed for passage. Forty-four Republican Senators, close to 90% of the Republicans, voted to give authority to their supposed “arch foe,” Democratic President Obama! Only 14 Democratic Senators voted in favor of giving *their*

President fast track authority, less than one-third of the Democrats!\*

Why is passage of TPP so important to the Wall Street ruling class that they are willing to reveal *the real cooperation* of their “Republicrat” puppets (i.e. the Democratic and Republican Party leaders — Obama, McConnell et al. — working in close collaboration) around the passage of Fast Track for TPP?

The Wall Street ruling class and its “Republicrat” political lackeys promote the TPP as a “trade alliance” to be initially made up of a dozen Pacific Rim countries. Jim Hightower, an outstanding progressive populist, however, has exposed the fact that the top-secret TPP “only uses trade as a mask.” 24 of 29 TPP chapters deal *not* with trade but “various ways to ‘free’ rapacious corporations from any accountability for the havoc they wreak and from any responsibility to the world community’s common good.” (*Hightower Lowdown*, January 2015) If it is passed by the USA and the other major powers involved, it will be the most anti-people, anti-worker, anti-99% agreement in modern times. It will represent the undiluted tyranny of U.S. monopoly corporations and Wall Street finance capital! ***In reality, TPP is the economic embodiment of the U.S. Empire’s War at Home and War Abroad.***



\*In fact, six of the fourteen Democrats came on board at the eleventh hour after getting assurances from Obama and McConnell of their support for an extension of the Export-Import Bank, so important to the giant Boeing Corporation and Boeing’s two Democratic Senators from Washington state. As the *Boston Globe* (5-22-15) reported: “Working with Senator Lindsey Graham, Republican of South Carolina, whose state also has large Boeing factories, they brought with them four additional Democrats to clear the 60-vote hurdle”.

### **-TPP and the U.S. Empire's War At Home and in the other TPP Countries-**

In the countries whose governments affiliate with the pact, *including the USA*, TPP implementation will represent virtually absolute power for the largest corporations and banks over *all* the people in *all* these countries. TPP will give these monopoly corporations the right to sue, before a special TPP corporate tribunal, any TPP member government for lost profits or “future lost profits” caused by a sovereign law in that country. For example, a law that protects the citizens of a particular country from genetically modified foods or from unlabeled meat from an unknown country of origin or a law banning “fracking” as an especially hazardous method of harvesting natural gas would be subject to such a “legal” challenge. If the monopoly corporation prevails in the corporate tribunal, the citizens of that country would be compelled to pay out such outrageous claims to the monopoly corporations from their government coffers!

Moreover, if such a “lawsuit” prevailed in such a corporate-rigged secret tribunal, the winning private corporation could ultimately compel any “sovereign” government to eliminate such a pro-people law due to its negative impact on corporate profits. TPP would thus replace whatever limited national sovereignty currently still exists in each of the affiliated countries with global capitalist tyranny!



Also of fundamental importance is the impact of such TPP laws and regulations on **the working class in each of the affiliated countries, including the USA**. The whole tyrannical set-up will be aimed first and foremost at maximizing the exploitation of the workers. A special feature of this will be the race to the bottom in terms of driving the wages, working and safety conditions down to the most barbaric levels of any TPP affiliated country so as to maximize the profits of the Wall Street bankers and the monopoly capitalist corporations.

### **-TPP and the U.S. Empire's War Abroad-**

Beyond the ability of the U.S. Empire to more intensively exploit, oppress and dominate, i.e. to wage war on the working class and the people of the USA and the other countries that sign on to TPP, it is aimed at waging economic warfare against China in particular.

The twelve Pacific Rim countries whose corporate and banking leaders have been secretly meeting for more than six years represent 40% of the world's production. They include, first and foremost, the USA, which dominates the group politically and militarily as well as economically. This fact of life means that, at least for now, the TPP will represent *a U.S. economic bloc in line with U.S. military and political blocs*.

Significantly, among the other eleven, Japan is the major economic power. \* The Asian contingent also includes Vietnam. The governments of Japan and



Japan's Prime Minister Abe & President Obama

Vietnam have demonstrated the most willingness to stand up to China's territorial assertions in the Asia-Pacific region. Another key player both in the TPP and in taking a stand in opposition to China's increasing military and political as well as economic clout has been Australia, whose government dramatically signed a major military basing agreement with the Obama Regime in one of its most significant moves to “pivot” U.S. global military strategy to Asia in the past few years. \*\*

\*And Caroline Kennedy, Obama's ambassador to Japan, and the daughter of “sainted” slain U.S. President John F. Kennedy, has become a major saleswoman for the TPP in the USA.

\*\*Key U.S. imperialist military strategist, Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., recently observed: “In the U.S. military, at least, the ‘pivot’ to Asia has begun. By 2020, the navy and the air force plan to base 60% of their forces in the Asia-Pacific region ... clearly meant to check an increasingly assertive China ... Washington can best achieve this objective by establishing a series of linked defenses across the first island chain — an ‘Archipelagic Defense.’” (page 78) “Several countries, Japan and Vietnam, in particular, have already suggested that they are serious about fielding the kind of robust defenses that would be required for Archipelagic Defense [against China]. Other states beyond the first island chain,

(Stop the TPP continued)

Thus, the TPP is an *economic* alliance that represents another important “pivot” to Asia by the U.S. Empire in conjunction with the *military* pivot Obama announced a few years ago to counter China. In this light it is no accident that the TPP has taken priority over an impending Trans Atlantic Pact and all other pending “trade” agreements.

The revealing May 18<sup>th</sup> *Wall Street Journal* editorial cited above warned the Republican Senators that, if Fast Track and TPP fail, “The big strategic winners... would be America’s adversaries, especially China, which is busy building economic alliances as a tool of its soft power. Chinese leaders are aiming to replace the U.S. as the dominant regional power in the Western Pacific, and a U.S. trade failure would speed that along.”

The current issue of the most influential U.S. ruling class journal, *Foreign Affairs*, contains no less than seven articles dealing with developments in China as it rises to challenge U.S. imperialist economic hegemony. (May-June 2015, Volume 94, Number 3) But the article that points up how urgently the declining U.S. Empire’s *Wall Street* ruling class actually needs the TPP is entitled, “Protecting America’s Competitive Advantage” and was authored by Fred Hochberg, the Chair and President of the Export-Import Bank of the United States. Hochberg, like the two Democratic Senators from Washington state as well as South Carolina Senator Lindsey Graham, three Senators from Boeing, is concerned that the U.S. Congress continue to fund the Export-Import Bank. According to Hochberg, this bank “empowers American Exporters by equipping those that cannot access private financing with credit insurance and working capital ...” and “thousands of U.S. businesses ... rely on the bank’s financing to secure overseas sales.” (pages 59, 60)

Hochberg points out, “For decades, government-backed export support fell under the aegis of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, an international body that sets responsible standards for export lending for its members. As recently as 1999, nearly 100 percent of export credit was governed by its rules. By 2004, *with the rise of Chinese exports*, the share of export support governed by the OECD had fallen to roughly two-thirds. By 2013, the share had plummeted to one-third.” “In the past two decades,” says Hochberg, “an increasing number of countries operate with little regard for established international guidelines, *export competition has come to resemble the Wild West*.” (My emphasis, ROL) “They are trying to keep up with countries such as China ... willing to shell out billions

including Australia and Singapore, appear inclined to provide basing and logistical support.” (page 85) Krepinevich concludes: “... establishing such a posture would represent an essential — and long overdue — first step in counterbalancing China’s ... ambitions.” (page 86, “How to Deter China,” *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2015)

of dollars to help their exporters close a deal.” (*ibid.*, p. 60) “During its eight decades of operation, the U.S. Export-Import Bank has financed a total of roughly \$590 billion worth of U.S. exports. By contrast, over the past two years alone, China has financed at least \$670 billion worth of exports. The actual sum ... may well be close to \$1 trillion.”

Hochberg urges the U.S. government to try to get China to work with it to achieve “fair global competition,” that is, “to act not simply as rivals but also as partners in responsible global growth.” However, until then he concludes: “... Washington should do everything in its power to give American exporters the support they need: ensuring the presence of a robust and capable Export-Import Bank and ratifying the Trans-Pacific Partnership ... [and] forcefully advocate on behalf of U.S. companies.” (pp. 64-65)

To bring home the urgency of that task for the U.S. Empire, on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, the same day the U.S. Senate gave Obama fast track authority for the TPP, “negotiators from 57 governments completed work on a charter for a Chinese-led Asian regional bank.” According to Associated Press (AP), “Beijing’s proposal for the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank attracted unexpected widespread support from Western governments including Britain, New Zealand and France despite US opposition.”

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**CONCLUSION:** Comrade Lenin, with his scientific understanding of imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, was able to lead the most successful socialist revolution in history. Today, a century later, in our view, Leninism still sheds the most light on the TPP and its implications for the world’s future.

Lenin taught that imperialism is the last, dying stage of capitalism largely because it features three fundamental and irreconcilable contradictions. These contradictions reveal the essence of the Trans Pacific Partnership.

**1. The contradiction between and among various imperialist countries and groupings:** The most important reason for the U.S. imperialist-led creation of the TPP, as we have documented above, is to counter the rapid rise of China as an imperialist power which is already eclipsing the USA, the hegemonic imperialist power over the past seventy years. This TPP economic bloc is linked to the U.S. military’s “Asian pivot” undertaken by the Obama Regime over the past few years. And, as Lenin taught, blocs such as TPP are building blocks leading to interimperialist war.

**2. The contradiction between the handful of major imperialist powers and the hundreds of millions, now billions, of colonial and dependent peoples of the world:** Certainly, most of the eleven

(Stop the TPP continued)

other countries whose governments have participated in the TPP negotiations these past six years are in some form of dependent status in relation to U.S. imperialism. (Even Japan, the other major imperialist power in the mix, seventy years after the end of World War II, has thousands of U.S. troops as an occupation force on its territory and is still militarily dependent on U.S. imperialism.) Lenin taught that the essence of imperialism resides in the distinction between the oppressing and the oppressed nations. Among those governments that vote to affiliate to the Trans Pacific Partnership, the tyrannical character of the TPP will no doubt provide great potential for *extra* abuse and exploitation of their countries by the dominant U.S. imperialist power — from selection and use of the secret corporate tribunals to favoritism in corporate decisions, fines, lawsuits, etc. The TPP will only serve to exacerbate this contradiction.

### **3. The contradiction between labor and capital:**

In all the countries that affiliate with TPP, including the USA, the opportunity to pit the workers of each country against the others — their work rules, labor conditions, wage rates, safety laws — will represent an unimpeded race to the bottom. And, spearheaded by U.S. imperialism, the workers in the TPP countries will be bombarded with propaganda that they need to sacrifice, in the name of “national defense” and “homeland security,” “against China, Russia, Brazil,” etc.

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Within the USA, the campaign to block Fast Track Authority for President Obama, which is key to any hope of stopping Congress from ratifying the Trans Pacific Partnership has now shifted from the U.S. Senate to the House of Representatives. In the House, there are at least a few positive pro-people and anti-monopoly Democrats as well as a relatively large number of Tea Party Republicans, some of whom are genuinely anti-monopoly and anti-federal government, even if somewhat based on their own backwardness, ignorance and white chauvinist prejudice, etc.\* These facts coupled with the fact that 100% of the House members have to

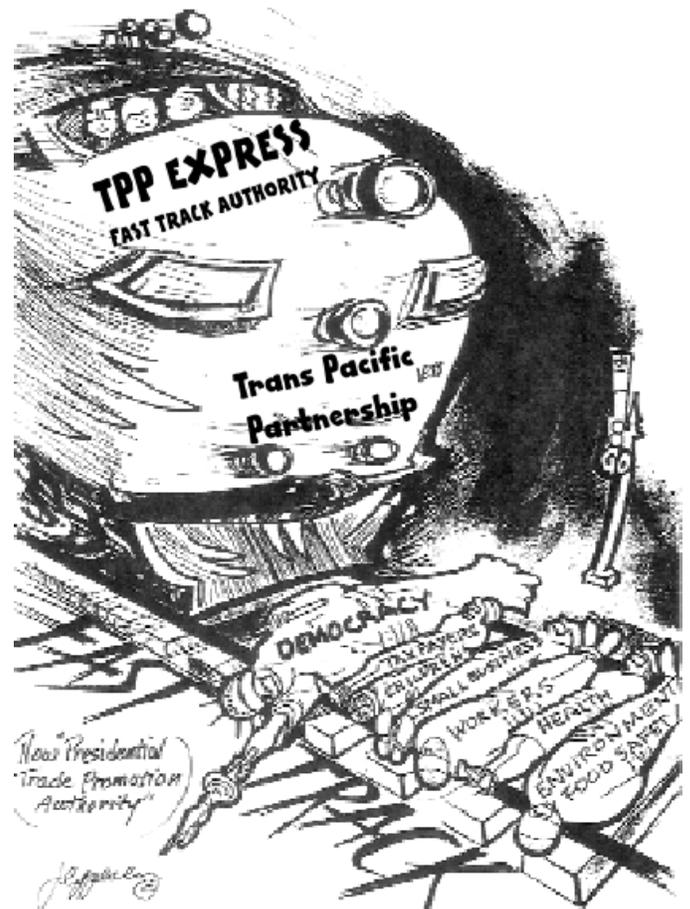
\*The presence of the Tea Party members is extremely significant. In the Hochberg *Foreign Affairs* article cited above, he complains that, “There are 60 such export credit agencies around the world, but the United States is the only country in which there is a raging political debate being waged by a small but potent minority over whether to actually weaken its banks’ financing capacity. ... Ideological opposition to the Export-Import Bank is not only shortsighted; it could also have devastating consequences for the thousands of U.S. businesses and workers who rely on the bank’s financing to secure overseas sales. No doubt China, Russia and other competitors are salivating at the prospect.” (p. 60) Hochberg is referring to these tea party forces.

stand for election every two years provide an opportunity for genuine anti-imperialist and revolutionary forces in the USA today to mobilize the masses to contact their House member, have street protests and take other actions to pressure the House to defeat Fast Track.

The fact that the leadership of organized labor – from the weak, two-faced AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka to the more serious Larry Cohen of the Communication Workers of America (CWA) and everyone in between — usually loyal acolytes of Obama and the Democrats, are all paying lip service to opposition to Fast Track and the TPP provides whatever militant and anti-imperialist “left” exists in the U.S. labor movement today an opportunity to actively organize among the unionized sector of the working class to wage a *political* struggle against Obama and the other “Republicanrat” lackeys of Wall Street imperialism.

**LET’S STOP TPP ON ITS FAST TRACK!!**

**WORKERS OF THE WORLD AND  
OPPRESSED PEOPLES UNITE!**



(Venezuela continued)

Before Hugo Chávez became president of Venezuela in 1999, it was indeed a client state of the US and the country's elite lived in luxury while most of the rest of Venezuelans lived in very poor conditions.

Since 1999, the people of Venezuela re-wrote the constitution and created the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (after Simon Bolivar who tried desperately to unite Central and South America), the nations and their citizens of Latin America have experienced (mostly) a sense of empowerment that comes with the sense that their societies care about them and that they matter and their voices can be heard by governments.

How did this change come about from the election of one man, Hugo Chávez? Well, he electrified the poor and disenfranchised in Venezuela by enshrining human rights as law and then setting about to make sure the will of the people was fulfilled.



The citizens of Venezuela have seen a decrease in poverty and an increase in their health and education. But there is a subset of Venezuelans who still do not like this empowerment: the elite, or the “oil”-garchy as I call the elite in Venezuela. Chávez once famously called them the “los escualídos” or “squalid ones.”

(As a side note, isn't that a great way of naming and shaming the “elite?” Instead of “elite” which connotes some kind of elevation of some over others, to say, instead, “the squalid ones?” Those that waste resources and spread their squalor over the planet like a fungus: I like it.)

Since Chávez was elected, many of “los escualídos” have worked overtime with the CIA and other US government entities and NGOs to overthrow the Bolivarian Revolution: So far it hasn't worked, but not because the US hasn't tried.

Once, in 2011, I was on a plane heading to Caracas and, next to me in the row, there were two people from Venezuela. With my limited Spanish, and their limited English, I found out that they owned a hotel at a resort in Venezuela and they had gone to Salt Lake City, UT

to go shopping. (Shopping in Utah?) Anyway, I had my computer with me and I showed the woman a picture of me with their president (who was still alive). For some reason, she thought it was Chávez and Lady Di at first, but after I convinced her it was actually I, she said, “You like him?”

“I like him a lot,” I replied.

*“He has been very good for the poor,” she admitted.*

I think it's pretty well established that the Bolivarian Revolution helped the poor of Venezuela, but how did it help Latin America in general?

In 2010, I was given permission to travel to Venezuela to interview President Chávez for what eventually became my book: *Revolution, A Love Story*. During that trip, I was invited to travel to Uruguay with President Chávez in his version of Air Force One to attend the inauguration of leftist President Felipé Mujica.

First of all, Chávez made other Latin American leaders like Evo Morales possible (but Chávez was only possible because of the Cuban Revolution, in my opinion), but it also inspired the other desperately poor people in Central and South America.

Here in the Evil Empire, to even be in the same zip code as a US President, one has to go through many levels of security, but in Montevideo, I witnessed Chávez confidently stride into a crowd of cheering Uruguayans to shake hands and speak with them. No one had gone through any screening, but when a person is generally loved and admired, that's not so much of a problem.

Author/Activist Eva Golinger documented from Freedom Of Information (FOIA) requests that the US was a profound part of the attempted coup against Chávez in 2001 and since then Golinger claims that the US has spent 100 billion dollars trying to destabilize the Revolution.

Also, during the Bush years, the Empire maintained nine military bases in neighboring Colombia, ostensibly to fight the “drug war” (the CIA is in the global drug trade business), but to also further isolate Venezuela just as the Empire is now doing in Ukraine to isolate Russia, for example.

When it comes to foreign policy, Chávez and current President Maduro have taken the route of spreading goodwill among Venezuela's neighbors. Cuba receives oil and beef (in exchange for doctors and teachers) and poor people in the US receive subsidized or free heating oil, for example.

It seems like the only thing the US exports are bombs and troops.

(Venezuela continued)

It was indeed a sad day for the world when Hugo Chávez passed away in 2013, and many people asked me if the Bolivarian Revolution would die with Hugo Chávez. My answer was and is, “I have been there, I have witnessed the advances in Venezuela and the political engagement and empowerment of the citizenry, and I can’t believe that they would want to return to the days when the gap between the rich and the poor was so great.”



With the new president Nicolas Maduro, I have seen that the US government is still supporting the former coup traitors but I also see the people of Venezuela courageously fighting to retain the legacy of Chávez, in his name. Is the Bolivarian Revolution perfect? Far from it because true Socialism puts control of work places and the government totally in the hands of the people. But with the Community Councils and social benefits, Venezuela far surpasses the so-called wealthiest nation on earth.

My response to right-wingers (like Obama) when they say that Venezuela is a “threat” to the US, is to ask a series of questions:

Q: “In how many countries does Venezuela currently maintain military bases and occupying forces?”

A: One: Venezuela

Q: “In how many countries does the US currently maintain military bases and occupying forces?”

A: Hard to pin down with “classified” sites, but around 150 out of a total of 195 countries.

Q: “How much money (percentage of GDP) does Venezuela spend on its military?”

A: 1.2% [about \$5.3 billion]

Q: “How much money (percentage of GDP) does the US spend on its military?”

A: 3.7% [about \$620.4 billion]

So, this is my question to Barack Obama:

“What nation is ***THE*** threat to global peace?”

Heck, with the police state crackdown here in the USA, it is not the Venezuelan government and people but the armed force of the US imperialist state apparatus (the police, national guard, etc.), representing the U.S. ruling class, that is an actual threat even to the citizens of the USA!



**Still stumped?! See answer below  
to front page mystery quotation.**

—the Editor

What has followed the murder of Patrice Lumumba, the outstanding African revolutionary, for the past fifty-five years in the Congo and on so much of the African continent has been tribal divisions and wars continually stirred up by U.S.-led imperialism, along with the systematic use of colonialism mixed at times with neo-colonialism. U.S. imperialist hegemony, with its domination of the United Nations as well as the complicity of the revisionists in state power in most former socialist countries, including Russia and China, has thus far largely prevented the African peoples from showing the world "what the black man can do when he works in freedom."



Belgian rulers joined with U.S. imperialism in this vicious deed as *did the United Nations*. Under the social democratic leadership of Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, UN troops were directly involved. The Russian Revisionist chieftain, Nikita Khrushchev, traitor to the cause of national liberation and socialism, helped set Lumumba up by his promotion of so many pacifist and petty bourgeois democratic illusions about the United Nations and its Secretary-General. As even *the Wall Street Journal* now admits, the UN Secretary-General "was as complicit in Prime Minister Lumumba's assassination as were his American and Belgian counterparts." (*ibid.*, April 4-5, 2015)

Tragically, Lumumba was overthrown in a coup d'état after only 12 weeks in office and was murdered four months later. Evidently fearful that the Congo would follow the Cuban path and all Africa would end up aligned with the anti-Western and socialist camp, U.S. President Eisenhower, at a National Security Council meeting, had given an order for the assassination of Lumumba. The



On June 30, 1960, **Patrice Lumumba**, the first democratically elected prime minister of the Congo, formerly the Belgian Congo, celebrated Independence Day in Leopoldville with an electrifying speech filled with hope and human dignity. Lumumba's speech had been immediately preceded by that of Belgian King Baudouin who, "oblivious to the scarring legacy of his nation's unconscionable rule in the Congo" (well documented in Mark Twain's brilliant book, *King Leopold's Soliloquy*) had incredibly claimed that the African people's independence was due to old King "Leopold, a champion of civilization." (Quotes from a book review in *Wall Street Journal*, April 4-5, 2015) Lumumba was widely considered the most capable of all the young patriotic leaders of the many newly independent countries throughout Sub-Saharan Africa. And the Congo was and is arguably the richest country on earth in terms of its vast mineral wealth.

# MAY DAY 2015: Unite & Fight for Jobs, Justice and Freedom — against the TPP, Police Brutality, and Imperialist Wars!

May Day greetings as **we link arms with workers around the world**, from Iraq to Venezuela, from Afghanistan to Cuba from Kurdistan to the Ukraine celebrating May Day – the great holiday of the international working class – in our common fight for decent jobs, affordable food, housing, a safe environment and against imperialist war and domination, police brutality, capitalist exploitation and all forms of oppression.

On May 1, 1886, 200,000 U.S. workers struck for the eight-hour work day; 340,000 more demonstrated around the country for the same demand. In 1889, the Marxist International Socialist Congress (Second International) voted in Paris to designate May 1, 1890 as an international day of workers' protest. **Thus, May Day was "born in the USA" out of the workers' struggle for the eight hour day.**

Beginning May Day 2006, hundreds of thousands of immigrant workers in the U.S. rose-up against increasing government attacks on themselves and their families **helping to revive May Day as a day of workers' action in the USA.**

The workers' uprising in Wisconsin, centered around basic union rights of public sector workers and the militant and victorious Chicago Teachers Strike against the Democratic Party Machine in 2012, were undoubtedly inspired by the Tunisian and Egyptian masses coupled with the bold and blatant right-wing corporate assault on U.S. workers and their unions. Both underscore the international character of our struggle – the essence of May Day!

**May Day 2015 arrives with the continuing fightback in the U.S. against police brutality** led by the uprising and continuing struggle of the Afro-American



people in Ferguson, Missouri and now Baltimore, Maryland and **the exemplary fight of the Kurdish women of the YPJ and Kurdish men of the YPG** who have heroically achieved military victories over

the "Islamic State" terrorist organization (ISIS) in Rojava (Kurdish Syria) in defense of their people.

Meanwhile the criminal Obama Regime continues with its bloody record of slaughter in Libya, Syria, Yemen, Mali, among others and helped create ISIS. It is this organization that now provides U.S. imperialism with a

"green light" to bomb, invade and occupy the vast lands of the Middle East.

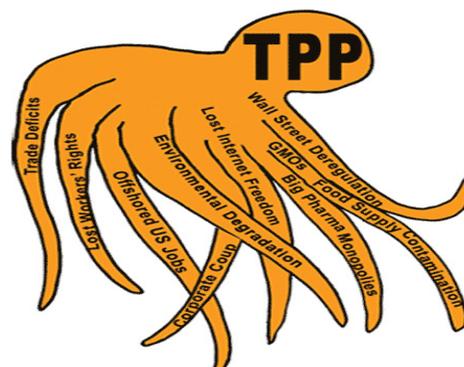
**Both the Republican and Democratic parties have proven their allegiance to the Wall Street rich and their brutal war mongering profit machine.** Both parties continue to support brutal unjust wars of aggression and oppression for oil and profit. Both parties attack immigrant workers and are attacking unions cutting social benefits. Both parties hide behind "investigations" while killer cops go free. Medicare and Social Security are on the chopping block. With their "austerity" programs, "deficit reduction" schemes and massive tax breaks for the rich, the capitalists are trying to resolve the economic crisis on the backs of the working class and working poor. Workers need to use their power – to organize, unite and fight for their rights and interests – young and old, men and women, workers of all nationalities, documented and undocumented – **to demand that WALL STREET PAY for the crisis they continue to create.**

One of the biggest obstacles to mobilization of the working people of the USA and the 99% against Wall Street capital, has been the failure of the U.S. "left" to break politically with the Democratic Party as well as its stooges in the national leadership of the AFL-CIO, the NAACP, etc., especially on the issue of U.S. imperialist-led wars.

## Stop the TPP

*TPP is a global conspiracy. Monopoly capital's target is —  
Our brother and sister workers of every country.  
It includes you and me.*

"Fast Track" authorization for Wall street's latest "trade deal" – the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) – is being prepared for a sudden vote in the US Congress at any moment. The January 2015 edition of The Hightower Lowdown exposes the fact that TPP is presented as a trade deal but "it only uses trade as a mask." 24 of 29 TPP chapters deal not with trade but "various ways to 'free' rapacious corporations from any accountability for the havoc they wreak and from any responsibility to the world



community's common good." Maximum corporate profits trump everything. In other words, it is straight up **corporate tyranny.**

# Longshore Union Shuts Port of Oakland to Protest Police Killings

by STACEY RODGERS, Executive Board Member ILWU Local 10

On Friday, May 1 – International Workers Day, otherwise known as May Day, about 2,000 people came together to march and protest the unjust murders of mainly Black and Brown people in the U.S. at the hands of the police. The event, “Labor Against Police Terror,” drew labor unions and community groups to the Port of Oakland. The International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 led the day of action marching from the Port of Oakland to Oscar Grant Plaza (at Oakland City Hall).



Longshore Workers May Day March in Solidarity with Black Lives Matter

ILWU has a long and proud history of participating in actions against social injustice, starting with its formation during the San Francisco strike of 1934 where two workers were killed by police. Other actions have included anti-apartheid actions against South Africa, shutting down the Port of Oakland in 2010 in support of justice for Oscar Grant, and protest of Israel Zim ships. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was made an honorary member of Local 10 just six months before his death.

The impetus behind the May Day 2015 action was the murder of Walter Scott in Charleston, South Carolina. Scott was related to several Charleston longshoremen of the International Longshoreman Association (ILA) Local 1422. ILA 1422 and ILWU Local 10 have a strong history of solidarity. In addition, Local 10 has suffered its

share of police terror. In 2012, Jerimiah Moore was killed by Vallejo police and last year Pedie Perez was killed by Richmond police. Both are families of longshoremen.

During April’s Local 10 executive board meeting, a motion was made to support the Charleston Longshoremen in whatever action they chose to seek justice for Walter Scott. An amendment to the motion was made that ILWU hold its monthly stop work meeting on May 1, effectively shutting down the Port of Oakland and march and protest the senseless murders of mainly Black and Brown people by police. The motion passed at the general membership meeting two days later.

With two weeks to plan and implement the march, the call went out to other unions and community groups. The response was far better than expected. Several unions joined in solidarity, as did various community groups in and around Oakland. Thus for the first time in U.S. history ... a labor union had initiated a protest against the police.

The rally started at Berth 62 at the port. The march, led by the Local 10 drill team, began at 10 a.m. wound through the Acorn community of West Oakland and ended with a rally at Oscar Grant Plaza. The goal of the protest was to call attention to the onslaught of police killings and demand that the killings must stop and those responsible be held accountable

ILWU recognizes its role in the community and knows that when labor disrupts commerce, the 1% will listen and act when their bottom line is affected or threatened. Workers, union and non-union alike, must come together to take the lead in these actions and exert their rank and file power and not rest upon elected officials. For too long the labor community has been silent on these issues and now is the time to renew our role in making things better.

An injury to one is an injury to all.

The monopoly capitalist system, based on private profit and greed, is corrupt to the core. It cannot meet the needs of the vast majority of humankind. By supporting the struggles of people from other lands against U.S. imperialist domination and coordinating our struggles in the U.S. with workers around the world against our common enemy, we can win! We can “bring to birth a new world from the ashes of the old” – workers’ power and socialism – the real solution to the economic crisis.

**Make Wall Street Pay –  
Fund Jobs and Education,  
not War and Police Militarization!  
Oppose the TPP, Stop Police Brutality  
Fight for Workers’ Power!**

**Workers of the World and Oppressed Peoples Unite!  
Long Live the Internationalist Spirit of May Day!**

-Issued May 1, 2015 by the *Greater Boston Branches of the Revolutionary Organization of Labor, USA-*

NOTE FROM CINDY SHEEHAN:

## **Ray O' Light Newsletter Now On Line!**

Dear Comrades,

The Soapbox People's Network ([www.cindysheehanssoapbox.com](http://www.cindysheehanssoapbox.com)) has been diligently publishing everything that the ROL Newsletter sends us. We are receiving over 100,000 hits per month and the information is certainly getting out there.

**The ROL page is at:**

**<http://www.cindysheehanssoapbox.com/ray-olight.html>**

I can always be reached at my email:

[CindySheehansSoapbox@gmail.com](mailto:CindySheehansSoapbox@gmail.com)

In struggle,  
Cindy Sheehan

\* \* \* \* \*

*"The great appear great to us  
Only because we are on our knees:  
Let us rise."  
— Camille Desmoulins*

**Revolutionary Organization of Labor (ROL), USA** is a revolutionary working class organization that fights for working class power and the elimination of all human exploitation.

**Ray O' Light Newsletter** is the regular publication of ROL, USA. We believe, with comrade Lenin, that the working class "... needs the truth and there is nothing so harmful to its cause as plausible, respectable petty bourgeois lies." In the spirit of Karl Marx who taught that "our theory is not a dogma but a guide to action," we welcome your comments.

Comradely the Newsletter Staff,

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