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**Obama's Health Care "Reform"**

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Modern medicine and technology have created all the means necessary to provide health care for the people. But for the capitalists, the health care industry is only another means for maximizing profits; rather than being motivated by improving the health of the population, the health care monopolies use the suffering and diseases of the people as a means to fatten their profits. The struggle for free and comprehensive health care is essentially a struggle of the people against the capitalist system of profit-making as it applies to the medical and health care field. It is a fight for the rights of the people against the power and privilege of the rich.

Precisely because, through their struggles, the people have been demanding a solution to the problem of health care, the capitalist class and its politicians have been discussing the necessity for change in the health care system. Of course Obama and the other capitalist politicians have no intention of voluntarily providing free health care for the masses of the people. The capitalists who, with the help of the labor aristocracy and opportunism, monopolize the political life of the country are seeking: 1) to divert and undermine the movement for health care reform by narrowing its scope and liquidating its basic demand; 2) to push through "reform" which guarantees even greater profits for the health care industry while further shifting the costs of the for-profit health care system onto the backs of the workers.

The labor aristocrats who head

up the AFL-CIO are calling on the workers to lobby for the health care "reform" being considered in Congress. What are the main provisions of the health care "reform" bills recently passed by the House and Senate? Both would: 1) make it a federal law for individuals to buy health care insurance or be fined; 2) establish a health insurance exchange – a market to buy federally subsidized health care insurance. While being forced to purchase health insurance, the

workers would be saddled with huge premiums, deductibles, and co-payments. This would mean a worsened living standard for the workers because they would be forced to pay insurance premiums that they cannot afford. It would also mean that workers still could not afford most medical treatment because of large deductibles and co-pays, and because many services still wouldn't be covered at all. Further-

*CONTINUED ON PAGE 2*

**Rights**

The Workers Party says that rights are something that arise from the very social being of humans and assert themselves as claims made by individuals and groups on society. The very act of being born into society gives the individual a claim. Especially in the modern world, when human existence has become completely socialized, no individual can assert even such elementary human rights as the right to a livelihood without making definite claims on the society. In our view, the very starting point of the social organization of human beings must be to guarantee the rights of the humans who make it up.

Die-hard defenders of the status quo often vehemently object to our conception of rights. They insist that "society doesn't owe anyone a living," and they replace the demand for equal, human rights with the slogan of "equality of opportunity."

But in contemporary America, what gives an individual the "opportunity" to receive health care or infant care or a university education?

Money. Indeed, the rich can afford the best of all these things and enjoy the freedom to develop their individual personalities. But what about the rest of us? Are our children meant to go without vital nutrition or health care? Should working class women simply bow their heads and toil 25 hours a day – on the job, in the house and as mothers – without demanding that society provide them with the conditions necessary for their all-around development?

Nor do we have the "equal opportunity" to get the money. On the contrary, the present system arose to defend and strengthen the monopoly of the capitalist class over the means of production. And today, the anti-social offensive of the government is simply robbing the public treasury in order to turn more and more of our country's social capital and infrastructure over to the capitalist class. In other words, at every moment the rich are given the "opportunities" while the majority

*CONTINUED ON PAGE 2*

## From the Anti-Imperialist News Service Online Edition

# Two More Terrorist Attacks Take Place in Syria on September 15th

According to the Syrian Arab News Agency, the state-owned news agency of the Syrian Arab Republic, an explosive device blew up on a bus in Idleb on September 15, killing a journalist and injuring 9 other people. The journalist worked for a newspaper issued by an organization called the Revolutionary Youth Union.

The same day in Damascus, an explosion caused by mortar shells injured two people.

Syria's Minister of Health Sa'ad al-Nayef also reported that terrorist attacks targeting the health sector have resulted in the deaths of 29 people, injuries to 106 people and the kidnapping of 21 people. In addition, attacks have cost the Ministry of Health over 400 ambulances and 212 service cars.

## Rights

from page 1

are denied their rights.

For tens of thousands of years, human beings have worked to equip themselves with the means necessary to secure their material existence and to open the path for the blossoming of the human personality. Today, when all these means have been created, it is only the forms of social organization which are blocking the people from realizing, in practice, all their inalienable human and economic rights. This is what the people must change in the course of claiming their rights.

# U.S. War "Games" in Latin America

As if U.S. imperialism were no longer the number one threat to peace in the world, U.S. Southern Command described its latest naval training drills, hosted by Colombia, as "defensive."

Nevertheless, the exercise brought military forces not only of the United States, but also of Canada and Britain right into the waters of the Western Caribbean Sea.

The 55th annual UNITAS naval exercises, which took place this year from September 8-15, involved 6 more warships than last year, bringing the total to 19. Other participants

were the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Chile and Peru. This year the U.S. also invited observers from Germany as well as Belize, El Salvador, Jamaica, Panama and Mexico.

The anti-imperialist, democratic tradition of the American people demands a democratic foreign policy which calls for an end to the militarization of our country's economic and social life, the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops stationed abroad, an end to U.S. participation in aggressive military alliances, and an end to all U.S. intervention and pressure against other countries.

## Health Care "Reform"

from page 1

more, these "reforms" would be a huge boon to the insurance companies who will be guaranteed by law an even bigger market and given hundreds of billions of dollars in subsidies.

The two vital features of these plans for health care "reform" are: 1) the health care industry, as a system run on the basis of maximizing profit, remains intact; 2) the workers are forced to pay. Under these plans, the insurance companies, the hospitals, drug companies, etc. would all continue to seek maximum profits while shifting the burden onto the workers through higher premiums and deductibles. And the workers will be forced to pay through higher and higher taxes.

The labor aristocrats and opportunists who are pushing these plans insist that such proposals are "realistic" and "pragmatic" while the demand that the rich be forced to pay is "too extreme, too radical." They are trying to pressure the people to give up the basic demand of free, comprehensive and universal health care for all.

But of course the people have the right to free medical care and a healthy life. Furthermore, we know that without a fundamental change in the

health care system, one way or another the workers will be denied needed care and the best medical services will remain reserved for the millionaires.

The need for fundamental reform of the health care system in the U.S. has been and will continue to be placed on the agenda by the struggles of the masses of people themselves. In order to turn our spontaneous and localized struggles for health care into a nationwide movement, in order to win the demand for free, comprehensive health care, paid for by the rich, the workers need to come into the political arena as an independent force. By coming out as an independent political force in opposition to the capitalist politicians who insist on keeping the health-care system as a field for profit-making, we can force the government to meet our basic demands.

## The Worker

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