

Update

THE WORKER

November 8, 2013

Newspaper of the Workers Party, U.S.A.

Vol. 27 Number 14

Road of the Party

Campaign for Economic Rights

The Workers Party has initiated the Campaign for Economic Rights (CER) as a program for unifying and strengthening resistance to the capitalist offensive and as part of the work to carry through the struggle for the political economy of the working class under contemporary conditions.

The CER asserts that every human being simply by virtue of her/his humanity is entitled to certain inalienable economic and human rights including:

- the right to food, clothing and shelter

- the right to a job or a livelihood commensurate with our country's level of development. This includes the right to income-security in the event of loss of capacity to work, retirement, etc.

- the right to comprehensive and free medical and health care

- the right to the best possible education, from infant care through the university.

The Campaign for Economic Rights is needed not only to struggle against the anti-social agenda but to give our reply to WHAT KIND OF SOCIETY?, to come forward with a vision and a program for a truly human society which guarantees the inalienable economic rights and well-being of every human being.

The level of development of our country, as well as the entire history of our people, who have, from the beginning, fought to cre-

ate a society which guarantees equal rights for all, demands that we go forward. The fact that tens of millions of Americans are denied their most basic rights is bad enough, but it is absolutely barbarous when we remember that our country has all the resources necessary to guarantee the well-being of everyone. Human society has reached the point where we are capable of leaving behind the dark ages when the main pre-occupation was with physical survival and eco-

nomically necessary.

What is blocking the way forward – what is keeping the people from realizing their inalienable economic rights? It is only the power and privilege of the capitalist owners. It is the fact that the health care system is organized with the motive and aim of maximizing profit, rather than insuring the health of the population, which is the problem; it is the fact that the capitalist class monop-

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Worldwide Condemnation of U.S. Blockade Against Cuba

For the twenty-second consecutive year, the United Nations General Assembly has condemned the U.S. economic blockade of Cuba. This year there were 188 nations supporting the resolution calling for the United States to repeal its embargo. Only the U.S. and Israel voted against the resolution. Micronesia, Palau and the Marshall Islands abstained.

The UN vote dramatically reveals the hypocrisy of the U.S. government. These days the U.S. government uses the UN Security Council as a vehicle through which it can dictate the affairs of other countries while claiming to have the authority of international law and the UN. Today, any country which opposes U.S. pressure and interference is portrayed by U.S. imperialism as an "international outlaw" and in many cases military action is threat-

ened or taken against so-called "rogue" states. But for the last twenty-two years, when the UN has voted overwhelmingly against the U.S. blockade of Cuba, the U.S. government has shamelessly turned its head, ignoring not only the elementary norms of relations between states and universally recognized international law, but also the declared will of almost every country in the world.

This year the strongest condemnation of the U.S. embargo came out of the mouth of the U.S. ambassador himself when he spewed openly racist and dictatorial "arguments." In his speech at the U.N., Ronald D. Godard asserted that the blockade of Cuba was for the Cuban people's own good. According to this fascist logic, U.S. imperialism must "mentor" the

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Cuban people by starving them into submission.

So too, Godard made the goals of U.S. imperialism clear: "The United States places the highest priority on building and strengthening connections between the Cuban and American people. These connections give Cubans the support and tools they need to move forward independent of their government."

The aim of U.S. imperialism is to overthrow the political and economic system in Cuba and again turn Cuba into its colony. Such an aggressive foreign policy flies in the face of world public opinion and the deep aspirations of the people of the U.S. who want to live in peace and friendship with the people of Cuba.

Prior to the U.N. vote, Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez spoke before the General Assembly of the United Nations and reiterated that the Cuban people will continue resisting the blockade. Below we reprint excerpts from this speech.

Mr. President:

The Department of Commerce of the United States has established as a precondition for the issuance of a license authorizing the supply of any equipment, devices or medicines to Havana's Pediatric Cardio-Center "William Soler", that these items are exclusively used to treat Cuban patients; that the final destination of these items is monitored; that they are not used to commit acts of torture or human rights violations; and that they are not used in biotechnological productions or are re-exported. Appendix E of the license questionnaire requires the inclusion of abundant data to make certain that the Cardio-Center is in no way linked to the production of chemical or biological weap-

ons, missile technologies or nuclear weapons.

Tens of prestigious specialists as well as at least five renowned US hospitals and many others in the planet know very well this institution which specializes in pediatric cardiology and cardiological surgery and which since 2010 has performed heart surgeries on 1 101 children and assisted tens of thousands of little patients.

However, the Cardio-Center continues to be classified by the U.S. Department of Commerce as "Denied Hospital".

Consequently, Cuban boys and girls can not be treated with a device called 'Amplatzer', which is used to cure inter-auricular communication or eliminate the vascular short-circuit inside the artery; or with the devices commonly used for invasive catheterization; or receive better quality medicines for the treatment of heart failure or last generation antiarrhythmic and antibiotic drugs.

For that reason, tens of minors had to undergo thoracic surgeries that could have otherwise been avoided. Another 102 children suffering from pulmonary hypertension could not be treated with nitric oxide, which is one of the best therapies available.

Likewise, the Cardiovascular Surgery Institute lacks spare parts, contrast media and software to perform echocardiographies.

The Orthopedic Hospital 'Frank País' can not replace the SOPHA Gamma Camera, which is required for the diagnosis of malignant tumors and bones and joints infections.

The Tropical Medicine Institute "Pedro Kouri" is not allowed to purchase 'Kalestra', an anti-viral oral solution for children, since it has no license from the Treasury Department to import it. This medicine in-

hibits the replication of the HIV virus in children who are born with AIDS, enhances their immunological system and prevents the occurrence of opportunistic diseases.

The human damages caused by the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba are incalculable.

It provokes hardships and is a mass, flagrant and systematic violation of human rights. Seventy six per cent of Cubans have lived under its devastating effects since the day they are born.

The blockade has been classified as an act of genocide pursuant to Article II of the Geneva Convention of 1948 on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide; and also as an act of economic warfare pursuant to the Declaration on the Right to Maritime Warfare adopted in 1909.

The State Department lies about and manipulates the data on remittances sent by émigrés and the small donations made by non-governmental organizations which it also hampers, with the purpose of portraying its government as a donor of humanitarian assistance to our nation.

The Memorandum written by the US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Lester Mallory, on April 6, 1960, which was declassified thirty years later, states, and I quote: "The majority of Cubans support Castro [...] The only foreseeable means of alienating internal support is through disenchantment and disaffection based on economic dissatisfaction and hardship [...] Every possible means should be undertaken promptly to weaken the economic life [...] denying money and supplies to Cuba, to decrease monetary and real

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wages, to bring about hunger, desperation and overthrow of government”, end of quote.

The fact that fifty three years later the same policy still prevails is something extraordinary and barbaric.

Mr. President:

The economic damages accumulated after half a century as a result of the implementation of the blockade amount to 1 trillion 126 billion dollars.

We have achieved undeniable results in the eradication of hunger and poverty, as well as health and education indicators that have become a world’s referent. The same applies to the promotion of gender equality, equitable freedom and wellbeing, social consensus, democratic participation of citizens in governmental decisions, the reversion of environmental deterioration and the development of international cooperation with one hundred countries of the Third World. How much more could we have done without this colossal obstacle to our development and the enormous human and financial costs it has imposed on us?

The blockade has been further tightened under President Obama’s administration, particularly in the financial sector.

The United States have historically used the enormous technological power of its recently denounced mass espionage system to persecute and monitor our financial transactions and economic relations.

From January, 2009 to September, 2013, the fines imposed on thirty US and foreign entities for their relations with Cuba and other countries have amounted to more than 2.446 billion dollars.

In December, 2012, the British

bank HSBC was fined with 375 million US dollars for the same reason and the Japanese bank Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ was fined with 8.6 million US dollars.

In March, 2013, ‘Reuters’ agency suspended the banking and financial information services.

The economic siege has been further tightened and its impact can be seen in the scarcities and difficulties suffered by Cuban families in every aspect of their lives.

The United States is not a trading partner of Cuba, as it has been shamelessly asserted by their representatives, because a trading partner can not be a State where it is impossible to export products to or buy services or products from; or a State with which it is not possible to use US dollars in any transaction; or a State whose subsidiaries in third countries refuse to sell foodstuffs or medicines to our country by virtue of the Torricelli Act, which also bans the entry to US ports of any ship in the world that may touch a Cuban for a term of 180 days; or a State which prevents other nations from selling to Cuba any merchandise containing more than 10 per cent of US components or exporting to the US any product that contains Cuban raw materials. Cuba’s trading partner can not be a State that implements the Helms Burton Act, or the one which expanded, in an unprecedented way, the extraterritorial scope of the blockade and entirely codified the “change of regime” and the ultimate intervention in Cuba. Cuba’s trading partner can not be the State that invokes the “Trade with the Enemy Act” of 1917, which is only applicable to war situations and is only valid for Cuba.

Our small island poses no threat to the national security of the superpower. Then, why can’t Americans

have access to first quality Cuban products or Cuban last generation medicines? Why are their business people loosing opportunities? Why is it not possible to open businesses that would create new jobs in times of crisis? Why can’t American companies have access to Mariel’s New Special Development Zone?

Sanctions remain intact and are being fully implemented. This is not a bilateral issue. The blockade is aggressively extraterritorial and a violation of International Law, which lacerates the sovereignty of other States.

It is a transgression of the international rules that govern trade and freedom of navigation. The cruel inclusion of medicines and foodstuffs is a violation of International Humanitarian Law. It is a hostile and unilateral act that should cease unilaterally.

Mr. President:

The blockade is the main obstacle to a broader access to the Internet and the information and communication technologies, since it restricts the band width of the Island, increases the cost of connectivity and prevents our connection to nearby submarine cables.

The sanctions seriously restrict the contacts between both peoples, and those which are authorized are subject to certain conditions with the purpose of bringing about a “change of regime” and promoting internal destabilization...

The blockade is an uncivilized act that prevents the free circulation of persons, the free flow of information, the exchange of ideas and the development of cultural, sport and scientific relations.

The US policy against Cuba is

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lizes the tools of our country and sets the economy in motion solely with the aim of maximizing profit, which prevents millions of workers from having a secure economic existence.

The CER insists that human beings have claims on society, have rights, on the basis of their humanity and not on the basis of their wealth and property.

The issue is that we must assert these rights, we must claim them through struggle against the power and privilege of a few. And we must claim them by coming out together. The CER says that each of us can only realize her/his economic rights by asserting these as human rights which belong inherently to everyone. We are saying that these individual rights can only be secured by asserting our collective rights, especially the right of the people to determine their social and economic environment.

Today the capitalists insist that there are no collective rights which belong to the whole people. They actually say that there is no society and that there are only individuals and individual rights. Of course, what they mean is that there must only be "rights" for the individual

owners of private property in the means of production and that society must be governed by the law of the jungle, must be an arena in which the rich and powerful prey on everyone else.

In our view, the capitalist class and the anti-social agenda are attacking everything that makes us human, and in particular trying to deny altogether the basic facts of human existence and of the modern world – to deny its social character, to deny our common humanity. And it is this humanity which we cannot let them suppress; it is this humanity which we must stand up and claim.

Claiming this humanity means that the working class must lead the way in coming forward with a pro-social agenda that recognizes and guarantees the rights of all the exploited and oppressed, of all humanity. There is no other way that we can emancipate ourselves and no other society to which we can aspire. Despite the relentless propaganda of the capitalists, the workers are not like the capitalists – we do not live, nor do we want to live, by exploiting others. On the contrary, our entire existence and our deep-

est aspirations are bound up with our social existence. Who does not want to create and live in that kind of society which guarantees the blossoming and development of every individual, the development of the humanity of all?

The immediate challenge facing the working class is to bring such a pro-social agenda into the political arena and contend with the capitalist class over the direction and future of our country.

Such a pro-social agenda must assert the inalienable economic rights of the people and insist that the guiding line of the economy must be to guarantee the well-being of the people. Such an agenda demands that government make the vitally needed social investments to guarantee the rights of the people.

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suffering from an absolute international isolation and discredit and lacks every ethical or legal ground. So has been demonstrated by the 180 votes in this General Assembly, the statements made by tens of Heads of State and Government at the General Debate and the opinions contributed by member States and international organizations to the UN Secretary-General's Report....

Mr. President:

Once again, on behalf of the self-sacrificing, heroic and fraternal people of Cuba, I ask the representatives of the UN member States to vote in favor of the draft resolution entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba."

Thank you, very much.

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