



continuing **THE DAILY WORKER**

March 1, 2025

Cold Peace with Russia / Cold War with China: Trump's foreign policy agenda

By C.J. Atkins

Trump labeled President Volodymyr Zelensky a “dictator” and called him out for not holding elections earlier this week. He said the Ukrainian leader only wants to “keep the gravy train” of U.S. money rolling in, and blamed him for starting the war with Russia.

Vladimir Putin, meanwhile, was said to be committed to “common sense.” The White House declared him to be someone Trump can “work together” with “very closely.”

What a world of difference from just a few months ago when a different U.S. president called Zelensky a “courageous and determined” defender of democracy and denounced Putin as a “war criminal.”

This dramatic turnaround is just the latest example of the about-face that's happened in U.S. foreign policy over the last several weeks—a change that's sparked confusion and bewilderment as 80 years of U.S. imperial strategy is seemingly being thrown overboard.

In Europe, Vice President J.D. Vance recently trashed political leaders there for not working together with fascists and initiated what one commentator called “the opening salvo in a trans-Atlantic divorce proceeding.” Snubbing German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Trump's V.P. met with Alice Weidel, leader of the neo-Nazi Alternative for Germany party, instead.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth, speaking in Munich last week, signaled a retreat from NATO, “the greatest military alliance in history,” according to Foreign Policy magazine, giving “China and Russia what they've long sought: a multipolar world.” (As if that was something to be given by U.S. officials.)

All of this on top of the tariff war threats against some of the U.S.' closest trading partners, declarations that Canada and Greenland will be annexed, and the squeeze put on Panama and other Latin American nations to cut ties with China, or else.

If you listen to some Democratic officials and liberal commentators in the corporate media, it's like 2016 all over again.

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has revived her accusation that Trump is “Putin's puppet.” Obama's former NATO ambassador Ivo Daalder argues the president has “adopted Putin's talking points” and is “making Russia great again.”

The worst in this milieu continues to peddle simplistic hot takes centered on Trump's admiration for strongmen or conspiratorial allegations that hinge on Russian blackmail and compromising material.

Dazed and confused

But this is not just a Democrats vs. Republicans storyline when it comes to interpreting events. Neocons in the GOP—who've been just as committed to the U.S.-dominated global order as any Democrat—are dazed by the administration's foreign policy revolution and unsure at times how to respond. It's all a sign of Trump's still ongoing remake of his party.



Sen. John Kennedy, R-La., a Trump loyalist when it comes to nearly every Project 2025 priority domestically, expressed disagreement with his leader's stance on Ukraine. He declared Putin “has got Stalin's taste for blood” and expressed skepticism about negotiations. Sen. Thom Tillis, R-N.C., returning this week from what he called a mass grave in Ukraine, said any resolution that lets Putin “feel like he won...is a bad idea.”

Others—including hawks like Sens. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., Roger Wicker, R-Miss., and Joni Ernst, R-Iowa—have refused to respond to media questions at all, apparently stunned from the case of whiplash inflicted on them by Trump.

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CONTINUING THE DAILY WORKER



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Trump's foreign policy agenda

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Ideological confusion reigns among the anti-Trump liberal and progressive grassroots, as well, with some of the same people who usually criticize U.S. foreign policy coming to the defense of the old imperial order.

Demonstrators at one anti-MAGA protest this week, for instance, resurrected Cold War anti-Communist tropes, carrying signs plastered with "Deport Comrade Trump" and "Deport Comrade Musk."

This writer encountered Facebook posts by a pair of erstwhile socialist activists Thursday declaring "Go back to Russia, Donald," and "He's Putin's agent." One of the two even wrote: "You have to prefer NATO hegemony to the spectacular destabilizing destructive danger" of Trump and company.

How should peace activists and opponents of U.S. imperialism interpret this seemingly sideways world? There is great pressure to conclude that things are just so chaotic and unpredictable that the only thing to do is wait it out and see what happens; it's all just a mess created by a madman in the White House.

Trump's former National Security Advisor John Bolton, for instance, told the Wall Street Journal Thursday that Trump has no coherent ideology, certainly not one capable of dismantling the global order as it has existed. Bolton is a neocon of the Iraq War variety and has turned against his old boss. "This is just one man's view," he said of Trump's attacks on the unipolar world. "Just grit your teeth" and bear it until he's gone.

But a deeper analysis of the ideological universe in which the Trump administration operates suggests that the foreign policy shifts now underway—much like the trade war—are not patternless, nor are they proof the president is a Russian agent. They are evidence of a split within the U.S. ruling class which has exploded into the open.

At the heart of that split are differences over how to resolve the long-term crisis of U.S. capitalism and confront China's rise to prominence in the world economy.

Only Trump can go to Russia

When it comes to the immediate case at hand—Trump's shift toward rapprochement with Russia—it's plausible to argue that a reverse Kissinger strategy is unfolding: a "Trump goes to Russia" version of "Nixon goes to China."

In the late 1960s and early '70s, President Richard Nixon's Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, watched the divisions between the Soviet Union and China, the world's two biggest socialist powers, very closely. Ideological disagreements, border disputes, and other issues had raised tensions between the allies.

If the USSR and China were ever able to patch up their differences, Kissinger recognized they would pose a serious threat to capitalism's dominance over the global economy, especially in the developing world, and constitute an even stronger bulwark against U.S. military power. Preventing that possibility became the major foreign policy goal of the Nixon administration.

Seeking to hammer a wedge between its two adversaries, the U.S. government opened secret talks with the Chinese state. The behind-the-scenes negotiations resulted in Nixon visiting Mao, the U.S. switching diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing, the declaration by the U.S. that Taiwan is a part of China (the "One China" principle), cooperation in various Third World military misadventures, and eventually opened the way to massively increased trade.

From the perspective of U.S. imperialism, the strategy of befriending China to isolate the USSR was a huge success. Sino-Soviet ties weakened further, the need to "contain" China was no longer so pressing, and the U.S. was able to focus more of its militaristic aggressiveness toward its main target, the Soviet Union.

Today, over 50 years later, the Trump administration is doing a re-run of that operation, this time making overtures to Russia with the goal of pulling it away from China—which everyone in the capitalist class knows is the true competitor to U.S. monopoly dominance.

It's a sharp break from a Washington foreign policy establishment that spent years trying to weaken Russia militarily and economically via the eastward expansion of NATO, the fomentation of "color revolutions" on its border, support for a provocative and costly war in Ukraine, and punitive sanctions. They thought this was the way to cripple China's biggest potential ally. Suffering from a Cold War 1.0 hangover, this group—which directed foreign policy during the Biden years—continues to see the further extension of U.S. power in Europe as an important milestone along the road to dealing with China.

The Trump administration and the far-right section of capital that backs him, however, have opted for the Kissinger approach. No longer viewing Russia as a real economic or security threat to either the U.S. or Western Europe, they want to focus on China, the real competitor to U.S. power. And they want to do it right now, not later on. Taking confrontation with Russia off the table, in their view, relieves U.S. imperialism of an expensive distraction from that task.

This faction of capital accepts the premise, as put forward by an anonymous "former government official" in a much-hyped paper published by the Atlantic Council in 2021, that "allowing Russia to drift fully into China's strategic embrace" would be the "single greatest geostrategic error" U.S. imperialism could make.

Marxist political economist David McNally this week described the thinking of the Trump faction in a post on social media: "It is about a concerted pivot to targeting China—its real global rival—and weakening the latter's ties to states like Russia. Throwing Ukraine under the bus in order to make a deal with Putin makes imperial sense if weakening China is the objective."

They're prepared to let Russia have its restricted sphere of influence if it results in a pulling away from China and the denial of Russian resources for the Chinese economy. Getting U.S. corporate hands on \$500 billion worth of Ukrainian minerals along the way, as Trump is demanding of Zelensky, is of course a hefty bonus.

A unipolar world is dead

The Trump faction of the capitalist class accepts that a multipolar world is already a reality and believes U.S. imperial policy needs to catch up to that fact. It sees the world being partitioned into competing blocs, with the U.S. and China as the major powers and all others, like Russia and the EU, as supporting players.

The effort to force Canada, Mexico, and Latin America into a tighter embrace with the U.S. economy is a reflection of this view. If China is building an economic bloc through its Belt-and-Road Initiative, then the U.S. has to consolidate its own bloc and erect tariff walls and trade bans to enforce it. The world is being divided up, the Trump faction believes, and clinging to notions that the U.S. can continue being the enforcer of a unipolar order is fantasy.

A look at changing global trade patterns over the past quarter-century suggests they're not wrong. In 2000, just after the destruction of the Soviet Union and when China's economic reform was still in its early stages, the U.S. was the top trading partner of the vast majority of the world's nations. U.S. corporate power spanned the globe, with no serious challengers.

Fast forward to 2024, and the map shifts completely. From Asia to Africa to a big chunk of Europe and almost all of South America, China has knocked the U.S. out of top spot when it comes to trade ties.

Only in North America, Central America, and Western Europe does U.S. capitalism still occupy the #1 rank. But even in these places, monopoly interests are under threat. A look at even just one major company, Elon Musk's Tesla, makes the point.

The Chinese EV brand BYD (Build Your Dream) is never seen on roads in the U.S. due to tariffs and other trade barriers, but it dominates Asian markets, and in January 2025—just last month—it overtook Tesla in a number of European nations for the first time. Plus, the company is eyeballing construction of a manufacturing plant in Mexico.

And then there is the threat of China's rapid AI advances. Just a few weeks ago, the DeepSeek chatbot threw the artificial intelligence industry into chaos and wiped a trillion dollars off the U.S. stock market overnight, sparking a panic among U.S. tech corporations.

U.S. monopoly capital is feeling the heat of competition and is looking for protection. The foreign policy being pursued by the Trump administration is an expression of the fears of a large section of the capitalist class, and those fears are why we have witnessed a rush toward the Trump camp by industrial sectors which had previously been skeptical of or neutral toward him.

Cold Peace / Cold War

While the administration is rolling out its changes to U.S. imperialism's orientation in a sudden blitzkrieg fashion, the outlines of Trump's strategy were actually put down on paper years ago. What's changed is not the ideas, but the ability to execute them.

More experienced at wielding executive power than he was during his first administration and with a more pliant Republican Party, Trump and the section of the ruling class which backs him are now striking harder and faster than they could before.

In 2017, two foreign policy analysts—Daniel Quinn Mills of Harvard Business School and Steven Rosefielde of UNC-Chapel Hill—distilled MAGA thinking on world affairs into a succinct set of policy prescriptions. Looking back at what they wrote then from the vantage point of 2025, much of it looks like a blueprint for what is now being constructed.

In their book, The Trump Phenomenon and the Future of U.S. Foreign Policy, the two wrote: "The most important fact in world politics today is that... we have a world divided into competing blocs...which are trying to expand, often against each other." They proposed a policy for the incoming president to follow in this changed world. It can be summarized in a few points:

1. **Seek a "Cold Peace" with Russia:** This meant terminating NATO expansion along Russian borders, accepting a Russian "sphere of influence" in the former Soviet states, and enticing Russia to join in an effort against China.
2. **"Contain" China:** Essentially this implied the initiation of a Cold War against the world's biggest socialist country. This was a necessity, the authors said, "to restrain a rival and preserve" U.S. access to East, Southeast, and Central Asia. From the point of view of U.S. capital, this requires efforts to wall off its biggest competitor.
3. **Strengthen Japan, India, and the nations of Southeast Asia** to assist in the containment of China.
4. **Reduce "democracy-promoting sanctions"** against Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Vietnam in order to pull these nations out of China's economic orbit. As the writers put it, "China is more important than wrist-slapping potential allies."
5. **Accept a "restructuring of borders in the Middle East":** That may mean a partitioning of Syria and Iraq, and as Trump has recently vowed, the erasure of Gaza. This is all to be done with an eye toward limiting Iran and strengthening allies like Israel, according to the authors.
6. **Let the European Union degenerate or disappear** under the weight of its own debt and immigration crises. Germany received particular disdain from Mills and Rosefielde for advocating provocative NATO expansions while shouldering little of the costs associated with them. With this in mind, Vance's attacks on EU leaders and his support for Euroskeptic neo-fascists make sense.
7. **Overhaul all trade policies to protect and maintain U.S. corporate power, especially that of domestically oriented companies, even it means sacrificing free trade.** It is here that the authors reveal most clearly the sectors of the capitalist class which they see as key components of the Trump coalition.

They emphasized the need to "maintain and re-establish...goods-producing companies" and "middle-sized firms," which they argued have paid the price of free trade while "large global, publicly-listed firms" reaped the profits. The Trump administration, they argue, must end support for "Wall Street-driven globalization."

At that time, sectors of the capitalist class like finance, high tech, and big oil were still keeping Trump at arm's-length; by the 2024 election, however, with the threat of Chinese competition undeniable even for them, many figures from these industries have also now been appended to the Trump coalition.

He's doing it for capitalists, not for us

Right-wing political figures working at the service of the capitalist class have a long history of crawling into power by spreading lies, fomenting division, and manipulating laws and the media. But they have also usually sprinkled some elements of truth into their deceptive appeals—that's the way to bring people on board in the numbers needed to win elections, after all.

Georgi Dimitrov, one of the famed anti-fascist leaders of the 1930s, explained how they do it:

"What is the source of the influence of fascism over the masses? Fascism is able to attract the masses because it demagogically appeals to their most urgent needs and demands. Fascism not only inflames prejudices that are deeply ingrained in the masses but also plays upon the better sentiments of the masses, on their sense of justice, and sometimes even on their revolutionary traditions. Fascism aims at the most unbridled exploitation of the masses but it approaches them with the most artful anti-capitalist demagogy, taking advantage of the deep hatred of the working people against the plundering bourgeoisie, the banks, the trusts, and financial magnates."

Looking at the criticisms that the ideologues around Trump have made—of the old imperial order, of NATO, of past U.S. foreign policy, of the free trade system, and of globalizing Wall Street financiers—there is much that would leave even Marxists nodding in agreement.

Neoliberal globalization and the unipolar imperial system dominated by U.S. capitalism brought unprecedented inequality to the nations of the world, destroyed high-paying jobs in the advanced economies, provoked an endless parade of wars, and caused millions of deaths. It's tempting to say good riddance and be done with it.

But what does the U.S. president and the faction of the ruling class which backs him hope to replace it with? A new Cold War against China, the carving up of the world into blocs on behalf of big corporations, more destruction in the Middle East, and the ditching of democracy at home—along with all the things that entails, like labor laws, women's rights, racial equality, and more.

There should be no illusions about the new order Trump hopes to construct in place of what he's tearing down. It's still going to be for the capitalists, not for us.

Anger over brutal Trump-Musk cuts erupts at town halls everywhere

By John Bachtell

While Republican U.S. House and Senate members rammed through a budget resolution that ruthlessly slashes Medicaid and other vital human services to fund massive tax cuts for plutocrats, they are hiding from growing anger among their constituents.

Scenes from eight raucous Town Halls held last week went viral, and now GOP leadership is telling members not to hold in-person town halls, fearing voter backlash. Others are blaming the town halls on the work of “left-wing” activists.

“The reason you mainly see those viral moments in ruby red districts is that every Republican in even remotely competitive districts is actively avoiding their constituents,” tweeted Indivisible co-chair Leah Greenberg.

“Lawmakers are spooked enough about the prospects of heated exchanges that most do not want to do town halls anyway,” an anonymous Republican told NBC News.

GOP congressional leaders have yet to introduce the final budget. However, anger over Musk’s unaccountable role in government, Trump’s unilateral cancellation of already allocated funding, the firing of federal workers, reckless tariffs, and fears of cuts to Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security are contributing to declining approval ratings for both Trump and Musk. Currently, 53% disapprove of Trump’s handling of the economy.

Meanwhile, at packed Town Halls, constituents are sharing their frustrations with GOP Representatives, upset that Congress has submissively and unconstitutionally relinquished its authority to the executive branch without protest.

In Oshkosh, Wisc., Rep. Glen Grothman, R, [faced](#) a hostile crowd that wanted answers. “This is moving very quickly compared to other administrations, and I think, across the board, (Trump’s) done some very good things,” Grothman said.

Boos and shouts erupted around the room, according to Wisconsin Public Radio. Grothman went on to praise orders ending [birthright citizenship](#) and [diversity, equity, and inclusion](#) initiatives, and attendees greeted him with louder boos.

Grothman called for “welfare reform” with a work requirement. Several people shouted, “no!”

Meanwhile in West Bend, Wisc., Republican Rep. Scott Fitzgerald, appeared at what was described as a “fiery” town hall as angry constituents confronted him on GOP plans to slash spending and Trump’s policy on Ukraine.

“The result of the fraud and abuse that has been discovered already,” Fitzgerald said, in defending Musk’s DOGE cuts, eliciting hoots and boos.

One attendee, Michael Wittig, was concerned about Elon Musk’s role in the Trump administration. He held a sign that read, “Presidents are not kings.”

“Are you going to subpoena him at some point? Are you willing to use your subpoena power to tell Musk to stand in front of Congress and answer some hard questions?” asked Wittig.



If there were GOP supporters present, they didn’t speak up.

Texas Rep. Pete Sessions faced angry constituents during what he believed would be a standard report-back session. “The executive can only enforce laws passed by Congress; it cannot create laws,” one [attendee remarked](#). “When will you reclaim control from the executive and stop hurting your constituents?”

Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, faced similar outrage at a town hall in Urbana, where attendees lambasted him for not opposing Trump’s policies. During an appearance on Fox News, Jordan [mocked](#) outrage about the firing of federal workers and attempted to defend the administration’s approach, citing the need for fiscal responsibility and economic growth.

However, his remarks were met with jeers, particularly when he mentioned the proposed cuts to Medicare and Medicaid. “We need to make tough choices,” Jordan said, only to be interrupted by a chorus of boos.

In what has become a pattern, several GOP lawmakers are choosing virtual town halls to sidestep the confrontation of in-person meetings. However, these virtual sessions have also faced criticism. Constituents have inundated online forums with questions and complaints, urging their representatives to justify their support for the executive branch’s controversial decisions.

At a news conference with Secretary of Transportation Sean Duffie, Rep. Kevin Kylie (R-Cal) was heartily booed by protesters when he proudly announced the Trump administration was cutting funding for California’s high-speed rail system.

Protesters yelled “No kings, only trains” and “Bring back Pete!” at Kylie and Duffie. California transportation officials later sharply disputed Kylie’s claims the project was a failure.

In Belton, Missouri, GOP Rep. Mark Alford hosted a town hall in a venue designed for 50 people, yet more than 150 attended. He faced persistent boos and shouting.

Alford was unconcerned with the firings of federal workers, even though his wife was one of those laid off. He even had the gall to say, “God has a plan” for those fired.

Anger over brutal Trump-Musk cuts erupts at town halls everywhere

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Daniel Scharpenburg, VP of a National Treasury Employees Union local, responded, “We don’t need thoughts and prayers...We need people to stand up for us.”

In Kanas, GOP Sen. Jerry Moran refused to attend a virtual town hall where hundreds of residents from across the state had gathered. The organizers taped a picture of the AWOL Senator to an empty chair and held the event anyway.

Rep. Rich McCormick faced angry constituents in a town hall in Roswell, Georgia. “Tyranny is rising in the White House. The man has declared himself our king,” said one constituent to cheers. “What are you and your colleagues going to do to rein in the megalomaniac in the White House?”

McCormick attempted to turn the tables, stating that he had the same conversation with constituents during the Biden administration. The room erupted in derisive boos.

In Harrisburg, Pa., constituents [protested](#) in front of Rep. Scott Perry’s district office, demanding he protect Medicaid and Medicare.

Republican Representatives are also getting blasted on the House floor. Rep. Jim McGovern, D-Mass. chastised one GOP South Carolina representative who proudly voted for the GOP budget resolution.

“74,000 of his constituents receive coverage under the Affordable Care Act,” said McGovern.

“By supporting this resolution, he’s betraying the 148,948 constituents in his district who depend on Medicaid for their essential care. And the 85,000 constituents in the fifth district rely on SNAP to put food on the table. Maybe do a town hall and listen to constituents rather than just big donors.”

Meanwhile, Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., spoke with other elected officials before a virtual town hall of 34,000 Vermonters in a state of 650,000 people.

Sanders is also visiting red states, addressing overflow crowds on a “Fighting Oligarchy” tour that includes Nebraska and Iowa. In Iowa City, he slammed Trump and Musk and urged people to take action by recalling past victories in independence from England, the struggles for women’s rights, equal rights, and the abolition of slavery.

Constituents are also flooding the phone lines of Democrat elected officials with calls to speak more forcefully. Many have, including Senators Chris Murphy, Schatz, and Warren, and members of the House, including Reps. Rashida Talib, Jasmine Crockett, Jamie Raskin, Ayanna Pressley, and others.

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez conducted an online Know Your Rights meeting with thousands of constituents, which drew the ire of Border Czar Tom Homan.

Democratic Attorney Generals from Arizona, New Mexico, and Oregon will begin holding Community Impact Hearings — a national series of town halls “to hear from the public about the impact of federal firings and DOGE funding freezes across the country.”

Leonard Peltier’s release is a milestone in Indigenous history

By Albert Bender

“I am finally free! They may have imprisoned me, but they never broke my spirit.” The poignant words of Leonard Peltier, the longest held Indigenous political prisoner, echoed across news outlets on Feb. 18, the date of his release after nearly 50 years of illegal, wrongful incarceration. Leonard was released that morning from federal prison in Florida.

He was promptly whisked by jet, arranged by the NDN Collective, to his home on the Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation in North Dakota. The NDN Collective hosted a celebratory event and community feed on Feb. 19 for Leonard. The event was live-streamed on NDN’s Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn accounts.

The NDN Collective and its allies have engaged in five decades of advocacy for Leonard’s freedom. It is an Indigenous-led organization devoted to advocating for Indigenous power via organizing and activism.

Leonard’s struggle had wound its way through seven presidents, numerous court appeals, and unceasing activism on the part of a global effort from a host of leaders and rank and file supporters. Biden granting of clemency on Jan. 20, while belated, was nonetheless breathtaking.

As an activist with the American Indian Movement (AIM), Leonard struggled unceasingly for Indigenous rights and was subsequently railroaded in a kangaroo court conviction for the deaths of two FBI agents in June 1975 on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. His conviction was a disgrace to American jurisprudence, with an abundance of federal prosecutorial misconduct that was countenanced by the judicial system.



For decades, activists buttressed by the advocacy of political, religious, and legal luminaries worldwide and prominent members of the U.S. Congress have been demanding his release, contending that he was wrongfully prosecuted and sentenced.

As an attorney, I can say that even a cursory examination of Leonard’s case more than amply indicates he should not have served a day behind bars, with 49 years being an unspeakable travesty of justice.

Celebrations of Leonard’s release are ramping up throughout the country. The Indigenous Peoples Coalition held a celebratory event in Nashville on Saturday, Feb. 22, and more are surely following in several other places.

This marks a milestone in Indigenous history. Another moral to be garnered from this struggle is that no matter how bleak the circumstances, never, never give up.

This victory represents the power of the people!

Teachers, civil rights advocates sue Trump administration for “right-wing woke” censorship

By Mark Gruenberg

GREENBELT, Md.—Now that they are in power in the White House, the white nationalist U.S. government is purging the nation’s schools of anything, including books, curriculum, and people who refuse to literally whitewash U.S. history. After attacking alleged “woke” policies in government institutions for years the right wing is going on a real thought control drive of its own that is telling the nation’s schools, teachers and students what they are allowed to read, say and even think.

The Teachers (AFT) and the American Sociological Association are suing in federal court in Greenbelt, Md., to stop the Trump government from forcing the nation’s K-12 schools to literally whitewash U.S. history.

The February 24 lawsuit seeks an injunction against Trump’s Department of Education and, ironically, its Office of Civil Rights, for enforcing their letter to school districts mandating the schools remove all references to racism, Jim Crow, Supreme Court rulings overturning it, the Civil Rights era and more from their curricula.

If the schools didn’t stop teaching those topics, or anything else that smacks of “diversity, equity and inclusion” by February 28, they’d lose federal dollars, the Trump agency threatens. The attack on schools follows “right-wing woke” attacks on the freedom to read.

Research by the PEN America organization, which tracks censorship, found that of the more than 10,000 books banned in public schools last year, the vast majority dealt with topics or themes related to people of color, LGBTQ people, and other minority demographics.

“We create safe and welcoming classrooms where students are cared for and accepted,” said Teachers/AFT President Randi Weingarten, a New York City civics teacher who holds a law degree. “We teach the skills and knowledge they need to navigate a diverse and complex world. And we value critical thinking, which requires us to present history in an open and honest way.”

An attack on knowledge itself

“This vague and clearly unconstitutional memo is a grave attack on students, our profession and knowledge itself. It would hamper efforts to extend access to education, and dash the promise of equal opportunity for all, a central tenant of the United States since its founding.

“It would ban meaningful instruction on slavery, the Missouri Compromise, the Emancipation Proclamation, the forced relocation of Native American tribes, the laws of Jim Crow, *Brown v. Board of Education*, the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, and the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act. It would upend campus life.”

The lawsuit against the Trump Education Department is both financially important for schools, and also part of the ideological war pitting Trumpites and their white nationalist legions against teachers, students, parents and school administrators seeking to defend the right to free speech, the right to free learning and discussion and even the right to disagree.

Federal aid makes up approximately 10% of all educational spending in the U.S., but is a far larger share in poor school districts, districts with high concentrations of students of color, or both. It’s also a larger share of K-12 spending, due to Title I of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which established federal school aid programs for districts with high shares of low-income students.



The case seeking to halt white nationalism from taking over U.S. schools is one of a raft of lawsuits filed in the opening month of the Trump government. Those 75+ suits, in turn, are prompted by Trump’s 200+ executive orders imposing his right-wing ideology on the government and letting his puppeteer, multimillionaire Elon Musk, take a chainsaw to the ranks of federal workers, agencies, programs and priorities.

That includes the Department of Education, where Musk’s minions have already invaded, seeking reams of personal information accompanying student loan applications. The loans themselves are in limbo. Trump wants to kill the department. The agency is a favorite bugaboo of the radical right.

Jamming white nationalism down the throats of schools violates both the Constitution’s freedom of speech and teachers’ freedom to teach, the suit says. It didn’t use the words “white nationalism” but the details make it clear that’s what Trump wants taught, and nothing else.

The Education Department’s letter is part and parcel of Trump’s crusade to take the U.S. back to the 1950s or before. His white nationalist allies and appointees want to return the nation to the time when Blacks “knew their place,” women were under male domination and reproductive control and Spanish-speakers were *braceros*.

In that era, all minorities, including religious minorities—all but white Anglo-Saxon Protestant “Christians”—suffered discrimination or worse in jobs, universities, accommodations and more.

Though the suit doesn’t say so, Chicago Teachers Union/AFT Local 1 President Stacy Davis Gates, a social studies teacher, said several weeks ago that Trump really wants to take the U.S. back to the 1850s. Then, slavery was rampant and legal, and Southern aristocrats bullied their slaves, or worse, while controlling the federal government. The widening ideological gulf between North and South over slavery led to the Civil War.

“Though gradual and uneven, our country has expanded universal access to free education, from the establishment of the first public schools in the original colonies, to overturning ‘separate but equal,’ in *Brown*, to passing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Equal access to education is central to creating a vibrant society, economy, and democracy,” the suit says.

Equal access calls for diversity

The suit says equal access to education means it must cover diversity, flying right in the face of Trump’s edict abolishing “diversity, equality and inclusion (DEI)” programs in the federal government. His diktat prompted corporations such as Ford, Best Buy, Meta, Google and Walmart to eagerly dump their own DEI programs and return to discriminatory hiring, firing and promotion practices.

The union, the sociological association “and countless schools, organizations, and individuals” nationwide “recognize diversity is a critical ingredient to fostering intellectual curiosity and educational attainment. Schools, from pre-K to college, are where we learn about our world and each other.”

That learning encourages creativity and open-mindedness, as well as creating scholars, the suit says. Curbing teaching and curbing learning would shut it off. “Ideas are sparked through debate and not stifled through homogeneity,” they declare. Trump’s threat “radically upends” both debate and teaching.

The Trump government’s Education Department bases its about-face on a 2023 U.S. Supreme Court ruling involving Harvard University. That decision ended consideration of race in college admissions, and overturned decades-old precedent. The Republican right-wing High Court bloc authored it.

“No federal law prevents teaching about race and race-related topics, and the Supreme Court has not banned efforts to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in education,” the lawsuit replies. “The Department of Education is attempting to establish a new legal regime when it has neither the lawmaking power of Congress nor the interpretative power of the courts.”

The Trump regime not only “misstates the law” but gives no “definitions or objective standards” for what schools can teach about U.S. history. Though the suit does not say so, lack of such standards leaves local school systems and school boards open to organized mobs of radical rightists threatening violence to force schools to impose their white-based ideology.

Those invasions got so nasty that in the final years of the Democratic Biden administration, the National School Boards Association had to seek Justice Department help and protection.

“The letter suggests a wide variety of core instruction, activities, and programs that schools, from pre-kindergarten through post-graduate education, use to teach and support their students now constitute illegal discrimination,” the suit says.

Among the subjects banned “as discriminatory” is teaching “about systemic and structural racism...It is not clear how a school could teach a U.S. History course without teaching about slavery, the Missouri Compromise, the Emancipation Proclamation, the forced relocation of Native American tribes, the laws of Jim Crow, Brown v. Board of Education, the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II, the Civil Rights Acts, the Fair Housing Act and the Voting Rights Act without running afoul of this prohibition.”

The Trump Education Department’s letter and threat also “appears to ban any existing voluntary associations or student groups, such as a Black Student Union” and “all programming in support of diversity, equity, and inclusion, again despite the fact that such programming is lawful.” Prior presidents of both parties, including Trump in his first term, supported it, the suit notes.

“The only way” the union, its members and the sociologists “can ensure they are not targets for enforcement is: Curtail any teaching that references any diversity, equity, inclusion, race, ethnicity, or national origin, or systemic discrimination; cease all teaching that voices any support for any diversity, equity, inclusion or similar principles; eliminate all student groups, including affinity and support groups; terminate any diversity, equity, and inclusion programming, and; immediately terminate any admissions, financial aid, student life, or other campus activities that could even possibly concern this administration.

“Many legal, evidence-based, and well-accepted ways to foster inclusivity and increase diversity of all types are nevertheless considered discriminatory by this administration. It would have devastating impacts on schools.”

Buy Nothing Day: Why I’m supporting Friday’s economic blackout

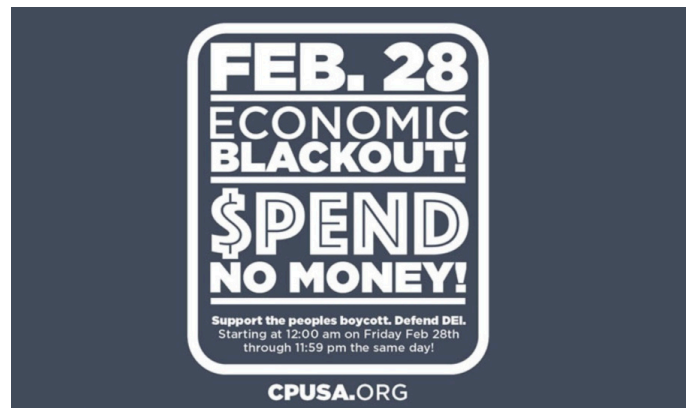
By Joe Sims

Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., at a pivotal moment in the Civil Rights struggle, is reported to have remarked, “There go my people, let me catch up with them.” King’s recognition of the gap between how Civil Rights organizations were conducting themselves and broad masses’ militancy and willingness to raise the stakes reminds me of the situation confronting the democratic and people’s movements today.

Two major protests—January 18th and President’s Day 50501—arose largely spontaneously without the overt participation of traditional allies in the labor and people’s movements. A third, the February 28th Economic Blackout, will occur this Friday.

Friday’s boycott hopes to use powerful economic pressure to protest major corporations renouncing their DEI—Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion—initiatives after Trump’s election. It’s an appropriate response to the racist capitulation of corporate America to the MAGA right. Hit them where it hurts: in the pocket book. As we say back home, “Money talks, bullshit walks.”

While the Civil Rights movement has correctly spoken of the need to begin boycotts, little has materialized in terms of plans and actions. The people, however, clearly want to act, and they want to act now, not later.



“There go our class and people! Let’s catch up with them.”

Calls for the Economic Blackout have exploded on social media from faith-based groups, local movements, and the everyday rank-and-file. So far, they’ve been joined by some progressive members of Congress and other movement figures.

Meanwhile, the National Action Network’s Al Sharpton is planning something for April, saying “We appreciate the spirit of the various efforts, but the only one that I and NAN have authorized will be announced at our national convention this April.” Rev. Sharpton has been leading “buy-cotts” at Costco and other corporations, urging shoppers to patronize companies like these that have not retreated from DEI.

Meanwhile, there's been a not-so-quiet grassroots uprising directed at Democratic and Republican members of Congress and other elected officials. Led by the Working Families Party, Indivisible, MoveOn, and others, the effort has flooded Congress with a deluge of phone calls and petitions demanding an end to Trump and Elon Musk's gutting of the federal workforce and unilateral breaking of laws and governing customs.

Unions are stepping up all over the country to defend their members, and finally some lawmakers in Congress are finding their voice. GOP representatives at town halls in their districts last week were met with voter fury, particularly at MAGA plans to drastically cut Medicaid in order to fund proposed tax breaks for the rich.

Trump and MAGA, however, have been pretending not to hear the public outrage at their dictatorial actions—at least they were until the town halls. They've even been ignoring some of the court rulings halting their spending freezes and cuts. A legal battle royale is pending as major hopes have been placed in the prospect that the courts will slow down or halt the MAGA blitzkrieg.

There's no guarantee, however, that the MAGA fascists will heed the courts, including the Supreme Court, setting the stage for a constitutional crisis.

Know this: Court action alone will guarantee nothing. It never has, and it never will. Today, with MAGA controlling all three branches of government, combined with Democratic Party disarray, there is no check and no balance. The only power that's capable of stopping the GOP juggernaut is the power of the people, the working class in particular. There is no power greater on Earth or in heaven.

That's why I'm supporting the February 28th Economic Blackout. The only thing the ruling class understands is power, relationships of power. And our power is expressed in our ability to impact the economic and political flow of goods and services. There are many ways of doing so: strikes, sit-ins, occupations, boycotts, media campaigns, and petitions.

Don't buy into the foolishness now circulating that they don't work and are designed to disarm, no matter who they come from, including the likes of Robert Reich and James Carville—both of whom favor pulling back and allowing MAGA to implode. Don't they realize that when it takes place the implosion will be on us? No, they don't. They're too ensconced in their respective bubbles.

Protest matters. Protest works. And the greater the pressure, the more people that are involved, the greater the impact. Keep the pressure on! No, turn it up! All out for Friday's boycott!

NC report: Building the YCL in the fight for our future

By Alex Solomon

The following report was given on behalf of the Young Communist League to the Feb. 2 meeting of the CPUSA National Committee.

The MAGA right is rapidly advancing its reactionary "America First" agenda. Trump and the MAGA-controlled Republican Party are implementing policies that dismantle democratic rights, gut social services, drive down working people's living standards, and consolidate power for the ultra-rich. Key developments include:

- **The creation of a Department of Government Efficiency**, overseen by Elon Musk, designed to gut vital social programs like the Department of Education, Medicaid, and Medicare under the false pretense of eliminating "inefficiency."
- **The appointment of Russell Vought**, a key architect of Project 2025, to the Office of Management and Budget, positioning him to fast-track tax cuts for the ultra-wealthy and implement pro-corporate policies that deepen poverty and inequality.

There is growing awareness that MAGA's agenda is more than conservative governance — it is a billionaire-backed, far-right power grab aimed at dismantling democracy, crushing the labor movement, and scapegoating oppressed communities to impose neofascist rule.

The fight against fascism and the struggle for peace

MAGA's far-right project extends beyond efforts to dismantle democracy — they also seek to revitalize U.S. imperialism under the banner of "America First" foreign policy. Key developments on this front include:

- **Escalating U.S.–Israeli coordination:** Trump's meeting with Netanyahu signals a renewed assault against Palestinians in Gaza, including unlocking dangerous weaponry, cutting humanitarian aid, and laying the groundwork for direct U.S. military intervention.
- **Renewed aggression in Latin America:** The appointment of Marco Rubio as Secretary of State signals plans to intensify sanctions and intervention, as does the relisting of Cuba as a State Sponsor of Terrorism.



The fight against MAGA fascism at home is inseparable from the struggle against U.S. imperialism abroad. The same billionaire-backed, far-right forces attacking labor and civil rights under the banner of "America First" are also pushing for endless war and military occupation under the same banner.

Building the YCL: Stronger chapters, stronger organization

As the struggles for peace and democracy become increasingly intertwined, the YCL must play a role in building unity amongst anti-fascist and anti-imperialist youth. To effectively confront the rising threats of MAGA fascism and U.S. imperialism, we need to expand our national presence and strengthen our organizing capacity.

Currently, The YCL lacks a strong national foundation and a critical mass of young Communist organizers. With only six active chapters, primarily concentrated in the Midwest and East Coast, there is an urgent need to grow our ranks, build new chapters, and develop the next generation of militant youth leaders who can take up the fight for peace, democracy, and socialism.

To address this, we are developing a Youth Toolkit to strengthen our organization and expand our reach. This will include:

- YCL chapter guidelines — Clear steps for how YCL chapters should organize themselves.
- A What we stand for pamphlet — Outlining the principles of the YCL and where we stand on key issues.
- A branding and style guide — Standardizing our messaging and outreach to build a stronger, more recognizable presence.
- Additional organizing resources to support new and existing chapters, compiled in an electronic folder.

YCL in action

The People’s March — January 18th

The YCL participated in the People’s March, initiated by the Women’s March, Movement for Black Lives, United We Dream, and other progressive organizations. We raised the slogan: “Our Freedom, Our Future! We’re Not Going Back!” and were even featured on NBC News for bringing a militant presence to the mobilization.

Our role in the mass movement is clear: to bring clarity, build militancy, and strengthen unity in the struggle to defend democracy and defeat fascism.

Rev. Al Sharpton’s MLK Day Sermon — Jan 20th

Reverend Al Sharpton delivered a historically grounded, struggle-oriented sermon marking MLK Day. He framed the current fight against Trump and the far right as part of a longer history of white nationalist reaction, from slavery to Jim Crow segregation to today’s MAGA movement.

Sharpton invoked the legacies of Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Ella Baker, and Martin Luther King Jr., honoring them as fighters for freedom, justice, and equality who confronted the forces of white nationalism in their time. He made clear that Trumpism is not an aberration but a continuation of this reactionary legacy, and that the lessons of past struggles must guide us today.

Sharpton called for a revival of economic resistance, urging the use of boycotts against corporations that cave to right-wing pressure by rolling back Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives, contributing to workplace resegregation. He also stressed the need to rebuild coalitions between the civil rights and labor movements, emphasizing that only through unity have we ever achieved victories over white supremacy.

National coordination, responding to the moment

To improve collaboration, we are holding monthly calls between YCL chapters and CPUSA National leadership. Given the rapidly shifting political landscape, this coordination is more important than ever. The far right is well-organized, disciplined, and moves as one — we must do the same.

Additionally, we are also planning to convene a national call for YCL chapters and young people within our orbit. This call will feature a panel of young Communist organizers discussing their efforts to build and participate in broad community coalitions against MAGA fascism, focusing on:

- Defending our freedom — blocking the MAGA right’s attacks on democracy, labor, and civil rights.
- Protecting our families and communities — resisting MAGA’s assaults on undocumented immigrants, trans youth, and other vulnerable populations.
- Choosing to fight for our future — engaging young people in long-term, year-round political struggle.

This is a critical moment that requires a clear, united response from young Communists. The YCL must rise to meet this challenge, expand our movement, and fight for a future grounded in peace, democracy, and socialism. We are dedicated to strengthening our organization, intensifying our organizing efforts, and building the unity necessary to defeat fascism and imperialism.

The time to act is now. We are not going back! We choose to fight!

People’s World May Day Greetings Book 2025 – Reserve your ad now

By People’s World

Our working class and the people’s movements are in the most intense fightback we’ve experienced in years, and May Day is shaping up to be a major milestone in these early days of resistance to the Trump-Musk administration.

The writers, readers, and supporters of People’s World are all plugged into the struggle and working hard to bring our publication’s Marxist analysis and reporting to as wide an audience as possible. Since Trump’s re-election, over a million reads have been registered on PeoplesWorld.org as people look for information on what’s going on and how to get involved.

To keep the socialist press online and available during this crucial time, we’ve launched the [2025 Fund Drive](#)—and as part of the effort, we’re bringing back the **People’s World May Day Greetings Book**.

We have to raise \$200,000 this year to keep PW going, and the May Day Greetings Book is a great way to support our daily publication while also broadcasting a message of your choice to readers across the country and around the world.

In each of the last two years, supporters have bought \$10,000 worth of ads celebrating working-class heroes and historic wins for labor and democracy. As you prepare for your local International Worker’s Day festivities, think about what you want to celebrate in this year’s edition of the national People’s World May Day Greetings Book.

Check out previous editions for ideas:

> [2023](#)

> [2024](#)

Now is your group’s chance to promote what’s important to you in front of People’s World readers!

Here are the ad rates:

Full page (8 ½” X 11”) = \$300
 Half page (8 ½” X 5 ½”) = \$180
 Quarter page (4 1/4” X 5 ½”) = \$90
 Eighth page (4 ¼” X 2 ¾”) = \$60
 Sixteenth page (2 1/8” X 2 ¾”) = \$30
 Name Listing = \$5

HOW TO SUBMIT:

You can send camera-ready copy or text and graphics, and we’ll lay it out on the page. Or, you can send text and graphics and our design team will create a beautiful ad for you.

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Or, if you prefer, mail a check payable to “People’s World” to:

People’s World May Day Ad Book
 235 W. 23rd Street, 7th Floor
 New York, NY 10011

If you need any assistance or have questions, email us: contact@peoplesworld.org.

Traductores para sordos buscan apoyo para campaña de sindicalización

By Mark Gruenberg

Canadian corporations and right-wing leaders complicit in Trump's tariff threats

By Elizabeth Rowley

We are living in an extraordinary moment, when the danger of new and bigger wars at the international level is becoming increasingly likely following the arrival of Donald Trump and the quasi-fascist government and movement that he leads back to the White House with majority control of both the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives.

The November election result in the U.S. announced a reign of terror to come on immigrants, on women, on transgender people and the whole LGBTQ community, on Black and Indigenous peoples and on their communities, on unions and other workers' organizations, and on access to and control over education, justice, and policing.

Trump's tariffs are a political tool aimed to force Canada, Mexico, China, and other countries to bow down to the U.S. and make even more economic and political concessions, including their sovereignty and independence. In North America, this is about the upcoming USMCA negotiations, where Trump wants even more access to resources and markets in Canada.

Now, Trump plans to ship 30,000 migrants to the U.S. torture camp of Guantanamo Bay, which is located on the island of Cuba. In charge of carrying out this plan is Secretary of State Marco Rubio, whose hatred of Cuba and of socialism is boundless. This is the bridgehead for a U.S. invasion of Cuba. And it's the reason for Communists, socialists, and democrats across Canada to mobilize in support of Cuba now.

This means that the Communist Party's election campaign will be important in helping to identify capitalism as the source of the many problems people are facing. And we need to highlight the policy solutions that exist to alleviate those problems, that meet the needs of working people. Working people in Canada need to be encouraged to vote for policies that they want and need.

We also need to pitch hard for the unity of working class and progressive forces, to build a People's Coalition that can fight for these policies and advocate for mass action after the election. The labor movement needs to take the initiative to begin building such a People's Coalition to lead mass struggles against the corporate agenda. Such a fightback could help forge a democratic people's alliance led by the working class which could ultimately challenge the ruling class for political power.

WASHINGTON—Supongamos que está enfermo, pero también es sordo, por lo que no puede hablar con su médico sin ayuda. Ahí es donde interviene un traductor, que utiliza servicios de retransmisión de vídeo, una forma especializada de comunicación que le permite hablar con su médico y su médico hablar con usted.

¿Qué tal si necesita acceso a su cuenta bancaria, pero el banco no tiene servicios en línea para personas sordas? Una vez más, el traductor interviene para ayudar.

¿O eres esposa y madre de un marido sordo y una hija sorda de 10 años? Una vez más, el traductor capacitado, que trabaja para uno de los dos contratistas de centros de llamadas privados que contrató la Comisión Federal de Comunicaciones, interviene para ayudar, especialmente en emergencias.

Sin embargo, los traductores, que están tratando de sindicalizarse con la oficina y los empleados profesionales, están mal pagados, tienen exceso de trabajo y están agotados porque sus centros de llamadas tienen poco personal.

No hay suficiente privacidad para los trabajadores de los centros de llamadas, incluso cuando manejan información personal y sensible (como saldos bancarios e historial médico) de sus clientes sordos y con problemas de audición. También hay hardware de mala calidad, largos tiempos de espera para recibir servicio, capacitación insuficiente y "lesiones físicas y mentales repetitivas" para los trabajadores, según una hoja informativa.

Todo eso llevó a los traductores a recurrir a D.C. en busca de apoyo público y de la agencia, la FCC, que indirectamente, mediante la transferencia de ingresos por impuestos a los usuarios, apoya su misión.

Los jefes corporativos de los traductores en ZP Better Together y en Sorenson atienden a rapaces firmas de inversión de "capital privado" que sólo están interesadas en el volumen de llamadas y las ganancias de las empresas. ZP emplea a 1.800 traductores y 2.500 más trabajan para Sorenson. Alrededor del 80%-90% de los traductores trabajan a tiempo parcial, dependiendo de las tendencias estacionales.

Así que el grupo, incluidos traductores que también se comunican en lenguaje de señas americano, organizó una conferencia de prensa afuera de las oficinas de la FCC en el centro de D.C., declarando que quieren presentar su caso (y el de sus clientes) a los comisionados de la agencia, presionando a la FCC para que acceda a la campaña de sindicalización y para que ZP y Sorenson se reúnan con los trabajadores y OPEIU.

"Pero sin un lugar de trabajo estable, la calidad del servicio" para las personas sordas y con problemas de audición "está en riesgo", afirmó Meg. La sindicalización puede ayudar a lograr esa estabilidad. "Estamos pidiendo a la FCC que envíe un mensaje" a los dos grandes contratistas "de que los intérpretes (humanos) son tan importantes como el equipo".

"Somos la voz de los abogados sordos, los propietarios de pequeñas empresas y la gente común y corriente.

Los intérpretes contaron con el apoyo del representante Greg Casar, demócrata por Texas, organizador sindical y nuevo presidente del Caucus Progresista de la Cámara, y Derek Braun, presidente de la Asociación Estadounidense de Profesores Universitarios/AFT local en la cercana Universidad Gallaudet, la institución de educación superior del país específicamente dedicada, diseñada y dotada de personal para personas sordas o con problemas de audición.

Casar está intentando concertar reuniones entre los comisionados de la FCC con los intérpretes y también con sus clientes sordos y con problemas de audición. Casar apoyó firmemente a los trabajadores y criticó duramente a los explotadores. "No podemos permitir que unas pocas firmas de capital privado aplasten estos servicios" y obliguen a los traductores "a trabajar tan duro y durante tanto tiempo", afirmó. "Ustedes como personas" que se organizan con OPEIU "tienen mucho más poder".

Y Gallaudet, dijo Braun, también podría estar en la línea de fuego. Explicó que el 80% del presupuesto anual de 220 millones de dólares de la universidad proviene del Departamento de Educación federal. Trump quiere acabar con ese departamento, accediendo a demandas de larga data de la derecha. Y ya se han eliminado millones de dólares en subvenciones para la educación.

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