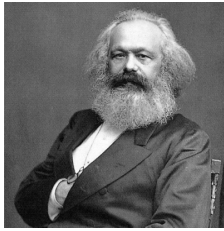


Towards Marxist-Leninist Unity

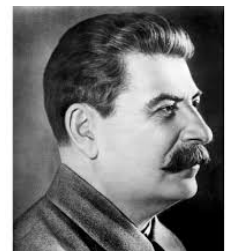


A Journal of Discussion and Debate



Vol. 4, No. 6
February, 2023

Contents:



Stop Police Murders!	1
Shock and anger after fired worker killed by police at Oklahoma pork plant.....	2
A Brief Summary of Recent Strikes in the U.S.	4
What Does a Multipolar World Mean, and Does It Benefit the Workers and Peoples?.....	5
The Developments of the War on the Working Class	7
How the War Machine ‘Recruits’ Poor, Oppressed Youth.....	8
Antiwar Activist Faces Repression in Germany	10
Happy Lunar New Year	11
Let Them Die!.....	12
US Life Expectancy Falls to Lowest Levels Since 1996.....	13
Why Does the United States Treat Us as a Colony	14
World Hunger Is Growing: Capitalism Is To Blame.....	16
The Decline of the U.S. Economy	18

Sección en español

¿Porque Estados Unidos nos trata como colonia?	23
Crece el hambre en el mundo: la culpa es del capitalismo	25
La declinación de la economía de EE.UU.	27

To see the reasoning behind publication of TMLU, please see the article “Why ‘Towards Marxist-Leninist Unity’” in the first issue on the web-site below. Though we believe that a Party must have ideological unity, we include progressive articles from groups with varying views. Also, note that unsigned articles, as well as comments before articles, are mine (George Gruenthal).

Note that we reprint many articles without our asking for permission. Clearly the authors are in no way responsible for other views in this publication.

Comments, criticisms and articles are welcome. The next issue of TMLU should appear in April, 2023. Material should be sent in by the end of March.

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Stop Police Murders!

On January 7, Tyre Nichols, a young Black worker (he worked at FedEx) in Memphis, Tennessee, was brutally beaten by 5 cops. He was beaten so badly that he died from his injuries 3 days later.

The cops who killed Nichols were part of a special police unit called SCORPION, which was charged with patrolling “high crime” areas, a euphemism for Black and Latino working class neighborhoods. Since Memphis is almost 65% Black, such units are a threat to the majority of the people of Memphis. Although this unit was disbanded shortly after Nichols’ murder, there is nothing to prevent it from being reformed under another name. (New York’s Mayor Eric Adams, a former cop, is bringing back NYPD’s similar anti-crime unit, which had been disbanded in 2020.)



The cops who murdered Nichols were immediately fired and charged with second degree murder and other crimes. This was obviously to try to prevent the massive demonstrations that took place all over the U.S., and all over the world, after the police murder of George Floyd.

The murder of Nichols once again disproves the so-called “bad apples” theory, that it is only a few “bad apples” among the police that spoil the image of the rest.

The fact that all of the 5 cops are Black in no way changes the racist nature of the U.S. capitalist system. First, police forces, at least in the South, began with the run-away slave patrols before the Civil War. And these cops, as all police in the U.S., are used to hold down working and oppressed people.

In 2022, police in this country killed 1061 people, almost 3 per day. Of these, at least 220 were Black (this number is clearly higher, since there are 332 whose race is classified as “unknown”¹), over 30% of those killed whose race was classified, although Blacks are less than 15% of the population.

Furthermore, one should remember that it was the first Black president, Barack Obama, who was the first to directly attack an African country, Libya, in 2011, leading to the brutal murder of its president, Muammar Gadhafi, the destruction of the country, and the introduction of Black slavery there.

Lenin pointed out, in *The State and Revolution*, that the state consists of “special bodies of armed men” (and now armed women as well), due to the “the cleavage of society into irreconcilably antagonistic classes.” They are used, in the form of the police within the country, to oppress and repress Blacks, Latinos and other working people, not to “serve and protect.” And in the form of the armed forces, they are here not to “serve our country,” but to help to suppress workers and liberation movements abroad.

Make no mistake about it: when there is again a mass militant working-class movement in the U.S., the police (and army) will once again be called out to repress and kill workers of all nationalities, including white workers, as they did in the 1930s.

Independent Workers Party, www.IndependentWorkersParty.org

¹ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/585152/people-shot-to-death-by-us-police-by-race/>

https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/jan/20/oklahoma-pork-plant-seaboard-foods-chiewelthap-mariar?CMP=share_btn_tw&fbclid=IwAR1Ev3IGNBqxgi6b7JpAj70-zibuY_Zu-KfHkxPPtDddXylxB_vfzKcf1wrg

Found through: [Union Members for a Workers Party](#)

Shock and anger after fired worker killed by police at Oklahoma pork plant

Chiewelthap Mariar, 26-year-old Sudanese refugee, shot dead after police called to escort him from Seaboard Foods factory in Guymon

[Michael Sainato](#), Fri Jan 20, 2023

Workers at a pork processing plant in Oklahoma have condemned the use of police by management that resulted in the killing of a worker who had just been fired.

Chiewelthap Mariar, a 26-year-old refugee from Sudan, was killed by police officers while working at the Seaboard Foods meatpacking plant in Guymon on 9 January.

A worker who filmed parts of the incident on his cellphone, and was later fired for doing so, requested to remain anonymous for fear of further retaliation. The worker claimed Mariar was fired from his job by a supervisor but was told by human resources to finish his shift.

The worker said the supervisor who fired him confronted Mariar on the shop floor after he was fired, and police arrived soon after to escort Mariar from the site. Seaboard Foods did not comment on but did not refute this characterization of the situation.

“I witnessed the entire thing, from when they started arguing with him until he was shot,” said the worker. “He had a company-issued band-cutter in his hand. When the police got to the plant, the guy was already working, minding his own business.”

The worker provided cellphone footage leading up to and following the incident, where Mariar can be seen with the band-cutter in his hand working around other employees and being confronted by officers on the shop floor.

“They made him out to be a danger when they said he had a knife in his hand, when it wasn’t. And that’s wrong on so many levels,” the worker said.

The worker claimed employees were told to keep working after the incident occurred.

“I worked in maintenance. All they had us do was cover the scene with plastic, and we proceeded to finish what was on the production line,” the worker added. “This company fired me for recording the truth they were trying to brush under the mat. They never asked me if I was OK. It was my first time seeing a guy get killed – and then I get fired.”

The worker also claimed they were asked to sign an incident report, despite not agreeing with what was pre-filled out on the report.



The Seaboard Foods pork processing plant in Guymon, Oklahoma. Photograph: Andrew Hay/Reuters

A spokesperson for Seaboard Corporation, the parent company of Seaboard Foods, said: “Following the incident, operations were ceased for the remainder of the evening and the following day, and we provided in-person counseling services for employees throughout the week, in addition to ongoing phone counseling services available 24 hours, seven days a week.”

The spokesperson added: “We express our heartfelt sorrow to Chiewelthap Mariar’s family, co-workers, friends and those affected by his death following an incident at our Guymon processing plant involving the Guymon police department on 9 January.

“Providing our employees with a safe work environment and their wellbeing is extremely important to us. Following repeated attempts to bring calm to the situation, we requested assistance from the Guymon police as we felt it was in the best interest for everyone’s safety.”

The company did not comment on any details regarding the situation or comment on the worker who claimed they were fired for taking cellphone footage, saying the company does not comment on personnel matters. They deferred further questions to the Oklahoma state bureau of investigation.

On 10 January, the OSBI issued a press release that said the incident was being investigated.

The press release claimed Mariar brandished a knife, approached officers who attempted to use a Taser that failed, and then Mariar was shot by the officers at the scene. Mariar was then transported to a hospital where he was pronounced dead.

The OSBI declined to comment beyond the press release and did not clarify whether the knife the police referred to was the company-issued band-cutter seen in cellphone video footage.

About 2,600 employees work at the Guymon plant, operated under a subsidiary of the Seaboard Corporation, one of the largest companies in the world with over \$9bn in annual revenue. The plant processes 6 million pigs annually.

The plant was criticized during the Covid pandemic due to the high rates of infection among employees. By April 2021, 41% of workers at the plant had tested positive for Covid. Some sick workers died from the virus.

In June last year, the plant was cited by Osha, the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration, for failing to properly document worker injuries and illnesses 51 times in the span of two months. The plant had also been cited by Osha in December 2021 for ergonomic problems facing workers on the job.

US police killings reached a record high in 2022, with at least 1,176 deaths, about 100 people per month.

Another employee at the Seaboard plant who works a different shift criticized management for calling police on a worker and bringing them into the plant. The worker claimed the human-resources unit on site was difficult to deal with.

“They didn’t have to bring the police in,” said the worker. “The whole thing is unfair. He did not have to have his life taken away.”

The union representing workers at the plant, United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), has called for a federal investigation into the incident.

“Mr Mariar and his family came to this country to escape the violence and strife of Sudan, settled in Guymon, Oklahoma, to contribute to the economy of our country, and died senselessly on the shop floor,” said Martin Rosas, UFCW local 2 president.

“Chiewelthap, his family, his community, and his fellow workers deserve justice.”

A Brief Summary of Recent Strikes in the U.S.

In January of this year, nurses in the private hospitals in Nork City, organized in the New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA), fought for a new contract. The demands were nit just for higher salaries, but also, and just as important, for increased staffing levels. This helped to ensure community support for the nurses. Most of the hospitals finally agreed to a contract without a strike. But two of the, Montefiore and Mt. Sinai, refused to agree. This led to a 3-day strike of some 7,000 nurses at the two hospitals. The final result was a salary increase of 19.1% over 3 years (at most making up for the high rate of inflation) and increased staffing at all the hospitals.



There were other significant recent strikes. Part-time workers at the New School (which provides itself on being a “progressive” institution) went on strike for 25 days at the end of last semester, demanding a salary increase, health insurance and paid family leave. The school finally settled on December 10. It should be noted that the great majority of classes in private colleges are now taught by part-timers, mainly graduate students.

There has also been continued organizing and strikes at Starbucks. Some 300 Starbucks stores have been organizing unions, and there was a three-day strike in December at over 100 of them.

The Ruling Class Cracked Down to Prevent a Railroad Strike.

But the most important strike struggle was the one that didn’t take place, among railroad workers. The workers are organized into 12 different unions. Although the union bureaucrats had agreed to a contract, it was rejected by workers in the 4 largest unions, representing a majority of the workers. One of the major points was that the contract did not include any paid sick days. As the railroad unions have a tradition of supporting each other, a strike would have shut down all the freight railroads. These railroads carry about 30% of the freight shipped in the U.S.

On December 1, Democrats and Republicans in the Senate united to vote 80 to 15 to prevent the railroad strike. This shows the unity of the two major capitalist parties in their fight against the workers.

As a long-time longshore worker pointed out, most businesses have only an inventory that lasts for two weeks, so a prolonged strike could practically shut down the economy. We have also seen how strikes by bus and subway workers in New York have practically created a situation of a general strike, even though such strikes in the public sector are illegal. This makes transportation workers (and warehouse workers such as in Amazon) such a key sector of the economy. The Taft-Hartley Act, signed into law in 1947, allows the President to prevent strikes that are harmful to the “national Interest” (really the bosses’ profits). At some point, hopefully, these workers will consider a strike even if breaks the capitalists’ law.

What Does a Multipolar World Mean, and Does It Benefit the Workers and Peoples?

From the end of World War II until about 1975, and to a large extent later, the U.S. was the chief imperialist power. It was by far the world's largest producer, the major trading power, and was (and still is) by far the world's leading arms producer. Most of the oppressed countries were (and many still are) dependent on U.S. imperialism.

I use the date 1975 above as this was the year of the U.S. defeat in Vietnam. This marks the beginning of the long but slow decline of U.S. imperialism.

Of course, the U.S. decline was interrupted by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact.* The U.S. was able to expand economically into this region (as did also a united Germany). It also expanded its military arm, NATO, including most of the Eastern European countries and even many of the former European Soviet Union (but not officially Ukraine). Russia under Yeltsin was a very weak capitalist power, until Putin took office and tried to turn Russia back into a strengthened imperialist power.

However, most of the era of imperialism (dating basically from the beginning of the 19th century) was a period of multipolarity, that is, of several competing imperialist powers. Until the end of World War I, there was competition particularly between Britain and Germany. Again, particularly after the rise of Nazism to power in Germany, there was a period of conflict between Britain, Germany and the U.S. Both these periods ended in a world war to see which imperialist bloc would become dominant.

Today, besides the decline of U.S. imperialism, we are seeing the rise of new imperialist powers, particularly China and Russia. Thus this multipolar world is once again becoming a world of conflicting imperialist powers. The BRICS countries do not form an anti-imperialist bloc – they consist of imperialist powers (Russia and China) and dependent countries (Brazil, India and South Africa, even if they are somewhat more developed than other oppressed and dependent countries).

However, most of our petty-bourgeois leftists do not recognize this. For example, John Parker of the group Struggle for Socialism – Lucha por el socialismo, one of the more recent splits from Workers World Party, spoke at St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Harlem on January 13. He stated that “the former European colonial African states... now want the Russian army to ensure their security.” Does he really think that, if that were to happen, Russia would not use this to build their own bases and take advantage of Africa's abundant mineral and agricultural resources? He also said: “Beijing is building roads in Eurasia from East to West. None of these relationships are imperialist relationships – they are not exporting capital; they are helping developing countries build up their infrastructure for mutually beneficial economic interests, unlike the financial gangsters of the West – the IMF and World Bank.”†

It is fine that he attacks the imperialist gangsters of the West (see also his article: “Zelensky complicit in corporate takeover of Ukraine: ‘It's an investment’,” at <https://www.struggle-la-lucha.org/2023/01/07/zelensky-complicit-in-corporate-takeover-of-ukraine-its-an-investment/>). It is always the task of revolutionaries to concentrate their attack on “our own” imperialism. But this does not mean to turn a blind eye to the interests of the opposing imperialists. If he thinks

* I will not deal here with the question of whether the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries (except Albania) were still socialist after the death of Stalin), as this is not the subject of this article.

† <https://www.struggle-la-lucha.org/2023/01/17/instead-of-focusing-on-russia-look-at-the-planners-of-this-war/>

that China is “not exporting capital,” then what are the Chinese mining interests doing in Ecuador and Peru, or its coltan interests in the Democratic Republic of the Congo?

The competition between imperialist powers can allow a certain room for breathing space to socialist and other progressive forces. For example, in the period after World War I, when the Soviet Union was invaded and then boycotted by the major capitalist powers, it was able to establish trade relations with Germany under the Treaty of Rapallo, as Germany was subordinated by the unequal Versailles Treaty.

Today, the fact that there are contradictions between the U.S.-E.U. imperialist bloc and the Russia-China bloc allows for a country like Venezuela, which has a bourgeois-democratic national government, or Cuba, which has a revolutionary-democratic government, to avoid U.S. sanctions by trading with Russia and China.

However, maneuvering between imperialist blocs is not the same as allowing for dependence on one or the other. When this is the case, one is just switching from one oppressor to another. And unfortunately, this is the way that many on the petty-bourgeois left in the United States see this multipolarity.



The Developments of the War on the Working Class

The sending to the corrupt Zelensky regime of 120 tanks of NATO's armies, and soon of long-range fighter planes and missiles, makes the inter-imperialist war being fought on Ukrainian territory take a further step towards the escalation, prolongation and extension of the conflict.

The supply of deadly new weapons and other funds responds to the wishes of US imperialism that wants to kill two birds with one blow: to weaken Russia, as an ally of its strategic rival, China; and tie the allied powers more closely to the NATO wagon to maintain its hegemony.

The war is increasingly proving to be an open conflict between the bloc led by the Pentagon and Russian imperialism that has no intention of giving up its grip on its areas of influence, on pain of the collapse of its ambitions in the "near abroad" [the countries of the former Warsaw Pact]. The task assigned to "global NATO" is to push more countries under US leadership into the war (this is what the recent NATO-EU pact, the NATO-Japan declaration and the visit of Stoltenberg [NATO's Secretary General] to South Korea are for), despite the fact that the "allies" have a lot to lose.

The normalization of relations with Russia (energy supplies, investment market and outlet of goods) will in fact be difficult to re-establish, even after the end of the armed conflict.

The longer the war drags on, the clearer it becomes that the US does not want any negotiated solution. Biden's decision to help Kiev retake Crimea speaks clearly in this regard.

At the same time, it is clear that workers and peoples are called on to endure ever heavier sacrifices. In a year of war, the working masses have been further impoverished, their fundamental rights attacked, while billions of euros have been transferred to the war monopolies under the pretext of "security" and "peace".

Every missile, tank, helicopter, ship, fighter, mortar and bullet sent to Ukraine is equivalent to less wages in workers' pockets, cuts in social spending (such as people's income), health, social security, more expensive bills and taxes, limitation and suppression of political and trade union rights and freedoms.

The workers are oppressed and exploited by warmongering governments, such as Meloni (which is in its sixth arms shipment), and by monopolies such as Leonardo and Eni, which drag our country into the abyss of war to increase their profits; but also, by reformist and trade union leaders who support membership in NATO, an imperialist organization of war and terror.

The workers must collectively discuss these questions in order to find answers that correspond to their interests directly affected by the imperialist war and the criminal policy of bourgeois governments.

But it's not just about discussing; To change the situation it is necessary to organize and fight.

It is necessary to create unitary bodies and to press the trade union structures of the workplace and the territory to take a stand against the war policy that plays into the hands of the bosses and affects the working class, which has no interest in this unjust war. International solidarity must be developed with the proletarians of other countries who do not want to be involved in the warmongering activities of the bourgeoisie.

It is necessary to work to organize protest actions, demonstrations and strikes, especially in the arms industry, to force the governments of the belligerent states to cease all participation in the ongoing massacre, to leave NATO and any other warmongering alliance, to reject the sacrifices they want to impose on us, to beat chauvinism with proletarian internationalism.

Experience teaches us that wars between different imperialist and capitalist states lead to their mutual weakening and weakening of the positions of capitalism in general, they create conditions favorable to the assault on the fortresses of the bourgeoisie, bring closer the moment of proletarian revolution, make it practically necessary.

We therefore are continuing to develop propaganda, denunciations, the initiative of struggle against imperialist war, for peace among the peoples, closely linking the slogans against war to those on wages, work, the defense of the economic and political interests of the workers.

Down with the war and its proponents, the monopolies and the gang of billionaires in power!

Long live the unity of the workers of all countries against the bourgeoisie and its watchdog, fascism; for the socialist revolution!

<https://unac.notowar.net/2023/01/04/how-the-war-machine-recruits-poor-oppressed-youth/>



JROTC students march in homecoming parade. Source: Center Line HS JROTC

How the War Machine ‘Recruits’ Poor, Oppressed Youth

January 4, 2023, by **Richie Merino**, published on *International Action Center*, December 20, 2022

A Dec. 11 New York Times report highlighted how thousands of public high school students in majority poor, Black and Brown districts are funneled into the U.S. military’s Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps program. Students are automatically enrolled and forced to participate as an explicit requirement without parental consent. Some high schools have saved money by using JROTC, which is ostensibly a feeder system for children to ultimately enlist in the military, as an alternative to hiring physical education or health teachers. (NY Times, Dec. 11)

More than 10,000 military recruiters stalk the hallways of high schools across the country with promises of a guaranteed job, health care, housing and a free college education. Poverty is one of the Pentagon’s most effective recruiting tools. Military officials explicitly acknowledge that young people’s inability to afford a college education is responsible for their success in meeting recruitment goals, and lawmakers warn that helping people pay off crushing student debt will hurt recruitment. Military recruiters exploit the student loan debt crisis to coerce youth into believing that enlisting is their only option.

The fact the U.S. military spends \$400 million a year to lure children into that violent, predatory institution should come as no surprise. The U.S. government utilizes the cultural infrastructure to embed the military into almost all aspects of life and to promote militarism. From pledging allegiance to the flag to applauding veterans during halftime, it is nearly impossible to watch sports without billionaire-owned teams constantly idolizing war.

Military recruiters reach youth through video games, such as the popular “*Call of Duty*” franchise. The role-playing game teaches children to glorify guns and violence and then funnels them into the military to live out their murderous fantasies. Hollywood is the most prominent recruiter for the U.S. military; the Pentagon has spent billions on “heroic” war movies vilifying Russia, China and the Middle East. For example, the U.S. Department of Defense collaborated with Paramount Pictures to weave imperialist, pro-war narratives into the movie “*Top Gun: Maverick*.”

War machine embedded in education

Some public high schools, like the one I teach at in the South Bronx, do not have a formal JROTC program, but military recruiters are very much embedded in the school’s culture. For example, during our annual field day where students participate in competitive sports to win trophies and prizes, the school invites military recruiters to host push-up, pull-up, running and other competitions. The school invites military recruiters to graduation ceremonies, where veterans present several memorial scholarship awards to “honor” the students who have decided to join the military upon graduation.

If military recruiters don’t capture poor kids in high school, they continue to prey upon low-income students in community colleges and public universities, such as City University of New York, where a majority of students are housing insecure. As a current CUNY student, my personal contact information was shared with military recruiters without my explicit consent. As a result, I receive an obscene number of emails, phone calls and text messages coaxing me to join the military and even to refer a friend.

A recent text message I received enticed potential recruits with “*full health care and dental benefits, including paid sick leave,*” which is egregious given Congress’ recent rejection of paid sick leave for railway workers.

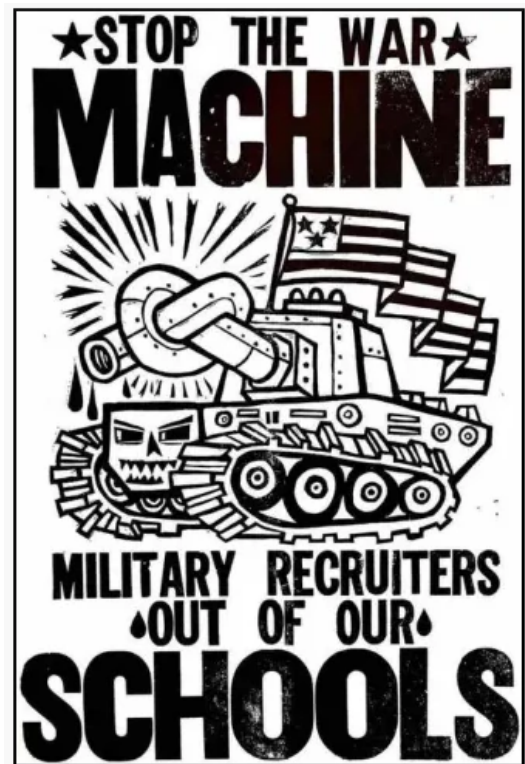
The struggle to end the poverty draft is personal to me, not only because I’ve seen my students’ eyes light up at the thought of having stable housing and food for the first time in their life, but because I saw how my brother’s economic deprivation led him to join the U.S. Navy. At 18 years old, his partner had an unexpected pregnancy, and he found himself scrambling to find a job that would pay him enough to survive and support his newborn. As a college freshman at a State University of New York campus, he found the military to be his only option.

After witnessing my brother, cousins and students being recruited into the military — not because they were patriotic, but because they needed money to support themselves and their families, I realized that the U.S. military preys on vulnerable people by design and in the spirit of capitalism.

As the Western empire and U.S. hegemony decline, the capitalist ruling class grows desperate to maintain rising profits through brute military adventures. We can expect the U.S. military to further increase its deceitful targeting of poor and disenfranchised youth to serve as cannon fodder for the military-industrial complex. We must take our antiwar and anti-imperialist movement into the streets.

The only war worth fighting is class war.

Dismantle the school-to-military pipeline! Police and military recruiters out of our schools! We will no longer be used as tools for imperialist aggression! We will no longer be used to fight and kill working people like ourselves! Money for jobs, education, housing and health care — not for war!



Source: International Action Center

Antiwar Activist Faces Repression in Germany

By [The Virginia Defender](#) on [December 28, 2022](#)

By Phil Wilayto

June 22, 2022, was the 81st anniversary of Nazi Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union, and a prominent German antiwar activist took the occasion to publicly question why the German government is now supporting neo-Nazi organizations in Ukraine.

As a result, that activist is now facing the possibility of up to three years in prison.

Heinrich Bucker runs Berlin's popular Coop Antiwar Cafe, which since 2005 has been a gathering space for activists working on a wide range of issues. Since 2019 the cafe has co-organized the weekly event "Frente Unido América Latina" in front of the U.S. Embassy. He's a member of the "Kommunistische Plattform" in the party DIE LINKE; a member of the League of Anti-Fascists; and represents the U.S.-based World Beyond War in Berlin. The cafe also represents the "Aufstehen" Initiative in Berlin Mitte, backing the left politician Sahra Wagenknecht and organizing left events against sanctions and for peace.

On June 22, Bucker gave a speech at an event hosted by Berlin's Friedenskoordination (Peace Coordination) at the Soviet War Memorial in Berlin's Treptower Park, in which, according to a statement on the antiwar cafe's website, he said that "... it seems incomprehensible to me that German politics should again support the same chauvinistic and especially Russophobic ideologies on the basis of which the German Reich found willing helpers in 1941. The SS and Wehrmacht used Ukrainian national-fascist organizations as repressive and murderous squads against their own countrymen, including millions of Jewish men, women and children."

The collaboration of ultra-nationalist Ukrainian organizations with the Nazi occupation is a matter of historical record. And, before the present war, Western mainstream media would routinely report on the existence of present-day fascist organizations in Ukraine, such as the Azov Battalion, Right Sector, National Militia, C-14 and many others. [For example, see this 2018 Reuters piece.](#)

But that coverage has now ended.

On Oct. 19, Bucker received a letter from the Berlin State Criminal Police Office notifying him that he was under investigation for possible violation of Paragraph 140 of the German Criminal Code, which has to do with disturbing the public peace. A violation of the statute can be punished by a fine or a prison sentence of up to three years. The investigation was apparently prompted by a complaint by a Berlin attorney upset about Bucker's speech.

"In Germany, we are currently experiencing a narrowing of the space for debate and massive restrictions on freedom of expression, caused by one-sided reporting in the mainstream-media," Bucker writes. "There are now a number of individuals who are in the focus of the German criminal investigation authorities. Similar tendencies are also reported from other EU [European Union] countries."

The Coop Antiwar Cafe itself also has come under attack. In addition to threatening emails, the cafe's front windows were recently smashed.

Along with his June 22 speech, Bucker also initiated a statement on the war in Ukraine that questioned the official line that it's simply an act of unprovoked Russian aggression. Instead, the statement, posted on the cafe's website, points to the steady eastward expansion of NATO up to the very borders of Russia, and U.S. and European support for the 2014 coup that drove out the elected president of Ukraine and

brought in a right-wing government anxious to join NATO and hostile to both Russia and the country's ethnic Russian minority.

Another reason for the police interest in Bucker could be the prominent role he has played in promoting an anti-imperialist statement on the war in Ukraine initiated by the U.S.-based Odessa Solidarity Campaign, a project of the Virginia Defenders for Freedom, Justice & Equality. That statement, similar to the one initiated by the Coop Antiwar Cafe, has been endorsed by more than 230 organizations and individuals in 22 countries, with nearly two-thirds of the endorsers from Germany.

Meanwhile, in the United States, the African People's Socialist Party is calling for support in the face of expected indictments of four of its leaders and prominent supporters who have been actively speaking out against U.S. support for Ukraine. The APSP is a Pan-African organization that for the past 50 years has been opposing U.S. wars at home and abroad.

In response to the police pressure, Bucker's allies and supporters in Germany have been preparing a united defense effort. Stay tuned for new developments and calls for solidarity.

For more information on repression directed against antiwar activists and efforts to support them, see:

[Coop Antiwar Cafe](#)

[African People's Socialist Party](#)

[Odessa Solidarity Campaign](#)

Phil Wilayto is editor of The Virginia Defender newspaper and coordinator of the Odessa Solidarity Campaign. He can be reached at: DefendersFJE@hotmail.com.

Happy Lunar New Year

The flag of the People's Republic of China is meant to represent the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship established in 1949 under the leadership of Mao Tse-tung, not Xi Jinping's imperialism with Chinese characteristics.



While we think this article is very useful, we have to disagree with the view that many white retirees are getting a “free ride” because most “minorities” die earlier. That Blacks and other oppressed nationalities are super-exploited in the US does not benefit whites as a whole. This is a version of the discredited “white blindspot” theory.

<http://zszs-blg.blogspot.com/>

Saturday, January 7, 2023

Let Them Die!

In the spirit of Jonathan Swift’s satirical world (*A Modest Proposal*), we might facetiously attribute the recent decline in US life expectancy to a concerted effort to strengthen the social safety net.

Politicians have been maintaining for decades that it would be necessary to reduce social security, Medicare, and Medicaid benefits to keep the systems solvent. Leaders of both political parties have urged cutting benefits, changing eligibility requirements, or raising the already-high age thresholds to preserve the reserves for future recipients. Alarmists have persisted for decades, and seniors and the poor have passionately and successfully resisted cuts and changes.

But now comes a new way of stretching the available funds for the poor and elderly: Enable and encourage them to die earlier!

From 2019 to 2021, a calloused response to a pandemic emergency, shamefully inadequate mental health support, a poor outcome, profit-driven healthcare system, unprecedented inequality, and a ruthlessly self-centered, individualistic civil society knocked off nearly two-and-a-half years from the expected lifespan from birth. In the US, a person born in 2019 would be expected to live to be 78.8, while the same person born in 2021 would be expected to die at 76.4, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). What a clever way to lessen the burden on the social safety net! No doubt, hundreds of billions of dollars will be saved! And undoubtedly, our representatives will give the savings to the military.

My guess is that many free-marketeers and debt-hawks wish that they had come up with this solution even earlier. It is far less politically volatile than raising the eligibility thresholds.

Of course, shortening life expectancy by two-and-a-half years cheats millions of the money that they have invested in social insurance. The hundreds of billions “saved” corresponds to the hundreds of billions invested in a secure future. Responsible government has stolen those benefits from those denied the same life chances that other advanced economies ensured their people over the same period.

Certainly, money is nothing compared to the prospect of premature death. The CDC estimates that the 5% drop in life expectancy between 2020 and 2021 alone accounts for 1.2 million “excess” deaths, the largest percentage drop in life expectancy since World War II.

While the CDC has not yet offered a further analysis of life expectancy by race and ethnicity, [The Wall Street Journal](#) reveals a recent study that shows Native Americans suffering the largest drop (1.9 years) in 2021. The eight million or so US citizens who identify as Native American have lost 6.6 years of their expected lives since 2019, now living 65.2 years from birth.

Thanks to US age eligibility, that means that Native Americans will pay into Medicare while never receiving any significant return in benefits! Further, they will only receive, at best, a token return in Social Security benefits for a lifetime of contributions!

Similarly, an African-American worker should expect to receive approximately six years’ less of benefits than his or her white counterpart, given the disparity in life expectancy.

Thus, many white retirees are “free riding” on the benefits earned by early deceased minorities, a stark rebuke to the racist depiction of minorities as welfare grifters.

In a society where losing one million, one hundred thousand victims to a viral infection is taken in stride, it may be more impactful to express human losses in dollars and cents.

In a society that places the health of its people in the hands of private profiteers and distributes life-giving drugs based on the ability to pay, it should be no surprise that life expectancy is declining.

In a society where citizens are expected to bear accidents, misfortune, and poor life choices alone and with no social scaffolding, death is a predictable outcome.

In a society where life-prospects are locked into an ordering based upon income and wealth, it should be no surprise that the poor and less fortunate are most likely to die prematurely.

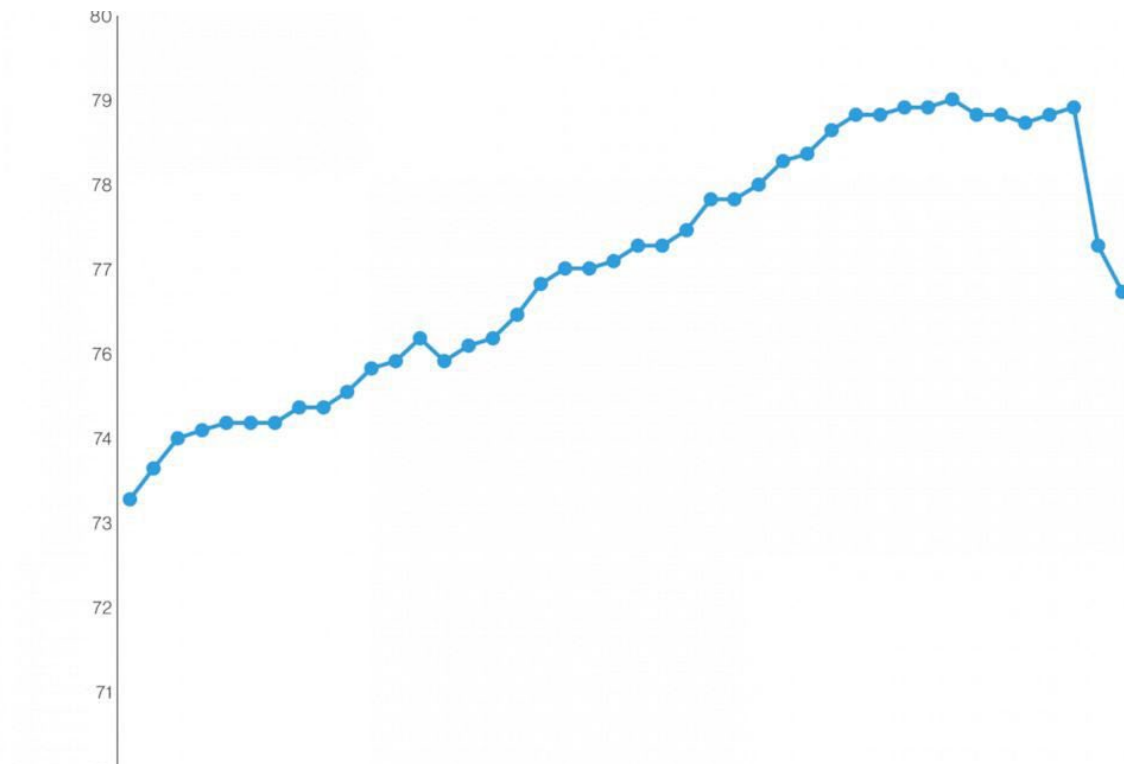
If the US is the bellwether of capitalism and its trajectory, then the world must come to live without capitalism.

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<https://mltoday.com/us-life-expectancy-falls-to-lowest-levels-since-1996/>

US Life Expectancy Falls to Lowest Levels Since 1996

Posted by [ML Today](#) | Jan 9, 2023



Why Does the United States Treat Us as a Colony

By: Angel R. Veras Aybar



A good part of the readers of these opinions or the title that heads it will say that I am not making any discovery and that is a great truth, because we have suffered a neocolonial situation that since the late 19th century.

After the entry of the United States into this region as a hegemonic power, reality tells us that these nations have been considered as the Backyard of our neighbor to the North. There have been various and almost permanent movements of resistance against the imperial oppression; but the victory of a movement that achieves the Restoration of Sovereignty and National Independence has not been possible.

There are topics on which the expression of imperial dominance becomes more enormous and irritating; such are the cases of: extraditions, impositions on immigration policy, the establishment of espionage or monitoring offices in areas related to national security, the actions or interference of the US Embassy; the actions of the DEA and FBI on Dominican territory; the imposition of their criteria on Dominican representatives abroad.

Now they are imposing restrictions on the entry of products such as sugar and with the presence of the head of the Southern Command exerting pressure on the Dominican government, supposedly on a humanitarian mission, which has always been the pretext for intervention.

The list of U.S. interferences in our affairs and their violations of the norms of International Public Law and American International Law would be endless, since the Dominican State tends to appear as a vital principle towards the arrogant attitude of the governments that have succeeded each other in Washington for many decades. This is added to the absence in our country of governments with firm criteria on Self-Determination and National Independence.

In terms of extraditions, the Dominican Republic signed a treaty with the United States since 1909, in force since 1910 and readjusted with another treaty of 2015, the latter has been in force since 2016. With Law 489 on extradition, the country accommodated its surrender of sovereignty to the United States; meanwhile, it allowed Dominican citizens to be extradited, an issue that did not exist under previous rules on the matter.

It is true that for several decades the world began to see new types of crimes, linked to: money laundering, public and private corruption, terrorism, trafficking in persons, kidnapping, among others; this new situation entails a readjustment of the repressive norms against such infractions. But under no circumstances should this be implemented at the cost of further reducing what little sovereignty we still have.

Since before the entry into force of the new treaty of 2015, the country already observed the US eagerness to impose its hegemonic whims; some citizens will remember the case of Daniel Mirambeaux and his sad end in the Palace of the PN with the demand of the United States to take him to its territory. It also recalls the long wait of Mr. Franklin Franco to avoid extradition to the United States. Other cases such as that of Quirino; Cesar the Abuser; Deputy Gutierrez de Santiago have been less tortuous, among other reasons because those requested for extradition reached an understanding with US prosecutors.

In the relations between the United States and the Dominican Republic, not only is there the fact that extraditions occur only from our country to the United States, but the Caribbean country has to endure the

fact that individuals who caused great offenses or damage to the whole society decide to reach an agreement with the USA; they serve the agreed sentence and return to the Dominican Republic to enjoy their illegally acquired assets, but they are protected by the cloak of impunity; since the treaty tends to protect them.

Regarding the sugar market in the United States, it is an act of hypocrisy or double standard that the US has “discovered” the mistreatment of the workers, since the US has always been aware of the abuses and forced labor practiced by its own companies such as the Central Romana. This is an entity that is an expression of the dominance exercised by the United States in the economic, social and territorial sphere on the eastern part of the Dominican Republic.

Of course, the pressure through which the United States is resisting getting sugar from Central Romana is not because they feel compassion for Haitian workers and some Dominicans; but because this is part of their strategy for the Dominican State to take up its policy of solving the Haitian crisis by taking in migrants from the neighboring country into Dominican territory. In other words; the US and the other powers that have finished with Haiti continue to insist that Dominicans must take up the solution of the Haitian problem.

We have always insisted that solidarity and internationalism towards our neighbors should not be confused with the irresponsibility of the powers that have led Haiti to this general drama, because it is very true that the Haitians have been in solidarity with us at various stages, but it is necessary to take into account that the interests of the US and other powers are not the same interests as ours; it is a matter of a weak nation, since those hegemonic centers do not give a damn about its survival as a state and only care about their own interests. Without agreeing with ultra-nationalist or racist positions, we must not allow those who cause Haiti’s misfortune to disrespect the memory of our heroes and martyrs, turning our territory into a zone of dispute as they have done in Serbia, Syria, Iraq, Yemen and other weak nations, nations that have seen their sovereignty broken by the impositions of NATO and the United States.

We must continue to give the solidarity that the Haitian people require, try to help them defeat the oligarchy that lives at the expense of their misery; we must reject any military intervention in Haiti, as such intervention is an aggression against us; we insist that legal norms on migration be complied with, as well as everything related to due process of law. We must continue to denounce and reject the use made by the Haitian and Dominican oligarchies of their cheap labor and the way they abuse the state of misery in which millions of Haitians and Dominicans live, because the powerful only think about the profit factor and not about the survival of both nations.

World Hunger Is Growing: Capitalism Is To Blame



In the last week of November 2022, the United Nations released an alarming report on the humanitarian situation on the planet, which warns that for this year, 2023, a record 339 million people will need humanitarian aid, 65 million more than last year. That means one in 23 people on the planet will require help to survive.

The UN, last October, reported that during the first months of 2022, "the number of hungry people in the world grew from 282 million to 345 million"¹; this is more than it now says require humanitarian aid. Obviously, by the end of the year, the number of hungry people will have been higher, as the information noted warned that "the world is at risk of another year of record hunger, as the global food crisis continues to push more people into increasingly severe levels of food insecurity." The issue is complex, alarming.

The UN, like other international organizations dedicated to the analysis of the world economy, says that food problems have worsened due to factors such as climate change, wars (such as the current conflict in Ukraine), elevated inflation. They have even come to "great" conclusions, namely that hunger is growing because poverty is growing. Too bad that there is no prize for this "truism"; some "geniuses" would dispute it.

It is undeniable that phenomena such as wars, political-state violence that causes mass migrations, climate change that causes natural disasters have a negative impact on millions of people living hungry, that is, a situation that puts them on the verge of death; However, such arguments hide the origin or the real cause for hunger to strike millions of people, particularly children: the private capitalist appropriation of the means of production and their products.

In 2012, Jean Ziegler, former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, presented a book entitled "Mass Destruction", in which, according to the press release published by Europapress², "he analyzes the right to food and puts a face to the victims and executioners of hunger". Ziegler argues that, according to research by the specialized organization of the United Nations, there is in the world the capacity to feed

12,000 million people, that is, for four billion more than the current population of the planet. However, every year, "more than three million children die from hunger and diseases – cough, diarrhea, rubella, malaria – that hunger leads to... Three million... That's more than 8,000 kids who die every day, more than 300 every hour, more than five in a single minute."³ Ziegler says that "a child who starves is a murdered child," and that in this case "the murderers are the speculators, who raise food prices to increase their profits. There are also accomplices, which are the Western banks and governments, since it would be very easy for them to end food speculation and they do nothing to prevent it. All the stock markets in the world operate on a national law and it would be enough to change an article. It's that simple."

Let us look back a little

In the 1980s and 1990s there was a great offensive of international finance capital, which caused profound changes in the economies of the countries. The Uruguay Round (1986-1994) of the World Trade Organization adopted a General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, which involved 123 countries as "contracting parties". Many countries were forced to lower their customs barriers and incentives for agricultural production, while the United States, Europe and Japan increased subsidies to their producers, so that they could produce more and take over markets.

About the same time, in 1991, Goldman Sachs decided to get into the food business and "selected 18 ingredients that they could turn into commodities and prepared a financial elixir that included cows, pigs, coffee, cocoa, corn, and a couple of varieties of wheat."⁴ They made economic calculations of investments, costs and profits and created the Goldman Sachs Commodity Index, and began offering shares of this index. Success materialized in the vaults of Goldman Sachs, commodity prices gradually rose and then grew more rapidly. Other bankers decided not to be left behind and created their own food indexes for their clients. Every time the value of investors' shares rose, the cost of workers' breakfasts and lunches also grew. Financial monopolies do business with food, just as they do with diamonds, oil, gold, or any other commodity. Business is business!

The big international financial monopolies hit their target, because food, water and land will always have value, more than bonds or long-term debt papers, and because of their volatility they will always make a lot of money because the demand for food will never disappear. "In 2003, investments in food commodities imported about \$13 billion. In 2008 they reached \$317 billion—nearly 25 times as much money, nearly 25 times as much demand. And prices, of course, skyrocketed.

Analysts who cannot at all be suspected of leftism calculated that this amount of money was 15 times greater than the size of the world agricultural market... An amount of wheat equal to fifty times the world's wheat production is being traded on the Chicago Stock Exchange every year... Every grain of corn in the world is bought and sold—neither bought nor sold, but simulated—fifty times."⁵ In other words, wheat speculation moves fifty times more money than wheat production.

Needless to say, the neoliberal policies approved by the Washington Consensus broke the economies of small agricultural producers, strengthened the concentration of land for production processes oriented to export, made countries with weaker economic development more dependent and, of course, increased poverty and hunger.

And they still keep saying that there is nothing better than capitalism.

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3 Caparrós Martín, *Hunger*. 2021

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5 Ibid.

This is the translation of a chapter of the book La guerra en ucrania y el contexto internacional. It was written in the form of an interview by Roy Daza of the Dominican-Salvadorian economist Cesar Sencion Villalona, so the "you" in the text refers to Sencion. We find it useful because it has updated information on the economic situation in the U.S. However, in further chapters Sencion uses this to support the progressiveness of a multipolar world in general, which we discuss in another article in this issue of TMLU.

The Decline of the U.S. Economy

In your speech at the 25th Meeting of the Sao Paulo Forum, which took place in Caracas in July 2019, you pointed out – very rigorously – that a process of decline of the U.S. economy is underway, the most important one in the world.

For three decades, the U.S. economy has been declining in relation to its main competitors. Many factors prove it, but I will only refer to the following:

- a) its lower importance in production and international trade ,
- b) Its excessive indebtedness,
- c) the gradual displacement of the dollar.

First point: its lower weight in production and international trade:

In 1945 the U.S. was responsible for 50% of world GDP, and in 1948 it had almost 22% of world exports of goods. As the international monetary system depends on the world's productive structure, the country with the greatest importance in production and export imposes its currency as medium of exchange, because to the extent that its commodities are the most in demand, its currency is the most requested.

When the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) disintegrated 31 years ago, and the governments of Eastern Europe led by communist parties fell, the US was left as the world's only political and military power; it was also the leading economy, accounting for nearly 40% of GDP and 25% of the world's exports of goods. The dollar was used in 95% of the world's commercial and financial transactions. However, at the end of the 20th century its contribution to GDP fell to 31%, that is, it had lost 9 percentage points compared to 1991, the year of the disintegration of the USSR. Japan was the second largest economy, followed by Germany, the United Kingdom and France; China was in sixth place, with 3.5%, but it was growing a lot, Russia and India were very distant, in 13th and 18th places respectively.

An event of great importance took place in 2006: Brazil, Russia, China and India decided to form the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China), an economic and political bloc which South Africa later joined, to constitute the BRICS. These countries have 50% of the world's population and 30% of the earth's surface, they create 25% of global GDP (the US creates 24%), have 45% of foreign exchange reserves, abundant reserves of oil, gas (especially Russia and Brazil), coal and minerals; they produce abundant food (except for Russia) and have complementary economies.

The BRICS, with now incorporated South Africa, has a bank and an investment fund of hundreds of billions of dollars, capable of competing in the medium term with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. This bloc is not consolidated, but it is a powerful rival to Europe and the United States.

At the same time that this and other blocs were forming, the Chinese economy accelerated its growth. Between 2005 and 2021 its nominal GDP increased 718%, from \$2.256 trillion, to \$18.463 trillion, while that of the U.S. only increased 97%, from \$12.580 to \$24.796 trillion.

In those years China doubled its share of the international economy, surpassing the United Kingdom, Germany and Japan, and became the second largest economy in the world, with 18% of world GDP in 2021 against 24% of the US. In 2021, China produced more goods and services than the entire European Union: \$18.463 trillion against 18.353 trillion.

China also ranks first in the production of thousands of industrial items, including many high-tech ones; it achieved impressive development in communications and has 3 trillion monetary reserves, or nearly 20 percent of the world's total. Its trade balance with the US registered a surplus of 355 billion in 2021; in addition, it is increasing its weight in the energy market due to the growth of its economy; in the near future, the prices of fuels and energy systems will depend a lot on that nation.

India, which at the end of the 20th century was the 13th largest economy in the world, is now the sixth; Russia, which ranked 18th, today ranks 12th. And Brazil went from 12th to 11th place. That means that four BRICS countries are among the top fifteen economies in the world and contribute, together with South Africa, a quarter of the planet's production. The BRICS nations have many energy resources. Russia has the world's eighth largest oil reserves and the largest natural gas reserve (25% of the world). Brazil has abundant oil and many mineral resources in general. The largest reserves of minerals and energy are in Russia, South America and the countries of the Middle East.

In contrast, Germany, France and Japan have no oil. Europe is heavily dependent on Russian gas. And the U.S., although it has increased its production of shale oil, does not have a guaranteed supply (it consumes 24% of the world),

because that oil is not profitable at a price less than \$70. Today it is profitable, but due to rising prices.

If in the field of production the U.S. economy is shrinking, its decline in exports is even greater. 14 years ago China surpassed the U.S. The leading exporting power is China, with 15%, that is, the largest in the world, against 10% for the U.S. Between 1948 and 2021 the US economy fell from 21.7% to 10% of world exports, Germany increased from 1.4% to 10% and the People's Republic of China went from 0.8% to 15% of world exports.

The US, which is declining as an exporting country, is – at the same time – the world's leading importer, with 11% of the total. Its trade balance is very negative, especially with China, the European Union, Mexico and Japan. Although its trade in services is positive, it is almost four times lower than its negative trade balance, which in 2021 was \$1,182.5619 billion and which is mainly covered by its external debt and the issuance of money without backing.

The reasons for these changes are many. One of them is that while China, Germany and other countries propped up their economies for many decades, the U.S. government, which is always involved in wars, neglected its investments in the social field and in basic infrastructure, which, by the way, has deteriorated a lot; and if that were not enough, it has increased its war budget to the extent that its military expenditure represents 35% of the world's military expenditures. Such an increase is the main cause of the deep and growing fiscal deficit of the United States.

The worst result of its warmongering policy and the neglect of basic investment is the loss of labor productivity. From the end of World War II until the 1970s, productivity in the U.S. grew at an average of 3% per year; between the 1970s and the 1990s it fell by half, and in recent decades it is worse. In the first quarter of 2022, it fell 7.5%, the biggest decline in workers' hourly output since 1947, according to early May data from the Labor Department. And labor costs rose 9.9%.

In China, labor productivity grew 7.5% between 1953 and 2016. Since then it has grown less, which is to some extent normal, because as the magnitudes grow, the growth rate slows; not in value but in percentage.

Secondly, excessive indebtedness.

To cover its fiscal deficit, continue wars, and maintain imports, its [U.S.] economy requires billions of dollars in borrowing. Its external public debt went from \$12.439 trillion in 2011 to \$30 trillion in February 2022. Its debt is the largest in the world and exceeds the value of its GDP. Most of it is contracted with Japan, the Cayman Islands and China. The countries that benefit most from U.S. imports (China and Japan) use part of their reserves to buy U.S. government bonds and avoid bankruptcy. If its creditors stopped lending to it, the U.S. government would not be able to sustain its budget, but debt also binds the lenders to certain U.S. decisions, which, if they choose not to pay, would disrupt the world economy.

Undoubtedly, this is a problem that threatens planetary economic stability, but it will have an adverse solution to the U.S. if that nation definitively loses its precarious hegemony.

Third point: the gradual displacement of the dollar.

Regarding this third problem we must say that to the extent that the importance of the U.S. economy decreases, I insist, both in world production and exports, that its currency weakens as a international medium of exchange and an international reserve. The implications of this fact for that country and the world economy are very important.

As we saw earlier, a portion of the dollars with which the U.S. buys abroad is obtained from loans and bond sales; China, for example, buys bonds that it issues to cover its deficit.

Regarding the financial-accounting movement towards the U.S., part of these resources allows, in turn, U.S. entrepreneurs to import commodities. The U.S. also attracts dollars through foreign investment, in China and Japan and other countries, and issues banknotes without backing by (inorganic) production, with which they finance part of the government deficit and then they circulate through banks and importing companies. As the dollar is in global use, [the U.S.] has the "luxury" of printing certain quantities and buying many commodities abroad, including cheap energy raw materials, capital goods (machinery and equipment) and consumer goods cheaply from China and other countries to which its population has become accustomed.

Now, let's see how this process works?

The mechanism works like this: the Federal Reserve issues money without backing to finance its fiscal deficit of more than \$700 billion; this money moves through the economy, goes to commerce and other sectors, flows to the banks, passes into the hands of importing companies (via credit) and from there goes abroad to buy goods and services, because the dollar is accepted all over the world.

This mechanism began in 1971, but the annual amount is increasing. In other words, the inorganic deficit [without real backing – *translator's note*] serves to finance both the fiscal deficit and part of the trade deficit.

This unbacked issuance does not create inflation in the U.S., because money flows abroad in the form of imports. But if that currency is replaced by another or by a basket of currencies (physical or digital) it would not serve to finance imports and its issuance without backing would not make much sense. This would mean a collapse in imports of

consumer goods, raw materials and capital goods, a drop in production and an increase in unemployment.

But the advantage of issuing currency without backing became a threat to the survival of the U.S. economy, because most of those dollars are under the control of the monetary authorities of the world's major economies, which have huge international reserves that can be exchanged for other currencies if the dollar continues to decline. In fact, that is being done by some governments, as we will see later.

China is the country with the largest reserves in the world and these have grown a lot in recent years: In 2003 they were \$403 billion; in 2007 they increased to 1,433 billion; and at the end of 2021 to 3,222.894 billion, that is, they represent about 20% of the world's monetary reserves.

If China and other countries with large economies decided not to charge in dollars for their exports and trade with the U.S., but in other currencies, such as the euro, yen, renminbi or any other hard currency (physical or digital, it does not matter), that country could not continue to issue dollars without backing to buy excessively in the world and it would have to adjust its purchases to its availability of other currencies, which it practically does not have because its trade balance with Canada, Mexico, Europe and Asia is negative.

The result would be a fall in U.S. imports, the bankruptcy of many commercial and banking enterprises, and the reduction of a part of its productive apparatus; unemployment would grow, and the economy would shrink. In the context of a sharp economic decline, the US government would have fewer resources and could not sustain the more than 800 military bases it has in the world. The economic downturn *would be followed by less influence on world politics. This is a crucial aspect to keep in mind in all international conflicts.*

It must be taken into account that its productive apparatus is very dependent on imported raw materials, some of which it cannot replace because it does not have sufficient quantities. Nor can it replace many consumer goods it imports, especially from Asia, where labor is very cheap and costs are generally lower. If U.S. companies produced these goods domestically, they would have to sell them very expensively or lower the wage cost and cause unrest in the working population.

In an article published in September 2009, Paul Craig Roberts, who was Assistant Secretary of the Treasury during the Ronald Reagan administration, said that "The time of the dollar is about to end, although it may last a few more years... the consequence of issuing so many trillions of new dollars to support the prices of U.S. Treasuries would be to destroy the fiduciary currency [one based on trust, not on gold – *translator's note*]: there are no services or commodities behind these dollars. Since 2008, services and commodities have not grown in proportion to the dollars the Federal Reserve has created... If the BRICS succeed in organizing their international payments in their own respective currencies and simply abandon the use of the dollar, this would result in falling demand for the dollar in the foreign exchange markets... the source of U.S. financial hegemony."⁴

Since a sizeable percentage of U.S. government revenue comes from the sale of treasury bonds, which cover its fiscal deficit, if its creditors cut back on the purchase of those bonds, the governments would have to cut spending and would not be able to pay as much of the money they owe unless they restricted their military spending or investment. And it turns out that a good part of that money is owed to China and Japan, that is, to two of its main competitors. So what happens with that financial framework has international implications.

It is in China's interest to convert its currency into the world's reserve currency, because it would reduce the exchange risk of its companies and the costs of its foreign trade. But the renminbi, which is gaining ground as a trade and investment currency, still has a low share (2%) in the composition of international monetary reserves, 60% of which are in dollars, 20% in euro and the rest in yen, pound sterling and other currencies. That is because China does not have a strong capital market to turn the renminbi into a fully convertible currency. However, it is taking some steps in that direction, such as creating markets in its currency, such as oil, issuing futures on the Shanghai Futures, iron through the Bohai exchange, and gold through the Shanghai Gold Exchange.

At the rate the renminbi is going, in less than a decade it will be among the world's top three currencies. And that is a serious threat to the U.S. dollar and the euro itself, whose role will become less relevant as it continues to weaken in the world economy.

What actions are being developed in the world aimed at diminishing the power of the dollar and what impacts would the end of the dollar era have on U.S. companies? Many. Let's look at a few:

- a) In June 2009, the countries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)—China, Russia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan—agreed to conduct trade among themselves by paying with their national currencies or with a supranational currency to replace the dollar.
- b) In 2009, China launched a program for neighboring countries to do business with the yuan without having to

⁴ Craig, Paul. "The days of the dollar are numbered." Web Cuba por Siempre. 16 October 2014. <https://micubaporsiempre.wordpress.com/author/micubaporsiempr>

convert payments to other currencies. Shanghai companies signed contracts with their counterparties in Hong Kong and Indonesia to make exchanges with the Chinese currency if the counterparties have it. The idea is that the renminbi will then be used between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Countries (ASEAN), made up of Brunei, Burma [Myanmar], Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

- c) In 2009, the Chinese government implemented a program for Chinese companies to use the yuan in their foreign trade. China also allows some neighboring nations to do business with its currency, which spread to South Korea, Malaysia, Belarus and Indonesia.
- d) In its "World Economic and Social Survey 2010", the United Nations stated that the dollar was not a reserve of stable value and had not contributed to bringing balance to financial markets. As an option, it proposed creating a system that was not based on a single currency, but on a basket of four currencies: dollar, euro, yen and pound sterling. That idea had been raised by China and some European countries at the G-20 summit in March 2009.
- e) In January 2011, the Chinese government authorized Chinese companies to make direct investments abroad in renminbi, except for financial investments. In addition, the Bank of China began offering yuan accounts at its subsidiaries in New York and Los Angeles.
- f) In late 2011, the governments of China and Russia agreed that individuals and companies in their countries could make transactions and pay in their respective currencies: renminbi and ruble. And in March 2012, China and Japan agreed to phase out the use of the dollar in their exchanges and do the calculations in their currencies.
- g) In 2011, Iran agreed with India that payments for Iranian oil imports would be made in Indian rupees and subsequently converted into a separately denominated currency.
- h) In January 2012, the governments of China and the United Arab Emirates agreed to replace the dollar with their respective currencies in oil trading. As Iran had previously left the dollar area, the petrodollar system (sale of oil for dollar) continues to break up.
- i) Tens of thousands of Chinese companies use their country's currency in their operations in Asia.
- j) In October 2013, British Finance Minister George Osborne and his Chinese counterpart agreed to turn the city of London into the renminbi's "global capital," and in January 2014 the People's Bank of China issued 2.5 billion yuan worth of bonds in Britain. The British government and companies can buy up to 80 billion yuan in bonds, as well as stocks and other financial instruments of Chinese origin. In turn, Chinese commercial banks can open branches in Britain.
- k) In November 2014, the People's Bank of China agreed with the German Federal Bank that German lenders would have direct access to the renminbi, meaning that the euros will be directly convertible into yuan without having to first be converted into dollars. In other words, the yuan has penetrated Frankfurt, considered the financial capital of Europe.
- l) In November 2014, China agreed with Canada to replace the dollar with the renminbi in their exchanges. Canada is one of the main trading partners of the U.S., with an annual exchange of more than \$600 billion.
- m) In November 2014, China agreed with Qatar to conduct its trade in renminbi. That agreement also affects petrodollars, as China will not be forced to get U.S. currency to pay Qatar for the oil it buys from it. If that deal extends to other OPEC countries, it would be the end of petrodollars.
- n) On December 29, 2014, the bilateral exchange agreement between the People's Bank of China and the Russian Central Bank began, whereby both countries exchanged goods for \$150 billion in their respective currencies. China will also trade using the renminbi and currencies of New Zealand and some cash-strapped Asian countries.
- o) In 2014 there were 10,000 international financial institutions operating with renminbi. In 2011 only 900 were operating.
- p) The U.S. dollar was removed from the list of currencies used by Iran in its trade transactions with Iraq.
- q) In 2016, the IMF added the Chinese renminbi to the Special Drawing Rights (SDR) basket. The other currencies are the U.S. dollar, euro, yen and pound sterling. This is a recognition of the role of the Chinese economy in the global market and financial system, since the IMF's criteria for adopting such a measure are the weight of a country in world exports and the extensive use of its currency to settle international transactions.
- r) On October 26, 2018, China and Japan signed a \$30 billion currency swap agreement to step up trade cooperation, promote financial stability and facilitate bilateral economic and financial exchanges. The agreement would be valid for three years and allow both countries to exchange payments in one currency for equivalent amounts in the other. The Bank of Japan and Japanese financial institutions have been expanding their renminbi-based businesses.
- s) Many central banks in the world use the Chinese currency as a reserve. At the beginning of 2018, the central banks of England, Switzerland, Belgium and Slovakia held it in their reserves for an amount exceeding \$100 billion.

It should also be taken into account that China is the main trading partner of about 140 countries, in most of which its currency is not yet used in commercial exchanges, but could be used if its trade expands and the dollar loses ground.

For transnational corporations operating in the U.S. and other parts of the world, the global currency exchange would not be traumatic, given their international, monopolistic and oligopolistic character. These companies operate on an almost planetary scale and organize the productive, financial and commercial networks of the goods and services that they control.

However, in the world there are not only monopolies. Many countries' economic structures, although linked to the world market (mainly through trade and finance), are vulnerable to domestic and international political decisions.

In the case of the U.S., if the dollar were replaced as the world currency, the import capacity of its companies would decrease due to the lack of resources to finance external purchases of consumer goods, raw materials and capital goods used in their production processes. A part of these resources comes today from the issuance of inorganics, which with the currency exchange could not continue. Domestic credit would fall and many companies would go bankrupt, both those that import and those that require inputs and machinery from abroad.

As the currency exchange and the end of the issuance of dollars without backing would affect the finances of the U.S. government, there would be a cut in subsidies, fewer public and private investment and more unemployment. Subsidized companies, regardless of the origin of their investments, would lose profitability and competitive capacity on a global scale. In turn, budget cuts, accompanied by higher unemployment, would reduce domestic demand, sales and profits for the companies, many of which would no longer be able to operate. In short, the U.S. economy is shrinking.

¿Porque Estados Unidos nos trata como colonia?

Por: Ángel R. Veras Aybar



Una buena parte de los lectores de estas opiniones o del título que lo encabeza dirán que no estoy haciendo ningún descubrimiento y esa es una gran verdad, pues se trata de una situación neocolonial cual padecemos desde finales del siglo XIX.

Luego de la entrada de Estados Unidos como potencia hegemónica en esta región, la realidad nos dice que estas naciones han sido consideradas como el Patio Trasero del vecino del Norte. Han ocurrido diversos y casi permanentes movimientos de resistencia contra la opresión imperial; pero no ha sido posible el triunfo de un movimiento que logre la Restauración de la Soberanía e Independencia Nacional.

Existen temas sobre los cuales la expresión de dominio imperial se hace más enorme e irritante; tales son los casos de: las extradiciones, las imposiciones sobre política migratoria, el establecimiento de oficinas de espionaje o monitoreo sobre áreas relacionadas con la seguridad nacional, las actuaciones o intromisiones de la Embajada norteamericana; las acciones de la DEA y FBI en el territorio dominicano; la imposición de sus criterios sobre representantes dominicanos en el exterior.

Ahora se despachan imponiéndole restricciones a la entrada de productos como el azúcar y con la presencia de la jefa del Comando Sur ejerciendo presiones sobre el gobierno dominicano, dizque en misión humanitaria, que siempre ha sido el pretexto de intervención.

La lista de intromisiones estadounidenses en nuestros asuntos y sus violaciones a las normas de Derecho Internacional Público y Derecho Internacional Americano sería interminable, pues el Estado Dominicano tiende a aparecer como una entealequia ante la actitud prepotente de los gobiernos que se han sucedido en Washington desde hace muchas décadas; lo cual va sumado a la ausencia en nuestro país de gobiernos con criterios firmes sobre la Autodeterminación e Independencia Nacional.

En materia de extradiciones la República Dominicana suscribió, tratado con Estados Unidos desde el año 1909, vigente a partir del 1910 y readecuado con otro tratado del año 2015, este último vigente desde el 2016. Con la ley 489 sobre extradición el país acomodó su entrega de soberanía con Estados Unidos; en tanto vino a permitir que los ciudadanos dominicanos pudieran ser extraditados, cuestión que no existía bajo las reglas anteriores sobre la materia.

Es cierto que desde hace varias décadas el mundo comenzó a ver nuevos tipos de ilícitos, ligados al: lavado de activos, corrupción pública y privada, terrorismo, trata de personas, secuestros, entre otros y que esa nueva situación conlleva una readecuación de las normas represivas contra tales infracciones; pero bajo ninguna circunstancia esto debe implementarse a costa de reducir aún más lo poco que se conserva de soberanía.

Desde antes de la entrada en vigor del nuevo tratado del 2015 ya el país observaba el afán norteamericano por imponer sus caprichos hegemónicos, algunos ciudadanos recordarán el caso de Daniel Mirambeaux y su triste final en el Palacio de la PN y ante la exigencia de Estados Unidos para llevárselo a su territorio; también se recuerda la larga espera del señor Franklin Franco para evitar su extradición a Estados Unidos. Otros casos como el de Quirino; Cesar el Abusador; el diputado Gutiérrez de Santiago han sido menos tortuosos, entre otras razones porque los solicitados en extradición se han venido a un entendimiento con los fiscales estadounidenses.

En las relaciones entre Estados Unidos y la República Dominicana no solo sobresale el hecho de que las extradiciones se producen únicamente desde nuestro país hacia el norteamericano, sino que el país caribeño tiene que soportar que individuos que causaron grandes ofensas o daños a toda la sociedad, decidan llegar a un acuerdo con USA; cumplir la pena acordada y regresar a la República Dominicana a disfrutar del patrimonio adquirido de forma ilícita, pero protegido con el manto de la impunidad; en tanto el tratado tiende a protegerlos.

En lo que respecta al mercado azucarero en el cual Estados Unidos a "descubierto" que existe malos tratos hacia los trabajadores, se trata de una acción de hipocresía o doble rasero, pues los estadounidenses siempre han estado al tanto de los atropellos y trabajos forzosos practicados por una empresa suya como lo es el Central Romana; entidad que es una expresión tanto del dominio que ejerce Estados Unidos en el plano económico, social y territorial sobre la parte este de la República Dominicana.

Desde luego que la presión mediante la cual USA se resiste a recibir azúcar proveniente del Central Romana, no solo es porque sientan compasión por los trabajadores haitianos y algunos dominicanos; sino porque ello forma parte de su estrategia sobre el Estado Dominicano para que asuma su política de solución de la crisis haitiana mediante la absorción de la migración del país vecino hacia territorio dominicano. Dicho de otra manera; los estadounidenses y las otras potencias que han acabado con Haití siguen insistiendo en que los dominicanos debemos asumir la solución del problema haitiano.

Siempre hemos insistido en que no se puede confundir la solidaridad y el internacionalismo hacia nuestros vecinos con la irresponsabilidad de las potencias que han llevado a Haití a este drama general, pues es muy cierto que los haitianos han sido solidarios con nosotros en diversas etapas, pero es necesario tener muy en cuenta que los intereses de los estadounidenses y otras potencias, no son los mismos intereses que los nuestros; en tanto se trata de una nación débil, cuya sobrevivencia como Estado le importa un bledo a esos centros hegemónicos, a los cuales solo les importan sus intereses. Sin tener que coincidir con posiciones ultranacionalistas o racistas, tampoco debemos permitir que estos causantes de la desgracia haitiana irrespeten la memoria de nuestros héroes y mártires, convirtiendo nuestro territorio en zona de disputa como han hecho en Serbia, Siria, Irak, Yemen y otras naciones débiles, naciones que han visto resquebrajada su soberanía por imposiciones de la OTAN y Estados Unidos.

Hay que seguir dando la solidaridad que el pueblo haitiano requiere; tratar de ayudar a que puedan derrotar a esa oligarquía que vive a costa de la miseria; debemos rechazar cualquier intervención militar en Haití, en tanto tal intervención es una agresión contra nosotros mismos; insistir en que se cumplan las normas legales en materia de migración, así como todo lo relativo al debido proceso de ley. Seguir denunciando y rechazando el aprovechamiento que hacen las oligarquías haitiana y dominicana de esa mano de obra barata y de cómo abusan del estado de miseria en que viven millones de haitianos y dominicanos, pues ocurre que esos poderosos solo piensan en el factor ganancia y no en la sobrevivencia de ambas naciones.

Crece el hambre en el mundo: la culpa es del capitalismo



La última semana de noviembre del 2022, la Organización de las Naciones Unidas, ONU, hizo público un alarmante informe sobre la situación humanitaria en el planeta, que advierte que para este año, 2023, un récord de 339 millones de personas necesitarán ayuda humanitaria, 65 millones más que el año pasado. Eso significa que una de cada 23 personas del planeta requerirá ayuda para sobrevivir.

La misma ONU, en octubre pasado, informó que durante los primeros meses de 2022, «el número de personas hambrientas en el mundo creció de 282 millones a 345 millones»¹, esto es más de las que ahora dice que requieren ayuda humanitaria. Obviamente, al finalizar el año, el número de hambrientos habrá sido superior, pues, la información señalada advertía que «el mundo corre el riesgo de sufrir otro año de hambre récord, ya que la crisis alimentaria mundial sigue llevando a más personas a niveles cada vez más graves de inseguridad alimentaria». El asunto es complejo, alarmante.

La ONU, al igual que otros organismos internacionales dedicados al análisis de la economía mundial aducen que los problemas alimentarios se han agudizado debido a factores como el cambio climático, las guerras (como el actual conflicto en Ucrania), la elevada inflación; incluso han llegado a «geniales» conclusiones, como decir que el hambre crece, porque crece la pobreza. Lástima que no exista un premio a la «perogrullada», algunos «genios» lo disputarían.

Es innegable que fenómenos como las guerras, la violencia política-estatal que provoca migraciones masivas, el cambio climático que provoca desastres naturales tienen incidencia negativa para que millones de personas vivan hambre, es decir, una situación que las pone al borde de la muerte; sin embargo tales argumentaciones esconden el origen o la causa real para que el hambre azote a millones de personas, particularmente niños y niñas: la apropiación privada capitalista sobre los medios de producción y sus productos.

En el año 2012, Jean Ziegler, ex relator especial de Naciones Unidas para el Derecho a la Alimentación, presentó un libro titulado «Destrucción Masiva», en el que, según la nota de prensa publicada por Europapress², «analiza el derecho a la alimentación y pone cara a las víctimas y a los verdugos del hambre». Ziegler sostiene que, según investigaciones de la organización especializada de las Naciones Unidas, en el mundo hay la capacidad para alimentar a 12.000 millones de personas, es decir para cuatro mil millones más de la actual población planetaria. Sin

embargo, cada año, «más de tres millones de chicos se mueren a causa del hambre y las enfermedades —tos, diarreas, rubeolas, malaria— que el hambre favorece... Tres millones... son más de 8.000 chicos muertos cada día, más de 300 cada hora, más de cinco en un solo minuto».³ Ziegler dice que «un niño que muere de hambre es un niño asesinado», y que en este caso «los asesinos son los especuladores, que aumentan los precios de los alimentos para aumentar sus ganancias. También hay unos cómplices, que son los bancos y los gobiernos occidentales, ya que les sería muy fácil acabar con la especulación alimentaria y no hacen nada para impedirlo. Todas las bolsas del mundo funcionan sobre una ley nacional y bastaría con cambiar un artículo. Así de simple.»

Miremos un poco hacia atrás

En la década de los ochentas y noventas se produjo una gran ofensiva del capital financiero internacional, que provocó cambios profundos en las economías de los países. La ronda Uruguay (1986-1994) de la Organización Mundial de Comercio, aprobó un Acuerdo General sobre Aranceles Aduaneros y Comercio, que envolvió a 123 países como «partes contratantes». Muchos países fueron obligados a rebajar sus barreras aduaneras y sus incentivos a la producción agraria, mientras que Estados Unidos, Europa y Japón incrementaban los subsidios a sus productores, de manera que podían producir más y copar los mercados.

Por esa misma época, en 1991, Goldman Sachs, decidió entrar con todo en el negocio de los alimentos y «seleccionó 18 ingredientes que podían convertir en commodities y prepararon un elixir financiero que incluía vacas, cerdos, café, cacao, maíz, y un par de variedades de trigo.»⁴ Hicieron cálculos económicos de inversiones, costos, utilidades y crearon el Goldman Sachs Commodity Index, y empezaron ofrecer acciones de este índice. El éxito se materializó en las bóvedas del Goldman Sachs, los precios de las materias primas poco a poco fueron elevándose, y luego crecieron más rápidamente. Otros banqueros decidieron no quedarse atrás y crearon sus propios índices de alimentos para sus clientes. Cada vez que subía el valor de las acciones de los inversionistas, el precio de los desayunos y almuerzos de los trabajadores también crecía. Los monopolios financieros hacen negocio con la comida, al igual que lo hacen con los diamantes, el petróleo, el oro o cualquier otro producto. ¡Negocio es negocio!

Los grandes monopolios financieros internacionales dieron blanco, porque los alimentos, el agua y la tierra siempre tendrán valor, más que los bonos o papeles de deuda de largo plazo, y debido a su volatilidad siempre harán mucho dinero porque a demanda de alimentos nunca va a desaparecer. «En 2003, las inversiones en commodities alimentarias importaban unos 13.000 millones de dólares; en 2008 llegaron a 317.000 millones —casi 25 veces más dinero, casi 25 veces más demanda. Y los precios, por supuesto, se dispararon.

Analistas nada sospechosos de izquierdismo calculaba que esa cantidad de dinero eran 15 veces mayor que el tamaño del mercado agrícola mundial... En la Bolsa de Chicago se negocia cada año una cantidad de trigo igual a cincuenta veces la producción mundial de trigo... cada grano de maíz que hay en el mundo se compra y se vende —ni se compra ni se vende, se simula— cincuenta veces.»⁵ En otras palabras, la especulación del trigo mueve cincuenta veces más dinero que la producción de trigo.

De más está decir que las políticas neoliberales aprobadas por el Consenso de Washington quebraron las economías de pequeños productores agrícolas, fortalecieron la concentración de la tierra para procesos de producción orientados a la exportación, volvieron más dependientes a los países con menor desarrollo económico y, claro incrementaron la pobreza y el hambre.

Y aún siguen diciendo que no hay nada mejor que el capitalismo.

Referencias:

1 <https://news.un.org/es/story/2022/10/1516122>

2 <https://www.europapress.es/epsocial/punto-critico/noticia-jean-ziegler-exrelator-onu-nino-muere-hambre-nino-asesinado-20120604100007.html>

3 Caparrós Martín, *El Hambre*. 2021

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

Esta es un capítulo del libro La guerra en ucrania y el contexto internacional. Fue escrito en forma de entrevista por Roy Daza al economista dominicano-salvadoreño César Sención Villalona, por lo que el "tú" en el texto se refiere a Sención. Nos parece útil porque tiene información actualizada sobre la situación económica en los Estados Unidos. Sin embargo, en capítulos posteriores, Sención usa esto para apoyar la progresividad de un mundo multipolar en general, que discutimos en otro artículo (en inglés) en este número de TMLU.

La declinación de la economía de EE.UU.

En tu intervención en el XXV Encuentro del Foro de Sao Paulo, que tuvo lugar en Caracas, en julio de 2019, señalaste —con todo rigor—, que está en curso un proceso declinación de la economía norteamericana, la más importante del mundo ¿Podrías ampliarnos esta idea, para situarnos en el contexto global e histórico de lo que está pasando?

Desde hace tres décadas la economía estadounidense se retrocede ante sus principales competidores. Muchas variables lo demuestran, pero solo me voy a referir siguientes:

- d) el menor peso en la producción y el comercio internacional,
- e) el excesivo endeudamiento,
- f) el paulatino desplazamiento del dólar.

Primer punto: el menor peso en la producción y el comercio internacional:

En 1945 EE.UU. generaba el 50% del PIB mundial, y en 1948 tenía casi el 22% de las exportaciones mundiales de bienes. Como el sistema monetario internacional depende de la estructura productiva mundial, el país con mayor peso en la producción y exportación impone su moneda como patrón de cambio, pues en la medida en que sus mercancías son las más demandadas, su moneda es la más solicitada.

Cuando la Unión de Republicas Socialistas Soviéticas (URSS), se desintegro hace 31 años, y cayeron los gobiernos de Europa Oriental encabezados por los partidos comunistas, EE.UU. quedo como la única potencia política y militar del mundo; también era la primera economía, con casi el 40% del PIB y el 25% de las exportaciones mundiales de bienes. El dólar se utilizaba en el 95% de las transacciones comerciales y financieras del mundo. Sin embargo, al cerrar el siglo XX su aporte al PIB cayo en el 31%, o sea, había perdido 9 puntos porcentuales con respecto a 1991, año de la desintegración de la URSS. Japón era la segunda economía, seguida de Alemania, Reino Unido y Francia; China ocupaba el sexto lugar, con el 3.5%, pero estaba creciendo mucho, Rusia y la India estaban muy distantes, en los lugares 13 y 18, respectivamente.

Un hecho de suma trascendencia tiene lugar en 2006: Brasil, Rusia, China y la India decidieron agruparse en el BRIC (Brasil, Rusia, India y China), un bloque económico y político al que luego se incorporó Sudáfrica, para constituir el BRICS. Esos países tienen el 50% de la población mundial y el 30% de la superficie terrestre, generan el 25% del PIB global (EE.UU., tiene el 24%), poseen el 45% de las reservas de divisas, abundantes reservas de petróleo, gas (sobre todo Rusia y Brasil), carbón y minerales; producen abundantes alimentos (salvo Rusia) y tienen economías complementarias.

El BRICS, ya incorporada Sudáfrica, posee un banco y un fondo de inversión de cientos de miles de millones de dólares, capaces de competir en el mediano plazo con el Fondo Monetario Internacional y el Banco Mundial. Ese bloque no está consolidado, pero es un potente rival de Europa y de EE.UU.

Al tiempo que iban cuajando ese, y otros bloques, la economía china acelero su crecimiento. Entre 2005 y 2021 su PIB nominal aumento 718%, al pasar de 2,256 miles de millones de dólares, a 18.463 miles de millones de dólares, y el de EE.UU., solo aumento 97%, de 12,580 a 24,796 miles de millones.

En esos años China duplico su participación en la economía internacional, supero a Reino Unido, Alemania y Japón y se convirtió en la segunda economía del mundo, con el 18% del PIB mundial en 2021 contra un 24% de EE.UU. En 2021, China produjo más bienes y servicios que toda la Unión Europea: 18,463 miles de millones de dólares contra 18,353 miles de millones.

China también ocupa el primer lugar en la producción de miles de rubros industriales, incluyendo muchos de alta tecnología, logro un impresionante desarrollo en las comunicaciones y posee 3 billones de reservas monetarias, es decir, casi el 20% del total mundial. Su balanza comercial con EE.UU. registro un superávit de 355,000 millones, en 2021, además, aumenta su peso en el mercado energético debido al crecimiento de su economía, de esa nación dependerán mucho, en un futuro cercano, los precios de los combustibles y los sistemas energéticos.

La India, que al cerrar el siglo XX era la economía número 13 del mundo, hoy es la sexta; Rusia, que ocupaba el lugar 18, hoy tiene el puesto 12. Y Brasil paso del lugar 12 al 11. Eso significa que cuatro países del BRICS están entre las primeras quince economías del mundo y aportan, junto a Sudáfrica, la cuarta parte de la producción del planeta. Las naciones agrupadas en el BRICS tienen muchos recursos energéticos. Rusia posee la octava reserva mundial de

petróleo y la primera reserva de gas natural (25% del mundo). Brasil tiene abundante petróleo y muchos recursos mineros en general. Las mayores reservas de minerales y de energía están en Rusia, en Suramérica y en los países del Medio Oriente.

En contraste, Alemania, Francia y Japón no poseen petróleo. Europa depende mucho del gas ruso. Y EE.UU., que si bien ha levantado la producción de petróleo de esquisto, no tiene garantizado su abastecimiento (consume el 24% del mundo), pues ese petróleo no es rentable a un precio menor de 70 dólares. Hoy es rentable, pero por una coyuntura de alza de precio.

Si en el terreno de la producción la economía estadounidense retrocede, el descenso de las exportaciones es aún mayor. Hace 14 años China supero a EE.UU. La primera potencia exportadora es China, con el 15%, es decir, la primera del mundo, contra un 10 por ciento de la norteamericana. Entre 1948 y 2021 la economía de EE.UU. cayo del 21.7% al 10% de las exportaciones mundiales, Alemania aumento de 1.4% a 10% y la República Popular China paso de 0.8% al 15% de las exportaciones mundiales.

EE.UU., que declina como país exportador, es —al mismo tiempo— el primer importador del mundo, con el 11% del total. Su balance comercial es muy deficitario, sobre todo con China, la Unión Europea, México y Japón. Aunque su comercio de servicios es positivo, es casi cuatro veces menor a su saldo comercial negativo, que en el año 2021 fue de 1.182.561,9 millones de dólares y el cual es cubierto principalmente con endeudamiento externo y emisión de dinero sin respaldo.

Las razones de esos cambios son muchas. Una de ellas es que mientras China, Alemania y otros países apuntalaban sus economías durante muchas décadas, el gobierno de EE.UU., que siempre está involucrado en guerras, descuido sus inversiones en el área social y en la infraestructura básica, que —por cierto— se encuentra bastante deteriorada, y si por si fuese poco: elevo su presupuesto de guerra, al extremo de que su gasto militar representa el 35% de los gastos militares del mundo. Tal incremento es la principal causa del profundo y creciente déficit fiscal de los Estados Unidos.

El peor resultado de la política guerrerista y el descuido de la inversión básica es la perdida de la productividad laboral. Desde el fin de la Segunda Guerra Mundial hasta los años 70, la productividad en EE.UU. crecio a un promedio de 3% anual; entre los años 70 y los 90 cayo a la mitad, y en las últimas décadas esta peor. En el primer trimestre de 2022, cayo -7.5%, el mayor descenso de la producción por hora de los trabajadores desde 1947, según los datos de principios de mayo del Departamento de Trabajo. Y los costos laborales subieron 9.9%.

En China, la productividad laboral crecio 7.5% entre 1953 y 2016. Desde entonces crece menos, lo cual es hasta cierto punto normal, porque en la medida en que las magnitudes crecen, la tasa de crecimiento aminora; no en valor sino en porcentaje.

Segundo punto: el excesivo endeudamiento.

Para cubrir el déficit fiscal, continuar las guerras y mantener las importaciones, dicha economía requiere la entrada de miles de millones de dólares en calidad de préstamos. La deuda pública externa paso de 12,439 millones de dólares en el año 2011 (12.4 billones) a 30.000 de millones (30 billones) en febrero de 2022. La deuda es la más grande del mundo y supera el valor del PIB. Su mayor parte esta contraída con Japón, Isla Caimán y China. Los países que más se benefician de las importaciones de EE.UU. (China y Japón) utilizan parte de sus reservas para comprar bonos del gobierno norteamericano y evitar su quiebra. Si los acreedores dejaran de prestarle, el gobierno estadounidense no podría sostener su presupuesto, pero la deuda también ata a los prestamistas a ciertas decisiones de los norteamericanos, que, si deciden no pagar, trastornan la economía mundial.

Sin duda, se trata de un problema que amenaza la estabilidad económica planetaria, pero que tendrá una solución adversa a EE.UU. si esa nación pierde definitivamente su precaria hegemonía.

Tercer punto: el paulatino desplazamiento del dólar.

Sobre ese tercer problema debemos decir que en la medida en que el peso de la economía de EE.UU. disminuye, insisto, tanto en la producción como en las exportaciones mundiales, esa moneda se debilita como patrón de intercambio y de reserva internacional. Las implicaciones de ese hecho para ese país y la economía mundial son muy importantes.

Como vimos antes, una parte de los dólares con que EE.UU. compra en el exterior los obtiene de préstamos y venta de bonos, China, —por ejemplo— compra bonos que ellos emiten para cubrir su déficit.

Como se trata de un movimiento financiero-contable hacia EE.UU., parte de esos recursos permiten, a su vez, que los empresarios norteamericanos importen mercancías. EE.UU. también atrae dólares mediante la inversión extranjera, de China y Japón y otros países, y emite billetes sin respaldo en la producción (inorgánico), con el que financian parte del déficit gubernamental y luego circulan por los bancos y las empresas importadoras. Como el dólar es de uso mundial, se da el “lujo” de imprimir determinadas cantidades y comprar muchas mercancías en el exterior, incluyendo materias primas energéticas, bienes de capital (maquinarias y equipos) y de consumo, baratos, provenientes de China y

otros países y a los cuales se acostumbró su población.

Ahora bien, veamos cómo funciona ese proceso?

El mecanismo funciona así: la Reserva Federal emite dinero sin respaldo para financiar el déficit fiscal de más de 700,000 millones de dólares; ese dinero se mueve en la economía, va al comercio y otros sectores, fluye a los bancos, pasa a manos de las empresas importadoras (vía crédito) y de ahí va al exterior a comprar bienes y servicios, porque el dólar es aceptado en todo el mundo.

Esa mecánica viene desde 1971, pero el monto anual es cada vez mayor. O sea, que el inorgánico sirve para financiar, al mismo tiempo, el déficit fiscal y parte del comercial.

Esa emisión sin respaldo no genera inflación en EE.UU., porque el dinero fluye al exterior en forma de importaciones. Pero si esa moneda es sustituida por otra o por una canasta de monedas (físicas o digitales) no serviría para financiar importaciones y su emisión sin respaldo no tendría mucho sentido. Eso significaría un desplome de las importaciones de bienes de consumo, materias primas y bienes de capital, una baja en la producción y un aumento del desempleo.

Pero la ventaja de emitir moneda sin respaldo se convirtió en una amenaza para la sobrevivencia de la economía norteamericana, debido a que la mayor parte de esos dólares está bajo control de las autoridades monetarias de las principales economías del mundo, que disponen de enormes reservas internacionales que cambiaran por otras monedas si el dólar sigue declinando. De hecho, eso lo están haciendo algunos gobiernos, como veremos más adelante.

China es el país con mayores reservas del mundo y estas han crecido mucho en los últimos años: En 2003 estaban en 403,000 millones; en 2007 aumentaron a 1,433,000 millones; y a finales de 2021 a 3,222,894 millones, es decir, representan alrededor del 20% de las reservas monetarias del mundo.

Si China y otros países con economías grandes decidieran no cobrar en dólares por sus exportaciones y su comercio con EE.UU., sino en otras monedas, como euro, yen, renminbi o cualquier otra moneda dura (física o digital, da igual), ese país no podría seguir emitiendo dólares sin respaldo para comprar excesivamente en el mundo y tendría que ajustar sus compras a su disponibilidad de otras monedas, las cuales prácticamente no posee porque su saldo comercial con Canadá, México, Europa y Asia es negativo.

El resultado sería una caída de las importaciones norteamericanas, la quiebra de muchas empresas comerciales y bancarias y la reducción de una parte de su aparato productivo, el desempleo crecería, y la economía disminuiría su tamaño. En un contexto de fuerte descenso económico, el gobierno de EE.UU. dispondría de menos recursos y no podría sostener las más de 800 bases militares que tiene en el mundo. *Al retroceso económico le seguiría una menor influencia en la política mundial. Ese es un aspecto crucial a tener presente en todos los conflictos internacionales.*

Hay que tomar en cuenta que su aparato productivo es muy dependiente de materias primas importadas, algunas de las cuales no puede sustituir porque no cuenta con cantidades suficientes. Tampoco puede sustituir muchos bienes de consumo que importa, sobre todo de Asia, donde la mano de obra es muy barata y los costos en general son menores. Si las empresas norteamericanas produjeran esos bienes internamente tendrían que venderlos muy caros o bajar el costo salarial y provocar malestar en la población trabajadora.

En un artículo publicado en septiembre de 2009, Paul Craig Roberts, quien fue Secretario Asistente del Tesoro durante el gobierno de Ronald Reagan, aseguro que “El tiempo del dólar está a punto de terminarse, aunque puede perdurar unos cuantos años más (...) la consecuencia de emitir tantos billones de dólares nuevos para apoyar los precios de los bonos del Tesoro de EE.UU. sería destruir la moneda fiduciaria: detrás de estos dólares no hay servicios ni mercancías. Desde 2008, los servicios y mercancías no han crecido en proporción a los dólares que la Reserva Federal ha creado (...) Si los BRICS tienen éxito al organizar sus pagos internacionales con sus respectivas divisas propias y simplemente abandonan el uso del dólar, esto resultara en la caída de la demanda del dólar en los mercados de divisas (...) la fuente de la hegemonía financiera estadounidense”¹.

Como un porcentaje considerable de los ingresos del gobierno de EE.UU. proviene de la venta de bonos del tesoro, con los cuales cubre su déficit fiscal, si los acreedores reducen la compra de esos bonos los gobiernos tendrían que recortar sus gastos y no podría pagar la mayor cantidad del dinero que debe, a no ser que constriña su gasto militar o su inversión. Y resulta que una buena parte de ese dinero se lo debe a China y a Japón, o sea, a dos de sus principales competidores. De manera que lo que ocurra con ese entramado financiero tiene implicaciones internacionales.

A China le conviene convertir su moneda en la divisa reserva del mundo, porque reduciría el riesgo cambiario de sus empresas y los costos de su comercio exterior. Pero el renminbi, que gana terreno como moneda de comercio y de inversión, todavía tiene una baja participación (2%) en la composición de las reservas monetarias internacionales, el 60% de las cuales están en dólares el 20% en euro y el resto en yen, libra esterlina y otras monedas. Eso se debe a que China no tiene un fuerte mercado de capitales que permita convertir el renminbi en una moneda completamente convertible. Sin embargo, está dando algunos pasos en ese sentido, como la creación de mercados en su moneda, como el de

¹ Craig, Paul. “El dolar tiene los dias contados”. Web Cuba por Siempre. 16 de octubre de 2014. <https://micubaporsiempre.wordpress.com/author/micubaporsiempr>

petróleo, emitiendo futuros en The Shanghai Futures, y el de hierro, a través de la bolsa de Bohai, y de oro a través de The Shanghai Gold Exchange.

Al ritmo que va el renminbi, en menos de una década estará entre las tres principales monedas del mundo. Y esa es una seria amenaza para el dólar estadounidense y el propio euro, cuyo papel será menos relevante en la medida en que siga retrocediendo en la economía mundial.

Qué acciones se están desarrollando en el mundo encaminadas a disminuir el poder del dólar y que impactos tendría el fin de la era dólar en las empresas de EE.UU.? Muchas. Veamos algunas:

- g) En junio de 2009, los países de la Organización de Cooperación de Shanghai (OCS)—China, Rusia, Uzbekistán, Kirguistán, Tadjikistan y Kazajstán— acordaron realizar el comercio entre ellos pagando con sus monedas nacionales o con una divisa supranacional que sustituya al dólar.
- h) En 2009, China lanzó un programa para que los países vecinos hicieran negocios comerciales con el yuan sin tener que convertir los pagos a otras divisas. Compañías de Shanghai firmaron contratos con contrapartes en Hong Kong e Indonesia para hacer intercambios con la moneda china si las contrapartes la poseen. La idea es que el renminbi luego se utilice entre China y el grupo de países de la Asociación de Países del Sudeste Asiático (ASEAN), integrado por Brunéi, Birmania, Camboya, Indonesia, Laos, Malasia, Filipinas, Singapur, Tailandia y Vietnam.
- i) En 2009, el gobierno chino aplicó un programa para que las compañías de su país usaran el yuan en su comercio exterior. China también permite que algunas naciones vecinas hagan negocios con su moneda, que se extendió a Corea del Sur, Malasia, Belarus e Indonesia.
- j) En su “Sondeo Económico Mundial y Social 2010”, la Organización de las Naciones Unidas afirmó que el dólar no era una reserva de valor estable y no había contribuido a llevar equilibrio a los mercados financieros. Como opción propuso crear un sistema que no estuviera basado en una moneda única, sino en una canasta de cuatro divisas: dólar, euro, yen y libra esterlina. Esa idea había sido planteada por China y por algunos países de Europa en la cumbre del G-20, de marzo de 2009.
- k) En enero de 2011, el gobierno chino autorizó a empresas de su país a hacer inversiones directas en el exterior en renminbi, salvo inversiones financieras. Además, el Banco de China comenzó a ofrecer cuentas en yuanes en sus filiales en Nueva York y Los Ángeles.
- l) A finales de 2011, los gobiernos de China y Rusia acordaron que las personas y empresas de sus países podrían realizar transacciones y pagos en sus respectivas monedas: renminbi y rublo. Y en marzo de 2012, China y Japón acordaron eliminar gradualmente el uso del dólar en sus intercambios y hacer los cálculos en sus monedas.
 - j) En 2011, Irán acordó con la India que los pagos por las importaciones de petróleo iraní serían efectuados en rupias indias y posteriormente se convertirían en una moneda denominada de manera separada.
 - k) En enero de 2012, los gobiernos de China y Emiratos Árabes Unidos acordaron sustituir el dólar por sus respectivas monedas en el comercio de petróleo. Como antes Irán había salido del área dólar, el sistema de petrodólar (venta de petróleos por dólar) continúa resquebrajándose.
 - l) Decenas de miles de empresas chinas usan la moneda de su país en sus operaciones en Asia.
- j) En octubre de 2013, el ministro de finanzas británico, George Osborne, y su homólogo chino acordaron convertir la ciudad de Londres en la “capital global” del renminbi, y en enero de 2014 el Banco Popular de China emitió bonos en Gran Bretaña por 2,500 millones de yuanes. El gobierno y las empresas británicas pueden comprar hasta 80.000 millones de yuanes en bonos, así como acciones y otros instrumentos financieros de origen chino. A su vez, los bancos comerciales chinos pueden abrir sucursales en Gran Bretaña.
- k) En noviembre de 2014, el Banco Popular de China acordó con el Banco Federal Alemán que los prestamistas alemanes tuvieran acceso directo al renminbi, lo que significa que los euros serán directamente convertibles en yuanes sin tener que convertirse previamente en dólares. En otras palabras, el yuan penetra en Frankfurt, considerada la capital financiera de Europa.
- l) En noviembre de 2014, China acordó con Canadá sustituir el dólar por el renminbi en sus intercambios. Canadá es uno de los principales socios comerciales de EE.UU., con un intercambio anual superior a los 600 mil millones de dólares.
- m) En noviembre de 2014, China acordó con Qatar realizar sus intercambios comerciales en renminbi. Ese acuerdo también afecta a los petrodólares, pues China no estará obligada a conseguir la moneda de EE.UU. para pagarle a Qatar el petróleo que le compra. Si ese acuerdo se extiende a otros países de la OPEP, sería el fin de los petrodólares.
- n) El 29 de diciembre de 2014 comenzó el acuerdo cambiario bilateral entre el Banco Popular de China y el Banco Central Ruso, mediante el cual ambos países intercambiarán mercancías por 150.000 millones de dólares en sus respectivas monedas. China también realizara intercambios utilizando el renminbi y las monedas de Nueva Zelanda y de algunos países de Asia con problemas de liquidez.

- ñ) En 2014 había 10,000 instituciones financieras internacionales operando con renminbi. En 2011 solo operaban 900.
- o) El dólar estadounidense fue eliminado de la lista de monedas utilizadas por Irán en sus transacciones comerciales con Irak.
- p) En 2016, el FMI incorporo el renminbi chino a la cesta del derecho especial de giro (DEG). Las otras monedas son el dólar de EE.UU., el euro, el yen y la libra esterlina. Ese es un reconocimiento del papel de la economía china en el mercado y el sistema financiero mundial, pues los criterios del FMI para adoptar esa medida son el peso de un país en las exportaciones mundiales y el amplio uso de su moneda para saldar transacciones internacionales.
- q) El 26 de octubre de 2018, China y Japón firmaron un acuerdo de permuta de divisas por 30,000 millones de dólares para intensificar la cooperación comercial, promover la estabilidad financiera y facilitar intercambios económicos y financieros bilaterales. El acuerdo sería valido durante tres años y permitirá que ambos países intercambien pagos en una moneda por cantidades equivalentes en la otra. El Banco de Japón y las instituciones financieras japonesas han estado expandiendo sus negocios basados en renminbi.
- r) Muchos bancos centrales del mundo usan la moneda china como reserva. A principios de 2018, los bancos centrales de Inglaterra, Suiza, Bélgica y Eslovaquia la poseían en sus reservas por un monto superior a los 100,000 millones de dólares.

También hay que tomar en cuenta que China es el principal socio comercial de alrededor de 140 países, en la mayoría de los cuales aún no se utiliza su moneda en los intercambios comerciales, pero podría utilizarse si el comercio se amplía y el dólar pierde terreno.

Para las empresas transnacionales que operan en EE.UU., y otras partes del mundo, el cambio mundial de moneda no sería traumático, dado su carácter internacional, monopolístico y oligopolístico. Esas empresas operan a escala casi planetaria y articulan las redes productivas, financieras y comerciales de los bienes y servicios que controlan.

Sin embargo, en el mundo no solo hay monopolios. Buena parte de las estructuras económicas de los países, si bien están vinculadas al mercado mundial (sobre todo por la vía comercial y financiera), son vulnerables a decisiones políticas internas e internacionales.

En el caso de EE.UU., si el dólar fuese sustituido como moneda mundial, disminuiría la capacidad de importación de las empresas debido a la falta de recursos para financiar las compras externas de bienes de consumo, materias primas y bienes de capital utilizados en sus procesos productivos. Una parte de esos recursos proviene hoy de la emisión de inorgánicos, que con el cambio de moneda no podría continuar. El crédito interno bajaría y muchas empresas se arruinarían, tanto las que importan como las que requieran insumos y maquinarias del exterior.

Como el cambio de moneda y el fin de la emisión de dólares sin respaldo afectarían las finanzas del gobierno norteamericano, habría un recorte de subsidios, menos inversión pública y privada y más desempleo. Las empresas subsidiadas, no importa el origen de sus inversiones, perderían rentabilidad y capacidad competitiva a escala mundial. A su vez, el recorte presupuestario, acompañado de un mayor desempleo, reduciría la demanda interna, las ventas y las ganancias de las empresas, muchas de las cuales no podrían seguir operando. En fin, la economía estadounidense se achicaría.