

Pseudo-left parties promote US-French-British bombing of Syria

By Will Morrow
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A number of political parties that call themselves socialist proved they are nothing of the sort by lending support to Friday night's illegal US, French and British bombing of Syria.

Groups like the American International Socialist Organization (ISO), Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), and the French New Anticapitalist Party (NPA) are pro-war organizations. They are participating in a propaganda campaign with the capitalist press organs and the intelligence agencies to spread the lie that the bombings are justified on a "humanitarian" basis and that additional military force is required. Socialists reject these attempts to cover imperialist intervention in a fraudulent "left" veneer.

First, these pseudo-left groups attack those who question the legitimacy of the CIA and MI6 claims that Assad used chemical weapons in Eastern Ghouta last week. They accept the claims produced by the same military intelligence agencies that spread the lie of "weapons of mass destruction" to justify the invasion of Iraq, which led to the deaths of over 1 million people.

The NPA's Joseph Daher wrote in an April 10 titled "Syria: A nightmare without end" that the Syrian government "killed over 100 people in 24 hours, according to the first estimates, with especially strong suspicions of the use of chlorine and sarin gas." Daher unquestionably accepts the claims that the Assad regime carried out a chemical gas attack in Ghouta on April 7. This charge has been promulgated throughout the media without evidence in order to justify an illegal war of aggression against Syria that has placed humanity on the verge of a nuclear world war between the US and Russia. In a post-bombing statement titled "With the Syrian people, against the bombings and all imperialist intervention," the NPA called for a

"rejection of the campaign to discredit the veracity of yet another criminal chemical attack by the regime."

The ISO's article from April 13, "US missiles won't stop Syria's suffering," features a photo of a child on a ventilator taken from the widely circulated video that the CIA claims is "proof" that Assad used chemical weapons. The article states, "On April 7, a chemical attack carried out by the Syrian government forces in the city of Douma in southwestern Syria killed at least 43 people and left many others struggling to breathe." The article declares that while the "Assad regime denied launching the chemical attack" and the "Russian government likewise claimed the reports of a gas attack were a 'hoax,'" these "denials are a cruel lie."

But US Defense Secretary James Mattis acknowledged Friday night in a press conference that he hadn't found evidence that the Syrian government used chemical weapons until Friday afternoon, hours after the ISO's article appeared. In other words, the ISO reached its guilty verdict before the Pentagon claims it reached theirs.

Second, the pseudo-left groups criticize the bombing campaign on the grounds that it does not go far enough and that more military intervention is required.

Writing for the NPA, Daher writes with concern that "Donald Trump has reiterated his wish to withdraw from Syria, in spite of resistance among his closest advisors." He notes that such a retreat "is being encouraged by the principal powers intervening in Syria: Russia, Iran and Turkey." Daher concludes by declaring that the "crimes of the Assad regime continue with the silence and complicity of the international and regional powers." In an April 13 interview published on the website of *International Viewpoint*, the magazine of the Pabloite United Secretariat, Daher

calls for the US to arm the Syrian rebels: “We should also support the provision of weapons and arms to these democratic forces in the region to combat both counter-revolutionary forces.”

The ISO’s April 13 article criticizes the Obama administration because it “denied rebels access to anti-aircraft or anti-tank weaponry that would have given them a potentially decisive advantage against the Syrian military, which could have led to the fall of the regime altogether.” The article continued:

“From the beginning of the Arab Spring uprising in Syria, U.S. policy has been aimed at making sure some form of the current regime continues in Syria, with or without Assad. As the regime’s savage counterrevolution advanced, thanks to Russian military might, the U.S. has come to accept that Assad will stay, and the Russians will be the powerbrokers in the country.”

Jacobin magazine, the journal supported by the DSA, has not published a single recent article on the US threats against Syria nor on the bombings themselves. While *Jacobin* editor Bhaskar Sunkara remained silent about Trump’s threats to bomb Syria in the days before the attack, he found time to publish multiple tweets about the New York Knicks basketball team. *Jacobin*’s silence denotes consent and complacency.

The same is true for the Australian pseudo-left organization Socialist Alternative, which maintains close relations with the ISO in the US, and International Viewpoint, the magazine of the Pabloite, ex-Trotskyist United Secretariat. These groups are nothing more than propaganda wings of American, British, and French imperialism. They provide the intelligence agencies with a megaphone, spouting their justifications for war and coloring them with “left” sounding verbiage.

These groups are pro-war because they belong to a privileged upper-middle-class layer that stands to benefit, materially, from the imperialist pillaging of the Middle East. Their pro-war proclamations reflect the right-wing shift among sections of the wealthiest 10 percent of American and European society whose stock portfolios have skyrocketed as a result of the financialization of the world economy and the global stock market boom.

Polls show massive opposition in the US, France,

and the UK to the Syria strikes. This reflects the growing opposition of the working class to war, which takes place under conditions of a growth of the class struggle worldwide as evidenced most acutely in the three countries who launched Friday night’s strikes. The pseudo-left and the imperialist powers fear that the struggles of the working class will merge with broad antiwar sentiment among workers and youth. The building of a mass movement in the working class opposed to war and inequality will take place in a conscious struggle *against* those groups who call themselves “left” while helping the imperialist powers fling bombs across the former colonial countries.

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