

## Trump's Triumphant First 100 Days (for the Ruling Class)" by Steve Jonas

May 8, 2017

Is there a more appropriate day on which to consider one of the most all-round takeovers of the U.S. Federal Government by the U.S. ruling class than May 1 (on which date this column was originally written)? For that was the date chosen, by a briefly united U.S. labor movement in the 1880s, as the official founding day for its planned major campaign to improve wages, hours and working conditions. The first "May Day" was held on May 1, 1886. And yes, although in the 20th century May Day became associated with the Soviet Union and Communist Parties around the world, in the beginning it was a U.S. holiday.

Unfortunately, the labor unity didn't last long. It happens that one of the 1880s movement's major components, the Knights of Labor, was, from the beginning, racially integrated. Another, the American Federation of Labor, was not. The ruling class then as now, manipulated racism and prejudice to undermine the labor movement then, just as guess who and guess which party, representing the ruling class, does now.

In 1991, as I have noted previously on more than one occasion, a young Democratic candidate for the party's Presidential nomination the following year, put it very well:

'For 12 years, the Republicans have tried to divide us, race against race.' . . . 'Here in the shadow of this great building, all of us, we know all about race-baiting. They've used that old tool on us for decades now. And I want to tell you one thing: I understand that tactic, and I will not let them get away with it in 1992.' "

Yes, that was Bill Clinton. Neither Clinton ever came close to following through on the politico/economic meaning of that statement. But now the nation has elected a (minority) President who rode to power in part because he openly adopted the policy and strategy that Bill Clinton exposed, on paper.

The Left and many Democratic centrists, even some Republicans in the latter category have been stating strongly and loudly that on balance Trump's First 100 days have been a failure. No major pieces of legislation passed. "Obamacare" (the Republicans' racist name for the Affordable Care Act) still stands, despite the fact that Trump promised that it would go "on the first day," at least metaphorically speaking. Since Trump has so little knowledge about how government actually works, he might have actually thought that that would be possible.

Just as he promised that both the Iran Deal and the Paris Agreements would go (although one or 't'other or both might still), he also promised that the easing of relationships with Cuba would be un-done (hasn't happened yet --- could it be that he changed his mind when he saw the movie, *The Fate of the Furious* and thought that the first car chase, set in the streets of Havana, was really terrific), that the US Embassy in Israel would be moved to Jerusalem, that China would be punished for "currency manipulation," that overnight millions of lost U.S. jobs would somehow be restored, that Wall Construction, to be paid for by Mexico, would start forthwith, that a Deportation Force would be assembled from existing agencies and put into action forthwith. As is well-known, only the last has been done. And so, along with much other evidence, the Left and the Democrats have proclaimed Trump's First Hundred Days a failure.

Well, not so fast. Trump, who through the whole campaign seemed to be a sure loser, was put in a position to be the winner when Comey interfered against Clinton for a second time only because of increasing support from the economically dominant sector of the U.S. Ruling class. So, forget the "broken promises," the possible role of Russia, the use of "alternative facts," the out-and-out lying, the continuous use of manufactured distractions from major issues on

which Trump and his "administration" are losing, and so on and so forth. For the U.S. ruling class, this is what counts:

1. The Two Most Important Ones (central to Modern Republicanism, since Goldwater): MASSIVE DEREGULATION IN MANY SECTORS (which has already begun with a vengeance). And the proposed massive tax cuts for the wealthy, (which were supposed to begin with the ones not so hidden in the original "Obamacare Repeal and 'Replace' " measure which failed in the House because it wasn't punitive enough against low-income folks previously without health insurance. And let us not forget the expansion of the Military-Industrial and Prison-Industrial complexes (see A.-G. Sessions for the latter) and the total reversal on NATO.

2. Next, of course, was BY HIS APPOINTMENTS THOU SHALT KNOW HIM. At this point, that needs no further comment, except to say that it is likely that only in their wildest dreams did the ruling class conceive of holding so many seats of power, directly, in the President's cabinet, especially that of a President who supposedly ran on "supporting the workers" (that is if they were white).

3. Then, the ruling class is very happy to use and exploit the two major components of Trump's base: the racist/xenophobic/Islamophobic Right and the traditional Republican Misogynistic Right. Trump so far for the first group has offered the Deportation Force, which is in full swing, the Muslim Ban (yes, it is temporarily suspended, the dropping of any programs designed to reform racist police practices, and the upcoming re-institution of the "drug war" and mandatory minimums (against only minority communities, of course).

4. To the second he is ramping up for a full-scale offensive against abortion rights and contraception (see the person he has appointed as the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs in the Department of Health and Human Services ---- a leading national opponent of both ---- whose Secretary is himself a strong opponent of abortion rights). Not directly related to ruling class interests, but they are very important for Trump and staying the course, and not possibly swerving in a direction that might actually benefit the broad mass of white U.S. workers.

5. And then Trump is also beginning to appeal to the parallel to the Misogynistic Right, the frank Religious Right, whose primary issue is the "Supremacy of God" (otherwise known as "Dominionism") over the Constitution. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos' passion for providing public funds for religious education is right in line with this ideology. Both strands of far right-wing reaction of course want to use the Power of the State to criminalize any thought, religious or otherwise, that doesn't agree with theirs on such matters as "when life begins" and "homosexual practices."

6. And so, the U.S. ruling class is in the catbird seat in terms of State-control, at least for the duration of the Trump/Pence Presidency. Unless the Russia thing really blows up in Trump's face, courtesy of Mike Flynn and other, yet-to-be-named "save your own skin" operatives, he doesn't seem to be going anywhere soon.

Postscript: On the White Working Class and the racism issue. Because they don't want to lay "blame" there, many on the Left and among the Democrats are shying away from this issue. But since Trump began his run for the Presidency on a racist premise --- "birtherism" ---- and then clearly in many ways continued along those lines, I believe that it has to be faced directly.

Why are the white workers continuing to support Trump? "Brought jobs back" or has plans to do so? No. Improved their health care? No. Strengthened their unions (which were responsible for the only good periods for the white working class in US history)? No. Has plans to strengthen their public education system (in rural and white working class sections of cities often the only option)? No. Improved protections against rapacious lenders. No. And so on and so forth. So, what could it be? Trump's good looks? Trump's pretty family? Trump's 4-6 bankruptcies (depending upon how you count)? And so on and so forth? No. Just go to the continuing Trump rallies. It's continuing racism and xenophobia --- you know, naming the "enemies" ---, loud and clear.

BUT, the strategy now for the anti-Trumpism movement must not be built on blaming the victims --- and white workers are just as much victims of it as are the African-Americans, the Native Americans, the Latinos, and, etc. It must be built on just what Bill Clinton (or at least someone who looked and sounded like Bill Clinton, because we never heard those words issuing from his lips again) said, quoted above. Neither the Left nor the Democrats, for the most part are going there, at least not yet. And if they don't, Trump, the Trumpites, and the U.S. ruling class are going to continue to win. The Doctrine of White Supremacy has been used since its invention to help maintain the power of the ruling class in this nation and its colonial predecessors. It is time to bring it to its knees.