



# Speak Out Now

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## The Two Men Who Believe They Can Rule the World

The recent meeting in China between Trump and China's president, Xi Jinping, filled the world's media. Where they met, what they ate, and who traveled with them were covered in detail. It was presented as the meeting of the world's two superpowers, aimed at maintaining a peaceful relationship while they compete for the world's markets and natural resources.

A closer look at the reality behind the show exposed the situation of the world capitalist system and the crises that lie ahead. Can they continue to avoid a direct clash that could lead to a major confrontation (World War III)?

The stakes are high. The domination of the U.S. on the world scale has been on the downturn, and China's influence has increased. This situation has been accelerated under the chaotic Trump regime, which has further dismantled the post-World War II order, which secured the relations between the U.S. and Europe. NATO was established as their military alliance, supposedly to defend Europe from the Soviet Union. Economic relations that were put in place continued during the formation of the European Union. Trump has undermined much of that.

The U.S. maintained its dominance throughout much of the world with its massive military presence. It has between 750 and 800 bases outside the U.S. The other world powers—Britain, France, Russia, and China combined—have fewer than 50 overseas military bases. As a consequence, the U.S. has been in a position to dictate much of the world economic and political order.

Recently, the U.S. has seen its economic dominance undermined by China's rapid economic development. During the past decade, under Xi's rule, China's Belt and Road initiative has extended China's investment and trade relations with countries around the world. In 2001, 30 countries had more trade with China than the U.S. In 2025, 145 countries had more trade with China than the U.S. The U.S. still dominates military production, exporting 42% of global armaments, with \$331 billion in sales.

These two superpowers are in competition for the resources that are essential for them to expand their positions in the fast-changing global economy. This means having control over access to energy sources like oil and coal. Beyond that, it means the ability to develop and produce essentials for the emerging technologies.

China has the largest known concentration of rare earth ores. It leads in the complex processing process of the ores. This provides the essential elements needed in the production of high-tech components including electric vehicle batteries, wind turbines, smartphones, magnets, and semiconductors. China also leads in the development and production of AI robots and electric vehicles.

The U.S. leads the world in AI investment and production of AI models, but China is catching up. The U.S. also has an edge in semiconductors, with developments by Nvidia providing an advantage over Chinese alternatives. The relationship to Taiwan plays a key role in this area as it produces almost 90 percent of the advanced chips needed for AI development.

The statistics tell one story. But the reality is that these two men head powerful states that exist within a system that is beyond their control—a system that demands constant expansion. They are both navigating the collision course the two countries are on. Among the unresolved questions are: Taiwan's independence, the U.S. war on Iran, and the possible confrontations developing from the U.S. and China's competition in the world economy.

These challenges can quickly escape their control and escalate into an open war. Both nations have massive weaponry, including nuclear weapons. A clash like this seemed unthinkable a decade ago, but is now a possibility.

What also may seem unthinkable is our possibility to challenge and stop this insanity. Many people around the world are aware of the situation we face. They, like increasing numbers in the U.S., are seeing the support the politicians provide to maintain this system.

In the U.S., we face ICE attacks on people in our communities, the dismantling of social services, and the deprivation of our right to vote. Confronting these attacks can be our starting point for broad social movements.

It may seem impossible, but real change comes from facing the impossible. We have seen this, from the fight against segregation which expanded to civil rights for all, to the fight for women's—and everyone's—right to vote, and the movement to end the war on Viet Nam. Each can be a step toward a broader movement. We can't be certain what the outcome will be. But we do know that our future and that of future generations is up to us.

## Reports From Speak Out Members Around the U.S.

### *The Triangle, North Carolina:*

#### **Everything Available at Luxury Retirement Home Except Respect for Its Workers**

On March 30, servers at Searstone Retirement Community in Cary walked off the job to begin a strike that has now stretched over a month. They have demanded accountability for sexual harassment against underage servers, better wages, working conditions, and an end to managerial retaliation. Searstone's management has ignored the workers. In a private community where residents pay on average \$6,000 a month for luxury lifestyles, workers haven't been afforded basic dignities. Searstone is owned by Samaritan Housing Foundation, a "non-profit" organization with over 300 million dollars of assets.

These workers have shown real courage by continuing to strike for over a month. We can't count on corporate management to do the right thing, so they need and deserve our solidarity. You can learn more and support at <https://tinyurl.com/3zk2pe34>.

### *Baltimore, Maryland:*

#### **Workers Can Stand Up to ICE Terror!**

ICE and Border Patrol may have toned down the loudest phase of their terror campaign, but immigrant neighborhoods remain under attack. In Baltimore's largely Latino neighborhood of Highlandtown, residents still face regular kidnappings by federal agents. Elementary schools have begun cancelling recess to protect children from the officers lurking around schools. Recently, workers at a bakery in Highlandtown were harassed by ICE agents, who were pursuing a man who had entered the building. Even though the agents had their hands on their guns, the workers prevented them from entering the back room and kitchen area.

With Baltimore on the shortlist for a potential ramp-up of immigration enforcement, we should learn from the bakery workers, and all have a plan with our coworkers for how we will protect each other and our neighbors from the federal thugs!

We live in the wealthiest country in the world, and it is our labor that has created all of this wealth. We aren't the ones who benefit from this. The super rich — the bosses of the big corporations and banks — keep the wealth and make all the decisions. Working people do the work that makes society run, and we can organize to unite our forces. When we do, we have enormous power to change things and make a better world.

### *Newark, New Jersey:*

#### **May Day Rallies Target Attacks on Working People**

This May 1, Newark residents held two rallies in celebration of May Day, the international workers holiday. One had about 100 people and is organized annually by a local social justice organization and union leaders.

The other rally, which began in a heavily immigrant neighborhood known as the Ironbound and marched into downtown Newark, had perhaps 200 participants. It was organized by immigrant workers' organizations and a handful of community groups. Workers gave testimonials about being under attack by ICE and CBP. One woman described how her husband had been taken, leaving her alone with her two young children. Anger at these attacks rang out consistently in chants of "chinga la migra!"

Newark's two rallies are cause for optimism. Working people are recognizing a need for solidarity with other workers and are beginning to organize to fight back.

### *Bay Area, California:*

#### **Mayor Fails to Relieve SF Housing Costs**

SF's billionaire mayor Daniel Lurie claims that the best way to address the city's housing crisis is to cut taxes and fees for real estate developers to encourage new construction. This strategy takes tax revenue away from the city budget in a time when our essential services are constantly on the chopping block. Also, it doesn't work!

A new report from the Budget Office shows no increase in construction following Lurie's tax and fee breaks. To developers, there's no point building when they know no one can afford what they'd need to charge in rent to cover construction. All of this just leads back to what we already knew: what we have in SF isn't a crisis of housing supply, it's a crisis of affordability. No politician cozying up with corporations is going to fix it.

