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Why the imperialists hate Huawei

The Chinese company Huawei has been targeted by the Donald Trump administration. At Washington's request, Canada arrested Meng Wanzhou, the chief financial officer of the company, last December. The charge? That the company did business with Iran, contrary to U.S. sanctions on that country.

Meng, the daughter of Huawei founder Ren Zhengfei, is still under house arrest in Canada and is awaiting possible extradition to the U.S.

Why has Washington focused such animosity on Huawei? Is it really because of Iran, which is also a target of U.S. aggression at the present time? Or is there more to it?

Huawei was founded just 32 years ago, but “today, Huawei's products and solutions are deployed in over 170 countries, serving more than one third of the global population. Huawei is the third-biggest global manufacturer of routers, switches and other telecommunications equipment by market share after Alcatel-Lucent and Cisco, and the brand recently joined in the ultra-competitive smartphone race.” (“Huawei: Transforming a Chinese Technology Business to a Global Brand,” martinroll.com, February 2018)

Huawei is on the cutting edge of the move to produce 5G (fifth-generation) smartphones, which are much faster and carry much more data than previous mobile phones. Some 5G phones produced by South Korean firms like Samsung and LG Corp. are already on the market and sell for more than a thousand dollars each. Apple is planning to market a 5G smartphone next year, which will cost at least that much — and probably more.

The owners of the Korean phone companies and of Apple are multimillionaires, even billionaires. But who are the owners of Huawei?

One percent of Huawei is owned by the company's founder and chief executive, Ren Zhengfei, which makes him a very rich man. But the other 99 percent is owned equally by all 180,000 workers through their union.

What U.S. company allows its workers to own 99 percent of the business — especially a business that is growing and thriving?

It seems very likely that this position of the workers at Huawei is what accounts for its remarkable achievements, as well as for the great hostility of the U.S. ruling class toward the company.

It appears that the workers at Huawei are highly motivated and encouraged to be innovative in a field that is changing and expanding by the minute. This subjective factor can be an objective advantage in the struggle between China and the U.S. over the development of new and higher technology.

U.S. decline and China's rise

U.S. imperialism is on the decline, and recent decisions by the Trump administration to impose tariffs on Chinese goods are doing nothing to halt that decline. Since China responded in kind, imposing tariffs on U.S. goods, that uncertainty has roiled stock markets here and created confusion and dismay on many levels — from Midwest farmers who have lost an important market for their products to industries dependent on Chinese-made components.

China now has the largest economy in the world. It cannot be treated as it was in the past by the imperialist predators.

China is not a chemically pure socialist country. The Chinese Communist Party decided decades ago, after a great internal political struggle, to allow a certain degree of capitalism to function as a stimulus to its economic development. But the party's control over the basic underpinnings of the economy has allowed that development to proceed for the most part in a planned way, lifting hundreds of millions of workers and peasants out of extreme poverty and revolutionizing the means of production.

Employee ownership of a single company like Huawei is not socialism, either. But in a capitalist country, such a situation would not last very long. Powerful corporate interests would gobble it up, especially as it has become so successful.

Huawei, however, 99-percent-owned by its workers, is thriving in a country where a great revolution lasting for decades broke the state power of the old ruling classes and set up a state based on the working masses. That state has made concessions, but it has not been overthrown. Building socialism “with Chinese characteristics” remains its goal.