The United Nations’ (UN) General Assembly convened in New York. Trump is being himself, a bully who runs off at the mouth to the Assembly. (Ironically, his wife, Melania, gave a talk about the evils of bullying among children.) Numerous national leaders have been addressing the General Assembly presenting both their hopes and grievances. Besides calling the North Korean leader, “rocket man”, and warning that the USA is ready to level the small country, Trump repeated a campaign theme that the UN is too bureaucratic and thus unable to get things done. Trump also pointed out that the USA is the biggest financial supporter of the UN.

As we have become familiar with Trump’s rhetoric, it is often contradictory and confusing. Basically one interpretation is that the USA is cheap. If we are to pay so much for the UN, it is to do our bidding and maintain global order according to USA corporate interests.

The UN does help refugees, holds conferences on world social and environmental problems and studies and supplies direct aid and expertise to developing nations.

Partly due to the UN leadership, measures of poverty and health have significantly improved in the last 50 or so years. The World Health Organization, the International Labor Organization, and numerous other UN departments, offers standards for each nation to aim for and provides hope for each citizen.

The UN has not been so successful at curbing demagogues and problems caused by the avarice rampant in a capitalist global economic system. Worldwide there is a refugee crisis resulting from lack of economic resources due to a fragile environment, compounded by fierce competition for those resources as different ethnic groups and/or religious groups battle each other for those limited resources and often made worse by ruthless dictators.

Since World War II, the USA has been embroiled in numerous squabbles (the Korean War, Vietnamese War, Israeli-Arab conflicts, deadly conflicts in the Western Hemisphere, numerous conflicts and disasters in Africa). Since the end of the cold war, the USA has fought in many conflicts while supporting an aggressive military force. The USA has few real enemies threatening the safety of the American citizens. We send military all over the globe to fight for corporate interests, most of the corporate interests are global or multinational. Should we stand up to support the flag and thank our military for serving and protecting a capitalist economic system? It would be wiser to reform the UN by dissolving the military in each nation and appointing and endowing the UN as the global peacekeeper and protector of each global citizen! DS

Charlotte Bleistein (1915-2017)

We lost one of our oldest members, Charlotte Bleistein. Charlotte died at the age of 102. Charlotte, a lifelong Socialist and an activist, dedicated to improving the lives of working people and promoting peace. Charlotte was proud of her Grandfather, one of the founders of the Socialist Party, an elected official and frequent contributor to The Leader, Milwaukee’s Socialist newspaper.

Charlotte, retired from her law practice at age 97, kept active right up till her death. On Saturday Sept 16, she spent the morning attending Fighting Bob Fest and finished her day at a fund raising dinner for the Wisconsin Injured Workers’ Center.

Words for thought

“Having an all-voluntary military has the downside that the nasty violence in our current stupid wars is inflicted disproportionately on those who serve, while the vast majority of the population goes on about its business hardly paying attention to the horrors of those wars.” Jeff Danziger
Wisconsin GOP v We The People

As this is about to be printed, the Wisconsin GOP is about to spend $3 billion for the creation of 13,000 jobs (more than $230,000/job) on promises made by a company called Foxconn (for many of the name says it all; fox, a deceptive, tricky, confusing predator; and con as in swindle, defraud, cheat, rip off). The state, in a less generous act, is rewarding a German company, Haribo, with $21 million to make gummy bears and other candies. (This is a bargain at only $57,000 per job, if all 385 jobs materialize).

The budget should have been finalized on June 30, but the GOP could not agree on several issues. Most notable issues were highways, but also education, prevailing wages for workers in the private sector building stuff for governments throughout Wisconsin. Not only does the budget clearly illustrate GOP & Walker priorities, the results also reveal the Walker and GOP incompetence.

While Walker is willing to spend billions (North Carolina backed out of the competition with an offer of $570 million for 8,800 jobs) to do what the market is supposed to do, he will not spend enough to build up Wisconsin’s infrastructure and human resources. The Highway rebuilding in what is called the Zoo Interchange on Milwaukee’s west side has been going on since 2012 and has a finish date of 2018, now has been extended for several years and federal funding could be in jeopardy for roads rebuilding between the Zoo Interchange and downtown Milwaukee. When Walker began his first term as governor, he embarked on an ambitious plan for building and rebuilding Wisconsin’s highways, at the expense of education and public transportation. Walker continues his attack on public transportation, as he used his partial veto powers to redirect $32 million that the state has received as part of its share of a national settlement with Volkswagen. The legislature’s budget would have given the money to local transit systems, but Walker has vetoed the provision with the result that the money will be used to re-place state vehicles. So much for providing the public with clean options to automobiles!

Walker has also closed down the state Educational Approval Board, which regulates for-profit colleges operating in the State. Many of these colleges have been shown to provide little education in return for the student going into debt having used publicly funded student loans to pay the for-profit tuitions. Does Walker really care about citizens? Does Walker worry about spending tax dollars wisely?

Although touting a large increase in school funding in election year 2018, Walker vetoed an increase in funding for the state school districts that spend the least on their students. Walker said that he was afraid that the increase might lead to increases in the property tax capacity. Great Scott, punish children for their parents frugality, wise or not. Wealthier school districts will get their increases!

Walker is also cutting staff and the pay for the State’s Election Commission. With all the unfounded fears of voter fraud, it seems insuring fair and honest elections is not one of Walker’s priorities. Walker also vetoed attempts by the legislature to provide better oversight of his administration.

With all the delays in passing a state budget, the same legislators quickly found $3 billion for Foxconn. The GOP continues transforming Wisconsin. DS

Question Of The Month: Your Response Is Welcome

A statistical analysis of voter turnout of the 2016 Presidential election in Wisconsin (which gave Trump a narrow victory in the popular vote) finds that Clinton (and Feingold) lost because of a poor turnout in Milwaukee’s African American neighborhoods.

Hillary Clinton, remember her, recently completed a book with her own analysis of what happened in 2016. She looks at the question of what happened in Wisconsin. Clinton concludes her analysis was that she was a victim of voter suppression and there was little that she could have done to change the results.

Another answer points to the fact that she did not come to Wisconsin after the spring presidential primary. The Clinton campaign did send other family members and other representatives, though most did not “press the flesh” among African Americans. Clinton did not push her platform, but relied on a selfish campaign call “to make history” (meaning make Hillary the 1st woman president).

Please send us your take on what is the greatest cause for low voter turnout among African Americans in 2016. Was it; voter suppression or the Democrats taking the African American vote for granted?