

People's Korea resists U.S. threats

By Deirdre Griswold

Where does the danger of yet another war come from?

Does it come from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which has no military bases or soldiers or nuclear weapons anywhere in the world but on its own soil?

Or does it come from the U.S. billionaire ruling class, which dictates U.S. military and foreign policy?

The U.S. has been militarily occupying the southern half of Korea since 1945. U.S. warplanes, warships, submarines, troops and military "advisers," armed with everything from assault rifles to nuclear weapons, are spread all over the world.

This is the question that should have been on the agenda of the U.N. Security Council on Dec. 22, when its 15 members voted for an even stiffer round of sanctions against the DPRK. These sanctions reduce the country's ability to import refined petroleum products by 90 percent and set a cap on crude oil imports. They also mandate the return within 24 months of the estimated 100,000 DPRK citizens working abroad, whose remittances to their home country contribute to the national economy.

The DPRK foreign ministry responded to these sanctions, declaring them "an act of war." And rightly so. Because attempts to starve and freeze an entire country can be as deadly as shooting.

The sanctions are timed to hurt the

DPRK at the cruelest time of year in this far-northern country. The Korean people must be tightening their belts and figuring out how to stave off hunger and frost during the coldest winter months.

How will the sanctions affect the schools in this socialist country, which wiped out illiteracy decades ago and provide every person with a free education? How will they affect the hospitals and clinics — where 70 percent of the doctors are women — that give total medical care and regular checkups free to the entire population?

People living in the United States never hear about the DPRK's great social achievements. They are made all the more spectacular by the fact that the U.S. military, from 1950 to 1953, dropped

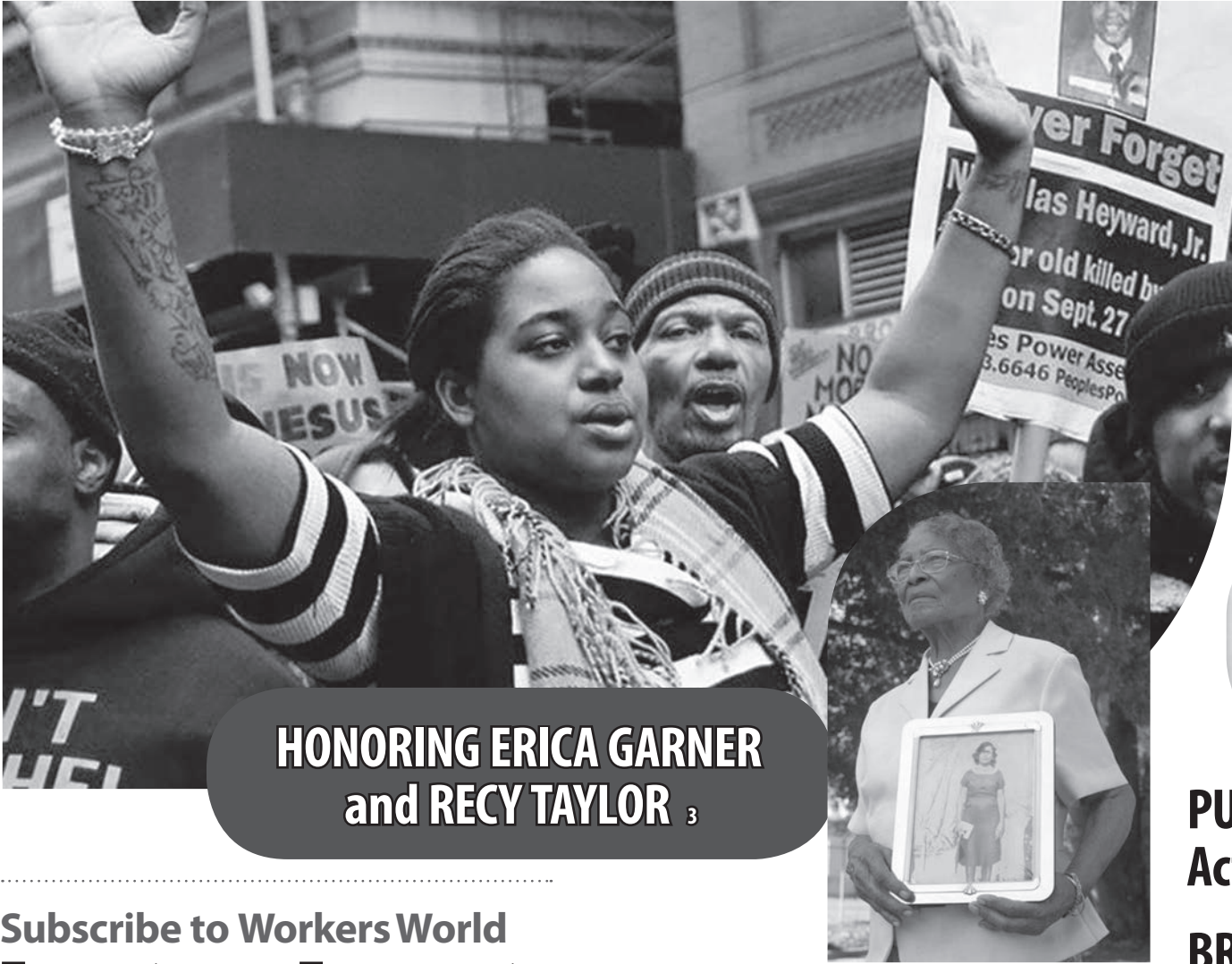
more bombs on north Korea than in the entire Pacific theater during World War II. People here cannot imagine what it must have been like to build up an economy focused on meeting people's needs when every single building higher than one story had been blasted to bits by U.S. planes during the Korean War.

But the Koreans know the horrors of war. That is why they have focused on the need for self-defense ever since — to defend what they have built up literally from the ashes.

U.S. a warfare state

The total U.S. military budget for fiscal year 2018 is \$824.6 billion, making it larger than the military budgets of the

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**DURHAM
ANTI-RACISTS
FACE TRIAL 2**



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Trial set for Jan. 11 Trial set for Jan. 11 Trial set for Jan. 11

Solidarity with Durham anti-racist fighters!

By LeiLani Dowell

Nationwide, activists are gearing up to show their solidarity with the anti-racist fighters who pulled down a Confederate statue in Durham, N.C., on Aug. 14. With a new court date set for Jan. 11, organizers are arranging transportation to arrive in Durham in the days before. In addition, plans are being made for national solidarity actions between Jan. 11 and Jan. 15.

The state has continued its political maneuvering in relation to the actions on Aug. 14, as well as in response to activists arrested during an anti-Klan protest in Durham on Aug. 18. A judge has continued the case, with a court date each month since Aug. 14, in an attempt to dampen the momentous solidarity from around the country.

The anti-racist activists have asserted that, at the trial, they will insist that tearing down monuments to white su-

premacy is not a crime. Organizers in Durham have initiated a campaign for local community members to sign up to be witnesses for the defense during the trial, allowing them to testify on the impact of monuments to white supremacy and the legacies of racism in the area. Plans are also in the works for a People’s Tribunal in the days before the trial.

Finally, solidarity actions are being convened from Jan. 11, the court date in Durham, to Jan. 15, the national Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, with the theme “In the spirit of Dr. King — workers’ rights, not white supremacy! Drop the charges against Durham activists!” The call will ask organizations and communities around the country to hold solidarity actions at racist monuments or other suitable targets.

For more information and to get involved, visit facebook.com/DurhamWWP or doitlikedurham.org. □

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Commentary

Say their names! Recy Taylor and Erica Garner

By Mikisa Thompson

Say her name: Mrs. Recy Taylor. Born Dec. 31, 1919, and died Dec. 28, 2017.
Say her name: Erica Garner. Born May 29, 1990, and died Dec. 30, 2017.
The last week of 2017 we have lost two Black women. Both experienced the plight of being denied justice while being Black in America.

Mrs. Recy Taylor:

She was a revolutionary woman way before the #Me Too movement of today. During the Jim Crow period, on Sept. 3, 1944, in Alabama, Mrs. Taylor was kidnapped, blindfolded, raped and brutally beaten by six white boys, all the while pleading for her life.
A Dec. 20 Democracy Now interview with Nancy Buirski, director of the film, “The Rape of Recy Taylor,” noted that she was left on the side of the road, later to be found by her father.

Then Recy Taylor said “Enough!” and bravely named and identified her attackers. Eleven years before the bus boycott in Alabama, Rosa Parks interviewed Recy Taylor for the NAACP as its chief rape investigator at the time. An Alabama Committee for Equal Justice for Mrs. Recy Taylor was launched, marking the first national campaign against the white supremacist rape of a woman of color.

In a Dec. 28 tribute to Taylor in The Root, Monique Judge said: “The racially motivated rape of Black women by white men was as prominent during ‘Jim Crow’ as the lynching of Black men was, but it is a topic that is not as discussed. Sexual violence against Black women often goes overlooked.”
Even though Recy Taylor immediately

spoke up and named her perpetrators, even though there was a confession from one of the perpetrators, a grand jury denied justice for her, twice.
Somehow, through all of this, Black women are still “to blame” and are asked questions filled with contempt, such as “Why did you take so long to tell?”
But Recy Taylor was only granted an apology by the Alabama Legislature in 2011, a full 67 years after her attack.
Sexual assault by white men against Black women is white supremacy.

Erica Garner:

She was the daughter of Eric Garner, who was killed by police in Staten Island, N.Y., on July 17, 2014. Eric Garner was murdered by NYPD Officer Daniel Pantaleo using an illegal chokehold. It was all caught on video, even Garner’s last words: “I can’t breathe.” It is now three years and five months since Eric Garner was murdered, and there is still no justice.
Ms. Garner suffered an asthma attack, which triggered a heart attack, which led to brain damage. Erica Garner was pronounced brain dead five days after the heart attack, and two days later she succumbed to death.
But her death was also the slow death due to systematic racial disparities in the



Vigil for Erica Garner and Recy Taylor, Pensacola, Fla., Dec. 30.

health and justice systems.
Living in a low-income neighborhood is genocide. Blacks and Latinxs make up the majority of people affected by pollution, and they also make up the majority of people in low-income neighborhoods. A 2014 study found that members of racial and ethnic minorities are exposed to levels of nitrogen dioxide, a common pollutant associated with asthma and heart disease, that is 38 percent higher than in the air most white people breathe. (tinyurl.com/yabqk4kc)
The racial divide in the U.S. is that elemental: Blacks and whites actually breathe different air.
Black people are continually denied

justice, even when the evidence is blatant, such as the video that recorded Eric Garner being murdered.
The death of Erica Garner’s father played a big factor in the death of Erica Garner herself. Living day by day, knowing that your father didn’t receive the justice that he deserved and walking the same streets with the officer who murdered your father are the slow death that Erica Garner went through.
Ms. Garner leaves behind two children: Alyssa and Eric. Her last wish was that you support foster children in some way, as she was in foster care during her life.
The system is stacked

against us. Life is a race that we have yet to master because the system works exactly as it is intended to. Mrs. Taylor spoke up and wasn’t heard. Ms. Garner spoke up for her father and was denied justice.
Justice isn’t blind at all. The system sees you, but does not count you in because of your Blackness and poorness.
However, this will not last forever because we are the revolution. The actions you take today to support Black women, who have been the truth-tellers for eons, will build a new foundation. A foundation that will be free of white supremacy.
Protect Black women. Hear Black women. Honor Black women. Fight for Black women. Uplift Black women. □

Lessons of ‘The Hammer & the Hoe: The Alabama Communist Party 1928-1951’

This is Part 2 of a three-part series based on an article that originally appeared on Dec. 14 in the Forge, a socialist newspaper for the South (theforgenews.org).

By Devin Cole

White workers were unorganized and many were swept up in the racist, fascist rhetoric of local bourgeois governments and the Ku Klux Klan. Thus, the fight for higher wages and better working conditions fell on the shoulders of Black workers, who were studying and organizing their own communities to lead the way for a socialist revolution in the South.
As early as 1931, Black women led relief committees for their communities. These committees did everything from raising money for families who were short on rent to physically going out to public outlets and appropriating electricity from those outlets for the homes of people who had their power shut off.
Though in its time the Alabama Communist Party was a force to be reckoned with, it ran into its own internal problems. In 1938, the communists allowed themselves to work with liberals and Democrats, mainly due to the declining strength of the Farmers’ Union, which had previously been associated with the Sharecroppers’ Union.
Additionally, continuous threats from the KKK and local governments had stamped out many prominent communist organizers and fronts. Some were beaten, some were forced to leave town, and some were murdered. Because of

this, a few radicals began to believe that radical sharecroppers, farmers and laborers could infiltrate the Democratic Party and turn it into a radical communist party.
This strategy, known now as entryism, is not compatible with revolutionary movements because oftentimes, the organization or party which the infiltrators are attempting to breach has already gained a considerable influence and the people in charge of it are steadfast in their views. Unfortunately, at this point, the ACP was beginning to waver in strength and influence among Black radicals, and so many believed that entryism was an acceptable strategy.

Anti-communist witch hunt

In 1938, Alabama communists teamed up with local Democrats and liberals to organize the first Southern Conference for Human Welfare, a conference that promoted bringing New Deal ideas into the South immediately.
The long-term goal of the ACP was to form a United Democratic Front. SCHW was already controversial in the planning stages because of its commitment to call for a repeal of the poll tax, which prevented most poor workers, especially Black workers, from being able to vote.
But in the early stages of planning, the local government accused the conference

of being a façade for a communist conference, which caused liberal leader Frank Graham to name six communists in the conference. By 1939, members of SCHW were calling for the expulsion of anyone they thought was a communist at their annual conference. Once again, liberalism submitted to reactionary politics and radical Black communists were the ones who suffered.
What liberals did not anticipate, but what the reactionary bourgeoisie wanted, were the lasting effects this would have on industrial labor in Birmingham, with its centralized labor system. Between 1939 and 1941, 50 anti-union bills were introduced in Congress, tightening the grip on trade unions and skilled and unskilled labor in Birmingham’s industries.
Leading the witch hunt in Birmingham was U.S. Rep. Joe Starnes, who began making McCarthy-like accusations (though McCarthyism would not take grip for another few years) that the Congress of Industrial Organizations in Birmingham was filled with communists. This of course caused backlash from the very religious communities, who doubled down on their anti-communist attacks, allowing unions to be controlled by reactionary behaviors and views.
This continued so intensely that even the liberals who had taken the side of the reactionary right were forced to retreat into silence. The ACP abandoned any hope it had for a Southern Democratic Front.



Sharecropper Ned Cobb, a.k.a. Nate Shaw, at 22, with his spouse, Viola, and their son Andrew, in 1907. Cobb was a member of the Alabama Sharecroppers Union, organized by the ACP.

By the early 1940s, however, with many liberals disillusioned and Black radicals and nationalists growing in numbers, the ACP began to grow again, despite a major blow to its ranks in the heat of the proto-McCarthy years. The ACP turned away from New Deal liberals, who had very little concern for Black workers, laborers and farmers.
They began to grow their own cadres, even resurrecting an idea brought up earlier in the party’s history: to form a Farmer-Labor Party and put their own

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Legal Aid lawyers protest ICE courthouse arrests

By **Betsey Piette**

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement arrests of immigrants in courthouses have skyrocketed since the inauguration of Donald Trump in January 2017. So, on Nov. 28, when agents with ICE snatched defendant Genaro Rojas Hernández in a Brooklyn Criminal Court hallway, dozens of Legal Aid lawyers responded in protest. These are the lawyers who most frequently defend low-income immigrants, documented or undocumented.

The lawyers spontaneously stormed out of the court and marched to the Brooklyn district attorney’s office. They demanded a policy to prevent court staff from collaborating with ICE agents in seizing immigrants who’ve had to come to court.

On Dec. 7, over 400 attorneys from the Legal Aid Society, the New York County Defender Services, Brooklyn Defender Services, The Bronx Defenders and the Neighborhood Defender Service of

Harlem rallied on the steps of Brooklyn Borough Hall to protest these shocking seizures. They issued a joint statement expressing concern about “the proliferation of ICE courthouse arrests since January.”

Speakers at the rally called on the Office of Court Administration and Chief Judge Janet DiFiore to take immediate action to limit federal immigration enforcement’s ability to arrest clients in or around courthouses. The action was labor-union initiated by the Association of Legal Aid Attorneys/United Auto Workers Local 2325.

Official OCA statistics counted Hernández as the fortieth person arrested by ICE inside a New York City courthouse in 2017. But the Immigrant Defense Project, an immigrant rights and legal assistance group, puts the number at 70.

National ICE internal policies direct agents to limit arrests in locations designated as “sensitive,” including schools, hospitals and churches. These policies do not cover courthouses. Local OCA guide-



Over 400 lawyers rally on the steps of Brooklyn Borough Hall, Dec. 7.

WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

Chalfen that “court officers are not complicit, do not coordinate with, facilitate or impede actions by outside law enforcement, including ICE agents, when they effect an arrest inside New York state courthouses.” (law.com, Dec. 7)

The Dec. 7 rally was endorsed by over 90 organizations, including unions, and community action, legal rights and immigrant rights groups. In a statement, they emphasized that “ICE’s continued presence in our courts causes fear to those that have a right under the Constitution to face any charges against them. They deter those seeking redress from the courts and our staff’s ability to provide zealous representation to their clients. The harm is immeasurable, and it only stands to grow.” □

lines allow ICE agents to conduct operations in courthouse public areas as long as agents identify themselves upon entry. 2017 is the first year that New York has tracked ICE arrests in courthouses.

In Hernández’s case, one agent twice denied he was with ICE when Legal Aid attorney Rebecca Kavanagh inquired, yet moments later he assisted another agent in the arrest. At least three other court officers were involved in the arrest, despite claims by OCA spokesman Lucian

Groups protest activist’s deportation

Boston

By **WW Boston bureau**

Siham Tinhinan Byah, an asylum-seeking single mother and well-known Boston-area community organizer, was taken in the pre-dawn hours of Dec. 26 from a Bristol County, Mass., Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention center and deported to Morocco.

In early November Byah reported to ICE for a routine check-in, part of her asylum petition legal process. She was detained that day, taken into custody by



ICE and held in intermittent solitary confinement for over six weeks with sporadic access to food and no medical attention at all.

ICE officials and corrections officers repeatedly lied to Byah about her deportation status. Despite having received multiple U.S. Department of Homeland Security communications

stating that her petition for asylum was pending, Byah was forced back to Morocco by DHS in the middle of winter, without a chance to say a word to her children and with nothing but the thin clothing

on her back. Her own lawyer, family and loved ones were not made aware of her transfer and deportation until hours later.

As an organizer, Byah was vocal in her solidarity with all immigrants, especially undocumented migrant workers and asylum seekers. She voiced unwavering solidarity with the Palestinian people. She spoke openly about the heavy repression against women and workers in her home country of Morocco.

Boston-area and nationwide organizations are rallying to demand Byah’s return to her family in the U.S. and the protection of her children. They are also demanding protection of other children

of deported parents from the devastating collaboration between child protection agencies and ICE that harms so many families and communities in this situation. These organizations include Boston Feminists For Liberation, Boston Democratic Socialists of America, International Socialist Organization, Party for Socialism and Liberation, Boston May Day Coalition, Workers World Party, Green Rainbow Party and Cosecha.

A demonstration to oppose the deportation of children is set for 1 p.m. on Jan. 9 in front of the U.S. Immigration Court at the JFK Federal Building in Boston. (See the Facebook event page at [tinyurl.com/y95dxb6](https://www.facebook.com/y95dxb6).) □

Lessons from 80 years ago ‘Friends of labor’ and state repression

By **Martha Grevatt**

2017 marked the 80th anniversary of many important labor struggles. The victory of the Flint sit-down strike against mighty General Motors breathed confidence into the whole working class. There were over 500 other recorded sit-downs in 1937, most ending with the employer agreeing to union recognition. Millions of workers in auto, rubber, textile, retail, hotel and restaurant, agriculture, packinghouse and other industries flocked to unions affiliated with the militant Congress of Industrial Organizations.

Events of 1937 hold important lessons for workers today about the role of the state, even under a Democratic president. In 1936, when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt was seeking reelection to a second term, the Democratic Party made an appeal to “reelect Roosevelt — Friend of Labor.”

By 1937, however, this chief executive of the capitalist state was presiding over fierce and deadly repression against the masses of workers fighting for basic rights.

In Puerto Rico, the Ponce Massacre took place on March 21 — Palm Sunday. At a peaceful march protesting the imprisonment of Puerto Rican Nationalist Party leaders, including popular labor

leader Albizu Campos, police killed 19 unarmed protesters and wounded over 200.

Puerto Rico, then as now, was a colony of the United States. No one responsible for the killings, including U.S.-appointed Governor Blanton Winship, was ever prosecuted.

In Harlan County, Kentucky — “Bloody Harlan” — there were repeated violent attacks on union workers from 1931 to 1939 by local police, vigilantes and federal troops. Anti-union thugs killed the son of a union supporter in 1937. Mine owners operated with impunity.

That year, supporters of the United Auto Workers were violently attacked by company goons and police in Detroit, Flint, Saginaw, Mich., and Anderson, Ind. In Detroit, police used tear gas and brute force to evict women sitting down in the Bernard Schwartz Cigar Corp. and in Yale & Towne locks.

Three of the Scottsboro Nine, African-American men imprisoned without trial for six years after being falsely accused of raping two white women, were sentenced in 1937: one to 75 years, one to 99 years and one to death. Only in 1950 was the last defendant released.

These are a few examples from 1937 that expose the class bias and racist character of the capitalist state — no “friend of labor.”

Little Steel strike: FDR says ‘plague on both your houses’

The Little Steel Strike of 1937 remains one of the bloodiest in U.S. history. Police and state-protected strikebreakers killed 17 strikers. Chicago police killed 10 in the infamous Memorial Day Massacre. Seven more died in a series of deadly clashes throughout northeast Ohio. A supporter was killed in Pennsylvania. Hundreds were seriously injured and over 2,000 were arrested.

“Little Steel” referred to eight actually large corporations — Jones and Laughlin, Inland Steel, Republic Steel, Bethlehem Steel, National Steel, Crucible Steel, Pittsburgh Steel and Youngstown Sheet and Tube — which were only “little” when compared to the giant, U.S. Steel.

The steel bosses, including U.S. Steel, were intransigent when it came to allowing unions in the mills. However, after the Flint sit-down victory the company agreed to recognize the CIO’s Steel Worker Organizing Committee rather than suffer a costly strike. Numerous smaller steel companies followed suit, as did Jones and Laughlin after a brief strike, followed by Crucible and then Pittsburgh.

On May 26, SWOC struck three hardline companies — Republic, Inland, and Sheet and Tube — and one of Bethlehem’s mills shortly after.

Carl Williams, United Mine Workers organizer, District 19 in Harlan County, Ky., 1934.



The strike became more than a battle between these companies and 80,000 steelworkers seeking union recognition. The ruling class saw an opportunity, with Republic President Tom Girdler as its protagonist, to break the CIO. Moreover, the forces around Girdler were determined to push back the New Deal reforms won by the working class.

Despite intense repression, striking pickets had been able to keep the mills closed, preventing scabs from coming in. By June, however, Democratic Gov. Davey of Ohio was colluding with the companies to force the mills open. His argument was that those who wished not to strike had a “right to work.”

When CIO officials appealed to FDR to intervene, the president showed his true class colors. He drew an equal sign between the violence of the steel barons and the militant resistance of the union, much of it led by Communist Party Leaders Gus Hall, Robert Burke and others.

Continued on the next page

Poultry workers fight wretched conditions

By Mike Kuhlenbeck

Labor groups are fighting for safer conditions for poultry workers and against proposed measures to increase production speeds at processing plants.

The poultry industry is booming with record profits, a market dominated by corporations such as Tyson Foods, Pilgrim's, Perdue and Sander-son Farms. These corporations jointly control roughly 60 per- cent of the domestic chicken market. Still unable to satisfy their greedy appetite for profit, the owners are forcing their workers to pay with their health and sense of human dignity.

At the behest of poultry industry owners, the National Chicken Council on Sept. 1 announced it was petitioning the U.S. Department of Agri- culture to increase the speed limits allowed on produc- tion lines, despite the current speed already being hazardous to workers' health. To make matters worse, industry lob- byists are also pushing for the USDA and Congress to com- pletely eliminate federal limits on production speed.

The Government Account- ability Office reports that poultry workers are twice as likely to suffer injuries on the job as other workers in the U.S., due to the nature of their work. The United Food and Commercial Workers union says that "forc- ing poultry workers and feder- al meat inspectors to work sig- nificantly faster will increase the odds they're injured and make chicken less safe for ev- ery consumer to eat."

Workers such as Rosa Rivas, a former employee of a Tyson Foods plant in Springdale, Ark., have spoken out against the wretched conditions they endure. After working at the plant for over a decade, Rivas said, "My experience was the lines are going pretty fast, and people struggle to work as fast as they ask us to work."

The speed of the process- ing lines at the plant damaged Rivas' hands. "Yes, my fin- gers still hurt from that and sometimes my fingers still cramp up because of how fast we were made to work on the

lines." (KNWA, North- west Arkansas News)

Last year, Oxfam published a shocking report entitled "No Re- lief," revealing how non- union poultry workers "earn low wages, suffer elevating rates of inju- ry and illness, toil in difficult conditions and have little voice in the workplace." The report details how workers are denied adequate bathroom breaks, forcing many to wear diapers under their uniforms while working the production line.

"Routinely, poultry workers say, they are denied breaks to use the bathroom. Supervisors mock their needs and ignore their requests; they threaten punishment or firing. Workers wait inordinately long times [an hour or more], then race to accomplish the task within a certain timeframe [e.g., 10 minutes] or risk discipline," said the Oxfam report.

Fighting modern-day 'Jungle' conditions

A recent report by the GAO also vindicates the Oxfam find- ings and the concerns raised by workers for several years. "When asked by GAO, work- ers in five selected states cited bathroom access as a concern and said they fear speaking up at work, where OSHA [Occupational Safety and Health Ad- ministration] inspectors typi- cally interview them."

Labor groups such as In- terfaith Worker Justice are responding to the GAO re- port, raising public awareness of the dangers in the poultry and meatpacking industries and fighting for the rights of workers.

The IWJ mission statement describes the group as "a na- tional network that builds col- lective power by advancing the rights of workers" though the labor movement and "engaging diverse faith communities and allies in joint action." A delega- tion representing IWJ delivered a letter to Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue and Undersec- retary Carmen Rottenberg on Dec. 12, urging them to ignore the demands of the NCC and the owners they represent.



PHOTO: WWW.UFCW.ORG/TAG/TYSON/

The National Employment Law Project has joined IWJ in a campaign to address these concerns. NELP's Debbie Ber- kowitz responded to the GAO report by stating, "The report confirms that the meat and poultry industry, in its quest to keep production lines run- ning at any and all costs, is not only cutting the corners on worker safety but further de- humanizing them by denying them legally required bath- room breaks."

Dangers in poultry plants and the meatpacking industry are nothing new. The Amer- ican public first got a sordid glimpse of such horrific work- ing conditions in the muckrak- ing novel "The Jungle" (1906) by socialist author and jour- nalist Upton Sinclair. Focusing on the state of "Packingtown," a name given to Chicago's stockyards, Sinclair demon- strated the degradation and unsanitary conditions con- fronting workers, who were risking their lives due to their bosses' pursuit of profit.

Published over a centu- ry ago, "The Jungle" raised a public outcry for change. Re- forms were passed through local and federal legislation, but that was not enough to se- cure the livelihood of workers in the poultry and meatpack- ing industries. With the bil- lionaire class represented by a reactionary Congress and the administration of President Donald Trump, they are con- spiring to turn back the hands of time to repeal gains made by the working class and strangle the labor movement.

Workers cannot rely on elect- ed officials or capitalist bosses to improve their situation. Only a strong, unrelenting, work- ing-class movement will be able to achieve such a goal. □

pecially active and formed the backbone of the strike."

This kind of community support was an essential factor in hundreds of sit-downs and thousands of strikes that won union recognition in factories, hotels, restaurants and other workplaces.

Unions can't rely on so- called "friends of labor." Unions must revive militant class-struggle unionism and build solidarity — global as well as local — of all workers and oppressed. □

On the picket line

By Alex Bolshi and Sue Davis

N.C. Christmas tree workers stop Scrooge wage theft

When we light up Christmas trees, we don't think about the work- ers who plant and harvest them. In North Carolina they're Mexican migrants who face harsh working conditions and intimidation in the fields. While the 2016 Christmas tree industry generated \$2.04 billion, according to the National Christmas Tree Association (Telesur, Dec. 25), none of these gains went to the workers. Instead, Scrooge bosses abused and stole from them.

During spring planting, the owners of Hart-T-Tree farm in Grassy Creek exposed workers to hazardous chemicals. Herbicides were sprayed while the men worked nearby, a violation of chemical guide- lines mandating a 10-day waiting period after application. Workers became sick, suffering from headaches, dizziness, vomiting and diar- rhea. During the harvest, instead of transporting workers in trucks, the bosses forced them to ride on top of a tractor bed filled with shifting trees down winding mountain roads, which led to fractured arms and bruised ribs.

But once the owners began deducting rent, electric and gas from their pay — illegal under the H-2A visa "guest worker" program — the workers contacted the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, which rep- resents 10,000 H-2A workers in the state. FLOC discovered the bosses had shorted workers' wages, paying them \$9 an hour, when the collec- tive bargaining agreement of the N.C. Growers Association stipulated a minimum of \$11.27. With FLOC's help, the workers filed a grievance and won; \$330,000 in stolen wages was returned to 54 Hart-T-Tree workers.

"A settlement of this nature being reached and paid out in a matter of a few weeks is unheard of in agriculture," said Justin Flores, FLOC vice president. As one worker told Payday Report, "We gotta organize; this is the hardest work out there. We're human beings, too." (Dec. 18)

CWA wins precedent-setting protections for trans workers

The Communication Workers announced Dec. 21 that over 21,000 AT&T wireless retail workers have reached a precedent-setting tenta- tive agreement. In addition to curbing outsourcing and raising pay, it provides the widest-reaching protections for transgender workers in any telecom industry contract. The agreement includes the first-ever enforceable protections against discrimination based on gender identity in 16 states with no statewide nondiscrimination law covering that category. The agreement also outlines a clear process for redressing dis- crimination through the union grievance and arbitration process across 36 states covered by CWA's bargaining unit.

"This contract shines a light on the union power to drive progress," stated Dennis G. Trainor, vice president of CWA District One. "Let this be a signal to opponents of LGBTQ equality, who are nearly always opponents of workers' rights too: We stand strong together and will tear down all obstacles to full equality."

CWA's hard-fought agreement with AT&T, on which workers will vote Jan. 12, also provides 10.1 percent pay raises over the four-year contract; by its end the workers will make on average \$19.20/hour. Over the last 11 months, the workers held rallies and picket lines in 36 states and Washington, D.C., dramatizing their fight with a 3-day strike in May.

FDNY civilian workforce files discrimination suit

A multi-million-dollar federal class-action lawsuit was filed Dec. 1 by seven plaintiffs against the city of New York alleging the Fire Depart- ment systematically discriminates against African-American workers in its civilian workforce and Emergency Medical Service. Based on a 2016 complaint to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commis- sion charging discriminatory practices, the suit alleges that the FDNY continues to resist hiring African Americans, asserting it "remains one of the least-diverse municipal agencies not only in New York City but in the nation." Black FDNY firefighters settled a discrimination lawsuit three years ago.

This lawsuit claims FDNY leadership hasn't adopted practices to reduce or stop discrimination; Black workers are not promoted to de- cision-making jobs and are not compensated as much as other employ- ees; and City Hall has failed to control FDNY practices. Among their demands, the plaintiffs want the court to appoint an outside monitor to audit compensation for five or more years. (Amsterdam News, Dec. 14)

Chicago hotel workers win 'Hands Off, Pants On' ordinance

With millions of women testifying to sexual harassment or assault through #MeToo, women in UNITE HERE are leading the demand for justice against gender-based harassment inside their workplaces. Housekeepers in UNITE HERE Local 23 in Chicago just won a new city ordinance called "Hands Off, Pants On" mandating a safe workplace for women working in hotel rooms. (dclabor.org, Dec. 11) □

Continued from page 5

Invoking Shakespeare, he de- clared "a plague on both your houses."

CIO leader John L. Lewis rightly condemned Roosevelt's decision "to curse with equal fervor and fine impartiality both labor and its adversaries when they become locked in deadly embrace." The ruling class recognized this signal from FDR that the New Deal was being reined in; the Buf- falo Evening News correspon- dent hailed this "change of

heart." (Ahmed White, "The Last Great Strike")

The strikers kept up the fight, but by August the strike was defeated. Yet, out of 30- plus struck mills in seven states, one was the scene of a partial union victory — In- land's Indiana Harbor mill. "Everybody took part in this lively strike," wrote observer Mary Heaton Vorse in "La- bor's New Millions." Women, children and foreign language groups had their own action days. "The Mexicans were es-

The new tax law’s impact in Puerto Rico

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

An age-old Chinese proverb could be applied to the situation that Puerto Ricans on the island are experiencing after the devastating Hurricane Maria: “Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime.”

The problem is that although Puerto Ricans know how to fish, the colonial condition to which they have been subjected for more than a century prevents them from fishing. Then there is that other saying that describes the Yankee colonialist, who “is like the gardener’s dog, who neither eats nor lets you eat.”

More than 100 days after Hurricane Maria’s devastation, there is still no reliable electricity in almost half the island and the source of drinking water is precarious, largely maintained by on-site generators.

Aid from federal entities — the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the U.S. Corps of Army Engineers — has been criminally slow and inadequate, causing hundreds of deaths due to lack of essential services. However, the U.S. government, like the gardener’s dog, prevents other countries from sending solidarity aid to the Caribbean archipelago to meet those needs. These are the precise needs that were caused by Puerto Rico’s subjugation to the empire, which caused the economic collapse of its colony.

Is this anything but a perverse blockade of an entire people?

Impact of ‘tax reform’

On top of this, the impact that the recently approved Tax Cuts and Jobs Act will have on Puerto Rico reveals that the domination of the empire over this archipelago adds up to criminal strangulation by straitjacket. Many people in Puerto Rico describe it as “the other hurricane,” referring to its devastating effect on the island’s economy.

What does this law contain regarding Puerto Rico?

Signed by the U.S. president on Dec. 22, this law imposes a tax rate of 12.5

percent on intellectual property — trademarks, patents and technological developments — of U.S. companies that operate in the island. That these companies, called “controlled foreign corporations,” had enjoyed generous tax exemptions in their place of origin in the U.S., even if production was in Puerto Rico, illustrates the inconsistencies and contradictions of the colonial state. Now, for this tax purpose, the law reaffirms Puerto Rico as a “foreign jurisdiction,” bringing into focus the 2016 U.S. court decision that PR belongs to, but is not part of, the USA.

As we explained in previous articles, the empire develops and imposes its will on the various economic sectors according to its interests. From the destruction of the currency and the imposition of the dollar at the beginning of the 20th century, this includes the monoculture of sugar cane, textile manufacturing and petroleum refining (of which there is none in Puerto Rico) to the most recent development bringing in high-polluting industries of pharmaceuticals and medical equipment.

Manufacturing, of which 40 percent is pharmaceuticals and medical equipment, is the basis of the Puerto Rican economy today. As U.S.-based companies, they take the profits generated by Puerto Rican labor to the United States. These are the industries that will be most affected by the new tax, which puts the island’s government and the Puerto Rican industrialists in total panic. They anticipate that the manufacturers will abandon the island, taking with them the tiny 4 percent tax contribution to the coffers of the Puerto Rican government and leaving more than 70,000 workers unemployed. Although the effects would probably not be seen until 2019, the fear is that it will be another hurdle to overcome if they want to attract new U.S.-based industries.

The indifference and contempt with which the issue of Puerto Rico has been addressed in the U.S. Congress deserve a separate article because they reaffirm what pro-independence supporters have maintained for decades: The United States is not interested in the Puerto Ri-

can people as deserving either assistance or respect, much less as another state. That reaffirms what independence leader Don Pedro Albizu Campos so often said: “The USA is interested in the cage, but not in the birds.”

Those who have been able to follow — at the risk of becoming nauseous — the attempts of the resident commissioner in Washington, PR Representative Jenniffer González, and of Puerto Rican Gov. Ricardo “Ricky” Roselló to obtain from the U.S. Congress exemptions and benefits in the proposed tax law for Puerto Rico can easily reach the same conclusions as did the independence movement, whatever their ideological orientation. González is a member of the Republican Party in the U.S., but in PR she is a member of the same New Progressive Party as her boss Roselló. He, in turn, belongs to the U.S. Democratic Party, showing the stupidity of colonialism!

While Gonzalez wandered like a lost soul through the corridors of the U.S. Capitol, pleading to Republican Congress members for statehood and for favors, her boss Roselló — submissive to the empire — kept sending letters to and visiting Congress members in Washington, begging for exemptions and crumbs.

In the end, the empire prevailed. Congressional ears refused to hear the requests for help for the reconstruction of Puerto Rico after María. Congress will not negotiate an aid proposal for the states and territories affected by the latest natural disasters until January.

Decolonization now!

It is this last thrust that makes clear the urgent need for a process of decolonization. The fantasy of the “Commonwealth of Puerto Rico” ended in June 2016 when Washington ruled that Puerto Rico’s powers are at the steps of the U.S. Congress, imposing immediately the dictatorial Fiscal Control Board, the “Junta.” And now it remains clearer than ever that the United States neither is interested in Puerto Rico being part of the United States nor wants Puerto Rico to be part of it, that is, as another state. Along with 2017 should be buried all those mementos reading “51st State.”

As long as Puerto Rico remains a colony, there will be no economic development that benefits its population.

The work needed for decolonization is enormous. It takes profound and consistent work to break down what the Cointelpro, anti-independence police actions have built in Puerto Rico. Unity in action is urgently needed; united decolonization campaigns are needed, despite ideological and tactical differences.

There are many examples, like the struggle against apartheid in South Africa that was so successful: first of all because of the struggle and militancy of the different South African groups — which also had differences among themselves — and also because of the huge international movement where the goal was the destruction of apartheid.

There were both pacifist groups and those that believed in armed struggle; each one did its part according to its ideology, but with the final goal of ending racist segregation. In Puerto Rico we have precedents: the telephone strike of 1998, the struggle to rid Vieques island of the U.S. Navy and the campaigns for the liberation of our political prisoners.

Now no less an effort is needed. It is essential. Above all, a great popular awareness campaign is needed.

It is time for what this writer witnessed during her recent trip to PR: The people —

people who are suffering from the corruption and abandonment of both local and federal governments — are ready. There is not much to explain about the abandonment of the federal government; it is enough to see the absence of the famous blue roof tarps of FEMA in the mountains.

We must go to every corner of the island — from Culebra and Vieques, to Cabo Rojo and Ceiba, to the poor barrios, to La Perla, to Lloréns. The pro-independence and progressive movement, the dynamic youth groups that are picking up the revolutionary baton, the LGBT groups, students, young and not so young, with or without disabilities.

All of us need to unite to decolonize ourselves and Puerto Rico and to forge a new homeland. There is creativity; what has been missing is the decisive will, and that is flourishing in the thousands of community groups being born around the archipelago. We can, along with the Puerto Ricans in exile in the United States — together we are one people — as long as Puerto Rico is their North Star and not the empire.

Long live a free and sovereign Puerto Rico!
End the Fiscal Control Board!
Solidarity and justice, not charity!
Stop the blockade of Puerto Rico!
Repeal the Cabotage Law
and cancel the debt!

Joubert-Ceci is a native of the Bélgica neighborhood of Ponce and is currently living in exile in the city of Philadelphia.

Activists raise for Puerto Rico

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

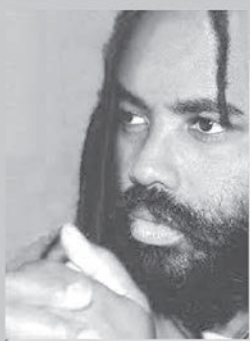
A delegation from Philadelphia that included members of the International Action Center, Philadelphia REAL Justice and Workers World Party traveled to Puerto Rico in a work brigade in early November following hurricanes Irma and María. As a result of generous donations from the Calvary United Methodist Church in West Philadelphia, they were able to bring 18 solar-powered lights and USB charger kits to distribute to families in mountainous regions which lacked access to electricity.

However, support from the church did not stop there. Inspired by the work of the IAC’s delegation, the congregation raised funds to send more solar kits to Puerto Rico. The IAC has offices at the Calvary Center for Culture and Community, which is housed at the CUMC.

The congregation turned their annual holiday concert on Dec. 17 into a benefit to provide more solar kits and other supplies for community organizations in Puerto Rico. Almost three months after the powerful storms hit, electricity, water and other necessities are still scarce because of the U.S. government’s refusal to supply adequate aid.

The event featured the big band sound of Big Push. A number of other performers joined in CUMC’s neighbor-to-neighbor action for Puerto Rico. They included Jesse Roemer and EZUZ, the improv-fusion band Interminable and legendary Philly funk band Breakwater. Vocalists

Pack the Courthouse for Mumia Abu-Jamal



In a court case that could eventually lead to Mumia’s freedom, Judge Leon Tucker has ordered the District Attorney’s office to present new testimony in reference to Ronald Castille. The hearing will take place Jan. 17.

Castille was a Philadelphia DA. Later as a PA Supreme Court judge, he refused to disqualify himself when Mumia’s case came before the court despite having been the DA during Mumia’s prior appeals. The US Supreme Court has ruled such conduct unconstitutional.

The people’s movement forced the courts to take Abu-Jamal off death row in 2011 but his freedom was not won. Despite his innocence he was re-sentenced to life in prison without possibility of parole.

The people fought for and won hep C treatment for Mumia but he now suffers from cirrhosis of the liver and continues to suffer pain and severe itching from a skin ailment. Life without parole is still a death sentence for thousands of prisoners, especially when decent health care is routinely denied for people behind bars.


Mumia has been unjustly imprisoned for 36 years. He should be released now.

CONTACT THE DA’S OFFICE: TELL THEM TO RELEASE ALL MUMIA FILES TO THE PUBLIC: (215) 686-8000; justice@phila.gov

For a ride from New York: 212.330.8029
Mobilization4Mumia@gmail.com: 215-724-1618;
Donate: mobilization4mumia.com/donate-1

Int’l Concerned Family & Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Int’l Action Center, Free Mumia Abu-Jamal (NYC), Campaign to Bring Mumia Home, Educators for Mumia

Wed, Jan. 17 8 - 11AM 1301 Filbert Philadelphia Criminal Justice Center



Raíces Borikén Collective says ‘Decolonize Puerto Rico!’

By Steve Gillis, financial secretary,
Steelworkers Local 8751
Boston

Blasting bomba, merengue and salsa music, and chanting, “Cancel the debt!” the Raíces Borikén Collective fired up the blistering cold streets of Boston on Dec. 17, demanding “Decolonize Puerto Rico!” Patricia Chali’Inaru Dones of the United Confederation of Taíno People led the militant action, which blocked major downtown streets.

Protesters were outraged at the U.S. government’s deadly neglect of hurricane-ravaged Puerto Rico and Wall Street’s unnatural disaster of bankruptcy administration. They gathered in Plaza Ramón Emeterio Betances, named for the inspirer of Puerto Rico’s “Grito de Lares” armed uprising for independence in 1868.

Ernesto Eroc Arroyo welcomed the hundreds gathered in the heart of Boston’s Puerto Rican community, Villa Victoria. “Where I grew up, over there on the third floor,” recalled Arroyo, “was born the Puerto Rican struggle to block bulldozers and stop racist ‘urban renewal.’ Villa Victoria was a victory for decolonization.”

Jasmine Gómez described Raíces Borikén Collective as “artists, activists and organizers, the majority of us women and queer, who work through education,

culture and direct action to dismantle the imperialist, white-supremacist, capitalist, patriarchal system that has kept Puerto Rico under U.S. colonial subjugation for 120 years.”

Powerful artwork displayed the collective’s demands. One showed a mother clutching a child below M16-toting colonial soldiers and bristling barbed wire. It declared: “Release the aid! Repeal the Jones Act! Cancel the debt! Decolonize Puerto Rico!”

Another poster blasted the U.S. Trump Congress, in which Puerto Rico has no vote, for its new, “reformed,” 20 percent tax on goods made in Puerto Rico — a de facto blockade of the island’s economy.

The march blocked Massachusetts Avenue at the offices of Seth Klarman’s Baupost Group, a hedge fund that “owns” nearly \$1 billion of Puerto Rican bond “debt.” The action further highlighted Boston’s role as an administrative and financial center of colonial rule.

Boston boasts of its 18th-century “anti-colonialism” against Britain, while the city operates as a financial and legal center for the U.S. colonial project in Puerto Rico. It is home to Puerto Rico’s federal district court as well as the Boston Group, which has funded massive school closures and privatization in Puerto Rico, and the Blackstone Group of financiers, who are rapidly turning the people’s beaches into playgrounds and casinos for wealthy elites.

Outside the Baupost Group offices, Gillian Mason of MA Jobs with Justice spoke on behalf of 160 labor organizations in that coalition. Mason blasted “the economic system and the vultures who orchestrated the crisis in Puerto Rico.”



WW PHOTO: STEVAN KIRSCHBAUM

Boston, Dec. 17

“We are sick of these capitalists like Seth Klarman of Baupost making money off the backs of working people in Puerto Rico and here in Massachusetts,” Mason continued. “It is time to decolonize Puerto Rico now, with the first step being to cancel the debt to capitalists!”

Steelworkers Local 8751 — the Boston School Bus Drivers — provided a mobile sound truck and handed out a statement in solidarity with Educamos, a Puerto Rican teachers’ union, saying: “While thousands of families have been forced out of Puerto Rico in recent months — many of whose children are now riding our school buses in Boston — we will continue to fight with you in the hopes that our combined efforts will soon end this criminal

plot of forced migration of your people from your land and your nation.”

Every speaker denounced and called for an immediate end to the U.S.-imposed Puerto Rico Oversight Management and Economic Stability Act (Promesa), which, even before the hurricane, had forced Puerto Rico to slash pensions and the minimum wage, close hundreds of schools and health facilities, lay off thousands of service workers, privatize social services like water, electricity and education, and liquidate people’s meager savings, much of it in scam “funds” pushed by UBS, Fidelity and other global financial institutions, while demanding extortionate, high-interest payments to Wall Street that can never be met. □

e funds Philadelphia



WW PHOTOS: JOE PIETTE

Asaf Berrios on drum, left.
Interminable, above.

Aaron Lewis, Zara Sims and Theresa Marsh performed, along with the Calvary Choir. Nine-year-old Asaf Berrios, an amazing steel drum player, and his father Raúl, who had recently arrived from Puerto Rico, gave a special performance.

Joe Piette and Mike Wilson, members of the IAC delegation, described their brigade’s work and what they witnessed in Puerto Rico. They urged the audience to continue their support. Students and faculty from the Workshop School in Philadelphia also participated by selling items that students had produced. They donated their proceeds toward the purchase of a solar kit.

The evening ended with all the performers and audience members joining in a carol singalong. Donations to support this fundraising effort can be made at allmeansall.org/donate. Write “Puerto Rico” in the comments section on the donation page. □

What’s really behind the Bronx fire

By Nate Peters
New York

The deadliest fire in this city in over 25 years erupted on the evening of Dec. 28. The large fire engulfed a residential building in the Belmont neighborhood of the Bronx, claiming 12 lives. Beginning in the kitchen of a ground-floor apartment, the fire quickly spread to the top of the five-story, walk-up building through a stairwell.

Who was at fault in this catastrophe? Media coverage in the New York Times, Daily News, Post and other media would have you believe it was the mother of two young children, who allegedly did not close her apartment door when she fled with them, allowing the fire to spread more quickly. New York Fire Department Commissioner Daniel Nigro egged the media on, saying, “Close the door, close the door, close the door” at a press conference the next day.

Barely mentioned in the frenzy to condemn a woman is that the NYC Fire Code requires landlords to install self-closing, fire-resistant doors in all buildings with three or more units. Such a door would have contained the fire inside the apartment longer, giving residents time to escape.

Rather than expose landlord negligence, most mainstream media rushed to blame this woman. The capitalist media would rather lay the deaths of 12 people at the feet of a mother concerned with getting her young children to safety than consider the culpability of the landlord, D&A Equities.



Coverage in the New York Times is typical: Despite at least eight articles and 9,000 words written about the fire in the three days afterwards, there is not a single mention of the fire door requirement.

New York City landlords routinely avoid basic maintenance of housing stock in working-class and oppressed neighborhoods such as Belmont, where the majority of the population is Latinx and the median income is below \$26,000. (tinyurl.com/ybg932hd)

Why would landlords pay for fire doors now, when, in a few years, they can push current tenants out and gut-reno-vate the building for wealthier, gentrifying tenants? Or sell the building for a big profit to a developer who will tear it down and build luxury condos in its place for even bigger profits?

Under capitalism, housing is built and destroyed for the benefit of landlords and their drive for ever-greater profits. The lives of tenants figure relatively little in these calculations. Perversely, the landlord may even benefit from this fire: With the current renters displaced, the landlord can remodel the building for more affluent tenants without a protracted legal struggle to remove the current tenants. Historically, it is not unheard of for landlords to “burn out” tenants in rent-controlled apartments to accelerate renovation-for-profit.

Such a cruel, inhuman system, in which the lives of 12 people matter less than a landlord’s profits, does not deserve to exist. Only socialism, where housing is built and maintained for the benefit of the people, can provide decent, safe housing for all. □



Families hold portraits of Fujimori’s victims in Lima, Dec. 28.

By Greg Butterfield

On Dec. 24, President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski (PPK) shocked Peruvians and the world by pardoning former right-wing dictator Alberto Fujimori. Fujimori oversaw a bloody 10-year reign of terror targeting Indigenous communities, leftist guerrilla movements and parties, trade unions and peasant organizations, students and women, and other progressive forces. This genocidal campaign had the full support and active participation of U.S. imperialism under Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton.

That night — Christmas Eve — hundreds poured into the streets of Lima and other cities to denounce the pardon and declare “¡Fujimori Nunca Más!” — “Fujimori never again!” — and “Out, out, PPK!” calling for the current president’s resignation. (Reuters, Dec. 27)

The Lima protesters, joined by thousands more the next day, were attacked by riot police with tear gas and truncheons as they marched toward the hospital where Fujimori was staying. He was pardoned supposedly on “humanitarian” grounds of ill health. Victims’ families and human rights organizations announced plans Dec. 27 to challenge the pardon in court. (soychile.cl, Dec. 31)

On Dec. 28, more than 20,000 people, led by families of the massacred and “disappeared” carrying photos of their loved ones, marched in Lima, joined by thou-

sands more in Cuzco, Ayacucho, Piura, Cajamarca, Chimbote, Huancayo, Puno and other cities throughout Peru. (La Radio del Sur, Dec. 29) Protests were also held across Latin America, in Madrid and New York.

“We will march until the pardon is annulled and Kuczynski resigns,” vowed Marco Arana of the Broad Front. (teleSUR, Dec. 29)

“PPK has never invited us — the families of his victims — to visit him as he has Keiko and Kenji [Fujimori’s children, leaders of the far-right Fuerza Popular party],” explained Carmen Oyague, whose daughter was one of nine students and a professor kidnapped and murdered in 1992. (The Guardian, Dec. 29)

A dirty political deal

Kuczynski was narrowly elected in 2016 with support of some progressive forces who viewed him as the “lesser evil” against opponent Keiko Fujimori. During the campaign he pledged not to pardon the ex-president.

In fact, Fujimori’s pardon by President Kuczynski came just days after members of the party headed by his children blocked PPK’s impeachment on corruption charges. (La Radio del Sur, Dec. 29)

Fujimori served less than half of a 25-year jail sentence for crimes against humanity. Contrast his treatment with that of leading leftist political prisoners.

Abimael Guzmán of the Communist Party of Peru—Sendero Luminoso (PCP-SL) and Victor Polay of the Tupac Amaru

Peru

Tens of thousands protest release of right-wing dictator Fujimori

Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) have been held in near total isolation in an isolated naval prison for more than 25 years.

After Fujimori’s pardon, Guzmán’s attorney, Alfredo Crespo, declared: “We demand the freedom of Abimael Guzmán Reinoso. Twenty-five years in absolute isolation.” (RedMas.com, Dec. 26)

Crimes of Fujimori and imperialism

Alberto Fujimori came to power in 1990 with a mandate from Wall Street to enact draconian International Monetary Fund austerity measures, privatize the economy and crush the growing liberation movements.

The crimes of Fujimori, the Peruvian ruling class and U.S. imperialism were documented in the pages of Workers World throughout the 1990s.

In early 1992, Fujimori and his military/police allies carried out a so-called auto-coup, suspending the Constitution, dismissing Congress and the courts, and implementing martial law throughout the country.

Little more than a month later, he ordered the massacre of more than 400 political prisoners at Canto Grande prison outside Lima.

U.S. military special forces intervened directly in the civil war under the guise of the “war on drugs.” Washington’s intelligence agencies participated in the capture of revolutionary leaders.

Peruvian industries nationalized under left-nationalist military governments in the 1960s and 1970s were sold off at

cut-rate prices to Western and Japanese monopolies and in exchange for massive military aid from both Republican and Democratic U.S. administrations.

Thousands of political activists and suspected “sympathizers” with the armed resistance struggle were imprisoned. They were convicted by military courts where judges wore hoods to hide their identities and where defendants had no right to defend themselves. Many prisoners were tortured. Thousands more were simply “disappeared.”

Death squads targeted Indigenous villages in the Andes and impoverished shanty towns around Lima from which the guerrilla movements drew support. Mass graves are still being uncovered today.

Fujimori also enacted a forced sterilization program against 300,000 Indigenous and poor women between 1996 and 2000, based on an earlier U.S. program in Puerto Rico.

In April 1997, Fujimori ordered the massacre of MRTA guerrillas who had occupied the Japanese Embassy in Lima to draw attention to the plight of political prisoners.

Fujimori’s pardon now is a symptom of a U.S.-inspired right-wing offensive to roll back Venezuela’s Bolivarian Revolution and the progressive governments and movements it has inspired throughout Latin America.

But the Peruvian people taking to the streets are showing the world they will not accept this without a fight. □

People’s Korea resists US. threats

Continued from page 1

next nine countries combined. (thebalance.com) This huge budget feeds the military-industrial-banking complex and the tremendous income gap in this country.

In late October, right before Trump’s trip to China, the U.S. sent two more U.S. Navy carrier strike groups to the Pacific, making a total of three aircraft carriers and their accompanying fleets of cruisers, destroyers and submarines. There have been so many U.S. warships in the Pacific this year that a number of serious naval accidents have occurred there.

Every summer, fall, winter and spring, the U.S. holds war “games” in south Korea, practicing for the invasion of the north and the “decapitation” — the Pentagon’s own word — of its leadership. Recently, these U.S. military exercises have included thousands of soldiers from Japan, the hated colonial power that ruled all of Korea from 1910 to 1945.

In early December, the U.S. launched another set of these war “games” in which six F-22 fighter jets, as well as six F-35As and 12 F-35Bs, were involved for the first time. These supersonic aircraft zooming toward the DPRK border ramped up the possibility that the Koreans might think an attack had begun.

Faced with this relentless aggression, Korean scientists have been able to construct nuclear weapons and a missile system capable of delivering them to U.S. targets if they are attacked. Given what the DPRK is up against, what country

in the world could be more justified in claiming the need for this type of defense?

The U.N. vote

China and Russia, world powers that are the DPRK’s two northern neighbors, are the ones tasked by this new sanctions resolution with cutting down most of its oil shipments and sending home its nationals working in their countries.

Back on Sept. 6, the New York Times reported that the Trump administration had “circulated a draft resolution at the United Nations Security Council that would effectively empower the United States Navy and Air Force to interdict North Korean ships at sea, inspect them to determine whether they are carrying weapons material or fuel into the country, and use ‘all necessary measures’ to enforce compliance.”

People’s China and capitalist Russia are said to have agreed to the Dec. 22 U.N. vote increasing sanctions on the DPRK partly because of this U.S. threat to start boarding Korean ships on the high seas. They are justifying their vote as a means to avert an incident that could lead to war.

However, they voted for previous sanctions resolutions, and that did nothing to stop the U.S. from intensifying its war threats against the DPRK or keep it from moving even more military personnel and equipment into the area.

Will this latest resolution, instead of appeasing the imperialists, merely whet their appetite for more and more concessions at the expense of the Korean people? When will the governments of China and Russia draw the line and say, “No pasarán”? (“They shall not pass.”)

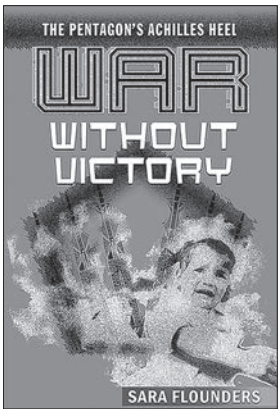
The problem is not just that an unfortunate incident could lead to war. The problem is that U.S. policy, as expressed in its pronouncements and its military exercises, is to destroy the socialist government of the DPRK and turn the northern half of Korea into a U.S. neocolony.

It should be remembered that no U.S. administration has been willing to sit down with representatives of the DPRK and negotiate an end to the state of war that has existed since 1950, despite many, many requests from the Koreans for such discussions and a peace treaty. What this means is that the Pentagon can launch an

attack at any time without even the figleaf of consulting Congress — because an official state of war already exists.

Were China and Russia to have vetoed the sanctions resolution, they would certainly have risked incurring the wrath of the imperialists. But doesn’t going along with such a resolution incur even greater risk of emboldening the most aggressive forces among the imperialist policy makers, who want unchallenged domination over the world and see both China and to a lesser degree Russia as rivals?

The actions of the DPRK’s neighbors so far must have confirmed to the Koreans that to prevent the U.S. from starting another war, they must have a very powerful deterrent of their own. And isn’t that why both the USSR, when it existed, and People’s China developed their own nuclear weapons in response to and despite the threats from Washington? □



WAR WITHOUT VICTORY

by Sara Flounders

“By revealing the underbelly of the empire, Flounders sheds insight on how to stand up to the imperialist war machine and, in so doing, save ourselves and humanity.”

– Miguel d’Escoto Brockmann,
President, U.N. General Assembly, 2008-2009;
Foreign Minister of Nicaragua’s Sandinista government.

Available at all major online booksellers.

PentagonAchillesHeel.com

People’s movement fights electoral fraud

PHOTO: TELESUR

By John Catalinotto

Jan. 1 — Hondurans have been in the streets risking their lives to protest fraud in the recent presidential election in their country. But the U.S. government congratulated the regime of Juan Orlando Hernández, which refuses to concede its loss to people’s candidate Salvador Nasrallah. Corporate U.S. and European media have barely reported a word of the government’s slaughter of dozens of people in the protests.

To bring the facts to our readers, Workers World has selected parts of recent interviews with people on the ground in Honduras.

WW sources include a Dec. 28 interview from the German newspaper Junge Welt with Berta Zúñiga Cáceres, a spokeswoman for the Indigenous organization COPINH (Civil Council of Indigenous and Popular Organizations of Honduras) and daughter of Berta Cáceres, one of the founders of COPINH, who was murdered in March 2016.

Real News Network spoke on Dec. 15 with Gerardo Torres, the international coordinator of the Opposition Alliance Against the Dictatorship, and with Dr. Luther Castillo, a Garifuna physician and former vice minister in the Department of Health under the former president of Honduras, Manuel Zelaya.

And on Dec. 26, Democracy Now interviewed Allan Nairn, who has been reporting directly from the Honduran capital city, Tegucigalpa.

Electoral fraud

All the commentators agreed with what Berta Zúñiga Cáceres said: “It is obvious that there was an electoral fraud ... because the electoral system is part of the

government apparatus and its networks.”

She added, “For the population, the current political conflict is dangerous, because the government disrespects the Constitution and the laws of the Republic. But despite the attempted coup d’état and the militarization of the conflict, the population continues to take to the streets. Especially for the Indigenous peoples, who see themselves as not represented in any political party, it is immensely important to resolutely oppose the government’s ‘Continue as before!’”

Torres estimated: “We have more than 55 people killed. ... We know that they have been murdered all around Honduras. If this were happening in another country, Venezuela is the most likely example, or Nicaragua, or El Salvador, then they [the international bodies] would have already taken a stronger action.

“They see people being killed in Honduras. Yesterday they killed a little girl and little boys. And they tell that we are the violent ones because some people throw rocks and people defend themselves while the military are shooting unarmed innocent people.”

The people can fight for themselves

Castillo: “As part of the people’s movement, as part of the coalition of grassroots movement, we expect nothing from the OAS [Organization of American States]. And we know that only people can save the people. Our people in the street can fight for themselves.”

“This is bigger than the opposition, than the Alliance. This is the people’s movement. The biggest difference between this and 2009? Today there are young people in the street.”

Torres: “They stopped a really good process that President Zelaya had in

Honduras



2009, they violently stopped it. And now it’s our time to stop the dictatorship and to start again in the process for building democracy, of building confidence in our government, and of building new ways of development in Honduras.

“This is a political problem, this is a new coup, but now, as Mr. Castillo said, we are not the same people that we were in 2009. We have lived eight years under a dictatorship, and we are willing and ready to end it.”

Castillo: “What I am sure of today is that we’re going to fight. As a social movement we are not even thinking about a new election. We are thinking about the fight for our rights. Even our people who have been killed in the street give us more energy, more commitment to continue fighting for their dreams.

“And we are ready, we are mobilized more than ever in the history of our country. We took the street in more than 158 separate places in the last weeks. And fighting with our hands, with our bodies, with nothing, with our consciousness, with our heart to build a new country against the tear gas, against the ballot of the dictatorship, against all this. With the blood of our people in the street.

“They kill one, we take them home. We say, ‘Go in peace,’ and we continue fighting for them.”

The fight for the military

“And we’re fighting for the military too,” said Castillo, “because they are

poor. There are 20,000 of them with chronic disease because of the bad conditions in the system. They sleep right there where they work. They don’t even have a mattress. They don’t have water. Their children don’t go to school. They don’t eat well. Then we’re fighting for us and we’re fighting for them.”

Nairn called the popular struggle “an intifada of Hondurans against election fraud. But, more deeply, it’s a class uprising against an oligarchy that the U.S. has been backing for decades. The U.S. first used it in the 1980s to stage the Contra attack against Nicaragua. Honduras was their base. Now they say it’s being used for the drug war.

“But it’s a de facto U.S. military occupation of Honduras, in a sense, since the U.S. has an actual base there, even though foreign bases are prohibited by the Honduran Constitution.”

Nairn also mentioned that “unlike in Israel, where the army is deeply ideological, fully indoctrinated to the project of the government, in Honduras it’s only certain sectors of the army and the police that have that character. I talked to many, many dozens of army and police, and it’s clear that many of them don’t really like being dragged along on a reimposition of the Hernández government.” □

Miners’ deaths spark growing protests

Morocco

By G. Dunkel

Brothers Houcine and Jedouane drowned in a clandestine, flooded, hand-made mine in Jerada, Morocco, on Dec. 22. When their bodies were recovered a day later, the protests started.

Jerada was a major coal mining town until the government-owned mine closed in the 1990s, laying off 9,000 workers. Since then, scores of tiny mines have given work to hundreds who daily risk death and injury for a living. Some mines are holes scarcely big enough for a small man to use. Generally, miners make around \$11 a day.

In the protests, thousands of people, many of them women and children, filled the streets, demanding “jobs, dignity and development.” These were the same demands made by the protest organization Hirak during large demonstrations in October in Al Hoceima, a coastal city in northeast Morocco.

Al Hoceima is north of Jerada and both are in the Rif region. This area has been the scene of such a major outcry that King Mohammed VI brought in thousands of cops in September to put a lid on protests that were severely challenging his regime. (Le Monde, Oct. 26)

The majority of the population of the Rif is Amazigh, often pejoratively called Berber. The Imazighen, the name the

Amazigh people use for their nationality, make up about 40 percent of the people of Morocco.

Historically, the Rif has been the center of struggle against France and Spain, the colonial occupiers of Morocco, and against kings Hassan II and Mohammed VI, who took over rule after direct colonialism ended.

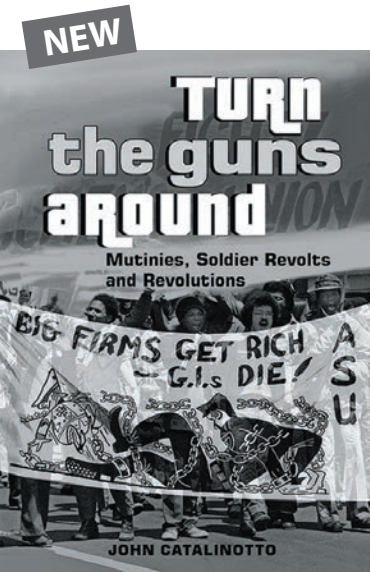
On Dec. 27, the Party of Authentic Modernity led thousands of people in marching on the city offices of Jerada to protest sharp increases in electric and water bills. Jerada is the poorest city in Morocco.

The four major labor unions in Morocco, joined by all the opposition political parties, then called a very successful general strike Dec. 29, which shut Jerada down, according to H24info.ma, a Moroccan internet news service. The country’s major trading partners are still Spain and France, its former colonial rulers. According to a year end report by the Office of Foreign Exchange, major exports are cars and coated wire for networks and computers.

While sectors of the Moroccan economy tied to neocolonial capitalism are developing, the people living in the poorer areas — not just in the Rif but also in the south of the country — are making their opposition to growing inequality firmly and militantly known. □



Thousands protest in Jerada, Morocco, Dec. 27.



TURN THE GUNS AROUND Mutinies, Soldier Revolts and Revolutions

by John Catalinotto

Weaving together GI letters, interviews and first-hand narratives with historical research, the author brings to life GI resistance in the Vietnam War era, shows its relation to capitalist state power and highlights why breaking the military chain of command is an essential step to ending oppression around the globe.

“If schools in the United States really wanted to impart historical truth, Catalinotto’s ‘Turn The Guns Around’ would be required reading. He tells the true story of this epoch. Few participants know more about the massive GI rebellion against the Vietnam War, the anti-war veterans’ movement or the history of soldier revolts from the Paris Commune to the Portuguese coup.”

— Pvt Larry Holmes *GI resister and organizer for the American Servicemen’s Union 1972-74.*
Available at online booksellers

A tax cut to hate

When Congress finally passed the misnamed Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and it was signed into law, it was clear that what it represented was an enormous transfer of wealth from all poor and almost all working people to the richest 1% of society. The biggest benefits would go to the super-rich.

It was the most reactionary change in social policy since the Bill Clinton administration pushed through “Ending welfare as we know it” in 1996.

But the worst is yet to come.

It may take a while for TCJA’s impact to become clear. This is true even though there were plenty of critical articles and reports that showed how one or another group of middle-income workers would be hurt. They showed how the cut in corporate tax from 35 percent to 21 percent and the elimination of estate taxes for an estate less than \$11 million would benefit only the rich.

In some last-minute conspiring between the House and Senate, a few of the most outrageous “reforms” were summarily eliminated. These were the “reforms” that aroused and mobilized sectors of the working class to demonstrate against the bill.

For example, the provisions that graduate students would have to declare tuition relief as income and the rejection of interest deductions on student loans were deleted.

Without examining each change — which will take much more space than this editorial allows and will probably keep tax attorneys and accountants busy all year — we can conclude that the great majority of the expected \$1.5

trillion increase in the budget deficit will be in the hands of the super-rich. They will use it to establish even greater control of future laws.

The mythical increase in investments and new jobs will fail to provide tax income. To the extent U.S. capitalists plan at all, CEOs plan new investments in technology that will reduce jobs and cut labor costs.

The ensuing increase in federal budget deficits will become the pretext for more attacks on the federal programs that provide services: Medicare, Social Security, Medicaid, what’s left of the Affordable Care Act, Veterans benefits, environmental protection, food and drug regulation and other Health and Human Services programs, etc. These cuts harm the entire working class, and Black, Brown and all oppressed peoples, women, children, immigrants and people with disabilities disproportionately.

The Republican Party, which pushed through the TCJA, is obviously an enemy of working people and a friend of the rich. The Democrats too, for their feeble resistance to this bill, have shown that they are unwilling to seriously challenge the interests of the capitalist class.

Thus the “tax reform” repeats the lesson shown in other areas: What’s needed is an independent mobilization of the mass movement against the current government — which necessitates that it be separate from the Democratic Party.

Don’t just hate the TCJA. Fight it and what are the inevitable next attacks on the workers and oppressed. □

No justice in 1946 racist lynching

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

The Atlanta Journal Constitution announced in an exclusive report Dec. 28 that the FBI had “quietly closed its investigation into the murders” of two Black couples by a racist mob in 1946 at Moore’s Ford Bridge in rural Walton County, Ga. The Georgia Bureau of Investigation is expected to do likewise by the end of January, with no one held accountable.

Often described as the “last mass lynching” in the U.S., the vicious, preplanned killing of Roger Malcolm, Dorothy Malcolm, George Dorsey and Mae Murray Dorsey reveals the conditions of white supremacy and violence that dominated throughout the former Confederate states.

The details of the case are well-known. Roger Malcolm had been involved in a physical fight with a white farmer, Barnette Hester, on July 14 and had stabbed him. Hester was taken to a hospital for treatment and Malcolm was held for 11 days in the county jail in Monroe, Ga.

White landowner Loy Harrison bonded Malcolm out for \$600 on July 25. The Malcolms and Dorseys were sharecroppers on Harrison’s land. Accompanied to the jail by Dorothy Malcolm and the Dorseys, Harrison then began the drive toward his farm in the late afternoon.

Harrison said that when he reached the Moore’s Ford Bridge, about an hour later, his car was stopped by a band of dozens of armed men who forced the two couples out of the vehicle, beating them and riddling their bodies with 60 bullets at close range. Although the assailants’ faces were not covered, Harrison claimed he didn’t recognize anyone.

Dorsey was a World War II veteran who had served in the Pacific. Reportedly, Dorothy Malcolm was seven months pregnant. The brutality of the murders made national news, and the Truman administration ordered the FBI to send investigators to Walton County. There was no local police investigation.

Although thousands of FBI interviews over five months took place, and early attention was put on several members of the Ku Klux Klan, hostility and fear led a grand jury to indict no one. The suspects were provided alibis and no physical evidence was found.

Eyewitness says cops were there

The level of racist intimidation can be exemplified by the public beating of Lamar Howard, a Black man who testified before the grand jury that he had overheard two of the participants planning the ambush. Howard was later accosted at his job by two white men who, when arrested, admitted striking him repeatedly. Yet they were acquitted by a jury in short order.

Years would pass and the killers of Roger and Dorothy Malcolm and George and Mae Murray Dorsey continued to live and thrive in Walton County.

In 1968, just before he was assassinated, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. sent a young Southern Christian Leadership Conference staffer, Tyrone Brooks, to Monroe in advance of his planned visit to the town after his return from Memphis. As a teenager, King had written a letter to the Atlanta newspaper in 1946 denouncing the murders.

Brooks, who went on to become an elected state representative in the Georgia House, pursued every lead in an attempt to bring justice to the families of the Malcolms and Dorseys.

After decades of little new evidence, in 1991, Clinton Adams, a 55-year-old white man, told FBI agents that he and a boyhood friend had witnessed the murders while hiding behind some trees. He claimed to have seen a police vehicle on site and named names. Adams said he had been warned to keep quiet and for years as an adult he moved frequently, fearful of Klan retaliation.

Adams, haunted by what he saw as a 10-year-old boy, continues to hold to his recollection of what he saw that day. Nevertheless, with many of the likely participants dead by that time, no official charges resulted.

In 1997, a biracial group formed the Moore’s Ford Memorial Committee, which successfully secured a first-of-its-kind historical marker on Highway 78. Located near the turn-off to the lynching site, it notes the racist act that took place there on July 25, 1946.

In 2001, then Gov. Roy Barnes officially ordered the Georgia Bureau of Investigation to re-open the case, followed in 2006 by the FBI. The lynching at Moore’s Ford Bridge joined the list of many other cold cases of unprosecuted racist murders that took place during Jim Crow segregation.

In 2004, Tyrone Brooks approached the memorial committee with a dramatic proposal: to re-enact the murders and preceding events at the actual locations on the anniversary date.

Year after year, in late July, local residents and family members as well as people from around the world gather in Monroe to witness a vile crime that mirrors past and present systemic injustices committed with impunity.

More than seven decades have passed since four young Black people’s lives were ended by racist terrorists who were protected by a code of violent white supremacy.

The official investigation and legal prosecution by the capitalist state have ended, but the trauma and pain remain. They continue to spur on the struggle for real justice and liberation.

Mathiowetz has attended the re-enactment at Moore’s Ford Bridge multiple times and met the relatives of the Malcolms and Dorseys, who demand justice. See the book, “Fire in the Canebrake: The Last Mass Lynching in America” by Laura Wexler, 2003.

IOWA

Activists arrested protesting U.S. drone deaths

By Mike Kühlenbeck
Des Moines, Iowa

Four anti-war activists were arrested here Dec. 28 after protesting war crimes committed by U.S. armed drones flown out of the Iowa Air Guard Drone Command Center.

The drone strikes, launched under the administrations of U.S. presidents George W. Bush, Barack Obama and Donald Trump, are responsible for thousands of deaths. According to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, between 737 and 1,551 civilians have been killed in drone strikes since its data compilation began, with hundreds of the victims being children.

Braving snow and cold weather, anti-war demonstrators gathered for a “direct action” rally in the early afternoon at the Iowa center. They carried signs reading: “Herod killed the infants. Matt 2:16. Today the Des Moines Armed Drone Command Center kills them too! Celebrate Christmas. Shut down DM’s Drone Command!”

Participants included Catholic Workers members and local members of Veterans for Peace in this final event of

a “Feast of Holy Innocents Retreat.” As they walked onto the base, deemed a “war zone” by some, they were confronted by Air Guard security and local cops, who warned the demonstrators they faced arrest if they did not leave.

As most of the crowd left, four Catholic Workers members stayed and were arrested: Ed Bloomer and Al Burney of Des Moines, Greg Boertje-Obed of Duluth, Minn., and Brian Hynes of Brooklyn, N.Y. The four were handcuffed before being loaded into a police van.

Charged with misdemeanor trespassing, they spent the night in Polk County Jail, and the following day had a hearing before a judge. Burney entered a guilty plea and was released with a fine. Bloomer, Boertje-Obed and Hynes pleaded “not guilty” in order to argue their case before a jury. The Berigan Catholic Worker House paid their bonds, set at \$300 each, according to a news release obtained by Workers World. Their court date is set for Feb. 1.

This is just one of many such demon-



Dec. 28 shortly before protesters were arrested.

strations by Des Moines Catholic Workers, VFP members and their allies in recent years. They have shown solidarity with “those murdered and injured by U.S. drones,” according to a 2017 leaflet publicizing a similar rally. They have carried signs reading “End drone warfare” and “End war,” along with other slogans denouncing the killing of civilians in Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Pakistan, Somalia, Syria and Yemen.

Des Moines Catholic Worker and anti-war organizer Frank Cordaro have previously called the actions of the Drone Center “a scandal of high proportion that the community has not addressed.” (kcci.com, June 28)

Members of this coalition in the fight against imperialist warfare and the perpetuation of crimes against humanity have vowed to resume their struggle in the days, months and years to come. □

WORKERS WORLD PARTY PARTIDO MUNDO OBRERO



salutes PFLP on 50th anniversary



The following solidarity statement was sent from Workers World Party to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine on the 50th anniversary of the PFLP's founding on Dec. 11, 1967.

Workers World Party salutes the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine on the 50th anniversary of your foundation. We honor the memory of Dr. George Habash and Abu Ali Mustafa, Ghassan Kanafani, Muhammad Al Aswad, Shadia Abu Ghazaleh and so many other comrades martyred in the cause of liberation. They are heroes and inspirations not only for the people of Palestine but for the workers and oppressed all over the world. We call for the freedom of Comrade Ahmad Saadat and all political prisoners held in the dungeons of the racist settler state in Palestine.

We condemn the Trump regime's moving of the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem as yet another act of war by U.S. imperialism against the Palestinian people. Jerusalem is the capital of Palestine, and Palestine must be free, from the river to the sea.

The year 1967 was a grim time for the Palestinian and Arab people. Fifty years after the Balfour Declaration and 30 years after partition, the Zionist settler state proved its worth to its imperialist creators. The June 1967 attack, which put the entire land of Palestine and the Sinai and the Golan under Zionist rule, was exalted by the U.S. ruling class. They dreamed it would put an end to the nationalist wave unleashed by the 1952 Egyptian Revolution. The devastation wrought on Egypt and

Syria by the U.S.-funded Israeli war machine shifted the balance of power in the Arab world in favor of the House of Saud and other Gulf dynasties and kept the oil wealth of Arabia flowing into the coffers of Wall Street banks and the U.S. military-industrial complex.

But amidst these grim events, the Palestinian people and their own resistance movement seized center stage. The PFLP brought the lessons of the great October socialist revolution and of revolutionary struggles in China, Vietnam and Cuba to that movement. You identified the enemies of Palestinian liberation as the alliance of world imperialism, Israel, Zionism and Arab reaction. You identified the working class and peasants as the mainstay of revolution and placed the Palestinian struggle squarely in the camp of the struggle of oppressed people around the world against imperialism. You stood steadfast in word and deed against all schemes to derail, divide and subdue the fight for the freedom of all of Palestine and the right of all Palestinians to return to their land.

Much has changed in the past 50 years — there have been victories and terrible defeats — but the struggle of the Palestinian people remains a focal point of the global war between oppressors and oppressed. Nothing illustrates the decay of U.S. imperialism more than its ut-

ter dependence on war and destruction in the so-called "Middle East," including the bloody Zionist occupation of Palestine. The Trump regime, representing the most desperate faction of the U.S. ruling class, seeks wider war in the region. That is its "peace plan." It is part and parcel of its escalating war against people all over the world, including the working class and oppressed inside the U.S.

The importance the imperialist ruling class attaches to strengthening the Zionist occupation and its war machine must be matched by international solidarity with the people of Palestine, especially from here inside the belly of the beast. Your struggle is our struggle. We demand an end to U.S. arming and funding of the racist state of "Israel" and the removal of all U.S. military and intelligence forces from the region. We stand with you until the entire land of Palestine is liberated and every Palestinian has the right to live in every part of Palestine in peace and freedom. That will be a day of victory for workers and oppressed people everywhere.

In the words of George Habash, "The oppressed and starving of the world shall be victorious."

Long live Palestine! Long live the PFLP! Long live international solidarity! Workers and oppressed people of the world unite! □

Bay Area Hondurans denounce 'electoral coup'

By Dave Welsh
San Francisco

In solidarity with their compatriots in Honduras, who have poured into the streets of that Central American country in the hundreds of thousands, Hondurans living in the Bay Area have repeatedly rallied in the Mission District to protest widespread fraud in the Nov. 26 presidential election.

"This new electoral coup calls for a strong international response," Porfirio Quintano, of Bay Area Hondurans United against the Dictatorship, told a Dec. 28 rally. "Look what's been happening. Since the U.S.-backed 2009 coup in Honduras and their 2004 coup in Haiti, the U.S. imperialists have been complicit in the ouster of elected presidents in Paraguay and Brazil, as well as their constant intrigues against the elected government in Venezuela."

"It's clear that Washington has zero re-

spect for the votes of the people of Latin America," he added.

The Nov. 26 Honduran presidential election pitted incumbent strongman

and U.S. favorite Juan Orlando Hernández against challenger Salvador Nasralla from the Alianza coalition. But after the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) an-

nounced that Nasralla was winning by a 5 percent margin with 71 percent of the votes counted, TSE abruptly stopped the count and declared Hernández the winner.

"They have stolen the votes from us," Nasralla said at a Dec. 10 march. "This country will be ungovernable starting now."

At the Bay Area rally, Quintano said popular anger at the stolen election is broader and more powerful today than after the coup in 2009. "Then, the protests were mainly in the larger cities. Today, the movement is everywhere in Honduras, including little villages in the countryside. Today all the people are involved in this fight."

Welsh was part of an International Action Center delegation to Honduras shortly after the 2009 coup, as well as an international observer during the 2013 presidential "selection" of Juan Orlando Hernández.



PHOTO: BILL HACKWELL

Lessons of 'The Hammer & the Hoe: The Alabama Communist Party 1928-1951'

Continued from page 3

candidates on the ballot. This party would support proletarian internationalism and massive domestic reform that would eventually become a socialist system and a revolutionary force in the deep South.

Rise and fall

One of the strategies that the new members took, along with some of the older comrades, was to begin publishing propaganda aimed at rural workers and farmers who supported them without using the word "communism" or any variation of it. This task was led by Joe Gelders, a longtime communist and party member. The end result was the Birmingham "Southern News Almanac,"

which made its debut on Jan. 25, 1940.

This strategy was effective. The SNA discussed labor struggles, anti-war activities, the blooming Civil Rights movement and police brutality, all without ever revealing its ties to the ACP. The few Marxist preachers who existed in the South were regular contributors who took a unique approach to Marxism by explaining greed, poverty, capitalism and racism through biblical terms and references. This would become the most widely received propaganda for communism in Alabama and perhaps the Black Belt itself.

The resurgence in Alabama was a side effect of a national resurgence in the Communist Party itself, but the exponential growth in Alabama was nothing short of extraordinary.

Unfortunately, the party's resurgence and rededication to the liberation of Black workers and an end to wage slavery would be cut short in 1941, when Nazi Germany invaded the USSR. The national CPUSA headquarters immediately turned from campaigns for self-determination for oppressed groups within the United States, to anti-Hitler campaigns, and all or most chapters followed suit, including Alabama.

At this point, the ACP had so many prominent members who had formed their own organizations, or who were dedicated to other organizations (such as LYS: the League of Young Southerners), that the party went back underground, the same underground it had come up from in the early 1930s.

In 1949, the CIO betrayed the ACP. It

passed directions down to expel anyone suspected of being a Party member. This led to the State Industrial Union Council, National Maritime Union and the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers voting to expel any and all suspected members.

In 1950, the Birmingham city council, working with the KKK, passed a city law banning the Communist Party's activities, and in 1951, the Alabama Communist Control Law was passed, requiring all party members and communist front organizers to register with the Department of Public Safety or face a fine of up to \$10,000 and a prison sentence. This act would cause the ACP to formally disband, with many of its members fleeing the state altogether to avoid capture by the KKK. □

PART 2





Impacto en Puerto Rico de la Reforma Contributiva

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Un milenario proverbio chino se podría aplicar a la situación que viven las y los boricuas en su tierra luego del devastador Huracán María: “Regala un pescado a un hombre y le darás alimento para un día, enséñale a pescar y lo alimentarás por el resto de su vida”. El gran problema consiste en que aunque las/os puertorriqueños saben pescar, la condición colonial a la que han estado sometidos por más de un siglo, se los impide. Luego está ese otro refrán para describir al colonialista yanqui que “es como el perro del hortelano, que ni come, ni deja comer”.

A más de 100 días de la devastación creada por el Huracán María, aún no hay electricidad constante en casi la mitad de la isla y la fuente de agua potable es precaria, manteniéndose en la mayor parte a fuerza de generadores.

La asistencia de las entidades federales — FEMA y el Cuerpo de Ingenieros — ha sido criminalmente lenta e inadecuada, causando cientos de muertes por falta de servicios esenciales. Sin embargo, Estados Unidos, como el mencionado perro del hortelano, impide que ayudas solidarias de otros países puedan arribar al archipiélago para suplir esas necesidades que por obligación le corresponde al imperio, causante de la debacle económica de su colonia.

¿No es esto acaso un perverso bloqueo de un pueblo?

Impacto de la Reforma Contributiva

Encima, el impacto que tendrá en Puerto Rico la recientemente aprobada Reforma Contributiva estadounidense (Tax Cuts and Jobs Act o TCJA en inglés) revela la criminal estrangulación por la camisa de fuerza que significa el dominio del imperio sobre este archipiélago caribeño. Muchas personas en PR la describen como “el otro huracán”, refiriéndose al devastador efecto en la economía insular.

¿Qué contiene esta ley respecto a Puerto Rico?

Firmada por el presidente estadounidense el pasado 22 de diciembre, esta ley impone una tasa de 12,5 por ciento de arbitrios sobre la propiedad intelectual — marcas, patentes y desarrollos tecnológicos — de compañías estadounidenses que operen en la isla. Ilustrativo de las incongruencias y contradicciones del estado colonial, estas compañías denominadas “corporaciones bajo control foráneo” (CFC, en inglés), habían gozado de generosas exenciones contributivas en su lugar de origen en EUA aunque la producción fuera en PR. Ahora, la colonia — que pertenece, pero no es parte de EUA, como lo dictó el Tribunal estadounidense en 2016, está reafirmada como una “jurisdicción extranjera” para este propósito contributivo.

Como ya hemos escrito en artículos anteriores, el desarrollo — e imposición — de los sectores económicos lo hace el imperio según le convenga a sus intereses: desde la destrucción de la moneda e imposición del dólar a principios del siglo XX, el monocultivo de caña de azúcar, la manufactura de textiles y refinamiento de petróleo (que por cierto no hay en PR), hasta el cambio más recientemente a industrias altamente contaminantes de farmacéuticas y equipos médicos.

La manufactura es hoy la base de la economía puertorriqueña y son precisamente las farmacéuticas y la de equipos médicos que constituyen más del 40 por ciento de la economía. Estas son empresas estadounidenses que además se llevan a Estados Unidos las ganancias generadas por manos boricuas. Son éstas industrias las que se verán más afectadas con el nuevo impuesto, por lo que el gobierno criollo y los industriales boricuas están en total pánico presintiendo que abandonarán la isla dejando a más de 70.000 trabajadoras/es sin empleo y el irrisorio impuesto de 4 por ciento que aportan a las arcas del gobierno boricua. Aunque los efectos no se verían hasta quizás el 2019, temen que sea un escollo más para atraer nuevas industrias es-



Orlando, Fla.
MO/WW FOTO: J. WHITE

tadounidenses.

La indiferencia y el desprecio con que el tema de Puerto Rico ha sido tratado en el Congreso estadounidense merecen un capítulo aparte pues reafirma lo que las y los independentistas han sostenido por décadas: a Estados Unidos no le interesa el pueblo de PR como merecedor de asistencia, ni respeto, ni mucho menos como un estado más. Se reafirma lo que el Maestro Don Pedro Albizu Campos tantas veces decía, “a EUA le interesa la jaula, pero no los pájaros”.

Quienes han podido seguir — a riesgo de intoxicarse — los intentos de la comisionada residente en Washington Jennifer González y el gobernador Ricardo “Ricky” Roselló por lograr exenciones y beneficios para Puerto Rico en la propuesta de ley contributiva en el Congreso estadounidense pueden fácilmente llegar a las mismas conclusiones del independentismo, sea cual fuere su orientación ideológica. González es miembro del Partido Republicano en EU pero en PR milita en el mismo Partido Nuevo Progresista que su jefe Roselló. Éste a su vez, pertenece al Partido Demócrata de EU, ¡estupideces coloniales!

Mientras González pululaba ignominiosamente por los pasillos del Capitolio estadounidense, suplicando por la estadidad y por favores a congresistas republicanos, su jefe, el arrodillado gobernador Roselló enviaba misivas y visitaba congresistas en Washington mendigando exenciones y migajas.

Al final, el imperio prevaleció. Incluso los oídos congresistas permanecieron sordos a los pedidos de ayuda para la reconstrucción de PR luego de María. Una propuesta de ayuda para los estados y territorios afectados por los últimos desastres naturales no se negociará hasta enero.

¡Descolonización urgente!

Es esta última estocada la que pone en claro la necesidad urgente de un proceso de descolonización. El espejismo del “Estado Libre Asociado” terminó en junio del 2016 cuando Washington dictaminó que los poderes de PR están en las puertas del Congreso estadounidense y se impuso la dictatorial Junta de Control Fiscal. Y ahora quedó más claro que nunca que a Estados Unidos no le interesa — ni quiere — que Puerto Rico sea parte de EU, o sea, otro estado. Con el 2017 se deben enterrar también todos esos recuerditos que decían “Estado 51”.

Mientras Puerto Rico siga como colonia, no habrá un desarrollo económico para beneficiar a su población.

El trabajo para la descolonización es

inmenso. Se necesita un profundo y consistente trabajo de descomponer lo que el Cointelpro ha construido en Puerto Rico; se necesita urgentemente una unidad en acción; se necesitan campañas descolonizadoras poniendo aparte las diferencias ideológicas y de tácticas.

Ejemplos hay muchos. Como la lucha en contra del Apartheid en África del Sur que fue tan exitosa. Primeramente por la lucha y militancia de los diferentes grupos surafricanos — que también tenían diferencias entre sí. E igualmente por el enorme movimiento internacional donde la meta era la destrucción del apartheid.

Ahí estaban tanto los grupos pacifistas como los que creían en la lucha armada; cada cual hacía su parte de acuerdo a su ideología, pero con la meta final de terminar con la segregación racista. En Puerto Rico tenemos precedentes: la huelga telefónica del 1998, la lucha de Vieques, y las campañas por la liberación de nuestras/os prisioneros políticos.

Ahora no puede ser menos. Es imprescindible. Sobre todo, se necesita una gran campaña de concientización popular.

Es el tiempo y creo, por lo que esta escritora presenció durante su reciente viaje a PR, que el pueblo, ese pueblo que está sufriendo con la corrupción y el abandono tanto del gobierno criollo como del federal, está preparado. No hay mucho que explicar sobre el abandono de los federales, basta ver la ausencia de los famosos toldos azules de FEMA en las montañas.

Hay que ir a cada rincón, desde Culebra y Vieques, hasta Cabo Rojo y Ceiba. A los caseríos, a La Perla, a Lloréns. El movimiento independentista y progresista, los dinámicos grupos de jóvenes que están tomando la batuta revolucionaria, los grupos LGBT, estudiantes, jóvenes y no tan jóvenes, con o sin discapacidades.

Todxs a unírnos para descolonizarnos y descolonizar a Puerto Rico, forjar una nueva patria. Hay la creatividad, lo que falta es la voluntad decisiva, y esa se ve florecer en los miles de grupos comunitarios que están naciendo alrededor del archipiélago. Podemos, junto con las y los boricuas exiladas/os en Estados Unidos — que son un solo pueblo — siempre que Puerto Rico sea su norte y no el imperio.

¡Viva Puerto Rico Libre y Soberano!
¡Fuera la Junta de Control Fiscal!
¡Solidaridad y Justicia, no caridad!
¡Alto al bloqueo de Puerto Rico!
¡Derogación de la Ley de Cabotaje y cancelación de la deuda!

La autora es oriunda del Barrio Bélégica de Ponce y exilada en la Ciudad de Filadelfia.

El capitalismo en un callejón sin salida



La tesis de este libro es que la crisis económica, que se inició en agosto de 2007, marcó un punto de inflexión en la historia del capitalismo. El autor sostiene que el sistema no se recuperará, no volverá al ciclo capitalista normal de auge y caída.

Durante décadas, la clase capitalista ha utilizado la revolución tecnológica digital para aumentar la productividad del trabajo a un ritmo récord. Menos trabajadores producen más bienes y servicios en menos tiempo con salarios más bajos. El resultado es una serie de “recuperaciones sin empleos” que hace que las cosas vayan aún peor.

Goldstein utiliza las leyes de la acumulación capitalista de Marx, y la tasa decreciente de ganancia, para demostrar por qué el capitalismo global ha llegado finalmente a un punto de inflexión.

El continuo estancamiento y el desempleo generalizado provocarán inevitablemente un resurgimiento de la lucha de clases que no se ve en EE.UU. desde la década de 1930; esta vez se dirigirá contra el propio sistema.