MUNDO OBRERO
WORKERS WORLD

PUERTO RICO: ¿Segunda invasión gringa? 12

Follow us!
@WorkersWorld
/WorkersWorldParty
workers.org

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite! workers.org Vol. 59, No. 40 Oct. 5, 2017 $1

PUERTO RICO: Second Yankee invasion?

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Oct. 2 — A year after the United States invaded Puerto Rico in 1898 and imposed a military regime, Hurricane San Ciriaco hit the island and devastated nearly its entire infrastructure. This allowed the invaders to restructure the country at their convenience. Agriculture was destroyed, and the coffee and tobacco that went to European markets were eventually replaced by gigantic sugar cane plantations imposed by the U.S. to benefit their sugar industry.

Profits went to their home offices in New York and Boston, thus beginning the draining of Boricua's wealth by the U.S. Together with this, the U.S. Congress passed the Foraker Act in 1900, which established the U.S. dollar as the official currency of Puerto Rico, replacing the peso, which the U.S. had already devalued in January 1899. With one Yankee slap, Puerto Ricans lost 40 percent of their wealth.

Today, after Hurricane Maria's Sept. 20 devastation of the island, it seems that the Yankee empire is preparing to restructure Puerto Rico again to serve its new interests in these times of terrible capitalist decline, which makes that system no less cruel and criminal.

This latest restructuring had already begun when the U.S. Congress passed the Promesa Act under the Democratic administration of President Barack Obama, forcing Puerto Ricans to pay an illegitimate and odious debt of $74 billion. A debt for which the authorities still — and this must be stressed — refuse to accept a people's audit.

This act imposed a Financial Control Board of seven members (known as the "Junta") associated with the banking industry. This Junta will rule Puerto Rico, including over the island's government. Just before María struck, the FCB had already imposed a horrific and damaging neoliberal Fiscal Plan for Puerto Rico directed against the working people, which would plunge more people into poverty. Part of Promesa is the privatization of state entities such as the PR Electric Power Authority (AEE), especially its electricity-generating capacity, which produces the most profits.

It is within this framework that the monumental devastation of the hurricane arrived.

Like a harbinger of what is currently happening, writer Yarimar Bonilla

Continued on page 7

Theodore Roosevelt in Puerto Rico, 1898.

Donald Trump greeted by U.S. military in Puerto Rico, 2017.

WW PHOTOS: JOE PIETTE

Philadelphia protest for Puerto Rico on Sept. 29.

WW BANNED FROM PA PRISON for 'fight against white supremacy' 2

New York Workers World Party forum, Sept. 28.

WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

TAKING A KNEE NFL protests & politics 3

New York City welcomes REV. EDWARD PINKNEY 4

NO DRONES! For rich man's war 7

LAS VEGAS & PUERTO RICO EDITORIAL 10

FEMA What's it good for? 6

HAITI General strike vs. budget cuts 9

CATALONIA Repression breeds resistance 11

Subscribe to Workers World

☐ 4 weeks trial $4 ☐ 1 year subscription $30
☐ Sign me up for the WWP Supporter Program: workers.org/articles/donate/supporters_/

Name _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Street _____ City / State / Zip _____

Workers World Weekly Newspaper
147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl, NY, NY 10011
212.627.2994 workers.org

Pennsylvania prisons ban WW for supporting 'fight against white supremacy'

By Joe Piette
Philadelphia

A letter from the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (DOC) received by WW Publishers on Sept. 11 stated, "The August 31 issue of Workers World newspaper has been denied to all inmates housed in Pennsylvania prisons." Their reason: The issue contains articles that "call for people to join the fight against white supremacy."

This is the fourth issue of WW denied so far to Pennsylvania prisoners since Donald Trump's election. Earlier in 2017, the DOC censored issues numbers 7, 12 and 13 for advocating a May 1 global general strike.

Page 2 of the Aug. 31 issue cited by the DOC featured an article entitled "AFL-CIO's Trumka leaves Trump council — He never should have joined!" The DOC seems to have taken offense with this paragraph: "The bigger question for labor is, of course, the conduct of Trumka. How could he justify taking a seat on this hideous council, knowing all about Trump's bigoted rhetoric and the presence of open white supremacists in the cabinet?" (workers.org/2017/08/29/)

The page 7 article also cited was entitled "A statement from the Durham branch of Workers World Party: On the toppling of Confederate statue." On the top of page 11 was "BULLETIN: More Durham arrests — Call the sheriff!" (workers.org/2017/08/29/)

Every U.S. newspaper has carried articles this past summer about the growing fight against white supremacy. Prisoners have as much right to read Workers World as any other newspaper or magazine, especially because WW articles are written by activists playing leading roles in that dynamic movement.

DOC forced to backtrack after public campaign

WW Publishers filed an appeal on Sept. 26, demanding that the DOC cease this unconstitutional practice for future issues; that each prisoner be given the copies that were denied to him or her; and, to make each prisoner whole, that each inmate whose constitutional rights were denied receive $50 for each illegally deprived issue.

Instead of limiting the response to an appeal letter, Workers World shared this DOC letter widely in social media so the public could view the white supremacist attitudes of the prison administration in their own words. The loved ones behind bars in Pennsylvania and every state are subjected to those racist attitudes and actions every day.

WW urged readers and activists to send complaints to the Department of Corrections, 1920 Technology Parkway, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050; 717-728-2573. Reporters from RT, the Guardian newspaper, Newsweek and other media outlets reached out to WW for confirmation and comments. Many expressed initial disbelief that the DOC would be so blatant in their support for white supremacy until it was confirmed that the letter was legitimate.

Workers World Party member Mike Wilson was interviewed on Michael Coard's "Radio Courtroom" program on WURD 96.1-FM, a major radio station popular in Philadelphia's Black community.

By Sept. 28, the DOC issued a written response calling its own Sept. 11 letter "a poorly written reason for denial." Contrary to the earlier letter WW received, the new statement claimed it was "a denial from one State Correctional institution to ONE inmate."

After criticizing their own reason for their denial as "grossly inaccurate," the DOC reacted to wide public condemnation, alleging it "does not tolerate racism in any form and supports policies of equality."

Workers World has yet to receive an official response letter from the DOC.

Close to 300 prisoners in Pennsylvania have free subscriptions to WW, whose front-page masthead contains the words: "Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!" Readers wishing to support more free subscriptions to prisoners are encouraged to donate through patreon.com/wwp.

The Klan & Government: Foes or Allies?

The capitalist government has covertly encouraged and promoted the Klan over decades. It is often overlooked in media reports that the durability of the Klan rests on long-term bonds to the state.

The capitalist government not only tolerates organizations like the Klan, but once the class struggle of the workers and oppressed people takes on the character of a mass upsurge, the capitalist government is more likely to encourage the Klan.

If the U.S. is resorting to naked armed force on a world scale, to threatening nuclear first-strikes, is it likely that the peace of the oppressor imposed on the oppressed will prevail?

Read more at http://tinyurl.com/y9t8d8ok

WORKERS WORLD this week

★ **In the U.S.**

PUERTO RICO: Second Yankee invasion? 1
Pennsylvania prisons ban WW 2
The politics behind the NFL protests 3
Harlem Abolition Forum counters police violence 3
Houston activists demand Indigenous Peoples Day 3
Freedom fighter Takiyah Thompson in NYC Oct. 14 3
Baltimore transit riders: 'Sink the Link'! 4
New York City: A salute to Rev. Edward Pinkney 4
Massive immigrant raids conducted in sanctuary cities 4
Roanoke struggles display people's power 5
On the picket line 5
Why FEMA can't protect us 6
Philadelphia: Protest denounces U.S. for Puerto Rico crisis 6
Anti-drone protest: 'Rich man's war, poor people's blood' 7
Letter on Korea: 'Don't kill for Trump and the Pentagon!' 8
Solidarity message from Partido Mundo Obrero/ Workers World Party to the people of Puerto Rico 9
Puerto Rican diaspora rallies in NYC 9
Boston: Protest budget cuts to HIV, youth housing 10

★ **Around the world**

Police attack anti-capitalist march in Moscow 8
Haitians hold popular uprising against new budget 9
Catalans defy Spanish cops to vote pro-independence 11
German elections show need for anti-racist struggle 11

★ **Editorial**

Las Vegas & Puerto Rico: What we know 10

★ **Noticias en Español**

PUERTO RICO: ¿Segunda invasión gringa? 12

Workers World
147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl.
New York, NY 10011
Phone: 212.627.2994
E-mail: ww@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org
Vol. 59, No. 40 • Oct 5, 2017
Closing date: Oct. 3, 2017

Editor: Deirdre Griswold

Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell, Kris Balderas Hamel, Monica Moorehead, Minnie Bruce Pratt; Web Editor Gary Wilson

Production & Design Editors: Coordinator Lal Roohk; Andy Katz, Cheryl LaBash

Copyediting and Proofreading: Sue Davis, Bob McCubbin, Jeff Sorel

Contributing Editors: Abayomi Azikiwe, Greg Butterfield, G. Dunkel, K. Durkin, Fred Goldstein, Martha Grevatt, Teresa Gutierrez, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Terri Kay, Cheryl LaBash, Milt Neidenberg, John Parker, Bryan G. Pfeifer, Betsey Piette, Gloria Rubac

Mundo Obero: Redactora Berta Joubert-Ceci; Andrea Bañuelos, Alberto García, Teresa Gutierrez, Carlos Vargas

Supporter Program: Coordinator Sue Davis

Copyright © 2017 Workers World. Verbatim copying and distribution of articles is permitted in any medium without royalty provided this notice is preserved.

Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the first week of January by WW Publishers, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Phone: 212.627.2994. Subscriptions: One year: $30; institutions: $35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from NA Publishing, Inc, P.O. Box 998, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-0998. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Subscription information is at workers.org/email.php.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl. New York, N.Y. 10011.

MUNDO OBRERO WORKERS WORLD

Join us in the fight for socialism!

Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a multinational, multigenerational and multigendered organization that not only aims to abolish capitalism, but to build a socialist society because it's the only way forward!

Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the never-ending quest for ever-greater profits. Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, joblessness and lack of hope for the future. No social problems can be solved under capitalism.

The U.S. is the richest country in the world, yet no one has a guaranteed right to shelter, food, water, health care, education or anything else — unless they can pay for it. Wages are lower than ever, and youth are saddled with seemingly insurmountable student debt, if they even make it to college. Black and Brown youth and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

WWP fights for socialism because the working class produces all wealth in society, and this wealth should remain in their hands, not be stolen in the form of capitalist profits. The wealth workers create should be socially owned and its distribution planned to satisfy and guarantee basic human needs.

Since 1959, Workers World Party has been out in the streets defending the workers and oppressed here and worldwide. If you're interested in Marxism, socialism and fighting for a socialist future, please contact a WWP branch near you. □

Contact a Workers World Party branch near you: workers.org/wwp

National Office
147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl.
New York, NY 10011
212.627.2994
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta
PO Box 18123
Atlanta, GA 30316
404.627.0185
atlanta@workers.org

Baltimore
c/o Solidarity Center
2011 N. Charles St.
Baltimore, MD 21218
443.221.3775
baltimore@workers.org

Bay Area
1305 Franklin St. #411
Oakland, CA 94612
510.600.5800
bayarea@workers.org

Boston
284 Amory St.
Boston, MA 02130
617.286.6574
boston@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.
335 Richmond Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14222
716.883.2534
Buffalo@Workers.org

Chicago
312.630.2305
chicago@workers.org

Cleveland
P.O. Box 5963
Cleveland, OH 44101
216.738.0320
cleveland@workers.org

Denver
denver@workers.org

Detroit
5920 Second Ave.
Detroit, MI 48202
313.459.0777
detroit@workers.org

Durham, N.C.
804 Old Fayetteville St.
Durham, NC 27701
919.322.9970
durham@workers.org

Houston
P.O. Box 3454
Houston, TX 77253-3454
713.503.2633
houston@workers.org

Huntington, W. Va.
huntingtonwv@workers.org

Indiana
Indiana@workers.org

Lexington, Ky.
lexington@workers.org

Los Angeles
5278 W Pico Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90019
la@workers.org
323.306.6240

Madison
Madison@Workers.org

Milwaukee
milwaukee@workers.org

Philadelphia
P.O. Box 34249
Philadelphia, PA 19101
610.931.2615
phila@workers.org

Pittsburgh
pittsburgh@workers.org

Portland, Ore.
portland@workers.org

Rochester, N.Y.
585.436.6458
rochester@workers.org

Rockford, Ill.
rockford@workers.org

Salt Lake City
801.750.0248
SLC@Workers.org

San Diego
P.O. Box 33447
San Diego, CA 92163
sandiego@workers.org

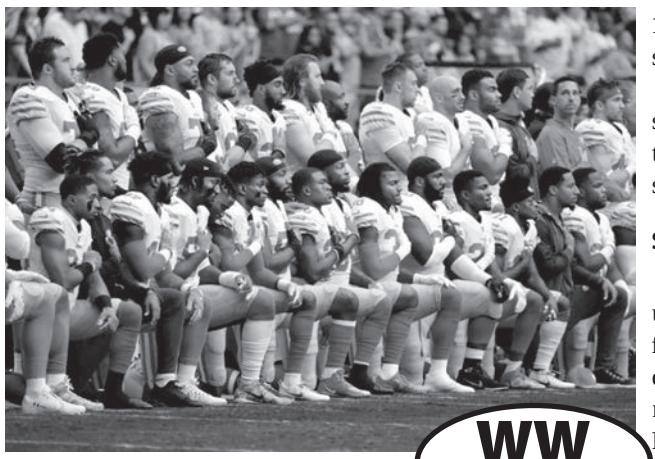
Tucson, Ariz.
tucson@workers.org

Virginia
Virginia@workers.org

Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 57300
Washington, DC 20037
dc@workers.org

The politics behind the NFL protests

By Monica Moorehead



WW commentary

The fourth week of the National Football League season saw continuing protests by its players kneeling, sitting, linking arms and/or raising fists.

These recent protests were ignited by Donald Trump's racist rants during a Sept. 22 Republican rally in Huntsville, Ala., when he called for the firing of any player who specifically sat or knelt during the anthem. He also insulted these players and their mothers by referring to them as "SOBs."

In response, more than 200 NFL players took part in an unprecedented display of solidarity against Trump's remarks on Sept. 24 and Sept. 25. The NFL players are 70 percent African American.

Following these protests, Trump continued his attacks on the players by tweeting to NFL owners that they were "afraid" of firing the players, who he said "disrespected" the flag and anthem.

Colin Kaepernick, the Black former San Francisco 49ers quarterback, was the main lightening rod for these protests when he took a knee during the 2016 NFL season to bring more national attention to the police killings and racist oppression that plague Black and oppressed communities.

Now into the second month of the 2017 season, Kaepernick remains unemployed, as no team owner has hired him.

Even though the number of players who protested Oct. 1 was smaller compared to those last week, 15 players from Kaepernick's former team, the 49ers, knelt during the anthem, while 15 other players stood behind them, putting their hands on the backs of their kneeling teammates in solidarity. Three members of the Miami Dolphins, including outspoken player Kenny Stills, knelt.

Nine defensive players from the Seattle Seahawks — Michael Bennett, Frank Clark, Garrison Smith, Marcus Smith, Jarran Reed, Michael Wilhoite, Cliff Avril, Sheldon Richardson and Naz Jones — knelt during their Sunday Night Football game versus the Indianapolis Colts. Bennett was assaulted by the Las Vegas police in late August. He has taken a very visible, consistent stance similar to Kaepernick's.

Six members of the Buffalo Bills, along with a large number of Baltimore Ravens, knelt before the anthem played, and were still booed by majority white fans.

Oakland Raiders running back Marshawn Lynch wore a "Trump vs. Everybody" shirt. The Raiders staff surrounded Lynch so he would not be photographed while sitting during the anthem.

The Carolina Panthers' Black quarterback, Cam Newton, gave a "Black power" salute in the end zone as a call for solidarity after scoring a touchdown on Oct. 1. Newton is a strong Kaepernick supporter.

Many athletes from different sports continue to kneel to protest inequality, including high schoolers.

Significance of players' protests

Black athletes have historically used sports as a platform to help forward the struggle for racial equality and national liberation, most notably Joe Louis, Jackie Robinson, Wilma Rudolph, Muhammad Ali, Tommie Smith, John Carlos and now Kaepernick.

Sports is an important part of U.S. culture that socially brings together many nationalities, generations, genders and gender expressions, despite the super-exploitation of athletes for bosses' profits.

The NFL remains the most popular pro sports league in the U.S. Therefore, no matter the wide spectrum of political views on the role the U.S. flag, the military and the anthem play in the protests, in general these athletes have taken an important step forward by using their visibility as athletes in the fight against white supremacy and police brutality and in solidarity with Kaepernick's fight to be signed to a NFL team.

These players have become important allies in the ongoing Black Lives Matter movement that emerged following the vigilante murder of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin in 2012.

As Bryant Gumbel stated on HBO's "Real Sports," "Thanks, Trump, for energizing social consciousness of all athletes to stand for something." Many of these players are acknowledging in their actions what ESPN's sportscaster Jemele Hill said on Twitter in early September: Trump is a white supremacist.

As their class consciousness deepens, many of these players will also come to realize — like millions of other workers — that their interests are diametrically opposed to the billionaire owners' interests to make profits from their athletics. While a large number of players are forced to cut their football careers short due to devastating, chronic injuries, the bosses fight tooth-and-nail to deny them long-term health coverage.

The owners may be upset with Trump for demanding that they fire protesting players, but these same owners are also doing everything possible to persuade the players not to use the platform of the playing field to protest, calling it "divisive."

The actions of the NFL athletes are encouraging others to take a stand, especially against police brutality. A group of white residents in Queens, N.Y., held a banner Sept. 22 inside Mets stadium, home to the New York Mets, while the anthem played. It read, "This is us taking a knee. Black Lives Matter." They had consulted with their Black neighbors beforehand to get approval for their protest. It was a powerful, symbolic display of anti-racist solidarity.

Despite any racist backlash, these players in the long run will continue to resist the pressures from the powers that be — from the mainstream media to the team bosses — to just stick to sports. It reconfirms the Marxist view that no struggle takes place within a vacuum. No struggle can be isolated from the general society, especially when white supremacy is so prevalent. ☐

Houston activists demand Indigenous Peoples Day

By Gloria Rubac
Houston

WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

Houston activists rallied at a statue of slave owner Sam Houston, then marched to a statue of Christopher Columbus in Bell Park on Oct. 30, condemning Columbus Day and demanding it be replaced with Indigenous Peoples Day.

Initiated by the Brown Berets de TejAztlan, a campaign has begun to get the city of Houston, Harris County and the state of Texas to recognize, adopt and celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day.

The spirited march arrived at Bell Park to find that the police had barricaded the Columbus statue, so the multinational crowd encircled the monument to the man who began the genocide of Indigenous peoples. Speaker after speaker condemned the colonization of the land by Europeans and called for unity to change the distorted history and outright lies propagated by schools, politicians and many historians.

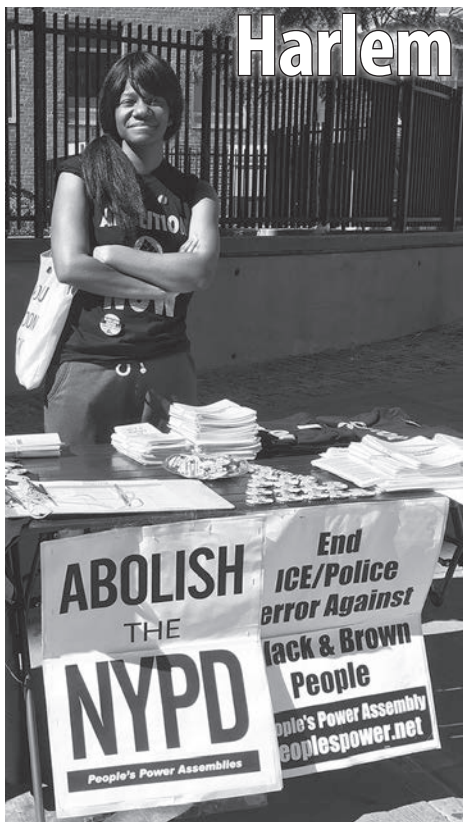
The rally was chaired by Oscar Gonzalez, a member of the Karankawa nation. Speaking were members of the Brown Berets de TejAztlan, Black Lives Matter Houston, the Carnalismo Brown Berets, Workers World Party and the Democratic Uhuru Movement.

The rally ended with Native blessings, drumming and dancing by Danza Azteca Taxcayolotl.

Indigenous activists and supporters will speak before the City Council on Oct. 3 to present a resolution calling on the city to recognize Indigenous Peoples Day. The same will later be presented to the county government.

While neither Houston nor Harris County recognizes Columbus Day as a holiday, the state of Texas does. The committee's long-range goal is to have Texas drop its official holiday of Columbus Day, as well as Confederate Heroes Day, and instead adopt Indigenous Peoples Day as a state holiday.

Columbus Day wasn't a federal holiday until 1937, almost 450 years after a lost Columbus landed here. In 1992, Berkeley, Calif., became the first U.S. city to adopt Indigenous Peoples Day. In the last few years, momentum has been building, and now dozens of cities, states and universities recognize Indigenous Peoples Day, including Albuquerque, N.M.; Cambridge, Mass.; Denver; Los Angeles; Minneapolis; and Tahlequah, Okla. ☐



Abolition Forum counters police violence

An Abolition Forum in Harlem on Oct. 1 included free food, drinks, talks by activists, a recording from political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, and two lawyers explaining people's rights and how to interact with the police. The day ended with a self-defense class by Ray and Mike of Brooklyn-based POP Gym.

Up to 12 cops and their captain showed up at the event, plus a community affairs officer. Shannon, an activist, got them to buzz off when she told them that she is a New York City Housing Authority resident and that the organizers didn't need a permit for anything. They lingered until the last of us left at 5:30 p.m.

— Story and photo by Julie Varughese

Freedom fighter Takiyah Thompson in NYC Oct. 14

By Workers World New York bureau

Freedom fighter Takiyah Thompson, the North Carolina Central University student and Workers World Party member who climbed the Confederate statue in Durham, N.C., in August to begin the act of taking it down, will be in New York City on Oct. 14. Thompson will discuss this event and how to continue to support the 14 Durham arrestees and carry on the struggle against all forms of white supremacy, including police repression.

The statue takedown took place Aug. 14, just two days after white supremacists in Charlottesville, Va., attacked anti-racist activists. Thompson was subsequently arrested for the action, along with 13 others, who face felony and misdemeanor charges.

The Oct. 14 meeting, at 135 W. 23rd St. (between 6th and 7th Aves.) in Manhattan, will begin at 4 p.m. ☐

Baltimore transit riders: 'Sink the Link'!

By Addison Gaddis
Baltimore

Maryland Transit Administration headquarters, Sept. 27.

Dozens of protesters affiliated with the Baltimore Bus and Transit Riders' Union, an organizing project of the Baltimore People's Power Assembly, gathered outside the Maryland Transit Administration headquarters in downtown Baltimore on Sept. 27. Carrying signs that read "Restore and Expand Bus Service" and "Sink the Link," protesters handed out literature and spoke on a megaphone about their experiences of being underserved by the MTA's transit infrastructure — particularly the bus system, which was recently overhauled in June under the brand "BaltimoreLink."

For Baltimore city and county residents, the name is a cruel joke. Nothing about the overhaul helps "link" anyone to anything, and Baltimore's already crumbling transit infrastructure has become even less user-friendly. Adding insult to injury, the change came with a significant fare hike, the third in the last year.

The BaltimoreLink did not emerge out of a vacuum. When Republican Gov. Larry Hogan was elected in 2014, one of his first actions was to destroy a long-standing plan to provide Baltimore with an east-west light rail transit system, known as the Red Line.

Baltimore has been fighting to get east-west rail transit since 1965, but powerful elements invested in maintaining the segregation of white and Black, of rich and poor, have repeatedly shut these efforts down.

Millions of dollars and years of research were poured into the development of the Red Line, but Hogan called it an "expensive boondoggle" and slashed it. Instead the billions of dollars that would have gone into construction of the Red Line were poured into repaving roads in the suburbs and rural areas. The message is clear: Baltimore city doesn't matter to the political forces in power, and the poor and working people of Baltimore who depend on transit to survive don't matter either.

The BaltimoreLink, then, is a boondoggle of its own, a booby prize — a paltry substitute for any actual change or improvement for a huge, vibrant metropolitan area. However, it has proven to be a powerful mass issue for Baltimore city and county residents to rally around. As one protester, Ryan, put it, "The problems they promised to fix, they were not fixed, and now we are left with a very confusing, difficult-to-navigate system that still faces the same issues as before."

Another protester, Glen Schmidt, shed light on some of the factors that led to the BaltimoreLink: "The MTA hasn't done a destination study since 2008, so they don't know where people need to go. They don't know where they're leaving from. That's like putting the cart before the horse. In order to change the system, you need to know where people need to go." Schmidt is vice president of the Baltimore Transit Equity Coalition, an organization that advocates for reinstatement of the Red Line.

The BaltimoreLink disaster impacts everyone who depends on the bus for their survival, but especially senior citizens, people with disabilities, youth and other vulnerable populations.

Ronald, a man with disabilities, spoke about getting caught in the back door of a BaltimoreLink bus and about his feelings of frustration trying to be heard afterwards by the bureaucracy: "I ended up hurting myself. I went to the hospital. I'm still trying to communicate and make a report. I go in the lobby. Nobody will come down and talk to me. I'm talking on the phone. They keep passing the buck, making excuses, saying they don't have time. I'm just exhausted. I need somebody to help me."

Ronald concluded: "I got on the wrong bus ... and that's how I ran into this [rally] today. I didn't even know about this, but God works in mysterious ways. I ran into these guys, the Sink the Link, the Union for Riders. God bless them." ☐

Left to right: Monica Moorehead, Larry Holmes, Rev. Edward Pinkney, Ralph Poynter, Theresa Shoatz, the daughter of political prisoner Russell Shoatz and Pam Africa.

WW PHOTOS: BRENDA RYAN

New York City: A salute to Rev. Edward Pinkney

Special to Workers World
New York City

The International Action Center and Workers World Party held a Sept. 30 reception to welcome former political prisoner Rev. Edward Pinkney to New York City.

Pinkney was framed and found "guilty" of "voter fraud" by an all-white jury. The prosecution claimed this occurred during a recall campaign against James Hightower, the white former mayor of Benton Harbor, Mich. Pinkney was released from prison in Marquette in June, after serving 30 months of a 30-month to 10-year sentence.

Pinkney was a thorn in the side of the Whirlpool Appliances Corporation, which laid off many Black workers in Benton Harbor at the end of the 1990s during the deindustrialization period resulting from capitalist globalization.

On behalf of Whirlpool's interests, the local racist powers that be targeted Pinkney for leading a struggle to empower the blatantly disenfranchised Black community, which also faces intense police brutality.

During the Sept. 30 reception, Pinkney shared his experiences in prison, especially his efforts to teach basic learning skills to his younger fellow Black inmates, ages 18 to 22 years, many of whom were unable to read or do math. His inspiring message to the audience was all about building unity and solidarity inside and outside the prison walls.

Speakers who paid tribute to Pinkney were Ralph Poynter and Betty Davis of the New Abolitionist Movement; Pam Africa from International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal; Henry Hagins of the New York City Free Mumia Coalition; and WWP Secretariat Members Monica Moorehead, Teresa Gutierrez and Larry Holmes.

An audio message taped by Mumia on Jan. 29, 2016, was played, in which the internationally honored political prisoner stated that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. would have admired Pinkney. ☐

Massive immigrant raids conducted in sanctuary cities

By Kathy Durkin

The bigot-in-chief in the White House has intensified his aggressive, racist war on immigrants. For four days, starting on Sept. 24, Immigration Customs and Enforcement agents, on orders from the Department of Homeland Security, rounded-up undocumented workers in "sanctuary cities" throughout the U.S. The number arrested: 498.

This sweep violated the laws and policies enacted by local governments to offer some protections to these immigrants from federal law enforcement agents, detentions and deportations. Immigrant rights' activists view these arrests as vindictive retaliation against cities which oppose the White House's aggressive deportation policies.

ICE agents arrested 167 people in Southern California, with 101 detained in Los Angeles. The second-highest arrest figure was in Philadelphia, where 101 immigrants were rounded up. Other arrests took place in Baltimore, the Boston area, northern California, the Chicago region, Denver, New York, Philadelphia, Portland, Ore., and Seattle. These migrants had traveled from 42 countries.

ICE claims these immigrants committed "alleged federal immigration violations." Although ICE is supposed to only detain people who have been convicted of "crimes," one-third (181) of those grabbed had no criminal record. Of those who have been convicted, nearly 90 cases involved traffic infractions; many others involved petty "crimes."

Immigration agents carried out a real cloak-and-dagger operation against these unsuspecting workers and parents. They monitored everyone's moves in advance of the arrests. Then, in the early morning hours, ICE agents swept into communities and grabbed people about to start their workday and/or take their children to school.

John Parker, a Workers World Party leader in Los Angeles and an organizer of local pro-immigrant rallies, emphasized to this writer, "All progressive people should oppose these outrageous round-ups, defend our sisters and brothers from this racist repression, and protest their detentions and deportations by any means necessary."

White House officials began their attack on the hundreds of sanctuary cities during their first week in office. The Trump administration issued an order to withhold federal funds from these local governments, but so far federal courts have blocked such financial punishment.

Attorney General Jeff Sessions, another arch-racist, has made it his mission to aggressively root out undocumented workers and to punish every city trying to protect them from ICE. Sessions has demanded that federal agents be given access to jails and that the release of immigrant prisoners be delayed so ICE can arrest them.

However, resistance to the Trump/Sessions' policy has come from hundreds of city governments, which have restricted what local police can do to aid ICE's pursuit of the undocumented. So the attorney general has retaliated by ramping up arrests of immigrants in these sanctuary cities, claiming "public safety" is at stake.

ICE: 'a politicized security force'

Salvador Sarmiento, a National Day Laborers Organizing Network coordinator, criticized the arrests in non-compliant cities: "ICE is operating as a politicized security force ... arresting 498 people in cities that represent the political opposition to an unconstitutional federal overreach on immigration. No one believes that Trump or ICE is guided by public safety." (Mercury News, Sept. 29)

The term "sanctuary city" arose in the 1980s when Berkeley, Calif., and other municipal governments pledged to accept migrants from Central America, at a time when some from that region were restricted from entering the U.S. Today the term generally refers to cities which support undocumented immigrants and protect them from ICE.

The Trump administration came into

Continued on the next page

Roanoke struggles display people's power

By Workers World Staff
Roanoke, Va.

An intense week of class struggle events in Roanoke, Va., displayed the power of poor and working people to fight back against Wall Street banks, corporations and their servants.

Union YES, Organize the South!

Non-union transit drivers at RADAR, a private company, participated in their first informational picket line on Sept. 26 to demand union representation. The drivers, who transport people with a variety of disabilities and seniors, work for wages just above the minimum wage, with no benefits and challenging working conditions.

Despite verbal harassment by management, the RADAR drivers, with the assistance of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1493, picketed all day outside company headquarters, distributing educational materials, hoisting placards and chanting slogans. Local 1493 represents city bus drivers and mechanics at Valley Metro, the public transportation provider for the Roanoke Valley.

The workers received support from the Roanoke Peoples' Power Network, various unions, the Southern Workers Assembly and other community groups. The next informational picket is Oct. 10 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 2762 Shenandoah Ave. NW.

No more jail deaths!

Dozens of community members came to the Roanoke City Jail on the evening of Sept. 26 to join a picket organized by the Roanoke Peoples' Power Network. Since 2015, at least six people incarcerated there have died under suspicious circumstances. Sheriff's officials claim these were all suicides.

The loud picket, with drumming, chants, and banners and placards demanding "No More Jail Deaths," received major media coverage throughout the Roanoke Valley. Natasha Harper, mother of Clifton Antonio Harper, 22, who died inside the city jail in 2015, and other family members and their allies spoke out to bring attention to the horrific conditions inside the jail and to demand justice now.

Fight white supremacy by any means necessary!

A Fight White Supremacy! meeting sponsored by the Roanoke Peoples' Power Network took place on Sept. 30 at the Gainsboro Library in the city's historic Black community. The meeting's focus was to raise awareness about the fight against fascists in Charlottesville, Va., and to support freedom fighters there and in Durham, N.C., where 14 activists have been charged with multiple misdemeanors and felonies for boldly tearing down a Confederate statue on Aug. 14.

Participants at the RPPN meeting came from Baltimore, Charlottesville, Lexington and other locations throughout southwest and central Virginia.

The meeting kicked off with a powerful rendition of the Sam Cooke song, "A Change Is Gonna Come," and by honoring Heather Heyer, Sandra Bland and other martyrs in the people's freedom struggles. Then a video was screened that vividly displayed the people's fightback against the cops and fascists in Charlottesville during the summer. The meeting concluded with a video of the Confederate statue in Durham being toppled.

An RPPN member opened the speakers' section by stating: "Our focus is to build a completely independent people's movement, because the rich racists are intent on destroying every gain we've won over the past 80 years and are destroying the planet — from pipelines to U.S. colonialism in Puerto Rico, to the unrelenting austerity in the Midwest and across the world. ...

"Malcolm X once said, 'History is best qualified to reward our research.' Thus the fight to smash white supremacy today — especially in the state now known as Virginia — can't be effective without discussing slavery, sharecropping, lynchings, the betrayal of Reconstruction and the numerous coups against Black elected officials that took place in the South, particularly in the 1890s. The Confederate monuments now in place were mostly built from 1890-1920 as victory monuments by capitalist white supremacists and their servants. ...

"We are here to build our power as poor and working people and invite you to join us in any way you can to help us smash white supremacy — by any means necessary — and to build an internationalist people's world."

A diverse rainbow of speakers followed and focused on the various struggles against white supremacy now underway in the U.S. and beyond, including the tearing down of Confederate statues; fights against the banks from Detroit to Puerto Rico, anti-union laws and the prison-industrial complex; the fight for LGBTQ and women's rights; support for National Football League players' resistance; protests against Gestapo-like Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids and deportations; faith-based anti-racist, pro-worker actions; the fight for justice for Kionte Spencer and all those murdered by cops and vigilantes; and related Black Lives Matter struggles.

Participants pledged to continue the fight to crush capitalism and build a world without poverty, racism or war.

For more information about Roanoke Peoples' Power Network activities and other class struggle events in Roanoke, visit tinyurl.com/RPPN-FB. ☐

Continued from page 4

office spewing hostility to immigrants, slandering Mexicans and threatening to build a wall between the U.S. and Mexico to keep them, and other migrants from Central and South America, out. These officials have continued to vigorously pursue their racist anti-immigrant campaign, in league with ultra-right Republicans, and playing to their base of super-bigots.

Early on in its term, the current White House ordered a travel ban against immigrants from seven Muslim countries. Faced with legal challenges, the final arbiter, the Supreme Court, allowed a partial ban to take effect. Then the administration expanded this ban on Sept. 24 to curtail travelers from other countries as well as immigrants from Muslim countries. The current order bars immigrants from Chad, Iran, Libya, north Korea, Somalia, Syria, Yemen and some individuals from Venezuela.

Sessions is doing all he can to buttress and expand the Trump government's xenophobic campaign. He announced Sept. 5 the end of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, an Obama-era policy that protected 800,000 young immigrant workers, students and parents from deportation. Reportedly, negotiations are ongoing with the Democrats to keep these young people in the U.S.

In carrying out the program of the racist clique in the White House, ICE has been deporting immigrants at twice the rate of a year ago. During the first three months of the current administration, the agency arrested more than 400 immigrants daily. It has becoming increasingly clear that the status of all 11 million undocumented workers and their relatives is in danger.

It is the duty of all progressive individuals and organizations to denounce the scapegoating, demonizing and criminalization of immigrants and to express the strongest solidarity with them. Their calls for full civil and legal rights must be supported so that all immigrants can live, work, study and raise their families in the U.S., free of government harassment and the ever-looming threats of detention and deportation. ☐

On the picket line

By Alex Bolchi and Sue Davis

NY Teamsters vote to become 'sanctuary union'

Workers organized and not-yet-organized: It's time for unions to become "sanctuary unions." When Eber Garcia Vasquez, a Teamsters painter for 27 years, who was on the path to get his green card, went for a routine check-in with the New York office of Immigration and Customs Enforcement on Aug. 24, he was arrested. Though Teamsters mobilized labor and community nationally, ICE tore him from his spouse and children, deporting him to Guatemala on Sept. 6.

Teamsters Joint Council 16, which represents more than 120,000 workers in 27 unions in the New York City area, responded by passing a resolution Sept. 13 making it a "sanctuary union." That means the union won't cooperate with ICE agents and will hold Know Your Rights trainings, negotiate protections for immigrants in labor contracts, mobilize to defend the immigrant community at large, and "protect the rights and safety of all of our membership regardless of immigration status." (tinyurl.com/ybnl9ndb)

George Miranda, president of Joint Council 16, wrote in the Sept. 3 NY Daily News: "If we fail to make the rights of immigrants central to how we view the rights of workers, we will lose both." That's why the union supports the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival program and condemns the Muslim ban.

Let's mobilize our unions to become sanctuary unions and defend members from ICE terror!

H-2A Mexican farmworkers in Northwest win strike!

Mexican farmworkers hired to pick apples under H-2A "guest visas" in Washington state went on strike in mid-September for six days against unfair labor practices at Larson Fruit near Quincy. On top of 34 complaints — broken ladders, dirty drinking water and toilets, and being forced to work when sick — the major problem was "lack of respect. "It was the verbal abuse and the insults," Ulises Perez told the Yakima Herald. "We just decided that we were not going to take it anymore."

The strikers appealed to the Northwest farmworker union, Familias Unidas por la Justicia, which helped negotiate the agreement. That included reassignment of the racist supervisor who harassed them, reinstatement of three fired workers and no retaliation against strikers who seek future H-2A employment. What helped empower the struggle is that the demand for H-2A workers has increased 40 percent since 2016 due to a sharp decline in Mexican immigration, and the workers know their value. (Oct. 1)

WW salutes these brave farmworkers for fighting for their rights. May their victory inspire others to resist racist abuse and exploitation!

Southern union scores first contract

Unions find the South traditionally tough to organize for historical reasons. But not so in southwest Memphis, Tenn. More than 600 workers in the Electrolux factory ratified their first contract Sept. 16 with the International Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 474. The new contract grants yearly wage increases; paid time off; more worker say in safety, training and labor-management issues; and pro-worker language dealing with discipline and absenteeism. Business agent Paul Shaffer declared this a huge victory for organized labor in the South. (Payday Report, Sept. 29)

Though IBEW lost its first vote in May 2015, the workers continued to fight and, a year later, voted 461 to 193 to unionize. This push won an ideological battle as well: explaining why the company's reforms were hollow and convincing doubters not to be swayed by the boss's propaganda. Great victory for Southern labor! Organize the South!

Beware: Two anti-union flunkies appointed to NLRB

Trump appointees to the National Labor Relations Board — Marvin Kaplan, a lawyer who wrote anti-worker laws for several congressional committees, and William Emanuel, a management-side labor lawyer and member of the right-wing Federalist Society — were confirmed by the Senate along strict party lines (Kaplan on Aug. 2, Emanuel on Sept. 25). The five-member NLRB, which oversees workplace disputes, unfair labor practice cases and union elections, is supposed to stand above the class struggle. But the administration in power dictates NLRB politics.

At the top of the new board's anti-labor agenda is undoing such Obama rulings as speedy union elections, holding major fast food corporations responsible for labor violations committed by their franchisees (the so-called "joint-employer decision") and allowing unions to organize "micro-unions." No wonder industry groups led by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce are cheering. (The Hill, Sept. 25) Get ready for the class struggle to heat up! ☐

Why FEMA can't protect us

By Deirdre Griswold

First came the devastation of hurricanes Harvey in Houston and Irma in Florida. Now, an even more terrible disaster is unfolding in the U.S. territories of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. And all in little more than one month.

And these are just the areas ruled by the United States. Many other nations in the Caribbean have been hit equally hard.

The U.S. has the biggest, most expensive state apparatus in the world. There is a government body supposedly prepared to handle disasters — the Federal Emergency Management Agency. It failed in 2005 after Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans. It's had 12 more years to get its act together. Why hasn't it?

The truth is that FEMA was never set up to mitigate the effects of natural disasters.

It was originally a super-secret agency tasked with providing a safe place for the evacuation of the U.S. government in the event of a nuclear war.

And that is still a large part of FEMA's budget, according to a very detailed expose of the agency, "The Secret History of FEMA," by Garrett M. Graffe. (Wired, Sept. 3)

Tool of the Cold War

Originally set up under President Harry Truman as the Federal Civil Defense Administration, it was renamed in 1979 and eventually wound up as part of the Department of Homeland Security in 2003. Its secret plans for "continuity of government" were to be downplayed once it became responsible for dealing with natural disasters.

However, "The majority of its funding and a third of its workforce was actually hidden in the nation's classified black budget. The agency's real focus and its real budget was known to only 20 members of Congress."

FEMA still maintains "a bunker in Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains that has served as the civilian government's primary emergency hideaway since the 1950s." A bunker could sound like a small thing. Not this one.

A small city was built inside Mount Weather, which had been hollowed out for the purpose. Elaborate plans were drawn up for the evacuation of top government officials in the event of a nuclear war. Besides providing shelter for politicians, bureaucrats and military officers, it was used as a center to develop advanced computing.

How they spend their money

FEMA's Project 908, drawn up in the 1980s, mapped out how to evacuate the major cities of the U.S. It estimated that 65 percent of the people in these cities could be evacuated in one day and 95 percent in three days. The agency distributed films to convince the people that they would be protected if a nuclear war began.

While the assumptions made were preposterous, they were backed by elaborate documents — one of them was a 152-page plan for evacuating New York. "Each of the five boroughs would rely on different transit modes to evacuate over the course of precisely 3.3 days."

New Yorkers now going through daily crises just trying to get to work and home via antiquated subways and overcrowded buses can roll their eyes at that one.

With the end of the Cold War, FEMA began losing some of its funding. But the attacks on 9/11 provided the rationale to bulk it up again as part of the Department of Homeland Security. Its emphasis was on "terrorism preparedness," not natural disasters.

In December 2003, it carried out an exercise code-named QUIET STRENGTH, in which it evacuated 300 of its own employees to Mount Weather.

In May 2004 "a much larger FEMA-led exercise, known as FORWARD CHALLENGE, brought together upward of 2,500 federal officials from 45 different departments and agencies to test emergency preparedness procedures. The exercise began with an imagined suicide bombing on the Washington DC Metro, followed by the death of three Cabinet secretaries leaving an event at the National Press Club. Then hackers began an attack on government computers systems, air traffic control networks, and even the nation's power grid. That evening, a person playing the president activated continuity of government measures."

No mention of how much all this cost. That budget, of course, is secret.

The next year, Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, and the federal government showed it was entirely unprepared to respond to this major disaster.

'Continuity' of class oppression

Graffe writes that "today, FEMA still spends tens of millions on its continuity programs — the unclassified portion of that budget is around $50 million a year. Mount Weather, whose annual operating costs are more than $30 million a year, is in the midst of what FEMA calls 'a significant infrastructure upgrade to replace old infrastructure, correct life/safety items, upgrade IT, and develop a more resilient facility capable of supporting 21st century technology and current federal departments and agencies requirements.'"

The "continuity programs" are meant to protect the politicians in the White House and Congress as well as the top military brass in any situation where their ability to rule might be in question.

FEMA is a quasi-civilian agency, but it is totally integrated with the military. When disaster strikes, there is no real civilian infrastructure to deal with the deadly consequences.

By contrast, in a socialist country like Cuba the people are organized block-by-block to help one another when another hurricane rips through, and the government provides transportation to evacuate those along the coast.

But the workers and poor in affected areas of the U.S. are on their own to either evacuate or hunker down in a fierce storm. State governors may tell people to leave their homes, as happened recently in Florida. But how? There is no mechanism in place to make it happen, no training, no martialing of public transportation. The roads become clogged with cars. If you don't have one, you're out of luck.

One thing emerges clearly every time disaster strikes here: There are thousands of volunteers who want to help their neighbors. They come out in little boats during floods, or help people find shelter during intense winds. They search for those who may be trapped in their homes or are washed away in a flood.

Instead of aiding such self-organization with material assistance, the local and national authorities focus on protecting the bigwigs and the property of the rich, personal as well as corporate.

Social change must come

The weather systems on our planet have been deeply impacted by capitalist development, which puts profits before anything else. At the same time, great advances in science and technology have provided us with the knowledge and means to plan our economy on a rational basis and put the needs of the people in sync with our environment.

And yet we're stuck with a social and political system that can plan to evacuate "leaders" like Trump and his ilk, but can't get water and power to working people in dire need.

As the threats of severe weather grow, the failings of FEMA underscore the need to build a revolutionary movement of the working class and all the oppressed against the billionaire class of exploiters. We must liberate the wealth that our labor has created and use it for the benefit of humanity, not to rescue the warmongering profiteers. □

Philadelphia

Protest denounces U.S. for Puerto Rico crisis

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

WW PHOTOS: JOE PIETTE

More than 100 people gathered for a late afternoon, rush-hour rally outside Philadelphia City Hall on Sept. 29 to demand immediate humanitarian relief for storm-ravaged Puerto Rico.

Initiated by Diaspora in Action, a loose collection of members of Philadelphia's Puerto Rican community with strong ties to their island nation, the rally followed a week of organized events to collect material aid for Puerto Rico.

While organizers sought to increase public awareness of the humanitarian crisis their friends and families are suffering under, several speakers also addressed the century-old impact of imperialist colonization that is behind the crisis. Many participants carried signs in English and Spanish calling for cancellation of the $123 billion dollars in debt currently faced by Puerto Rico (Forbes, June 1, 2017), and for reparations for the island.

Speakers repeatedly challenged President Donald Trump's excuses that as an island it was just "too difficult" to get support there. They pointed out that when the U.S. conducted military operations on Puerto Rico's archipelago island of Vieques, they never had a problem getting ships there.

Rally organizer Kimberly Torres challenged Trump: "You can drop bombs on Afghanistan but you can't drop food supplies to Puerto Rico?" Calling for a million Puerto Ricans to march in Washington, D.C., she challenged the crowd to "get angry!"

Former Philadelphia City Council member Angel Ortiz criticized the U.S. government for abandoning the people of Puerto Rico and trying to starve them out, as a part of the continuing land grab by Wall Street interests. He urged repeal of the Jones Act, passed in 1920, which mandates that only ships registered in the U.S. can carry goods by water between U.S. ports.

Ortiz concluded, "The people of Puerto Rico are not going to pay the debt. The U.S. owes us for 118 years of colonialism and exploitation. Puerto Rico belongs to Puerto Ricans!"

The growing anger over obvious racial disparity in the response to the impact of Hurricane Maria on Puerto Rico was expressed by several people. Diana Gonzalez recounted the legacy of U.S. colonialism and its continuing impact. "We didn't ask the U.S. military to come to our island to rape our women or subject them by force to birth-control testing, and we sure didn't ask for the debt you created."

Gonzalez urged people to continue sending donations, noting that "when more stuff keeps arriving it puts pressure on them to release it."

Johanna Janies, whose family lives in St. Croix, raised the lack of adequate response to the storm damage from two recent hurricanes on the U.S. Virgin Islands: "The U.S. bought our islands from the Dutch for military purposes 100 years ago. People from the U.S. always find time to come to our lands for vacations. They can't just have us in the 'good times' and ignore us in the bad."

"The way they have left Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands is unacceptable," Janies stated. "We need a continuous fight!" □

Anti-drone protest:

'Rich man's war, poor people's blood'

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

The grassroots group Upstate Drone Action delivered a citizens' war crime indictment to the chain of command at Hancock Air Force Base in Syracuse, N.Y., on Sept. 25. Seven UDA members were arrested in the action.

The group also placed a six-foot-high dollar sign dripping with "blood" at the main gate of the base to dramatize what they see as the determining factor in Pentagon/CIA warmongering: corporate greed.

Hancock AFB hosts the 174th Attack Wing of the NY National Guard, one of two Reaper drone "attack wings" in the state. Piloted from Hancock, the MQ9 Reaper drone is a satellite-directed assassin weapon flown over Afghanistan. The CIA also uses drones for secret and illegal attacks on northwest Pakistan and other majority-Islamic nations. These attacks have dislocated whole communities and killed many hundreds of people, including noncombatants. ("Living Under Drones," Stanford University and New York University law schools)

One of the arrestees, Mark Scibilia-Carver, noted in the Sept. 26 UDA press release: "U.S. taxpayers fund this terrorism ... instead of funding health, education and infrastructure here."

Central New York state is now an international hub of drone research and development, according to Larry Brinker, director of the Syracuse-based NUAIR Alliance (Northeast UAS Airspace Integration Research), comprised of more than 100 for-profit and nonprofit companies, including military-industrial heavy-hitters SRC Inc., Lockheed Martin and Saab Defense. (syracuse.com, Feb. 23)

SRC, a "not-for-profit" spun off from Syracuse University, recently received a $65 million contract from the U.S. Department of Defense for its "Mobile Skylight Van" system to detect, track and defeat small "enemy drones" — which even provide the location of the "hostile operator." (syracuse.com, Sept. 29)

"This whole counter-drone technology that SRC developed for the military is one of the hottest markets in the civilian drone industry," Brinker said. "Jails, stadiums, power plants, prisons — they're all concerned about protecting their infrastructure. ... Every sheriff that has a prison in New York wants some sort of anti-drone system."

The mammoth Reaper drone, used for bombing by the Pentagon and the CIA, and the anti-drone systems under development by military-industrial companies, used to disarm those resisting the imperialist onslaught, are the flip sides of U.S. military strategy for 21st century warfare.

Upstate Drone Action has been engaged in its own persistent campaign to expose drone war crimes and U.S. warfare for profit. Since 2010, there have been some 200 anti-Reaper arrests at Hancock and about a dozen street theater actions.

See Wilton Vought's video of the action at youtu.be/PHBnj8HbmMU. More information is at upstatedroneaction.org.

PHOTO: UPSTATE DRONE ACTION

Protest at Hancock Air Force Base, Syracuse, N.Y., Sept. 25.

Puerto Rico: Second Yankee invasion?

Continued from page 1

quotes from an interview of a local wealth manager in her article in the Sept. 22 Washington Post, titled "Why would anyone in Puerto Rico want a hurricane? Because someone will get rich."

Bonilla says the manager "was extremely upbeat about the economic climate. Anticipating government default, she had redirected her clients' assets toward U.S. stocks. 'The only thing we need now is a hurricane.' She was referring to how such natural disasters bring in federal money for rebuilding and often become a boon to the construction industry. As I left her office, she encouraged me to buy stock in Home Depot."

Militarization of Puerto Rico

Nearly a week after the terrible event, the Pentagon announced the arrival of forces to "help the people of Puerto Rico." The Department of Defense increased its staff from 460 to 6,433 and stated "that will continue to rise as needed," according to Puerto Rican Gov. Ricardo Roselló.

From Fort Bliss, Texas, 16 helicopters will arrive between Oct. 2 and 3. "'The assault ship USS Wasp and Navy aircraft are also en route to the island,' said Pentagon spokesperson Lt. Col. Jaime Davis." (elnuevodia.com, Oct. 1) Also arriving are 210 military police officers and infantry personnel from the National Guard. Police will arrive from New York and New Jersey. Supposedly the USNS Comfort hospital ship will arrive on the coast of San Juan on Oct. 4.

The Pentagon has already taken command of the "reconstruction" of Puerto Rico with these officers and the Army Corps of Engineers. At the governor's daily press conferences you can see some of these military officers by his side. And we shouldn't forget the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which is in charge of the distribution of food, water and basic supplies.

And that is precisely the big problem in Puerto Rico now.

While in front of the television cameras and on the few radio stations operating now, it has been announced that these supplies are being delivered to the 78 municipalities of the island, this statement is far from reality. Even the same corporate news media denounce the lack of help to places most distant from the capital. These very reporters have crossed rivers and difficult roads to reach those communities and make them visible on the news.

Burying their dead in the back yard

Communities after communities in front of cameras narrate the tragedy and the subhuman conditions they endure, isolated from the rest of the island. Living for almost two weeks in houses without roofs, electricity, drinking water, communication or food, the people are drinking dirty water from contaminated rivers, where they also wash their clothes and bathe. They bury their dead in the back yard.

That's how many communities are living now. Where the "mighty" U.S. Armed Forces, which can build a city with air conditioning in the middle of the desert in a few days as they proved during the invasion of Iraq, but can't even cross a river to bring necessary aid in Pueerto Rico. This is just one more crime committed by the Pentagon.

FEMA, meanwhile, is committing another crime.

FEMA and the military act together and depend upon each other. FEMA has become the "coordinator" of aid arriving on the island and the military supposedly helps with distribution. The problem is that this is not really happening, as indicated above.

The people are saving the people

The Puerto Rican diaspora in the U.S. is living with anguish and despair for their families in the archipelago. These sentiments have inspired a profound desire for reconstruction, starting with the collection of basic items needed, collected and sent to Puerto Rico. However, once anything reaches the island, FEMA takes over the containers and hinders distribution. Thousands of containers have been stranded in ports, including containers from corporations that, for whatever reason, have not taken out the contents, preventing the flow of needed materials.

The government has accused truck drivers of not helping with the distribution. However, the truck drivers have explained to the press that for days they have been waiting for agencies to hire them for distribution, but they have been repeatedly ignored. Many of them are waiting for work without returning to their homes so as not to use gasoline due to the great shortage of fuel. They accuse the shipping company Crowley of using drivers from private agencies, leaving out independent Puerto Rican drivers.

Faced with this reality, the Puerto Rican diaspora is looking for alternatives other than sending items in containers through the Crowley shipping company, choosing to send them independently. People traveling to Puerto Rico carry all the bags that the airlines allow — to accommodate supplies for the people.

Ana, a friend of this writer, who will soon travel to the island, said she was able to get a ticket in first class, which allows her to carry 70 pounds per suitcase. She will pack supplies, leaving behind her personal belongings. That is how many people are sending supplies which would not otherwise reach the communities that most need them.

From several reports, we can see how the people are getting organized in their communities. Neighbors come together to clear roads and rebuild their homes with materials that can still be used. The effort is massive. Work brigades from the diaspora are also organizing to assist in the reconstruction of Puerto Rico.

Angélica Acosta of the Socialist Front of Puerto Rico told Workers World/Mundo Obrero: "The working class went out with their trucks, uniforms and much more to get the country going as they know how to do daily. In other places, they finally get to meet their neighbors or share more with them. The people are sharing their food and utensils. There are communities that have begun to erect destroyed houses, like the brave people that we are."

Help is coming from individual artists and personalities — mostly Puerto Ricans — who reside in the United States. Professional athletes have brought aid via private aircraft. Many are raising funds for the country's recovery. Puerto Rico, despite the great tragedy, is not alone. Other countries are showing solidarity. The Dominican Republic sent gasoline. Panama has also sent aid.

There are organizations on the island organizing brigades for the distribution of food, water and medicine and helping with the reconstruction of the country. This writer was able to communicate with Mercedes Martínez, president of the Puerto Rico Teachers' Federation (in Spanish FMPR), which is one of these organizations. They work together with the General Confederation of Workers (in Spanish CGT) and the Jornada Se Acabaron las Promesas, an organization against the Promesa law. These brigades will begin work on Oct. 3. FMPR also accepts donations through gofundme.com

Cuba has offered medical assistance, but so far it's not known whether aid can reach Puerto Rico due to U.S.-imposed colonial laws. The mayor of San Juan, Carmen Yulín Cruz Soto, accepted the help of Venezuela, which will send gasoline. Venezuela's nationalized oil company, PDVSA, through its Citgo company in the U.S., can ship the product. In addition, due to international pressure, President No. 45 lifted the Jones Act of 1920 for 10 days. This law prevents Puerto Rico from using any shipping company other than from the U.S., with U.S. personnel and ships built in the United States.

Pay attention!

Donald Trump will travel to the island Oct. 3, apparently for two hours. His itinerary is secret.

But it's not just Trump who will visit. There are other vultures lurking to see how they can take advantage of Puerto Rico. That is the biggest problem: It arises from the restructuring that U.S. capitalism wants to make, taking advantage of the devastation of the island.

Also expected is John Davies, president of the Baton Rouge Foundation that participated in the restructuring of Louisiana in 2005 after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. Davies is advising the "Recovery Fund" that the Center for a New Economy created on Sept. 22.

The CNE is composed of bankers and financial advisors who are very close to the process that the Fiscal Control Board is carrying out in PR. Here is the danger of restructuring with neoliberal privatizing measures. Such measures to privatize the energy sector are already included in the Promesa Act.

No to the militarization of Puerto Rico!

Repeal the Jones and Promesa Laws! No to privatization!

Reparations to the Puerto Rican people for more than a century of U.S. crimes!

Give to the people what belongs to the people!

Long live a free and sovereign Puerto Rico!

Police attack anti-capitalist march in Moscow

By Greg Butterfield

Communist and other leftist youth in Moscow had planned to hold their annual "Anticapitalism-2017" march on Sept. 23, highlighting the crisis conditions for young workers since the restoration of capitalism in Russia a quarter-century ago. This year's event held special significance for many, as it fell during the 100-year anniversary of Russia's 1917 socialist revolution.

However, Moscow city officials denied the usual authorization for the march. In violation of the law, the mayor's office first delayed its response to the organizers, then did not offer an alternative march route, and finally ignored the organizers' offer of an alternative.

Believing they were well within their rights, activists came out Sept. 23, declaring they would hold a "people's festival." But police were waiting. They stopped and arrested many before they could reach the gathering site, including Left Front coordinator and former political prisoner Sergey Udaltsov and United Communist Party First Secretary Vladimir Lakeev.

Those activists who were able to gather unfurled a banner and began to march, determined not to be intimidated. But police roughly broke up the demonstration, throwing people to the ground and arresting about 40 in all.

In response, Workers World Party from the U.S. issued a statement of solidarity with the Russian activists. It read in part: "These dangerous moves against the Russian Left come at a time when U.S. imperialism, under the Donald Trump regime, is threatening war and carrying out provocative acts against countries around the world, including Russia and many of its allies. It can only be called foolhardy on the part of the authorities of the Russian Federation to engage in physical and political attacks on the best and most determined fighters against U.S. imperialism, friends of Donbass, and committed anti-fascists."

Workers World spoke with Sergey Chekrygin, secretary of the Central Committee of the Union of Communist Youth, who was among those arrested on Sept. 23, about the action and what was behind the police crackdown in Moscow.

WW: Sergey, can you tell us about the idea behind "Anticapitalism-2017"? How many years has it been going on? Who is involved?

Chekrygin: This youth action against capitalism by the left forces of Russia has been held annually since 2001. It's based on the "Marches to Moscow" [mass marches of workers organized by the Labor Russia movement in the 1990s]. Several left parties and movements take part.

In the past, it was accompanied by mass marches and rallies, and sometimes by rock concerts. In 2002, during "Anticapitalism-2002," there were clashes between the left and the police. Militia cordons were broken, and about 100 demonstrators were detained. A lot of people went to jail.

Anticapitalism-2017 ended in the arrests of leaders of leftist organizations and many activists. The action was attended by the United Communist Party, Union of Communist Youth, Left Bloc, Other Russia, the "Select and Share" movement, Revolutionary Communist Youth League (RKSM-b), Revolutionary Workers' Party, New Communist Movement, Vanguard of Red Youth - Labor Russia (AKM-TR), All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), the Communists of Russia, and the Iskra socialist movement.

Moscow City Hall illegally banned our march this year, but we found the strength to go out to this action, albeit in the form of a people's festival. We should not be intimidated by prohibitions.

WW: Can you describe your experience on Saturday?

SC: Unfortunately, I was a little late for the action and arrived a few minutes after 1 p.m., but in those few minutes almost all our comrades in the struggle had already been detained. People just came out of the subway, they didn't chant anything, they didn't hold signs, but even so they weren't allowed to reach the gathering site. There were many police, who were grabbing people indiscriminately.

I still went to the place where I was supposed to meet my comrades. We were few. Without thinking twice, we decided to hold up a banner with the inscription "Capitalism is shit!" and began to march and shout the same slogan. We knew perfectly well that we would not be allowed to walk 20 meters without being detained, but the march was to be held at all costs, and we did everything in our power.

WW: I saw photos and video that showed very brutal treatment of you and other protesters. How long were you detained?

SC: The police tore at the banner and ripped our flags. It was just sick. But not surprising. A normal person does not work for the police. A normal person will not serve a power that robs its people at will. And as for the protection of "law and order," this is now an empty phrase. The law is in the hands of those who fear their people. On the one hand, the authorities seem strong and invincible, but on the other hand, they show their weakness.

I, like many others, was pinned to the asphalt and then put in a police bus. I was taken to Presnensky police station and asked provocative questions, but I didn't answer them. There were other comrades in the struggle with me. We were united and not afraid of anything. Many activists were kept in the police department of Moscow for four to five hours. Some were held for a day or two.

We must pay tribute to our comrades who went to all the jails around Moscow to support the detainees and brought us food and water. We didn't feel abandoned. On the contrary, it was very good moral support.

WW: Sergey Udaltsov of the Left Front, who was only recently released from prison, was jailed for five days. Why was he singled out for punishment?

SC: Udaltsov, like many others, was detained at the exit from the Metro [subway]. He did not violate the law. He didn't shout any slogans or wear any symbols. The court was provided with video proving this, but still made its decision — five days under arrest. [Udaltsov was released on Sept. 28.]

By the way, the police who detained Sergey explained their actions this way: "Your appearance on the street provokes people and forces them to gather around you." According to their logic, Sergey is guilty just for showing his face in public.

WW: Why do you think the authorities decided to crack down on the event this year? Is it related to the upcoming World Festival of Youth and Students in Sochi, Russia?

SC: The authorities carried out all this less than a month before the opening of the XIX World Festival of Youth and Students in Moscow — a traditionally leftist and anti-imperialist gathering of young people. What will the leftist visitors from around the world say about this violence in the homeland of the October Revolution? Nothing good.

I've heard that many Russian and foreign leftists are not allowed to participate in the upcoming World Festival of Youth and Students by decision of officials appointed by the Russian government. Even initiators and organizers of the event are being excluded!

What the authorities have done is an attempt to stifle the left forces in the capital of the Russian Federation in the centenary year of the Great October Socialist Revolution. You can't call it anything else.

WW: Thank you for your comments and your efforts!

SC: Thank you for the conversation, support and solidarity! We are also in solidarity with you! ☐

Letter on Korea

'Don't kill for Trump and the Pentagon!'

To the Editor:

Why does north Korea want nukes? It's pretty simple, and totally unreported in the corporate media. The U.S. Air Force flattened practically every building and structure there during the Korean War in the 1950s.

It's not "paranoia" (as we are told again and again and again, using the method of Herr Goebbels that worked so well in Nazi Germany). It's a rational decision based on the Koreans' terrifying previous experiences with bombing by the U.S. and their knowledge of U.S. bombing of others, major examples being the Vietnamese and the Iraqis.

The Koreans are Asians, and so the unnecessary, totally racist nuking of Japan — twice, when for all practical purposes WWII was over — must weigh heavily on the minds of Korean military leaders. The recent Korean rocket launches are small compared to the huge, year-after-year military exercise mobilizations the U.S. has been leading since the 1950s. But there is more, much more.

Korea was one of the first countries the U.S. military put in its gunsights to institute and enforce the "blessings" of free enterprise, "or else." In 1866, trying to "open" Korea as a market for U.S. goods, former U.S. gunship General Sherman, then a commercial vessel but still equipped for war, sailed up the Daedong River, where it was destroyed by Korean defenders.

That was followed by more attempts. U.S. President Chester Arthur sent Navy gunboats to Korea in the 1880s that blasted their way into a forced opening of trade with U.S. businesses.

Chester Arthur was a "good old boy" who knew a thing or two about the benefits of trade and being a middleman. Before becoming president, the well-heeled Arthur had the highest-paying job in the federal government. As head of the New York City Customs House, he received all tariff collections.

His position included the huge perk of appointing about a thousand sycophants as fee collectors, and in turn seeing to all the kickbacks the collectors were required to pay to the Republican Party. His reported income of over $50,000 annually was more than the salary of the president!

Donald Trump was born too late. His corrupt dealings would have raised no issue back in Arthur's time. Having been born and raised in New York high society, Trump perceives his class privileges and war powers much like fellow New Yorker Chester Arthur did over a century ago.

Remember the Maine? Remember the USS Maddox and USS Turner Joy (ships involved in the trumped-up Tonkin Gulf incident)? Remember that only one senator had a child serving in Iraq? As with Iraq Oil War II, who would benefit from Korean War II? It would be Trump, former ExxonMobil CEO Rex Tillerson and their rich pals, not us!

Tell the children. Don't let them be bamboozled by patriotic blather into killing for Trump and the Pentagon.

Daniel Kermit Leibensperger

Former lead steward, UFCW Local 1994; Safety Committee chair, Newspaper Guild Local 35; active member of Sparrows Point Steelworkers Locals 2609 and 2610; secretary of the Keep Apartheid Steel out of the Baltimore Subway Coalition; chief steward, Steelworkers Local 7936; active member/organizer Ironworkers Local 7; grandson of UMW coal miner Daniel Leibensperger, who always walked out when the "Union Man" waved the shirt.

SATURDAY
OCT 7TH
Join the Rally to
RESIST WAR AND RACISM
at Home and Abroad
1pm RALLY
at 34th St & 6th Ave • NYC
A united effort supporting the demands:
▸No to racism & white supremacy! BLACK LIVES MATTER!
▸Stop attacks on migrants, refugees and Muslims!
▸Bring the troops home and close the bases!
▸End the sanctions & the threats!
▸Jobs, education & healthcare, not endless war!

We need:
Massive Relief for Puerto Rico and the Caribbean!
Not U.S. Wars from Afghanistan to Korea!
It is a racist crime that 80% of Puerto Rico still lacks electricity, 50% without potable water!
Demand immediate delivery of generators, fuel, water filtration, food, tarps, prefab housing!
This basic equipment is stockpiled for every U.S. war. But it is inaccessible when millions of people desperately need it.
Cancel the debt! Open the warehouses!
Humanitarian Relief! Not Military Occupation!

This Rally is part of the coordinated national effort of many antiwar, antiracist, social justice and community-based groups. See NoToWar.net
Join the Facebook event: bit.ly/2xNXJ35

Participating Groups - as of Oct 2, A Call to Action on Puerto Rico, Action 21 Jersey City • Alianza Pais Militantes • BAYAN USA Northeast, Bolivarian Circle NYC • Comite Timon - Capituio Naeva York • Colectivo Honduras USA Resistencia • Comte. to Stop FBI Repression • Free Mumia Abu Jamal Coalition • Free Peltier – NYC • Frente Socialista de Puerto Rico • Gabriela New York • Haiti Support Network • Hoods 4 Justice • Informacion Al Desnudo • Int'l Action Center – IAC • Int'l League of Peoples Struggles – ILPS • Int'l Working Women's Day Coalition • Jersey City Peace Mvmt. • KnowDrones.com • Labor Against Racist Terror • Margaret Kimberly & Glen Ford - Black Agenda Report • New Abolitionist Mvmt. • Nodutdol for Korean Community Development • NYC Jericho Mvmt. • NYC Students for Justice in Palestine • Oscar- Mandela Comte. • Pakistan USA Freedom Forum • Parents to Improve School Transportation - PIST • Peace Action Manhattan • Peace Action NYS • Peoples Organization for Progress, Peoples Power Assemblies - PPA • Peoples Video Network•Pro Libertad Freedom Campaign • Rev. Luis Barrios, Right to Resist War & Empire • Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network • Shut It Down - NYC • Socialist Action • Solidarity Center NYC • Solidarity with Novorossiya & Antifascists in Ukraine • South Asian Fund for Education, Scholarship & Training • SPARC – Serve the People, Awaken Revolutionary Consciousness • U.S. Peace Council – USPC • United National Antiwar Coalition – UNAC • Veterans For Peace/Chapter 021 NJ • Workers World Party
Issued by: UNACpeace.org

Haitians hold popular uprising against new budget

By G. Dunkel

While hurricanes Harvey and Maria didn't strike Haiti, Hurricane Irma gave the country a glancing blow mainly in the northwest, the poorest section of Haiti. It displaced more than 100,000 people and destroyed crops, roads and infrastructure. The rest of the country was spared but lost a major food source.

Nevertheless, a social and economic hurricane is hitting the country now, fueled by avarice and greed, and will continue to hit Haiti for the foreseeable future. It is the new tax code, embodied in the budget that went into effect Oct. 1.

Under this code, drivers who want to renew their licenses will have to pay $158 for an income tax report. All Haitians — even those living abroad — who want to use governmental services, such as getting a professional license, a passport, a diploma or school transcript, vaccines and so on, will annually have to pay 10,000 gourdes ($159 at the current exchange rate).

The association of public transport drivers and owners called a strike on Sept. 18, which was widely followed in Port-au-Prince, as well as in some major cities outside the capital. Workers used the bus strike as an excuse to stay away from work, making it an undeclared general strike.

The representatives of the Protestant churches in Haiti and the head of the council of Voudou practitioners both issued statements opposing this new budget and demanding that Haitian President Jovenel Moïse back down. The Voudou council explicitly supported protests. (Haïti-Liberté, Sept. 20)

Moïse went to the U.N. General Assembly on Sept. 21, giving him a chance to address world leaders from the U.N. podium. He also met with two major world economic leaders: Luis Alberto Moreno, head of the Interamerican Development Bank, and Christine Lagarde, executive director of the International Monetary Fund.

While Moïse was in New York, a coalition of groups in the Haitian community called two demonstrations against his new budget and taxes, which also apply to Haitian citizens living in the U.S. The first rally was held the night of Sept. 20 in a Brooklyn church called the Evangelical Crusade of Fishers of Men. The next day a protest was held in front of the U.N. building. Groups calling this demonstration included Fanmi Lavalas (Lavalas Family) New York, Pitit Desalin (Dessalines Children) of NY, Ayiti Libète (Haïti Liberté), Radyo Pa Nou, SOHD and KAKOLA.

Resistance to government budget empties street in Port-au-Prince.

When Moïse returned to the Port-au-Prince airport, he decided to march to the National Palace. He had with him cops, a security detail, members of his Bald-Headed Haitian Party (PHTK), as well as a few hundred former soldiers, (One of his pet projects is reconstituting the Haitian army.)

As the parade left the airport, it was met with bottles and rocks, so his security team rushed him into a car.

A bus operator strike and other protests called for Sept. 28 and 29 were called off, or postponed to Oct. 2 and 3, for a variety of reasons; yet some protests still took place. Forty-nine of Haiti's 140 city halls closed their doors and went on strike for three days, from Sept. 25 to 28, to protest the new tax code.

HaïtiLibre.com reported Oct. 1 that the government had made some concessions and some sections of the bus operators were calling off their strike.

The situation is fluid. Traditional trade unions and workers groups with their own grievances, as well as community groups, are very likely to continue pushing to have the new budget/tax code withdrawn.

What the U.S. wants above all else in Haiti is stability. As long as Moïse can keep the lid on resistance, keep Haitian labor cheap and keep Haiti's markets open for U.S. goods like rice, the U.S. will keep supporting his rule. □

WWP extends solidarity to Puerto Rico

From the belly of the imperialist beast, the members of Partido Mundo Obrero/Workers World Party send a strong shout-out of solidarity with the Borincano people, who are facing the devastating consequences of the powerful Hurricane Maria.

This hurricane is the most powerful and dangerous to strike Puerto Rico since Hurricane San Felipe in 1928. An Atlantic storm rated Category 5 on the Saffir-Simpson scale, that one caused 300 deaths.

Maria arrives at the archipelago during the worst political and social moments in the history of that nation.

With great pain we have witnessed scenes of floods and catastrophes that occurred within a few days after Hurricane Irma hit the island. Entire neighborhoods have been under water and dangerous electrical cables have fallen, endangering the life of anyone who touches the electrified waters. Buildings have broken windows and doors, their roofs are blown off, and there is massive destruction that has not yet been registered given the lack of communications.

The deprivation of electrical service, with its consequent impact on all areas that depend on electricity, such as running water and refrigeration of food as well as the environment, is so important in a subtropical land where temperatures have exceeded 90 degrees Fahrenheit in the last few days.

We embrace and sympathize with every Puerto Rican, within or beyond the island's borders, who make up that nation and are separated only by the cruelty of the Empire's colonizing process. We share the anguish of those families who try to find out about the situation of their loved ones in the archipelago but live in torment waiting for news because of the lack of communication.

Increasing this misforture is the process of privatizing some sectors, such as communications, which are so essential at the moment. Privatization never benefits the people; on the contrary. An example is the telephone network, now in the hands of a company called Claro, which can't run without electric service, leaving the people incommunicado. This contrasts with the state-run Telefónica de Puerto Rico, which had emergency generators during Hurricane Hugo in 1989 and demonstrated that communications could be maintained without the main electrical grid.

From here in the U.S., we will help all we can to alleviate the enormous burden imposed by nature and by the hands of criminals on Wall Street and in the governments — both of Puerto Rico, which is in collusion with the criminal Board of Fiscal Control illegally imposed by the U.S. Congress, as well as by the current fascist-like resident in the White House.

Our strongest supportive embrace for the Puerto Rican people.

From the cruel and murderous empire,

Berta Joubert-Ceci and Teresa Gutiérrez

For the National Committee of Workers World Party/Partido Mundo Obrero

Puerto Rican diaspora rallies in New York City

By Anne Pruden
New York

A bilingual "mic check" and demonstration was held at Manhattan's Federal Plaza on Sept. 28 to denounce the U.S. governmental neglect of Puerto Rico in the wake of Hurricane Maria, led by President Donald Trump,.

Hundreds of people joined the protest after long marches through various New York communities. Other emergency rallies for Puerto Rico were held in several New York City locations.

Protesters chanted "Donald Trump! Shame on you!" and "¡Yo soy Boricua!" ("I am Puerto Rican!"), and they held signs denouncing Trump. They sang songs in Spanish, such as the revolutionary Puerto Rican anthem, "Que Bonita Bandera" ("What a Beautiful Flag"). As they passed by, a city sanitation truck driver and a city bus driver both honked their horns in support.

A flyer distributed at the event demanded the U.S. release life-saving relief, cancel the debt and abolish the Jones Act, which requires goods shipped to Puerto Rico to be transported only by U.S. vessels. Under pressure, Trump temporarily waived the act on Sept. 28 — for only a 10-day period. □

WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

WORKERS WORLD
editorial

Las Vegas & Puerto Rico: What we know

The horrific massacre that took place in Las Vegas during a country music festival late at night on Oct. 1 has taken the lives of a recorded 59 people and injured 527 as of Oct. 2. It is the deadliest massacre, in terms of numbers, that has occurred on U.S. soil in recent history.

It will take days, weeks and — who knows — maybe even months for a full investigation to answer certain questions leading to the motive of the alleged shooter, Stephen Paddock. One obvious question is how was he able to bring 10 suitcases packed with 18 to 20 automatic rifles, many of them fully loaded, to his 32nd-floor hotel room overlooking the festival, without arousing any kind of suspicion.

Another obvious question is: Why wasn't this heinous act deemed domestic terrorism as soon as Paddock, who is white, was identified? Usually the government and the corporate press are quick to characterize Muslims as "terrorists," but not in this case. Police only stated that Paddock was a "lone wolf" attacker.

This should come as no surprise, since the white supremacist attacks in Charlottesville, Va., on Aug. 12, resulting in the death of anti-fascist activist Heather Heyer, were not characterized, by either President Donald Trump or the press, as domestic terrorism.

There are some political facts related to Las Vegas that we do know. For instance, to cite a popular baseball quote, "Mass shootings are as American as apple pie." A chart, compiled by the British Guardian, indicates there have been 1,516 mass shootings in the U.S. over the past 1,735 days — the highest rate in any developed country recorded since 2012. A mass shooting is defined by the Gun Violence Archive as four or more people shot in one incident, whether killed or injured.

We also know that racism plays a prominent role in determining whose lives receive more priority than others. The Black Lives Matter movement reflects the fact that when it comes to racial profiling by the police or vigilantes, Black and Brown lives are dehumanized on a daily basis.

When two hurricanes hit Puerto Rico within a two-week period, virtually devastating the entire island and leaving residents with little to no drinking water, electricity, food or sanitary supplies, Trump accused the mayor of San Juan, Carmen Yulín Cruz, of "poor leadership." This was after she called out his administration for not responding immediately to the crisis for 3.4 million U.S. citizens. An estimated 60 lives have been lost to date in Puerto Rico and probably many, many more given the lack of medicine and other kinds of deprivation.

Ten days after Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico, Trump visited the island for one day, on Oct. 3. After claiming he would visit the hurricane-wrecked Virgin Islands, a U.S. territory with a mostly Black population, he decided not to visit it at all.

In contrast, Trump is scheduled to visit Las Vegas, where the massacre victims were mostly white, on Oct. 4, just three days after the carnage. This past weekend, Trump was at a golf tournament in Jersey City, N.J., where he dedicated the trophy to the people in Puerto Rico. WTF!!

Trump's response shows how the Puerto Rican people, due to national oppression, are treated as less than human. An Oct. 3 Washington Post article ("Trump says Puerto Rico officials should be 'proud' more haven't died like in Katrina") reports that during his visit to Puerto Rico, he condescendingly told officials, "I hate to tell you, Puerto Rico, you've thrown our budget out of whack."

Many say that guns are a societal problem when in reality, capitalism — a system that depends on class violence and especially white supremacy to survive — is the REAL problem that must be eradicated. □

Activists 'die-in' over budget cuts to HIV, youth housing

Massachusetts

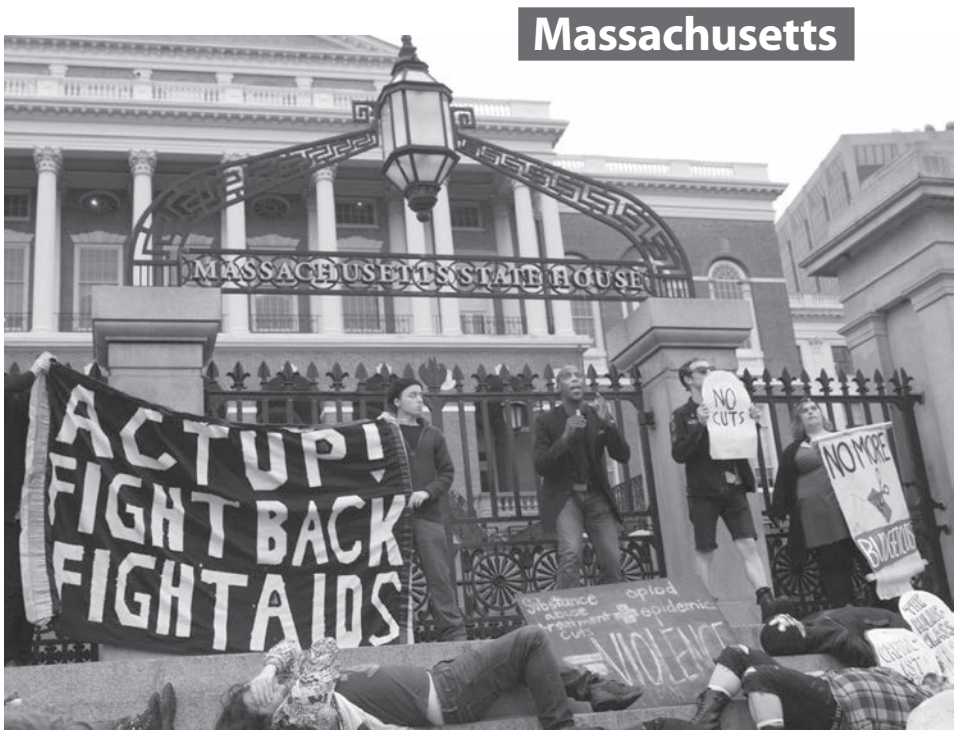


PHOTO: ASH HENRY

Pastor Franklin Hobbs speaks from the steps of the Massachusetts State House while protesters stage a 'die-in' on Sept. 19.

By WW Boston bureau

Sept. 25 — In response to Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker's murderous budget cuts to HIV, housing and youth services, protesters staged "die-ins" at the State House and a nearby busy shopping district in Boston on Sept. 19.

Despite thousands of HIV infection cases in Massachusetts and hundreds of new cases each year, Gov. Baker used his line-item veto to cut nearly $3 million to HIV-related services from the state's 2018 budget. Organizers called upon members of the state legislature to override these cuts, representing millions of dollars in services stolen from the oppressed.

Protesters — led by ACT-UP Boston — leafleted and chanted. Then, each fell down "dead" in coordinated sequence, recalling militant direct actions of ACT-UP during its critical height in the late 1980s and early 1990 in response to the brutal, government-enabled HIV/AIDS crisis that claimed one victim in the U.S. every eight minutes.

ACT-UP has also mounted demonstrations over the years to expose U.S. and European neocolonial pharmaceutical profiteers, who prioritized their bottom line over fighting the massive HIV/AIDS pandemic in sub-Saharan Africa.

Youth organizers in Boston — most are younger than the 30-year-old ACT-UP movement — expressed outrage that after three decades, a militant fight for HIV/AIDS and related services is still as necessary as ever.

Accessing treatment for HIV is often insurmountable for those without insurance and stable housing, especially poor and working people, trans, Black and/or Latinx people. HIV infection rates are also high among people who use drugs and face that related stigma disproportionately under capitalism.

Among the programs set to be completely axed by Gov. Baker is Youth On Fire, a highly valued Cambridge program providing beds, meals, overdose prevention and other support for LGBTQ youth and youth with HIV.

An affinity group of ACT-UP Boston, called ACT-UP CLASS WAR — the Coalition of Local Activists and Seropositive Siblings formed to Wipe out Austerity and Racism — mobilized to raise demands beyond the call to urge legislators to overturn budget cuts.

The CLASS WAR group called for securing housing as a basic human right and for ending Boston's exploding luxury housing market, which has produced mass evictions of longtime working-class and poor residents. They also demanded full, permanent funding for Youth On Fire, as well as additional services that would provide housing for homeless people living with HIV/AIDS and supervised consumption facilities for people who use drugs.

As of this writing, the Massachusetts House has voted to override Gov. Baker's cuts to 2018 funding for youth homelessness and HIV programs, including Youth On Fire. It remains to be seen if the state Senate will do the same. Two other programs — Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (which includes help for people with disabilities) and support for section 8 vouchers — have not yet received an override vote in either chamber.

People wait anxiously to learn the fate of these budget items that seriously impact their lives. One "die-in" speaker related that they might not survive the winter if the line-item cuts get pushed through.

As true today as it was 30 years ago, in the face of capitalist austerity, "Silence is death." □

Save the date!

WORKERS WORLD PARTY NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Saturday and Sunday NOV 18-19

NEW YORK CITY Place TBA

Plenaries, discussion groups and workshops will take up:

Durham, Aug.14

- **Commemorating Centennial of Russian Revolution and Its Lessons for Today's Struggles**

Women spark 1917 Russian Revolution

- **Building a United Movement Against All Forms of White Supremacy, Led by Trump Regime**

Houston, August 2017

PHOTO: ALICE LOAIZA

- **Connecting Racism to All Class Issues Like the Lack of Hurricane Relief**
- **The Fight Against Imperialism and Occupation Continues**

And more

A Voice from Harper's Ferry
***written by* Osborne P. Anderson,** a Black revolutionary who was there.
Essays by: **Mumia Abu-Jamal**, **Monica Moorehead** and **Vince Copeland** on the 'Unfinished Revolution.'
Read it at www.workers.org/ebooks/AVoiceFromHarpersFerry.pdf

Why Colin Kaepernick is right
Articles from Workers World/Mundo Obrero Newspaper
www.workers.org/books

Catalans defy Spanish cops to vote pro-independence

By John Catalinotto

The Spanish state's brutal attempt to repress the Oct. 1 referendum for self-determination of Catalonia boomeranged on the Madrid regime. Instead of squelching the vote, brutality aroused massive anger and resistance. This boosted the independence movement of the Catalan people and pushed the working class to the front.

The people of Catalonia have the right to decide on their status. And they certainly have the right to vote in a referendum without fearing clubs and rubber bullets from the national police and Civil Guard.

Instead, with local Catalan police standing aside, federal police tried to close voting centers, seize ballots and voting boxes, and finally used clubs and rubber bullets to attack groups of potential voters, bloodying heads, throwing men and women down steps, breaking bones and injuring 844 people, according to reports the next day.

Spain's Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy of the People's Party ordered the attack on Catalonia. His center-right party supports the monarchy; it includes those who continue the policies of the fascist regime that won the Civil War in 1939.

When Rajoy sent shiploads of national police to the port of Barcelona, dockers refused to supply or unload the ships. Local firefighters helped other citizens protect the voting places. Masses mobilized to resist and carry out the vote.

While polls before the confrontation showed a majority of the 5 million eligible voters might have voted "No" to independence, the attack aroused those who felt the repression. More than 2 million people defied the police to vote, and 90 percent of them voted "Yes."

Some tens of thousands of students marched Oct. 2 in the streets of Barcelona, the regional capital, chanting "We have chosen!" and "The streets belong to us."

Dozens of Catalan unions have called for a general strike on Oct. 3. Before the Oct. 1 confrontation, two of the biggest union confederations, the Workers Commissions (CCOO) and the UGT, had not signed on to the strike. Now they have. Such a strike has the potential of moving the initiative for the struggle for self-determination closer to the working class and away from the pro-capitalist Catalan parties.

What is the 'Spanish state'?

Many leftists in what we call "Spain" use the term "Spanish state" to describe it. Nor would they call all of its citizens "Spanish." Distinct peoples inhabit more or less distinct regions and speak different languages than the dominant Spanish language. They don't all identify as Spanish.

They might instead identify as Galician, Basque or Catalan, among others. Galicia is a poor region in the northwest, identified with agriculture and fishing. The Basque Country in the northeast is more industrial, with a long history of armed struggle for independence and many political prisoners behind bars in the Spanish state. Catalonia is a prosperous region on the eastern shore, known among other things for its strong workers' and anarchist movement, which was on the republican side against the fascists during the 1936-39 civil war.

Beside slaughtering the workers' movement, the 40-year fascist Franco regime that won the civil war forced Spanish nationality and language onto everyone. That included suppressing regional languages and not teaching them in schools.

As the fascist period drew to a close after Francisco Franco's death in 1975, the agreement for the new regime was called the "Transition." Revolutionaries considered the Transition a rotten deal that imposed a king on all the peoples, instead of the republic they wanted. It also allowed the fascist criminals and the wealthy oligarchs to maintain their position and wealth.

So the Spanish state — the Civil Guard, the national police, the army — is identified with the fascist era, the repression of the working class and of minority nationalities, and the continuation of this rule and the monarchy under the Transition from 1978 to today.

Reaction today across the territory

Pro-independence Catalan parties — mainly pro-capitalist parties — are leading the regional government in Catalonia. They pushed for the referendum. Others doubt these parties are really prepared to struggle for independence; they suspect the parties just want a bigger cut of exploited wealth for the Catalan ruling class.

There is nothing progressive about the Spanish state. On the international arena, it plays a completely reactionary role in Latin America, using its economic and cultural contacts in tandem with U.S. imperialism. It regularly attacks Venezuela and Cuba at international forums. In 2003 it joined the U.S.-British invasion of Iraq, at that time led by People's Party Prime Minister José María Aznar.

So far the European Union has supported the central Spanish regime against an independent Catalonia.

On the other hand, nominal independence does not in itself mean a victory for working-class demands. These demands are for an end to austerity, guaranteed full employment, reinstatement of public medical care, etc., along with an end to the monarchy and reinstatement of the republic.

All pro-independence organizational statements that reached Workers World from much poorer Galicia and the more repressed Basque Country support Catalan self-determination. Of course they also attack Rajoy for police repression.

For revolutionary working-class organizations, the key issue is how to build solidarity among the working class of all the peoples of the Spanish state.

Demonstrations were held Oct. 1 in at least 11 cities of the Spanish state, among many different peoples, to say, "Catalonia is not alone."

At the one in Madrid, Ángeles Maestro of the Red Network thanked Catalans: "[B]ecause what is happening today in Catalonia affects us all and impacts directly all the peoples who dwell within the boundaries of the Spanish state. Because what is happening in the streets of Catalonia is a crude replica of the farce of a transition that we have experienced here the last 40 years. It's not that the transition regime made itself illegitimate today; it was always so. Only its DNA is so profoundly reactionary that today it shows big time." □

German elections show need to intensify anti-racist struggle

By John Catalinotto

The best news from the German national elections of Sept. 24 was that the main parties of German imperialism — the Social Democrats (SPD) and the Christian Democratic Union with its Bavarian Christian Social Union ally — had their worst results since World War II. The SPD got only 20.5 percent and the CDU/CSU 32.9 percent.

These parties, which have dominated the German government since post-war West Germany was stabilized, together got barely more than half the votes.

The worst news was that the ultra-right wing, anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim party, the Alternative for Germany (AfD), came in third, with 12.6 percent of the votes. For the first time the AfD, founded in 2013, won seats in the Federal Parliament, or Bundestag.

Political observer Victor Grossman aptly describes the AfD, which has drawn together leaders from various racist and neo-fascist parties, as divided between "far right racists and extreme right racists" in his Berlin Bulletin of Sept. 25.

The AfD won 94 of the 709 seats in the Bundestag, which will give these ultra-rightists even more media coverage to spew their racist viewpoint.

The AfD advance should not, however, prevent existing left forces in Germany from continuing their courageous activities, which include confronting the racists and neo-Nazis wherever they raise their heads, protesting at U.S. military bases, denouncing German participation in wars abroad and supporting workers who go on strike.

The electoral results fit a general pattern in many European countries. Instability in the capitalist economy, coupled with an "austerity" program that cuts wages, benefits and jobs, creates general dissatisfaction among the population. Workers' living standards decline, and insecurity grows, even in the more prosperous countries.

Mostly NATO members, these countries' imperialist ruling classes also take part in wars and war maneuvers, from the borders of Russia to the mountains of Afghanistan. They sow misery throughout North Africa and Western Asia, driving millions to leave these regions and head toward Europe for survival.

The capitalist, pro-imperialist parties that have run these governments for decades offer no solutions for the workers. Right-wing parties arise that offer false solutions. They scapegoat refugees, immigrants and especially Muslims, blaming the victims for the evils of decadent capitalism.

While none of these ultra-right or neo-fascist parties has taken control of a government in Western Europe, they still represent a threat. The National Front in France received a third of votes there, and parties analogous to the AfD exist in Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy and the Scandinavian countries. In addition, they pressure the center-right and formerly social-democratic parties to move to the right and parrot their racism.

The racist and xenophobic Donald Trump electoral victory in the United States fits this pattern.

Merkel still chancellor

In Germany the CDU/CSU still came in first, with 246 seats, despite finishing with such a small plurality. The SPD won 153 seats. Angela Merkel, who has been chancellor since 2005, still has the task of forming and leading the next government.

Three other parties won seats. The Free Democrats (FDP), a bourgeois party that had lost all its seats in the 2013 election, came in fourth, winning 80 seats. The Left Party — the only party that has been anti-war and shown solidarity with immigrants — is fifth, with 69 seats. And the Green Party, which can no longer be considered leftist, but still takes positions defending the environment, won 63 seats.

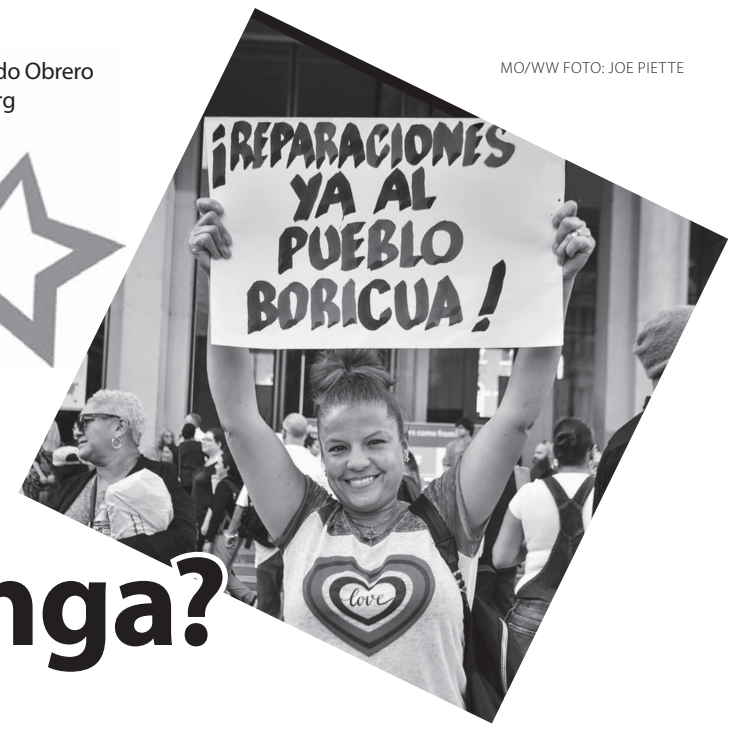
The last German government was a so-called Grand Coalition of the CDU/CSU together with the SPD. This time SPD leader Martin Schulz has announced that his party will not join such a coalition, but will instead lead the opposition. That means it will be a serious parliamentary problem for Merkel to form a new government.

Merkel will have to join two diverse partners with her own parties. The most likely coalition would be between the CDU/CSU, the FDP and the Greens. As of now an alliance of any party with the racist AfD is taboo. The CDU/CSU also refuses to allow The Left Party into the government.

Being part of a government coalition would, in any case, force The Left Party to surrender its up-to-now consistent anti-war and anti-NATO positions and compromise its defense of workers' rights. Joining such a government might only discredit this party as a pole of opposition to the imperialist regime. But such discrediting has occurred where The Left Party joined local government coalitions. □

WORKERS WORLD
MUNDO OBRERO
Correspondencia sobre artículos en Workers World/Mundo Obrero pueden ser enviadas a: WW-MundoObrero@workers.org

¡Proletarios y oprimidos de todos los paises unios! workers.org Vol. 59 Núm. 40 5 de octobre 2017 $1



MO/WW FOTO: JOE PIETTE

PUERTO RICO

¿Segunda invasión gringa?

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Un año después de que Estados Unidos invadiera a Puerto Rico en 1898 e impusiera un régimen militar, azotó la isla el huracán San Ciriaco que devastó casi en su totalidad la infraestructura insular. Esto sirvió al invasor para reestructurar el país a su conveniencia. Destruida su economía agrícola que en ese entonces cultivaba - además del azúcar - café y tabaco para la exportación a Europa, los EUA impusieron eventualmente su gigante plantación cañera para beneficiar a su industria azucarera.

Las ganancias se irían a Nueva York y Boston, sede de sus oficinas, comenzando así el sangrado de la riqueza boricua. Junto a esto, el Congreso de EUA aprobó en 1900 el Acta Foraker, que ratificaba el dólar estadounidense como la moneda oficial de PR, sustituyendo así al peso el cual EUA había ya devaluado en enero de 1899. De un manotazo gringo, las/os puertorriqueños perdieron el 40 por ciento de sus riquezas.

Ahora, luego de la devastación del huracán María el 20 de septiembre, parece ser que el imperio yanqui se apresta a reestructurar a Puerto Rico nuevamente para que responda a sus nuevos intereses en esta época cuando el capitalismo se encuentra en una terrible decadencia, lo que no deja de hacerlo más cruel y criminal.

Ya esta reestructuración había comenzado cuando el Congreso EUA aprobara la Ley PROMESA bajo la administración demócrata de Obama para obligar el pago de una deuda pública ilegítima y odiosa de $74 mil millones. Deuda que aún – y hay que recalcarlo – las autoridades rehúsan aceptar una auditoría ciudadana.

Impuesta por esta ley llega una Junta de Control Fiscal de siete miembros asociados a entidades bancarias que dispone y manda en PR, incluso sobre el gobierno insular. Justo antes de María la JCF había ya impuesto un horroroso y perjudicial Plan Fiscal neoliberal en contra del pueblo trabajador que hundiría más al pueblo en la pobreza. Parte también de PROMESA es la privatización de entidades estatales como la Autoridad de Energía Eléctrica (AEE), sobre todo su parte generatriz que es la más ganancias crea.

Es dentro de este marco que llega la monumental devastación del huracán.

Como presagio de lo que ocurre, la escritora Yarimar Bonilla escribió en un artículo el 22 de septiembre sobre una entrevista realizada a una asesora financiera local. Esta "estaba extremadamente optimista sobre el clima económico. Anticipando el incumplimiento del gobierno, había reorientado los activos de sus clientes hacia las acciones estadounidenses..... 'Lo único que necesitamos ahora es un huracán'. Se estaba refiriendo a cómo estos desastres naturales traen dinero federal para la reconstrucción y, a menudo, se convierten en una bendición a la industria de la construcción. 'Al salir de su oficina, me animó a comprar acciones en Home Depot'". (Sept. 22, Washington Post)

Militarización de PR

Después de casi una semana del terrible suceso, el Pentágono anunció la llegada a PR de sus fuerzas para "ayudar al pueblo puertorriqueño". De 460 a 6,433 aumentó el personal del Departamento de Defensa estadounidense (DoD) y "seguirá en ascenso según las necesidades" según dijo el gobernador Ricardo Roselló.

Desde el Fuerte Bliss de Texas llegarán 16 helicópteros entre el 2 y 3 de octubre. "El buque de asalto USS Wasp y aviones de la Marina también están en ruta hacia la Isla, dijo el teniente coronel Jaime Davis, portavoz del Pentágono". (elnuevodia.com, 1 de octubre) De la Guardia Nacional van 210 oficiales de la Policía Militar y personal de infantería. Policías llegarán desde Nueva York y Nueva Jersey. Supuestamente el buque hospital USNS Comfort arribará a las costas de San Juan el 4 de octubre.

Ya el Pentágono tomó el mando de la "reconstrucción" de PR con estos oficiales y el Cuerpo de Ingenieros. En las diarias conferencias de prensa del gobernador se ve acompañado de algunos de estos oficiales y sin olvidar, a FEMA, la cual está al mando de la distribución de alimentos, agua y materiales básicos.

Y he ahí el gran problema ahora en PR.

Mientras en las cámaras de televisión y en las pocas cadenas de radio que operan ahora se anuncia que la entrega de estos materiales se está haciendo a los 78 municipios de la isla, la realidad está muy lejos de esta aseveración. Incluso los mismos medios noticiosos corporativos denuncian la falta de ayuda a los sitios más alejados de la capital. Esas/os mismos reporteras han cruzado ríos y caminos difíciles de transitar para llegar a esas comunidades y poderlas visibilizar en los noticieros.

Comunidades tras comunidades narran en las cámaras la tragedia y las condiciones infrahumanas por las cuales están pasando aisladas del resto de la isla. Viviendo casi por dos semanas en casas sin techos, sin electricidad, agua potable, comunicación, ni comida, tomando agua sucia de riachuelos seguramente contaminados, donde también lavan su ropa y se bañan. Enterrando a sus muertos en el patio.

Así hay gran cantidad de comunidades donde el "poderoso" ejército estadounidense que puede construir una ciudad con aire acondicionado en el desierto en pocos días como mostró durante la invasión de Irak, no puede sin embargo cruzar un río para llevar la ayuda necesaria a estas comunidades. Este es un crimen más cometido por el Pentágono.

FEMA por su parte, está cometiendo otro crimen.

Tanto FEMA como los militares actúan unidos y dependen del uno y del otro. FEMA se ha convertido en el "coordinador" de las ayudas que llegan a la isla y supuestamente los militares ayudarán a su distribución. El problema es que realmente no ocurre, como lo indica el párrafo anterior.

Pero el pueblo salva al pueblo

La diáspora boricua en Estados Unidos vive con congoja la desesperación de sus familiares en el archipiélago. Estos sentimientos han propulsado un verdadero anhelo de reconstrucción comenzando por la recolección de artículos básicos necesarios y enviarlos a PR. Sin embargo, una vez llegan a la isla, es FEMA quien se ha hecho cargo de los vagones, entorpeciéndose así su distribución. Miles de contenedores se han quedado varados en los puertos, incluyendo contenedores de corporaciones que por sea las razones que tengan, no se han llevado sus contenidos, haciendo que se impida también la circulación de materiales necesitados.

El gobierno ha acusado a los camioneros de no ayudar en la distribución de éstos. Sin embargo, los camioneros convocaron a la prensa para explicar que por días han estado esperando para que las agencias les contraten para la distribución, siendo ignorados repetidamente. Muchos de ellos se quedan esperando por trabajo sin regresar a sus hogares para no utilizar la gasolina por la gran falta de combustible. Acusan además a la empresa marítima Crowley, de utilizar agencias privadas de conductores, dejando fuera a estos conductores boricuas independientes.

Frente a esto, la diáspora boricua está buscando otras alternativas que no sea el envío por contenedores en la línea Crowley, optando por enviar independientemente. Personas que viajan a PR llevan todas las maletas que las aerolíneas les permiten, para acomodar materiales para el pueblo. Ana, una amiga de esta escritora, quien viajará pronto a la isla comentó que pudo conseguir un pasaje en primera clase, lo cual le permite llevar 70 libras por maleta. Ahí acomodará materiales, dejando atrás sus pertenencias personales. Así están haciendo muchas personas para enviar materiales que de otra manera, no llegarían a las comunidades que más lo necesitan.

En varios reportajes se puede constatar cómo el pueblo se va organizando por comunidades. Vecinos que se unen para limpiar los caminos, reconstruir sus hogares con los materiales que aún se puedan utilizar. El esfuerzo es masivo. Brigadas de trabajo desde la diáspora también se están organizando para ayudar en la reconstrucción de Puerto Rico.

Angélica Acosta, del Frente Socialista de Puerto Rico envió a WW-MO el siguiente comentario: "La clase trabajadora salió a la calle con sus camiones, uniformes y mucho más para levantar el país como saben hacerlo a diario. En otros lugares, finalmente conocen a sus vecinos o comparten más con ellos. El pueblo está compartiendo sus alimentos y utensilios. Hay comunidades que han comenzado a levantar las casas destruidas, como pueblo valiente que somos".

La ayuda está llegando individualmente de artistas y personalidades – mayormente boricuas – que residen en EU. Deportistas han llevado ayuda en aviones privados. Muchos están levantando fondos para la recuperación del país. Puerto Rico, aparte de la gran tragedia, no está solo. Otros países están demostrando su solidaridad. La República Dominicana envió gasolina. Panamá también ha enviado ayudas.

Hay organizaciones en la isla organizando brigadas para la distribución de alimentos, agua y medicinas y para la reconstrucción del país. Esta escritora pudo comunicarse hace unas horas con Mercedes Martínez, presidenta de la Federación de Maestros de PR, que es una de estas organizaciones que junto a la CGT y la Jornada Se Acabaron las Promesas, comenzarán estas brigadas de trabajo el 3 de octubre. La FMPR además acepta donaciones a través de 'GoFundMe'.

Cuba ha ofrecido ayuda médica pero hasta ahora no se sabe si la ayuda podrá llegar por las leyes coloniales impuestas a PR por EUA. Hace unas horas la alcaldesa de San Juan, Carmen Yulín Cruz Soto, aceptó la ayuda de Venezuela que enviará gasolina. PDVSA, a través de su compañía Citgo en EUA, puede enviar el producto. Además, debido a la presión internacional para que se derogue la Ley Jones de 1920 que previene a PR de usar otra marina mercante que no sea la estadounidense, con personal estadounidense y en barcos construidos en EUA, el presidente Núm 45 aceptó cancelarla por 10 días.

¡Ojo!

El 3 de octubre, Trump viajará a la isla, aparentemente por par de horas. Su itinerario es secreto. Pero no solo es Trump quien visita. Hay otros buitres que acechan para ver cómo se pueden aprovechar de Puerto Rico.

Es aquí donde está el problema mayor: la reestructuración que quiere hacer el capital estadounidense, aprovechando la devastación de la isla. Estos días se espera también la llegada de John Davies presidente de la Fundación Baton Rouge quien participó de la restructuración de Luisiana en 2005 después de la devastación del huracán Katrina. Davies viene asesorando el "Fondo de recuperación" que el Centro para una Nueva Economía (CNE) creó el pasado 22 de septiembre.

El CNE está integrado por banqueros y asesores financieros muy allegados al proceso de la Junta de Control Fiscal. Aquí está el peligro de la reestructuración con medidas neoliberales de privatizaciones. Medidas ya incluidas en la Ley PROMESA para privatizar el sector energético.

¡No a la militarización de PR!

¡Derogación de las Leyes PROMESA y Jones! ¡No a las privatizaciones!

¡Reparaciones para el pueblo puertorriqueño por más de un siglo de crímenes EEUU!

¡Al pueblo lo que es del pueblo!

¡Viva Puerto Rico Libre y Soberano!