



Fight for socialism!

Can't vote out racism, sexism, war

By Teresa Gutierrez

Nov. 7 — When you read this, the most unprecedented, disturbing, raucous and depressing U.S. presidential election will finally be over.

This election cycle developed into a contest between the two most unpopular candidates in modern times. One will be inaugurated in Washington on Jan. 20.

This article, written before the election, is about preparing for the next four years, despite who wins. No matter the outcome, capitalism has arrived at a dead end, unable to overcome its deep contradictions, showering wealth on those already billionaires, while grinding down the workers who produce everything. The dire consequences of that fact will only intensify over the next four years.

Building a mass movement to fight this system is the order of the day, no matter the outcome of the election.

It must be said upfront, however, that a Donald Trump victory would be horrifying. Even though it seems unlikely at this point that Trump could win, no one had expected him to get this far.

A Trump victory would give a further green light to the forces of racism and repression, both inside and outside the capitalist state. The movement would have to prepare for more unbridled police terror and mass deportations.

At best, it would mean a government so deadlocked that little gets done and both parties blame the other.

Few could wish any of this on the people of this country. A deadlocked government means the elderly do not get their Social Security checks on time, the impoverished do not get badly needed benefits, government workers of all kinds get furloughed.

No matter which party wins, the movement must be prepared to resist more wars and repression carried out in the name of “national security.”

Two parties, one system

To revolutionaries and socialists who understand the capitalist nature of this country, it is well known that the Democrats and the Republicans differ little, as both historically represent Wall Street and the Pentagon. Although the social base of each party is different, they both adhere to the norms of capitalist rule.

The Republican Party is richer and much, much whiter, and is supported by the most reactionary elements of the ruling class. The Democratic Party depends on support from the unions and people of color, appearing more working class even though it is closely intertwined with Wall Street.

It is the fat cats in the boardrooms and their agents who wield the real power and dictate to the party in the White House.

Only mass upheaval from the workers and the oppressed can push back those fat cats.

Continued on page 6

WORKERS WORLD EDITORIAL

Don't just mourn, organize

Nov. 9 — We're as angry and shocked as our readers. The polls were wrong. We're not the only ones who are horrified that a candidate could be elected who boasted of his misogyny and egged on the worst racists while talking trash against immigrants.

But this is no time just to mourn. It's a time to reaffirm support and militant solidarity with all those who have been the main targets of Trump's demagoguery and hatred: women, people of color, immigrants. That's the only path toward uniting the working class against its real enemies: the billionaire rulers of this country, including Trump.

The day after the election must become Day One of the resistance.

More information will come out as to who voted and why. Trump tapped into many grievances and used them to get elected, promising anything and everything and directing anger at the first African-American president. Yet both Trump and Clinton were unpopular, and both offered no real solutions to the problems of capitalist exploitation, racism, sexism and war.

Trump did NOT get as many popular votes as Clinton.
Continued on page 10



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

SEPTA strike's repercussions

3

RESISTANCE AT STANDING ROCK

2, 6-7



The Everett Massacre of 1916

4

KKK HEAD DAVID DUKE DUMPED AT DILLARD

5

All-Indian Trade Union Congress

8

Dangers of 'no-fly' zone

11

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PFLP salutes struggle at Standing Rock

Excerpts from a statement of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, released on Oct. 29 and published in full on workers.org.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine extends its strongest support and solidarity to the Indigenous resistance at Standing Rock against the Dakota Access Pipeline and the settler colonial project of genocide and plunder in North America.

“The Indigenous strugglers at Standing Rock are defending Indigenous land and water, resources that have been confiscated and polluted for centuries. They are defending the very existence of their people with their valiant resistance. As a Palestinian national liberation movement, we salute [them] and all who stand alongside them at Standing Rock confronting the militarized forces of the settler colonial state and their privatized agents,” said Palestinian leftist writer Khaled Barakat in an interview with the PFLP media office.

“It is ... no surprise that G4S has [provided] private security for the construction of the destructive, invasive pipeline through Indigenous land, threatening the water and safety of the Standing Rock Sioux and the rights of Indigenous nations. [G4S provides] security to the Canadian mining corporations that plunder Indigenous land for mineral wealth around the world [and] sells equipment and security services to the Israel Prison Services, which imprison over 7,000 Palestinians. [It is] involved in the mass incarceration of children and youth — especially youth of color — in the U.S., and in the deportation of migrants in [Britain], Australia, the U.S. and elsewhere,” said Barakat.

“The hundreds of Indigenous nations — including Palestinian participants — coming together in Standing Rock exemplify an unceasing history of hundreds of years of resistance in the face of a genocidal project,” said Barakat. “Today’s U.S. empire that bombs and threatens [people’s] lives ... especially in the Arab world, Asia, Africa and Latin America, was built on settler colonialism, the genocide of Indigenous people, and the enslavement and genocide against Black people.

“The land and water defenders at Standing Rock are

defending all of us. We see them reflected in the Palestinian mothers holding tight to their olive trees targeted for settler destruction; in the Palestinian farmers who resist in the so-called “buffer zones”; and the fishers who brave warship fire to preserve Palestinian fishery.

“There have been hundreds of arrests, the use of massive military equipment and the force of the state in order to enforce the [DAPL] through sacred burial grounds and attempt to force Indigenous land and water defenders from their land. [This mechanism is] used in Palestine, keeping thousands of Palestinian political prisoners behind bars for struggling for the freedom of their people and their land,” said Barakat.

We express our strongest solidarity with Native and Indigenous struggles for self-determination and liberation. We encourage all Palestinians, especially the Palestinian community in the United States, to ... build upon the efforts of Palestinian youth in support, solidarity and participation in the Standing Rock camps of struggle, and in developing ... joint struggle and solidarity with Native liberation movements.

We also encourage ... the Palestine solidarity movement to ... deepen its involvement in the struggle to defend Indigenous land, and note ... the protests ... linking the struggle of Palestinian prisoners and the call to boycott G4S with the defense of Standing Rock. There is a long history of ... common struggle between our liberation struggles, together in the global movement to defeat settler colonialism, Zionism and imperialism, that we must nurture and build upon until victory and liberation. □



Palestinian flag in Oceti Sakowin Camp, North Dakota, with Palestinian activist Nadya Raja Tannous.

MUNDO OBRERO WORKERS WORLD

Who we are & what we’re fighting for

Hate capitalism? Workers World Party fights for a socialist society — where the wealth is socially owned and production is planned to satisfy human need. This outmoded capitalist system is dragging down workers’ living standards while throwing millions out of their jobs. If you’re young, you know they’re stealing your future. And capitalism is threatening the entire planet with its unplanned, profit-driven stranglehold over the means of production.

Workers built it all — it belongs to society, not to a handful of billionaires! But we need a revolution to make that change. That’s why for 57 years WWP has been building a revolutionary party of the working class inside the belly of the beast.

We fight every kind of oppression. Racism, sexism,

degrading people because of their nationality, sexual or gender identity or disabilities — all are tools the ruling class uses to keep us apart. They ruthlessly super-exploit some in order to better exploit us all. WWP builds unity among all workers while supporting the right of self-determination. Fighting oppression is a working-class issue, which is confirmed by the many labor struggles led today by people of color, immigrants and women.

WWP has a long history of militant opposition to imperialist wars. The billionaire rulers are bent on turning back the clock to the bad old days before socialist revolutions and national liberation struggles liberated territory from their grip. We’ve been in the streets to oppose every one of imperialism’s wars and aggressions. □

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WORKERS WORLD this week

★ In the U.S.

Fight for socialism!	1
Philly demands ‘Transit Justice’ from SEPTA.....	3
Transit workers’ six-day win	3
SEPTA riders launch free fare campaign.....	3
Centennial of 1916 ‘Everett Massacre’	4
Dillard students give KKK Duke a hot reception.....	5
Fight for \$15 goes statewide in Iowa.....	5
Roanoke, Va.: First-ever Fight for \$15 protest.....	5
Protecting people from pipelines	6
Coast-to-coast solidarity with Standing Rock resistance...	7

★ Around the world

PFLP salutes struggle at Standing Rock	2
The All India Trade Union Congress.....	8
Moroccan protests shake U.S. ally	8
Cuba wins at U.N., 191 to 0.....	9
France: Refugees part of global crisis	9
Gambia blasts the International Criminal Court	10
Two sections of a united front against imperialism.....	10
A NATO ‘no-fly zone’ in Syria means a bigger war	11
Families across Britain protest killer cops	11

★ Editorial

Don’t just mourn, organize	1
----------------------------------	---

★ Noticias en Español

La necesidad de solidaridad internacionalista.....	12
Trump, Clinton y el FBI.....	12

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Philly demands ‘Transit Justice’ from SEPTA

By Perry Genovesi
Philadelphia

In the first minute of the first day of November, 4,738 union drivers, maintenance workers and cashiers of Transportation Workers Union Local 234 went on strike, affecting public transportation for over 800,000 daily riders in Philadelphia. The next morning, it seemed that thousands of unseasoned drivers and cyclists had invaded the city. Cars went the wrong way down the block, bikers wobbled out of their lanes — you almost thought you were in a city of tourists. But no, these were doubtless workers who had, up to the day before, ridden the subway trains, trolleys and buses of SEPTA, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority.

Management and the SEPTA Board of Directors forced this strike by refusing to negotiate a new agreement with the union. In TWU President Willie Brown’s own words, “SEPTA’s bargaining team and high-priced outside lawyers stone-walled contract talks for months prior to the strike.” (philly.com)

Local 234 has a courageous history of militant labor action, calling its members to the picket line 12 times since 1975, more than any other U.S. transit agency. During a 1998 Local 234 strike, the local AFL-CIO Labor Council threatened a general strike if SEPTA hired scabs, forcing the transit system to back down and eventually settle after 40 days. (Philadelphia Inquirer)

And what did TWU workers want with this strike? A new contract that would meet their justified demands, such as better bathroom breaks, safer scheduling, equitable pensions and quality health care.

In a Billy Penn magazine article on the strike, TWU spokesman Jamie Horwitz said, “We just think [meager breaks] are bad working conditions.” Drivers added that it’s against regulation for a driver to leave their seat to use the bathroom, and it’d be a headache to pull over in downtown traffic and a hassle to cold-ask businesses to use their bathroom. So they wait, but when they get out of Center City, “people will hop on the bus before you can even [get off].” (billypenn.com)

A second issue was better scheduling. Drivers commented that they “drive tired,” and a better scheduling system would allow for more rest. That means drivers would be less prone to fatigue

— or to accidents. Pennsylvania Department of Transportation data, tracking all commercial buses in Philadelphia, show more than 950 accidents from 2011 to 2015, killing 19 people. Also needed were protocols to deal with other health hazards, such as blood or syringes, on the bus. (Newsworks.org)

SEPTA pensions were set up in the bosses’ favor with executive and manager pensions uncapped, and worker pensions capped at \$50,000. Striking workers at the Wheatsheaf picket line told supporters that managers are retiring, but SEPTA doesn’t replace many. Instead, SEPTA rehires managers as consultants to do the same jobs at more than \$100 an hour, with pensions three times that of workers. This is like dumping a wheelbarrow of retirement money at the bosses’ feet with each check.

Workers were also fighting to hold onto quality health care. SEPTA was demanding health care hikes that would boost worker contributions from \$552 a year up to \$6,000 if they wanted to keep equivalent medical coverage.

The masses’ mass transit

SEPTA needs to not only repay the community for the inconveniences caused by the strike, but it owes reparations for a history of inferior service in Black and Brown neighborhoods.

Even when trains and bus lines are running, the routes are more often longer distances from homes in Black and Brown communities. These are communities more likely to be in poverty, where private cars are not affordable, and where over 25 percent of residents live below the poverty line. A strike exacerbates Philly’s transit woes for those making poverty wages. And in a city where gentrification is so aggressive, public transportation literally passes them by. (Census.gov)

SEPTA’s “premium” line is the Regional Rail, which serves the wealthier and whiter suburbs. Regional Rail was still running during the strike because that union has a separate contract. Most news stories about the strike spotlight how crowded the Regional Rail trains are, but barely cover how people in poorer communities fare during a work stoppage.

Last year, SEPTA increased service to 24 hours a day on its two subway routes, the Broad Street Line and the Market-Frankford Elevated Line. But SEPTA didn’t expand its hours to serve workers

laboring until midnight and beyond in health care, fast food and other industries, but rather because more millennials are moving into gentrified neighborhoods.

‘Transit Justice!’

Transportation justice would mean robust SEPTA service in all our communities — cars and stations as clean and as outfitted with tech and screens and quiet cars as Regional Rail. Workers would have fair wages, benefits and safe working conditions. Mass transit would be able to accommodate all people with

disabilities. Riders would have the right to take public transportation for free.

Let’s take the first step toward this by recognizing that SEPTA drivers and riders should be united on the same side against a racist, anti-worker transit agency.

A gleaming mass transit would be for the whole mass of people. Until then each union victory benefits all people who have to work to survive whether employed, unemployed, union or not-yet-organized.

What do we want? Transit justice for the community — and no one left waiting at the station. □



WW PHOTOS: JOE PIETTE
Union and community solidarity with striking transportation workers in Philadelphia.

Transit workers’ six-day win

By Joe Piette
Philadelphia

“Tentative agreement reached. We are off strike.”

With that Nov. 7 message, the Transportation Workers Union Local 234 blogged the end of their six-day strike. Local 234 achieved a tentative five-year new contract agreement with SEPTA [Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority] management early that morning. (twulocal234.net)

The deal came as the ruling class was ganging up on the union, with Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenny and Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf both joining SEPTA’s legal hearing before Common Pleas Judge Linda Carpenter to seek a court injunction forcing the union back to work. A second hearing was to be held on Nov. 7. TWU leaders had promised to resist any in-

junction. A major Philadelphia rally scheduled for Democratic Party presidential candidate Hillary Clinton the evening of Nov. 7 may have pressured SEPTA to reach an agreement. Mass transit was needed to guarantee that a big crowd could get to the Center City venue featuring President Barack and Michelle Obama, both Clintons and several big name entertainers. Pressure on SEPTA from the community was increasing as well. Mass transit users had called for a Nov. 7 protest in front of SEPTA headquarters to demand a day of free transit for each day SEPTA management failed to agree to a new contract. Terms of the agreement have not yet been released. While the new contract still must be approved by union members and by SEPTA’s board of directors, workers have reported back to their normal shifts and mass transit has resumed. □

SEPTA riders launch free fare campaign

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

Handing out hundreds of “SEPTA Inconvenience Passes” (SIP) to passersby at a Nov. 7 press conference outside SEPTA headquarters, community activists called on the company to compensate riders for lost access to transportation during the six-day transit strike. SEPTA is the public transportation agency for 3.9 million people in and around Philadelphia

The Transit Riders Initiative demanded SEPTA honor the SIP passes with free rides for the strike days and refunds on monthly transit cards. In front of a giant SIP pass, spokesperson Erica Mines told the media, “If formal steps are not made to negotiate with riders and provide free rides, these passes will be used in lieu of fares once service is restored.”

The newly formed group wants SEPTA management held accountable for

neglecting to address worker needs in a timely manner, failing to negotiate in good faith with workers and forcing the strike.

“The responsibility of accepting this cost falls on the administration, not the workers,” Mines stated. “SEPTA management intentionally stalled negotiations to intentionally use public inconvenience from the strike to force workers into sacrificing vital demands.”

The SEPTA drivers, clerks and maintenance workers of Transportation Workers Union Local 234 struck Nov. 1 after trying for two years to get a fair contract from management. Key sticking points were worker pensions, health benefits and healthier working conditions.

A Transit Riders Initiative press release noted: “The transit workers’ demands are basic rights that all workers should be entitled to. Sacrificing these demands lowers the minimum expect-

tations for employers across the board, from city workers to nonunion workers.”

At the press conference, community activist Deandra Jefferson called out SEPTA for putting “capitalist greed” ahead of workers’ need and communities relying on public transit. Around 800,000 riders, including 52,000 students, use SEPTA’s buses, trains and trolleys every weekday. Jefferson pointed out that if these riders had refused to go to work or school in support of the TWU strike, SEPTA would have settled on day one.

On Nov. 4, SEPTA officials sought an injunction to force workers back to work. Management’s smokescreen for gouging workers was to pit them against riders by claiming concern about the “health, safety and welfare of the public” who ride SEPTA.

It’s unlikely those riders include many of the fifteen SEPTA board members.

Only four are from Philadelphia, including Pennsylvania state Rep. Dwight Evans, whose benefits include a state vehicle. The makeup of the board is controlled by the state legislature.

Spokesperson Erica Mines stated: “Like all workers, SEPTA drivers and support staff have a right to decent wages, benefits and safety. The people also have a right to safe, efficient and affordable public transit. We ask SEPTA to authorize use of the free Inconvenience Passes and for drivers to accept the passes out of respect for community sacrifices during the strike.”

The press conference was covered by three television stations and newspaper reporters, including the Philadelphia Daily News and Inquirer. As the event wound down, SEPTA management again demonstrated “concern” for riders by sending out uniformed transit police to harass the protesters. □



By Jim McMahan
Seattle



On Nov. 5, 1916, sheriff’s deputies and hired strikebreakers fired on striking shingle weavers at the Everett, Wash., port 30 miles north of Seattle. That led to a dozen deaths, many injuries and the arrest of 294 workers.

But the “Everett Massacre,” as it became known, was not just a working-class struggle drowned in blood. Instead it mobilized the workers, leading to an eventual watershed victory for the working class, which overcame great repression and led to the 1919 Seattle General Strike. The Everett struggle set a shining example of solidarity when the workers movement faced the same type of rapacious, uncontrolled capitalism we face today. In that spirit we commemorate this year’s centennial as an important milestone in U.S. labor history.

The workers’ struggle in Everett was led by the Industrial Workers of the World, the Wobblies. The IWW’s “one-big-union” approach united all workers, skilled and unskilled, in a single union, unlike the American Federation of Labor which only organized workers in the skilled trades. The IWW also organized oppressed workers of all nationalities into its ranks in defiance of segregation.

Shingle weavers strike

A city of 30,000 people, Everett was a company town, whose workers produced

lumber, shingles and shipping. The lumber industry, known as the “lumber kingdom,” dominated the Pacific Northwest in the early 20th century. The Weyerhaeuser Group exploited more than 30 million acres of timberland, equal to the area of Wisconsin. The undiversified nature of economic life bound all the Everett bosses into a common body, the Everett Commercial Club.

The majority of the mill workers were shingle weavers. Here’s a description of shingle weaving from a 1917 Sunset magazine: “If the automatic carriage feeds the odorous wood 60 times (a minute) into the hungry teeth, 60 times he must reach over, turn the shingle, trim its edge on the gleaming saw in front of him, cut the narrow strip containing the knot hole with two quick movements of his right hand and toss the completed board down the slot to the packers. Sooner or later the weaver would lose a finger or hand. If ‘cedar asthma,’ the shingle weavers’ occupational disease, does not get him, the steel will.”

The shingle weavers union struck against a wage cut in 1915. The strike failed. In 1916, with the price of shingles soaring, the union set May 1 as the deadline for a pay increase. The owners refused. The strike was on!

Throughout the summer the workers held out, despite their picket lines being continually attacked by owners’ thugs. On Aug. 19, only 18 were left on the line. The cops forced them past 70 armed thugs who beat them mercilessly.

Free speech tactic

The IWW put out a call for solidarity

and began a free speech struggle in the streets. The Wobblies had used the tactic effectively in about 20 cities. If enough workers had the courage to speak, get arrested and pack the jails, they won. They had a great victory in 1909 in Spokane, Wash., when 500 got arrested — with no place to hold them.

On Aug. 30, the Everett lumber trust met, stripped city officials of power and put Sheriff Don McRae in charge. The sheriff’s tactics were to brutalize activists and deport them so they couldn’t fill the jails. Two hundred members of the Commercial Club were sworn in as deputies. The whole meeting was blatantly illegal.

In late September a mass meeting of over 2,000 met in Everett and heard IWW, socialists and trade union speakers denounce the beatings, deportations and jailings of IWW and migrant workers. In October over 300 Wobblies were deported. When 41 IWW members arrived for the next street meeting, they were beaten and forced to walk through a violent gauntlet outside the city. After walking 25 miles to Seattle, most went to the hospital.

Nov. 5 mass action turns into massacre

After a delegation of union and clergy leaders visited the bloody scene the next day, they called a mass free speech meeting for Sunday, Nov. 5. That day, some 250 harvest and lumber workers and miners boarded the steamship Verona in Seattle and another 38 took the passenger ship Calista. As the Verona entered the Everett harbor, thousands of locals welcomed the activists. The Verona workers began singing “Hold the fort for we are coming, union hearts be strong.”

On the dock Sheriff McRae gave a signal. Shots rang out from two covered docks where deputies were waiting, raining thousands of rounds on the Verona. A few Wobblies returned fire, but most were unarmed.

Five workers on deck were killed and 31 wounded. Six more were dead in the water, their bodies washed up later. The Calista backed out, followed shortly by the Verona. When the Verona docked in Seattle, cops took 294 workers to jail. The wounded were treated poorly. Five hundred deputies patrolled Everett that night; the state militia mobilized in Seattle.

Two sheriff’s deputies had been killed and sixteen wounded, most by other deputies. Pinkerton undercover agents identified 74 IWW members on the Verona, all of whom were charged with first-degree murder. No deputies were charged.

On Nov. 18, the bodies of Felix Baran, Hugo Gerlot and John Looney were taken to a cemetery, with thousands marching behind the cortege. The next day 5,000 rallied in Seattle to commemorate the dead and condemn the Everett massacre.

‘Not guilty’

On March 5, 1917, the 74 Wobblies were tried in Seattle for the murder of deputy Jefferson Beard; it turned out the other deputy had been shot in the back by a fellow deputy. Thousands attended the trial, though the courtroom only held a hundred.

The Seattle Central Labor Council lined up a fighting lawyer, George Vanderveer, to lead the defense. Vanderveer skillfully reconstructed the scene. The jury was brought to see the Verona docked in the exact position where it was during the Everett massacre.

On May Day, the IWW, socialists and radicals marched in Seattle, stretching 15 blocks. The International Workers Defense League sponsored a token 10-minute strike at 11 a.m. against the threatened hangings of labor activists Tom Mooney and Warren K. Billings. Many Seattle workers took the day off to march to the cemetery where the Everett martyrs were buried.

“As the idea of the general strike grew, so grew the idea, and by the time we were half-way to the cemetery someone raised the red flag in our ranks,” wrote labor activist Minnie Reimer. The workers then marched to the county jail housing many Everett prisoners and sang songs with them.

On May 5 the jury — seeing with their own eyes that the accused could not have shot the sheriff’s deputy — delivered a not guilty verdict. That was the IWW’s greatest historic victory, setting off celebrations in Wobbly halls from coast to coast and inspiring loggers and lumber mill workers to step up organizing.

The Everett mass struggle led to the great Seattle general strike in 1919, which shut down Seattle and Tacoma for a whole week and sent solidarity messages to the Russian Revolution.

The major source for this article is “Revolution in Seattle” by Harvey O’Connor, Chapter 2.

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- ▶ If you worry that the capitalist crisis isn’t going away anytime soon
- ▶ If you want to fight for a better way of life based on economic planning, equitable distribution of wealth and justice for all
- ▶ If you’re lucky enough to still have a job

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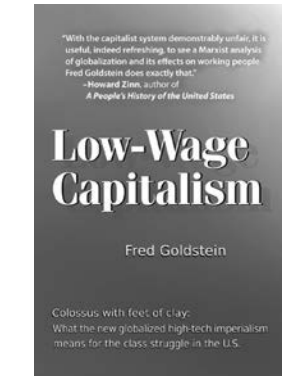
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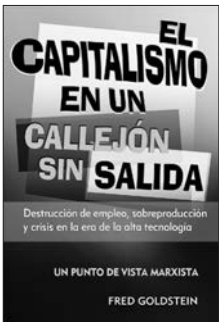
Workers World in New Orleans after hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

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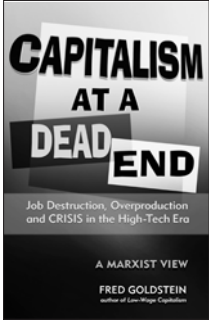


Low-Wage Capitalism describes in sweeping detail the drastic effect on the working class in the United States of new technology and the restructuring of global capitalism in the post-Soviet era. It uses Karl Marx’s law of wages and other findings to show that these developments are not only continuing to drive down wages but are creating the material basis for future social upheaval.



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



Capitalism at a Dead End

Job destruction, overproduction and crisis in the high-tech era

For more information on these books and other writings by the author, Fred Goldstein, go to **LowWageCapitalism.com**. Available at all major online booksellers.

Dillard students give KKK Duke a hot reception

By Quest Riggs
New Orleans

Students at Dillard University, a historically Black liberal arts college in New Orleans, stood up against the university administration, campus police and white supremacy on Nov. 2.

With the support of community members, activists and students from campuses throughout the city, the Dillard students showed the militant potential of the youth. Inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement, our youth are ready to fight courageously against further encroachment by the fascists.

When the students learned, on less than one week's notice, that David Duke had been invited to their university, they were shocked and outraged. The infamous former "grand wizard" of the Ku Klux Klan, inspired by Donald Trump's racist presidential campaign, had decided to run for the U.S. Senate in Louisiana. Polls that put him at 5.1 percent of the vote meant he was just over the 5 percent

threshold required to participate in a U.S. senatorial debate held at Dillard on Nov. 2. The event was orchestrated by Raycom, a private broadcasting company.

A progressive student group at Dillard, Socially Engaged DU, sent a letter to the university president urging him to refuse to allow Duke on campus, citing fears for student safety and embarrassment, among other reasons. After their letter was ignored by the president, they vowed to protest the event. With help from students and activists across the city, they organized a large, energetic and determined crowd.

Militancy wins broad support

The protesters marched around the building, chanting "No Duke! No KKK! No fascist USA!" They eventually moved toward the back entrance of the building, where they were met by the campus police force. Protesters were able to pry open the doors, confronting the cops face to face. They wanted to get in to disrupt the fascist David Duke and chase him out

of majority-Black New Orleans.

After holding their position at the entrance for about an hour, the protesters were sprayed with Mace, hit with batons, threatened with Tasers, kicked, slapped and shoved. They were fearless and sustained a long confrontation, but eventually the cops were able to lock the doors, prompting the protesters to move to the other side of the building to demonstrate against the repression.

When the debate ended, the protesters split up and attempted to block all the exits to prevent Duke from leaving without getting a piece of their minds. Cowardly Duke was able to sneak off campus with help from the campus police and administration. As protesters noticed his vehicle speeding off campus, they yelled and hit the car. After he escaped, the protest began to lose steam and disperse, and the cops used this opportunity to arrest six protesters, a stunt they would not have tried when the protest was at full strength.

All charges against the students were



later dropped after widespread media coverage and an outpouring of support for the protesters.

To some students, the university administration and the campus police force have lost any legitimacy they previously may have held, and some students are working to hold them accountable for their actions on the night of the protest.

As for Duke, it has once again been proven that he is not welcome in New Orleans and should expect steadfast resistance whenever he shows his face here. Our youth have the courage, not only to fight fascists, but also to confront the state that protects fascists while murdering and imprisoning poor and oppressed people. □

After Polk County ‘compromise,’ Fight for \$15 goes statewide in Iowa

By Mike Kuhlenbeck
Polk County, Iowa

In reaction to a vote by the Polk County Board of Supervisors for a compromised wage increase that contains anti-worker provisions, Fight for \$15 supporters say they will now take the fight to the Statehouse.

After a series of meetings conducted by a county minimum-wage task force, followed by public readings by the Polk County Board of Supervisors, the latter voted for a gradual increase to \$10.75 per hour — by 2019. This represents a \$3.50 bump from the current \$7.25 per hour minimum wage, but fails to increase it to a living wage, which at present is considered to be \$15 per hour.

Dozens of Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement (Iowa CCI) activists showed up at each meeting to plead their case. At the first public reading of the ordinance, however, supervisors Angela Connolly and Robert Brownell introduced an amendment to the ordinance

to create "a frozen tipped wage at \$5/hr."

"Along with blindsiding the public with an amendment to freeze the tipped wage," said an Iowa CCI press release, the supervisors "took two steps back" by moving forward with the "youth wage exemption," where workers ages 14 to 17 would receive only 85 percent of the increased wage.

Iowa CCI organizer Bridget Fagan-Reidburn told WW: "This set off the readings in the wrong direction, and we spent much of our focus on eliminating the exemptions.

"We felt that the voices of everyday people weren't being heard," Fagan-Reidburn said, "that they were listening to the restaurant and grocery industries and put priority to their opinions. We were scolded for our passionate public comment and they seemed angry and offended that we were pushing them to do more, but we kept pushing. They even threatened to scrap the entire ordinance."

With the passing of this ordinance, praised as a "compromise" by Supervisor

Connolly and others, the board sold out Iowa workers.

Democratic Party activist Pat Rynard defended the compromise and said the workers fighting for \$15 an hour at the last meeting "got out of hand at times, leveling very personal attacks at the supervisors, as well as shouting and yelling at times during the meeting didn't help anything."

Contrary to this claim, Fagan-Reidburn told WW that there was little "yelling," as Rynard claimed in his "Iowa Starting Line" article of Oct. 12. "There was some tension and increased passion at times, especially when early on the supervisors came in and essentially admonished people for \$15 per hour, calling us unreasonable."

Fagan-Reidburn said there were no personal attacks, "just impassioned testimony" and "pushing back on dangerous exemptions to the minimum wage that pit young against old, tipped workers against non-tipped workers and set a bad precedent for the state legislature that convenes in a couple of months."

As reported by the Des Moines Register on Oct. 12, "The vote makes Polk

County the fourth local government in Iowa to raise its minimum wage (Johnson, Linn and Wapello counties already approved wage hikes)," yet none of these constitute a living wage.

A national study conducted by the People's Action Institute, published last month as "Waiting for the Payoff," concluded that the living wage for a single adult living in Iowa is \$15.10 per hour, reflecting "what is needed to meet basic needs and maintain some ability to deal with emergencies and plan ahead."

The study also reports that the living wage that a single adult needs "increases to \$16.74" for those paying off student loan debt, noting that "Iowa's minimum wage of \$7.25 does not allow working families to make ends meet."

Fagan-Reidburn said Iowa CCI and Fight for \$15 Iowa will work with the community to help ensure that as many cities as possible participate in or improve the countywide ordinance.

"We will push cities to scrap the youth wage and tipped-wage exemptions. During the 2017 legislative session we will continue to push to pass a living wage bill." □



WW PHOTO: WW STAFF
Worker solidarity launches lunch-rush Fight For \$15 protest at Roanoke, Va., Burger King, Nov. 4.

Roanoke, Va.: First-ever Fight for \$15 protest

By Workers World Staff

Dozens of low-wage workers and their supporters, chanting "We can't survive on \$7.25," held the first-ever Fight for \$15 protest in southwest Virginia on Nov. 4. The protesters were out and loud during the noon lunch rush at the Burger King on Franklin Road SW in Roanoke.

The multinational low-

wage workers, many women of color, spoke out about economic and other outrageous injustices they confront daily, including having to juggle family responsibilities and two or three jobs to survive. Many youth and students also participated.

For over an hour, workers held a banner declaring "Workers Produce All Wealth." Other signs included Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s photo with a demand to end poverty, "\$15 and a Union," "Protect LGBTQ Workers' Rights" and "Black Workers' Lives Matter."

Numerous supporters joined the pro-

test, including the president of the Western Virginia Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, as well as union members from the Food and Commercial Workers, the Teamsters and the Virginia Professional Staff Association. Also present were the Coalition for Justice from Blacksburg, Va., Fight for \$15 workers from Richmond, Va., \$15 Now, the Peoples' Power Assembly and Workers World Party. Messages of solidarity were received from Communication Workers Local 2204 and others.

Fight for \$15 Roanoke is planning more actions. See facebook.com/Fightfor\$15 or send email to fightfor15.org. □

Fight for Socialism

Continued from page 1

Despite the maneuverings of the far right to influence the elections in favor of Trump, the polls are predicting that the first woman ever will be elected president of the U.S.

There would be much to celebrate in breaking this glass ceiling — were it not for Hillary Clinton’s history, political bent and practices during her decades of activity in capitalist politics.

Record of Clinton machine

The Clinton machine has been part of the conservative wing of the Democratic Party and took the party further to the right.

Both Hillary Clinton and her political partner Bill Clinton were key to forming the Democratic Leadership Council. The DLC, founded by southern Democrats in 1985, reinvented the Democratic Party as one “pledged to fiscal restraint, less government, and a pro-business, pro-free market outlook.” (Truthout, Dec. 2, 2015) In other words, more like the Republican Party.

One need not go back to the 1980s to see how the Clintons carried this out in practice.

It was under Bill Clinton that the welfare system, which provided a minimum income to people living on the edge, was dismantled in 1996. This most affected poor women with children, who were disproportionately Black because of this country’s racist history.

Hillary Clinton’s entire presidential campaign has been about keeping the party’s left wing in line while turning to the right.

Bernie Sanders and the progressive movement behind him, including the young activists of Occupy Wall Street, forced Clinton to pick up some left rhetoric. Compelled by the strength of the Sanders campaign, she too addressed massive, outrageous student debt, as well as campaign finance reform.

The righteous Black Lives Matter movement, which heroically disrupted some of her events, and the rebellions going on in the streets against police murders, compelled Clinton to invite mothers of victims of police terror to appear with her campaign.

Turning right for running mate

But when it came time to pick a vice presidential candidate, what did she do?

Did she analyze the situation in which millennials were clearly turning to the left, and get encouraged by their actions in the streets, calculating that it would be helpful for change in the future?

No. She continued to veer to the right, choosing a conservative Democrat from the South as her running mate.

How different it would have been had she chosen Sanders, as a gesture to the over 12 million who had voted for him and to the tens of thousands who had financed his campaign with \$5 and \$10 contributions, not like her Super Pac money.

It would have been even more remarkable — and a real signal to the oppressed — had she chosen a person of color as a vice presidential candidate. Mentioned as a possible nominee was Cory Booker, former mayor of Newark, N.J., now a U.S. senator. Selecting an African American would have done more to rectify her “superpredator” comment about Black youth than any “I’m sorry.”

Or, to respect Latinx, who are coming out in record numbers to vote, she could have chosen Democratic politicians like Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julian Castro or pro-immigrant activist Rep. Luis Gutierrez from Chicago.

But that is not what the Democratic Party is about — not now, not ever. It is about maintaining the status quo and keeping the oppressed in line. It serves as a brake against any real struggle for change.

Clinton, women and Latin America

During the campaign, and especially in the presidential debates, Clinton often sold herself as a fighter for women’s rights and against sexual assault. But she has already earned the anger of a sector of Latinx with her role on Honduras, which belies any real interest in fighting for women.

The 2009 coup against Honduras’ democratically elected president Mel Zelaya ushered in a wave of repression that has especially affected women and LGBTQ people.

Clinton admitted in her autobiography, “Hard Choices,” that she used her power as then U.S. secretary of state to support the coup and bring pro-U.S. “stability” to Central America, even if it meant forgetting about democracy. (TeleSur, Feb. 28)

Not only has Clinton been silent on

Protecting people

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

A mass movement of Indigenous people — from within U.S. borders and internationally — continues to build resistance at Standing Rock, N.D. Their struggle to stop the \$3.8 billion crude-oil Dakota Access Pipeline, financed by Energy Transfer Partners, has been underway since April.

The Oceti Sakowin (7 Council Fires of the Sioux) are leading a historic, militant struggle against the U.S. and state governments and their armed units as a colonizing force and capitalist institutions in league with Big Oil. In recent weeks, over 300 people have been arrested defending the sovereignty of the Oceti Sakowin people and protecting the region’s water supply.

The North Dakota National Guard, police from seven states and private security guards have attacked nonviolent water protectors in a continuation of the racist wars waged against Native peoples in the region since the 1800s.

In recent attacks, soldiers and cops have pushed into tipis with automatic weapons, marked those arrested with ID numbers on their arms, and thrown them into subhuman jail conditions that were likened to dog cages. All those arrested have been routinely stripsearched, and one woman from Standing Rock was reportedly left naked in a cell overnight.

Faith Spotted Eagle, an elder of the Yankton Sioux, earlier highlighted specific dangers for Native women, saying of the “mancamps” of Western oil drilling sites: “We have seen our women suffer. One out of three women in our nation has been sexually assaulted by non-native people.” (politico.com, April 22, 2014)

Erin Schrode, a CNN reporter, recorded a Nov. 2 attack by the state. She wrote

this, but, during a debate with Sanders, she disgustingly chastised Honduran families for sending their children north to escape terror.

Lucy Pagoada, a Honduras resistance fighter, told WW: “As Hondurans, we hold Hillary Clinton responsible for the repression and killings of hundreds since 2009, including the death of beloved environmentalist leader Berta Cáceras.”

Warhawk on Iraq, Libya and Syria

Clinton endorsed and took part in the destruction of Iraq. She promoted counterrevolution in Libya and has been part of the force that is destabilizing Syria, causing death and destruction to millions.

In 2008, former U.S. Congressmember Jane Harman wrote in the Huffington Post, “Women serving in the U.S. military are more likely to be raped by a fellow soldier than killed by enemy fire in Iraq.” (May 25, 2011)

Ominously, WikiLeaks revealed that Clinton is targeting Social Security for cuts. This would hurt women most of all. Two-thirds of the beneficiaries of Social Security aged 85 and older are women. However, in a debate with Trump, Clinton said she wanted to increase Social Security for women, many of whom, because of how the benefit is presently configured, now live in or near poverty. But, as Alan Nasser points in a Nov. 4 CounterPunch article, Clinton spoke frankly to bigwig bankers about supporting their plan to slash the benefits.

The first female U.S. president may be breaking a glass ceiling, but the cuts from its shards may be felt most by working-class women.

Will Trumpites go back into the woodwork?

During the campaign, Clinton was chastised for calling Trump supporters a



CREDIT: LUCAS REY

Water warriors, Standing Rock.

on her Facebook page that nonviolent water protectors “were seeking to cross the river to hold a prayer circle on Army Corps public land, but [were] halted by over one hundred hostile military police armed with and deploying tear gas, pepper spray, batons and rubber bullets, as well as assault weapons and the threat of jail. ... I was shot at pointblank range, dozens were maced and pepper-sprayed in the face, hundreds faced freezing waters.” That evening helicopters and airplanes harassed the resistance encampments with flyovers and flooding spotlights.

‘The world is watching’

Oceti Sakowin Camp Coordinator Phyllis Young condemned DAPL: “Since this company has arrived on our land, it has blatantly disregarded the law and our people.” (nativenewsonline.net, Nov. 6)

Of the solidarity continuing to build, Sitting Bull College Visitor’s Center Coordinator Jen Martel emphasized in that article, “The world is watching and is saying it is time for us to stand up against corporate greed.”

Supporters are arriving nonstop at Standing Rock camps as the world’s peoples affirm Oceti Sakowin sovereignty and their defense of #WaterIsLife. Youth

“basket of deplorables.”

For the most part, those who attend and cheer at Trump rallies are deplorable. They go along with the racist, anti-Muslim rhetoric, challenge freedom of the press, believe that a wall on the Southern border will bring back jobs and stop the “browning of America,” threaten Black people’s right to vote, don’t agree that Trump offends women or people with disabilities, and excuse Trump’s misogyny — all such stands are indeed deplorable.

While the left must not give up on all these people, most have crossed a line. They reflect a danger, whether Clinton wins or not.

Some Trumpites belong to extreme right-wing militias, such as the Georgia Security Force, which are pleased with Trump’s attacks on Syrian refugees and Muslims. They are riled up with the belief that Clinton will take away their right to carry guns.

Interviews with some of these elements reveal that such militias are getting ready to defend their “way of life” — code words for racism, denying women the right to abortion and attacking immigrants.

Such elements are not likely to crawl back into the gutter. They can be expected to continue with their anti-Hillary Clinton diatribe — much of it thoroughly sexist — long after the election. Not only is this misogynist, it is dangerous.

The rise of the alt-right is a danger, and should be fought. Should they decide, for example, to mobilize at a Clinton inauguration, the left and progressives should challenge the right wing — at the same time they organize against Clinton.

Should Clinton win, the movement must be sure to distance itself from the actions and the sexist verbiage of the right. A Clinton administration should be fought

47th National Day of Mourning

From Plymouth Rock to Standing Rock — #WaterIsLife

Thursday, Nov. 24, 12 noon sharp

Cole’s Hill, Plymouth, Mass.

Since 1970, Native peoples have gathered in Plymouth to commemorate a National Day of Mourning on the U.S. “Thanksgiving” holiday. That day is a reminder of the genocide of millions of Native people, the theft of Native lands and the relentless assault on Native culture. Participants in National Day of Mourning honor Indigenous ancestors and the struggles of Indigenous peoples to survive today — against continuing racism and oppression.

United American Indians of North America asks supporters to join them in this commemoration dedicated to the #NoDAPL water protectors at Standing Rock and the struggle to recognize Indigenous Peoples Day. There will be a special message from political prisoner Leonard Peltier.



A campaign is underway calling on President Obama to grant him clemency. **FREE LEONARD PELTIER!**

Email: info@uaine.org • www.uaine.org • twitter: ndnviewpoint@mahtowin1 facebook.com/events/1836658466568754/

Get on the International Action Center bus to Plymouth!

Meet at 6 a.m. sharp at Solidarity Center, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd floor, Manhattan.

(Leave Plymouth at 4:30 p.m. to arrive in NYC at 9:30 p.m.)

Round-trip tickets: \$30-\$45 (sliding scale)

Buy bus tickets in advance at Solidarity Center, 2:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Tickets go fast. **Buy your tickets today! For info: 212-633-6646. See IACenter.org**



le from pipelines

runners from Flagstaff, Ariz., representing the Hopi, Navajo and Pueblo peoples, entered Standing Rock and received a standing ovation after a 1,400-mile run in late October.

Representatives from Indigenous nations in South America have arrived with statements of support from their peoples. Contingents from Canada to Japan and beyond have come.

Solidarity actions are spreading across the U.S., particularly at banks financing DAPL and at local U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' offices. In San Francisco, 12 people were arrested Oct. 31 for blocking elevators at the local Citibank headquarters. The bank is a major lender to DAPL.

Another focus of solidarity actions will be on Nov. 15 at local Army Corps of Engineers' locations to demand rejection of the DAPL permit and a full Environmental Impact Statement on the destructive project.

**Pipeline dangers:
From Alabama to North Dakota**

All those resisting at Standing Rock emphasize that inevitable pipeline failures will have dreadful consequences for millions of people beyond their own. On Oct. 31, the 5,500-mile Colonial Pipeline ruptured in Helena, Ala., exploding in a 150-foot geyser of fire, killing one worker and injuring eight more, some with critical burns. The double pipeline carries 100 million gallons of gasoline, jet and diesel fuel daily between the Gulf Coast and New York City. The 50-year-old pipeline is the largest refined products pipeline system in the U.S.

This was the second Colonial spill in six weeks and its sixth polluting accident in 2016. A September break spilled from 252,000 to 336,000 gallons of gasoline near the uniquely biodiverse Cahaba River. The Oct. 31 incident flooded the land

with 168,000 gallons.

Tara Zhaabowekwe Houska, at the Standing Rock resistance, spread the word about the Colonial blast: "That explosion is case in point that pipelines are extremely dangerous and when they leak or explode, we're not just talking about an isolated incident that can be fixed quickly, it can be hundreds of thousands of gallons of gasoline that can seep into the ground and into the drinking water." Houska, a citizen of Couchiching First Nation, is National Campaign Director at Honor the Earth, an environmental group supporting Native nations. (al.com, Nov. 2)

The connection between the pipelines was emphasized by Sarah Sunshine Manning (Shoshone-Paiute and Chipewa-Cree), a reporter for Indian Country Today Media Network, who was quoted in the same article: "For [the DAPL], slated to go under the Missouri River, there's not the slightest bit of confidence, that number one, it won't break, but secondly, that the detection systems will be able to detect a burst in time."

The Cahaba, Black Warrior, Coosa and Hurricane Creek Riverkeepers of Alabama called pipeline owners to task in a Nov. 2 statement: "We have every reason to believe that this old pipeline may have other deficiencies such as deterioration, cracks, and leaks. It is time for spills, leaks, and accidents from the Colonial pipeline to end in Alabama. We cannot

Police fire pepper spray on water protectors attempting to cross river to sacred site at Standing Rock.

CREDIT: ATSA E'SHA HOFERER



afford to continue playing Russian Roulette with lives and our drinking water." They asked for regulators and the company to inspect the line and issue plans for maintenance and upgrade. (coosariver.org, Nov. 2)

But this plan places actions to protect people, water and earth in the hands of the colluding capitalist government and Big Oil. An independent report by pipeline experts recently concluded that the Army Corps of Engineers' original environmental assessment of DAPL completely underestimated the risk of pipeline spills, inadequate construction, failure of regulatory oversight and the impact on both the Oceti Sakowin and everyone living downstream. (earthjustice.org, Nov. 3)

'Listen to the water protectors'

That the drive for capitalist profit constantly endangers people's safety and lives was reflected in how the Wall Street Journal covered the Alabama pipeline disaster. The newspaper did not mention any of its environmental consequences or acknowledge by name Anthony Lee Willingham, 48, a 20-year veteran pipeline worker who died in the fire. The pro-big-business newspaper pontificated on how the explosion would impact gas prices

Coast-to-coast solidarity with Standing Rock resistance

By Workers World Staff

Solidarity actions in support of Standing Rock resistance to the Dakota Access Pipeline are proliferating from coast to coast throughout the U.S. In New York City, multiple #NoDAPL actions are ongoing, including weekly support rallies called by Samidoun: Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network. They have exposed the role of G4S — the global security firm that staffs Israeli prisons and detention centers used to crush Palestinian resistance — whose guards are now also assaulting and terrorizing Standing Rock water protectors.

From Oakland, Calif., National Nurses United is deploying a second team of registered nurse volunteers to support water protectors with medical and first aid needs. Participating RN Amy Bowen said, "As a nurse, I understand the necessity of preserving and protecting our water. Water equals life, and the Dakota Access Pipeline threatens the health and well-being of millions." (Facebook: Labor for Standing Rock, Nov. 7)

On Nov. 5, over one hundred protesters gathered in downtown **Rochester, N.Y.**, to support the Standing Rock occupation and denounce the Dakota Access Pipeline project. The protest was organized and attended by a wide variety of individuals and groups, including local Native American organizations and Workers World Party.

"It's not a matter of if the pipeline will explode. It's a matter of when," said protest organizer Athesia Benjamin. "That water in the sacred land is too precious to be threatened and corrupted." (13wham.com, Nov. 5)

Benjamin told WW reporter

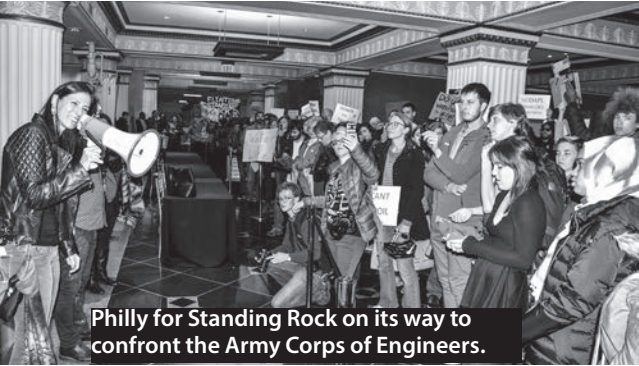
Lydia Bayoneta: "It is racism that has led to the militaristic assaults on the protesters at Standing Rock."

Members of local Native American groups spoke and led chants and songs in their own languages, emphasizing both the importance of cultural traditions and access to basic necessities, like clean water for the community in North Dakota.

"We have to keep our resources and lands protected for future generations," said Rohsennase/Dalton LaBarge (Mohawk) of Rochester. "We've saved our languages, we've saved our traditions. We're letting people know that we're still here." (Rochester Democrat & Chronicle, Nov. 5)

Protest organizers announced they're collecting canned goods, cold weather clothing, blankets and sleeping bags to send to protesters in North Dakota who plan to stay in Standing Rock camps into the winter.

Philadelphia activists responded to the Red Warrior Camp call for Global Solidarity Action in the wake of brutal government attacks on Native American land defenders at Standing Rock. The Philly protesters held a march of resistance on Nov. 2. After rallying on the west side of



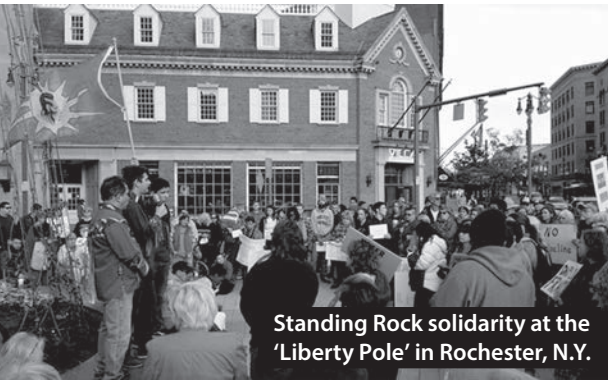
Philly for Standing Rock on its way to confront the Army Corps of Engineers.

City Hall Plaza, 200 participants walked two blocks into the building with the local office of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. ACE's authorization has been key to allowing DAPL to be built.

On the second floor mezzanine, demonstrators chanted and listened as leaders described the group's letter demanding that ACE "reconsider and rescind any and all permits or easements" for DAPL on Native lands. After half an hour, an ACE representative appeared and accepted the document but made no comment. The boisterous, sign-carrying crowd walked out, its mission fulfilled.

Later that afternoon, a smaller group marched out of Westchester University, near Philadelphia, to confront the local branch office of DNB First Bank, one of many funders of the DAPL construction. The protest, called by Students for a Democratic Society-WU, condemned "state-sanctioned violence and repression" against the Standing Rock water protectors. Protesters presented their target with a letter of demands, which included withdrawal of its financial backing. That a bank official felt compelled to come out to receive the letter, and tried to deny the charges, speaks to the growing power of mass solidarity with Standing Rock resistance.

Lydia Bayoneta, Gene Clancy and Joe Piette contributed to this article.



Standing Rock solidarity at the 'Liberty Pole' in Rochester, N.Y.

A century of struggle: The All India Trade Union Congress

Amarjeet Kaur is National Secretary of the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC). Martha Grevatt interviewed her Oct. 7 during the 17th Congress of the World Federation of Trade Unions held in Durban, South Africa.

Kaur explained that until 1947 AITUC was the only trade union umbrella organization in India. Another 11 union centers were formed between then, the 1980s and the current decade by various political currents — from the Marxist left to social democrats to “right-reactionary, religion-based organizations.” The federations led by the previous and current ruling bourgeois parties are the largest, followed by AITUC, which is “the top among the left.” After describing the AITUC and its growth, Kaur discussed the 180-million-strong countrywide general strike on Sept. 2.

Martha Grevatt: About how many unions are in AITUC?

Amarjeet Kaur: The AITUC has 3,000 affiliated unions from all sectors: oil, petroleum, insurance, postal, telephone, mining, unorganized sector, domestic workers, welfare scheme workers, vendors, hawkers, taxi unions, auto unions, public transport, building construction, engineering workers, metalworkers, all sections including agriculture — unions of formal and informal sectors everywhere, governmental and nongovernmental.

Welfare scheme workers are not protected by any labor law because they are told, “You are volunteers and you are not getting wages. You are only being given honorarium because you are providing some services” [such as immunizations of pregnant women and providing meals at schools to poor children]. They are almost 10 million, most of them are women, and they are working for worker status. They think, “We should be paid minimum wages,” which any unskilled worker is given in India.

There are so many workers who are getting jobs for a little while, and then they’re out of jobs. There are those who are seekers of employment forced into menial jobs here and there. But naturally they belong to the particular sectoral unions depending on their skill or semi-skill. There’s no sector left that we have not unionized.

At our last verification, which the government of India conducts, we had claimed 6 million workers, but the government gave us only about 3.8 million. This time, after a gap of 10 years, our claimed membership is now 14 million.



AITUC delegation at the WFTU Congress in Durban, Oct. 8. At left, Amarjeet Kaur.

PHOTO: MARTHA GREVATT

We are very sure this time we will be able to secure more than 10 million from government reports.

MG: What’s the history of AITUC?

AK: The labor movement began in India in 19th century [in] the jute mills and textile mills. So the labor movement was quite influenced by the world labor movement which was emerging at that time as well as by Marx and Engels talking about the working class coming up to take charge in the next period, in the next era.

The third influence on Indian labor was of our own national freedom movement against British colonial rule. Then the 20th century begins. The participation of laborers in the freedom movement increased and formation of unions also increased and, developing with that, the participation [by labor] in the freedom movement, in spontaneous calls given by the national freedom movement leaders.

That influenced the freedom movement leadership also, recognizing these workforces very potential not only to fight for their own rights but their potential to even strengthen the liberation movement to get India free. So with that process we went further ahead.

The efforts were made to have an all-India organization. And the first conference, which was held in Bombay [now Mumbai] was in 1920. There unions of all sections, formal, informal, governmental, non-governmental, all those unions came together and formed this umbrella organization as All India Trade Union Congress.

During the British period, under umbrella of AITUC, several rights of workers and several labor legislations were won. The Indian trade union movement was

very well recognized in various phases of the freedom movement and in the organized movement after 1920. The result was when a Constituent Assembly was formed for the kind of constitution India will have after independence from British, that Constituent Assembly took note of the participation of Indian labor movement in the freedom movement.

The result was that several of our rights were recognized in the constitution of the free republic of India: right to associations, equal pay for equal work, maternity benefits to women workers, healthy working conditions, no discrimination at workplace and living wages.

These concepts were taken into the Indian constitution, and this all was due to the labor movement which fought in India. We also achieved several legislations during British period. The Trade Union Act under which we registered our trade unions we achieved in 1926. Then Workplace Compensation Act and several laws. We sought many amendments, and we got [them]. Of these working hour conditions, also during British period, we achieved [limits of] 12 hours; we got eight hours [after independence] in 1948.

MG: What were the main demands of this year’s strike?

AK: About seven years ago, 11 center trade unions from the extreme right to the extreme left came together around 10 demands. Everybody was brought into one platform. The agenda was that we oppose the neoliberal economic policies of the government. We were saying, “Do not privatize the public sectors.”

We also said, “Don’t contract work, but rather make labor regular.” We raised the

issues of minimum wages, pensions and control of prices of essential commodities for everyday consumption and everyday use by the common people.

So a 10-point charter of demands was made under which we brought everybody together. We were saying, “No labor laws should be violated,” as they were being violated. All this was going on when a government change happened.

The previous government was trying to make changes in the labor laws, but with our resistance, they could not. They were trying to sell the public sector, but we did not allow that. So they said, “OK, the profit-making public sector will not be sold out.” They will only sell out that which is not making profits.

With our resistance, we were in a position to stop many things. But since the current government came into power, they have not responded to labor agitations and movements. [The Bharatiya Janata Party government is led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.]

The violation of laws continued. Prices increased. Issues of contractualization and casualization were going on. The government forcibly started changing labor protection laws, some through Parliament. When they did not succeed in Parliament because they were not in the majority, we mobilized and advocated with everybody — with all political parties.

In eight of 29 states where the ruling party rules, they have already made those changes. This is very dangerous. Because of that, we added our 11th demand — that labor law changes which are against labor will not be tolerated.

Tens of millions join general strikes

There is now a 12-point charter of demands around which the strike was held. The 12th point involved the government’s aims to gain foreign direct investments (FDI) without any safeguards in India — in defense, railways and the insurance sector. It also dealt with its attempts to harm our nationalized banking sector.

That was real, so we added the demand for no FDI to be blindly [imposed] in every sector. But this government went ahead anyway. Based on our charter of demands, we organized a general strike on Sept. 2 in 2015.

Before that strike, a group of ministers had formed and negotiations had begun, but they did not want us to go on strike. We went on strike — with the participation of 150 million people. But after the strike, the government refused to talk to us, refused to negotiate, did nothing.

Then we held a set of activities. Step by step we once again raised demands and went on strike on Sept. 2 of this year. It was even more successful than last year’s strike. This time the number of strikers increased from 150 million to over 180 million!

The government, through [its ally] the BMS [Indian Workers Union], tried to confuse the workers. They tried to say there was no need to go on strike. But still we got the participation of all sectors — and even succeeded in mobilizing farmers.

We succeeded in mobilizing workers who are not generally unionized and even mobilized the unions which are not affiliates of central trade unions. Everybody was brought on board, and it was a very successful strike. □

Moroccan protests shake U.S. ally

By G. Dunkel

Fisher Mouhcine Fikri and some friends jumped into the back of a garbage truck to extract his swordfish, worth \$11,000, which the fish and game authorities had seized and were going to destroy. His friends were able to jump out of the truck when the cops gave the order to “crush them.”

Fikri didn’t make it. His gruesome execution was caught on video by one of his friends and went viral throughout Morocco on Oct. 28. While the biggest demonstrations were in Al Hoceima, Fikri’s hometown in the northeast, the Moroccan press reported massive protests in all of Morocco’s major cities and even in small and midsized ones, 40 cities in all.

Al Hoceima is in the Rif area of northern Morocco, a predominantly Berber area with a long history of militant struggle. The Berbers are indigenous to North Africa and make up about 40 percent of Morocco’s people.

The protests were massive but peaceful, and the cops didn’t make any attempt to stop them. To calm the fury, 11 police and fishery officials were detained, but the charge was “forgery” for filing faulty paperwork about the incident. It’s highly unlikely that anyone will be charged with killing Fikri, since the authorities are calling it an accident.

Protests continued past the immediate outrage, with a major march in Morocco’s capital, Rabat, on Nov. 6. It was not just the gruesome police murder that brought

people out into the streets. Protester Khadija Zerwal told Reuters at the rally: “The death of Mouhcine is like a death for all Moroccans. This won’t stop until we get dignity and fairness.” Many protesters marched peacefully toward the Parliament, waving flags, chanting against the ruling elite and demanding dignity.

According to Forbes magazine, King Mohammed VI of Morocco is the richest man in North Africa. He has control over and profits from phosphates, Morocco’s most profitable export, as well as the fishing industry.

Morocco’s main trading and diplomatic partners are France and Spain, its former colonial masters, but the monarchy goes out of its way to maintain good relations with Washington. □

Cuba wins at U.N., 191 to 0

By Cheryl LaBash

For the 25th time, the world had its say firmly opposing the financial, commercial and economic blockade imposed by the imperialist North American giant on Cuba, its much smaller socialist neighbor in the Caribbean.

More than a vote, it was a demonstration of worldwide popular support for ending the blockade against Cuba. Unlike previous United Nations General Assembly votes, on Oct. 26 not even Washington said “No.” In a first, the U.S. and Israel abstained from voting, making the total 191 to 0. In 2015 the vote was 191 to 2.

Nineteen other representatives spoke before the U.S. and Cuban spokespeople. Others explained their votes afterward, including in an hourlong session following the lunch break.

Among those speaking were representatives from Niger, representing the U.N.’s Africa Group; the Association of Southeast Asian Nations; the large countries of Russia, the People’s Republic of China and India; the Pacific Archipelago Tonga; the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States; and Caricom. The Non-Aligned Movement recognized and complimented positive U.S. diplomatic steps, but insisted the blockade of Cuba must end.

The Bolivian representative reminded the audience that Cuba was the only non-African country to help fight for African liberation, that Cuba shares the little they have and asks for nothing, and that Cuba improves people’s lives with doctors and teachers. He also gave a tribute to the Cuban Revolution and its historic leader Fidel Castro on his 90th birthday.

The Cuban leader, he said, opposed nuclear war, international debt, climate change, in short, capitalism and imperialism, and was for a new international order. The speaker ended with “Long live Fidel! Long live Cuba!”

In addition to Bolivia, representatives of ALBA [the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America] countries — Venezuela, Ecuador, Nicaragua and El Salvador — spoke.

After announcing to applause that

the U.S. would not vote against Cuba’s resolution, U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Samantha Power admitted: “Instead of isolating Cuba, as President Obama has repeatedly said, our policy isolated the United States. Including right here at the United Nations.”

U.S. rep calls blockade ‘legal’

But Power quickly claimed legality for the blockade that had just been denounced in the speeches and in a 174-page Secretary General’s report supporting Cuba’s resolution.

In an example of the new, more nuanced U.S. foreign policy against socialist Cuba, Power, after referring to alleged “human rights” violations in Cuba, said: “Let me be among the first to acknowledge — as our Cuban counterparts often point out — that the United States has work to do in fulfilling these rights for our own citizens. And we know that at times in our history, U.S. leaders and citizens used the pretext of promoting democracy and human rights in the region to justify actions that have left a deep legacy of mistrust.

“We also recognize the areas in which the Cuban government has made significant progress in advancing the welfare of its people, from significantly reducing its child mortality rate, to ensuring that girls have the same access to primary and secondary school as boys.” (usun.state.gov/remarks/7510)

Power gave as a positive example of international cooperation between the U.S. and Cuba the fight to stop the Ebola



Demonstration against the blockade.

virus epidemic in West Africa. She spoke of Cuban Dr. Félix Báez Sarriá, who contracted Ebola, survived and returned to the Henry Reeve Brigade in Sierra Leone. She pointed out that the brigade takes its name from a Brooklyn, N.Y.-born, 19-year-old, who died fighting alongside Cubans for independence in 1876.

Cuban foreign minister speaks

After detailing the human and financial cost of the blockade in great detail in his introduction to the vote, Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parilla spoke concretely about Dr. Sarriá and international cooperation.

“However, it should not be kept silent that in the tragic moments of the epidemic of Ebola in West Africa, the deployment of Cuban medical aid was hampered by the refusal of the British Standard Chartered Bank to make transfers between the World Health Organization and the Cuban medical brigades, consisting of Dr. Báez Sarriá and others who risked their lives by their direct contact with patients.

“Even under such extreme conditions,

it required specific licenses from the Treasury Department. The Uganda branch of this bank had just closed the personal accounts of Cuban health workers in that country and the British subsidiary of Barclays Bank also prevented them from making transfers to Cuba.

“The same occurred regarding the Cuban personnel working in the education sector in other countries. These examples demonstrate the complexity of the real relations between the United States and Cuba, but the rapprochement made this morning is, without doubt, encouraging. With the change of the U.S. vote we may ask: Will these practices cease?

“The change in the vote that Ambassador Samantha Power has just announced is a promising sign. We hope it will be reflected in reality.”

Rodríguez ended by thanking all the people and governments, political parties, social movements, parliaments, civil societies, and international and regional organizations that have contributed their voice and vote against the blockade. He extended gratitude to the people of the U.S. for the growing support for ending the blockade. □

FRANCE Refugees part of global crisis

By G. Dunkel

Although many jobs have dried up and developed capitalist countries throughout the world no longer seek as much low-wage labor, people from poor countries wracked by misery and war are taking almost unimaginable risks to make their way to developed countries where they hope for a better future.

Often, it is to the very imperialist countries whose ruling classes have for generations fattened off exploiting the labor and resources of their homelands.

According to the U.N. High Commissioner on Refugees, even though the flow of people making Mediterranean Sea crossings from Africa to Europe in 2016 has been only about a third of last year, the death rate this year is higher. For the Central Mediterranean route between

Libya and Italy, one person has died for each 47 who made it through.

Even after refugees reach Europe safely, their reception is not at all assured. In countries like Hungary, which has had a reactionary government since capitalism was restored in 1989, it is downright hostile.

France, which once exploited much of Africa as its colonial possession, has a large immigrant population and sports the motto “Liberty, equality and fraternity.” But its reception for refugees is mixed.

One of the biggest unofficial camps for refugees in Europe grew up over the past few years near Calais in northern France. Migrants there have been mainly from East Africa — Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea and Ethiopia — or Afghanistan, not former French colonies. They gathered in a camp nicknamed “The Jungle” that was close to the tunnel running between France and Britain. The goal of many has been to get to Britain, where some have family ties and the hope of finding jobs. Some 3 million immigrants work in Britain.

Various unofficial estimates from charity organizations put the number of refugees who had been living in the Calais camp at between 6,000 and 8,000. One-third were women, and between 1,000 and 2,000 were unaccompanied minors, some as young as 10.

Much political maneuvering is taking place in France around the presidential election scheduled for this coming Spring. The semi-fascist National Front, a major political party in France, has been whipping up an anti-immigrant, racist frenzy over the camp. The government of François Holland, which calls

itself “Socialist” but serves the interests of the capitalist class, decided to raze the camp and send the people living there to “reception centers” throughout France which were specially built to accommodate immigrants.

The Calais camp was completely razed by the end of October, and over 6,000 people were moved by bus to the centers. However, some 1,200 unaccompanied minors, many of whom have family ties to refugees in Britain, were not moved, and a number of them wound up sleeping in the open air for several nights.

The British government has accepted a few hundred. Britain and France are arguing over others, who now have accommodations in temporary centers. (Agence France Presse, Nov. 4)

A number of refugees didn’t get on the buses from Calais but instead headed to Paris. Some went to a very large encampment in northeast Paris, near the Stalingrad Metro station. The mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, estimated it was growing at the rate of 80 to 100 people a day, though not all are coming from Calais.

On Nov. 4, for the thirtieth time, the cops dispersed this encampment and sent around 3,500 people to reception centers. (La Croix, Nov. 4)

Telesur reported on Oct. 10 that young people from Paris’ immigrant suburbs had started a program of providing refugees sleeping on the streets with free meals. Soon after the article was posted, the project went viral online.

“We also are children of immigrants, we grew up in poverty; the principle of sharing is part of who we are,” said Souleymane, a resident of the Sarcelles suburb where the project began. □

WAR WITHOUT VICTORY

by Sara Flounders

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

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

Available on online booksellers.
PentagonAchillesHeel.com

Rainbow Solidarity In Defense of CUBA

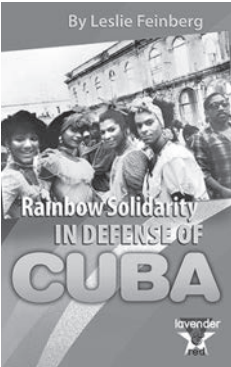
By Leslie Feinberg, author of ‘Stone Butch Blues’

Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba documents revolutionary Cuba’s inspiring trajectory of progress towards liberation of sexualities, genders and sexes. This ground-breaking book reveals how the Cuban Revolution has grappled with the pre-revolutionary legacy of 450 years of persecution and exploitation of homosexuality.

Rainbow Solidarity answers the demonization of the 1959 Cuban Revolution by Washington and the CIA, Wall Street and Hollywood by demonstrating that the process of solving these problems is the forward motion of the revolution.

Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba is an edited compilation of 25 articles from the *Workers World* newspaper series by Feinberg entitled *Lavender & Red*, online at workers.org.

Available at major online booksellers



Don't just mourn, organize

Continued from page 1

ton. That shows something about the attitude of the people. But the election system in this country isn't based on the popular vote. Nor does it give third parties a chance to be heard. (The Moorehead/Lilly campaign of Workers World Party got its revolutionary socialist views heard by being in the streets with the movement including social media.) In addition, many of the most oppressed are prevented by poverty, threats and reactionary laws from voting.

Let's not forget that earlier this year Bernie Sanders moved large crowds by angrily focusing on the economic problems facing the workers. When he was knocked out of the race, it's possible that some of his supporters refused to support a grinning Clinton or even opted for an angry Trump.

The danger is not just Trump the person but the misogyny, racism and attacks on immigrants and the LGBTQ communities that his election victory can unleash. His main support comes from white men. Whether they realize it or not, when they voted for Trump they identified not with the working class, in which the majority are now women and/or people of color, but with the ruling establishment.

U.S. corporate culture dishes out fantasy — the fantasy of the strong, rich, white man who can fix everything, from “Batman” to Trump’s “reality” show. The “good” capitalists will provide good jobs for everyone. In this Fox-dominated atmosphere, which extends from films to radio and television to comic books, many bought into Trump’s outright fantasy.

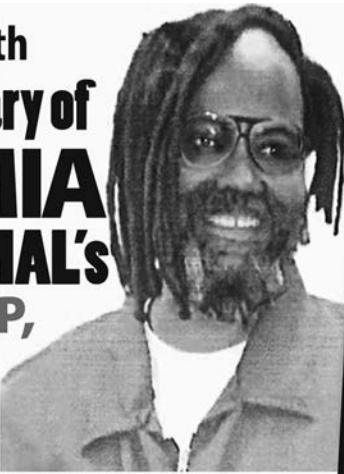
But the promises of the Clinton neoliberals are fantasy, too. The fantasy is that U.S. capitalism can be strong and contin-

On the 35th Anniversary of

MUMIA

ABU-JAMAL'S

FRAMEUP, ARREST, & NEAR DEATH



We demand immediate **HEP C cure** for Mumia & other PA hep-c infected prisoners! They are very sick and PA is refusing to treat them!

Free Mumia & All Political Prisoners ▶ Clean Water for All PA prisoners ▶ End Mass Incarceration ▶ End Life Without Parole ▶ Abolish the Racist Death Penalty! ▶ End Solitary Confinement ▶ Solidarity with Prison Work Strikers ▶ Black Lives Matter ▶ End Stop & Frisk ▶ NO Standing Rock Pipeline ▶ Protect Our Water!

BE IN PHILADELPHIA

fri ▶ DEC 9

3pm RALLY & MARCH
NO Frank Rizzo statue
15th St. and JFK Blvd.

5:30 pm INDOOR EVENT
Arch St. United Methodist Church
Corner Arch St. and Broad St.

6 pm – 9 pm PROGRAM
Mobilization4Mumia@gmail.com

ue to grow under the right president, one carefully hand-picked by the establishment.

The next four years will bring a strong dose of **real** reality. The house of cards that is the world capitalist system is already reacting as stock markets tank. They could rebound for a while, and billions will be won and lost, but the capitalist system can never recover its early vigor — and the financiers know it.

It is precisely African Americans, Latinx, Indigenous nations, women, Arabs, Muslims and LGBTQ people who have been in the lead of so many struggles that challenge this system. Trump cannot meet the needs of the vast majority of people in this country. The struggle continues from the grassroots up, and the only answer is to forge the greatest unity of all the movements that fight capitalism and reaction.

Gambia blasts the International Criminal Court

By Chris Fry

The western African country of Gambia announced on Oct. 25 that it was withdrawing from the Hague-based International Criminal Court, calling the ICC the “International Caucasian Court.”

Gambian Information Minister Sheriff Bojang accused the ICC of the “persecution and humiliation of people of color, especially Africans.”

“There are many Western countries, at least 30, that have committed heinous war crimes against independent sovereign states and their citizens since the creation of the ICC and not a single Western war criminal has been indicted,” Bojang said. (af.reuters.com, Oct. 26)

The information minister specifically noted former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, whom the ICC refused to prosecute for war crimes against the people of Iraq. Gambia was a British colony since the 17th century until 1965 and

was a nexus of the genocidal British slave trade for hundreds of years.

Gambia joins Burundi and South Africa as African countries that have recently withdrawn from the International Criminal Court. Since it was established in 2002, the ICC — tasked with prosecuting the most serious crimes that shock the conscience of humanity, namely genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and crimes of aggression — has charged only Africans in the six cases that are ongoing or about to begin.

The governments of Uganda and Kenya have announced that they too are considering leaving the ICC.

The conflicts that wrench the African continent today were spawned by centuries of European colonialism, as well as the current oppression and exploitation by U.S. and European banks and corporations. More and more African coun-

tries see the ICC, not as an agent of justice, but as simply one more mechanism designed to force the people of Africa to submit to Western domination.

The U.S. government signed the “Rome statutes” that created the ICC but has never ratified it. That is no surprise. From Korea to Vietnam, from Afghanistan to Iraq, millions of people from countries around the globe have suffered death and destruction from Washington’s aggressive war adventures, whether direct or proxy wars.

A former U.S. Air Force judge advocate, now Congressman Ted Lieu, D-Calif., in a letter to both Secretary of State John Kerry and Secretary of Defense Ash Carter, warned that the Pentagon’s support of Saudi Arabia’s horrendous bombing campaign in Yemen constitutes war crimes. “U.S. personnel are now at legal risk of being investigated and potentially

prosecuted for committing war crimes. Under international law, a person can be found guilty of aiding and abetting war crimes.” (theguardian.com, Nov. 3)

Lieu points out that not only is the U.S. supplying the planes and bombs to the Saudis, which have killed more than 4,125 civilians in Yemen, including more than 1,121 children, but it is also providing in-flight refueling to Saudi bomber planes. And the U.S. has been supplying the Saudis with dreaded anti-personnel cluster bombs, banned by international treaty in 2008. (thenation.com, Nov. 3)

Justice for the victims of war crimes will never come from minions of the U.S. and European banks and giant corporations that direct and profit from these wars. Only the world’s oppressed and workers can mete out the proper punishment to the Pentagon brass and these merchants of death. □

Syria and Donbass:

Two sections of a united front against imperialism

By Alexey Albu

The writer is a coordinator of the banned Ukrainian Marxist organization Union Borotba (Struggle), who participated in a recent international solidarity delegation to Syria. Albu is a former regional deputy of the Odessa region and survivor of the May 2, 2014, neo-Nazi massacre at the Odessa House of Trade Unions. He is currently living in political exile in Russia and the Lugansk People's Republic.

Workers World contributing editor Greg Butterfield translated the article at the author's request. Abridged here, it is available in full at RedStarOverDonbass.blogspot.com, Nov. 2.

The movement of people adhering to communist views around the world is vast. But the political spectrum within this movement is also vast. The construction of a new, more just society without war, destruction, poverty and exploitation is the dream of hundreds of millions of people around the world. However, views on how to build this new society are all very different.

I would like to make my views clear. I support any attempt to make progressive social changes in society, and I support any political, social and government initiative, if the alternative to it serves reaction, regression and rollback to a lower stage of human development. That is why I support the young People's Republics

of Donbass, because their antipode is Ukrainian fascism, which kills innocent people, destroys cities and villages, and arranges massacres as it did in Odessa on May 2, 2014, the horrors of which I experienced myself. ...

Today, in the struggle against imperialism (a pity that some uninformed people confuse this term, which they often use to mean “imperial” or “imperial ambitions,” and not a phase of the capitalist system), Syria takes the main place. ... It was therefore very important for us to establish a relationship with all progressive forces challenging the U.S. as the main center of world imperialism, including the government of the Syrian Arab Republic.

It was important for us to see the situation from within the region, the lives of the people in the frontline towns and refugee camps. It was important to meet with senior officials of the government, religious and community leaders in Syria, for me — and for the other comrades from Italy, Morocco, Lebanon, Scotland and Greece who participated in the delegation. ...

[When we reached Damascus] I had a good impression from our conversation with [President] Bashar al-Assad's Deputy Hilal al-Hilal, which took place behind closed doors, in a small circle. I said then that Syria and Donbass are two sections of a united front against American hege-

mony, U.S. imperialism. And now, being back in Donbass, I can't stop thinking about how we can expand this front, as we help each other to survive in this difficult struggle.

It was very interesting to see the work of the Syrian government in the area of basic necessities of the common people — repairing housing destroyed by militants, water, electricity, medical care. Speaking of health care, during our visit to wounded soldiers in the hospital, I saw excellent conditions, which often do not exist in Ukraine or Donbass. Yes, perhaps we were shown one of the best medical facilities. But it is comparable to the best hospitals in Ukraine.

During the trip, I realized that the social burden the state carries is huge. This policy is the antithesis of the policy of the new Ukrainian authorities. ...

It so happens that as a result of my political activities, I've met a lot of comrades from Kurdistan, who told me about the struggle of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) for a free, socialist Kurdistan, and how they resisted the troops of the Turkish government on one hand and the U.S. puppet Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) on the other. Of course, I believe the Kurdish liberation movement is progressive, and for me it was very important to learn about the relationship between the

Syrian government and the young Kurdish state of Rojava arising in the north.

The fact is that we do not always get unbiased information through the lens of the media. Very often the media contrasts Rojava and the Syrian government, saying that Assad bombed peaceful Kurdish villages and violated the agreement granting autonomy to the Kurds. After the trip to Syria, I realized that this is not quite true. The political landscape of the region is extremely difficult. Within the same area there are many different forces and groups that are under the influence of large political centers — united, separated, fighting with each other. ...

I realized that the Syrian government intends to respect the agreement and give the Syrian Kurds their long-awaited autonomy. This was very important to me. That is, for now the union of progressive forces continues to operate against the Islamists, and inside this union there is no war. I really hope that mutual understanding will continue within the progressive camp. ...

In September 2013, when we carried out actions against U.S. intervention in the war in Syria, I couldn't imagine that the United States would soon unleash a civil war in my own country. Today we have a common enemy, and the only solution is a united struggle and mutual aid. If we organize — we will win! □

A NATO ‘no-fly zone’ in Syria means a bigger war

By Ava Lipatti

The failure of U.S. foreign policy to overthrow the Syrian government has forced the U.S. government to reassess its role in the conflict in Syria. Already in its sixth year, the conflict has killed hundreds of thousands and displaced 11 million people — nearly half the Syrian population.

Up to this point, the U.S. has carried out airstrike campaigns and funded, armed and trained various anti-government groups. More direct intervention has been a possibility for a long time now. The widely proposed “no-fly zone,” which would lead to direct military intervention, demonstrates that the U.S. and NATO are clearly not interested in peace.

A no-fly zone is a territory over which the U.S. and its NATO allies do not permit other military aircraft to fly. Those powers would force other planes to land, shoot down aircraft and bomb airports preemptively. Prominent supporters of a no-fly zone in Syria include Hillary Clinton, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, and British Foreign Minister Boris Johnson.

Politicians and military leaders alike have no illusions about the aggression that a no-fly zone entails. Marine Corps Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, said that “for us to control all of the airspace in Syria it would require us to go to war against Syria and Russia.” (theguardian.com, Oct. 25)

History of no-fly zones

No-fly zones have been implemented three times: Iraq in 1991, Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1993 and Libya in 2011.

At the end of the Gulf War in 1991, a no-fly zone was imposed on Iraq by the United States, France and Turkey. It was enforced up to the invasion in 2003. More than 1,400 Iraqi civilians were killed by U.S. and British bombs dropped to enforce the no-fly zones.

After the separation of Bosnia from Yugoslavia in 1992, the U.N. Security Council passed a resolution calling for a no-fly zone in Bosnia-Herzegovina; it was enforced by NATO. Following the declaration of the no-fly zone came a 15-day bombing campaign, along with British and French shelling of Bosnian Serbs.

In 2011, the U.N. Security Council passed a resolution that allowed NATO and its Gulf allies to impose a no-fly zone in Libya. While the Libyan government took part in the ceasefire, NATO began its bombing campaign and support for anti-government elements, ripping apart the country and overthrowing the sovereign government.

U.S. desires regime change in Syria

Although a no-fly zone may be promoted as a moderate solution to de-escalate the ongoing conflict in Syria, historical precedent suggests anything but. A no-fly zone will require anti-aircraft technology and an estimated 70,000 troops on the ground, according to the Pentagon. (New York Times, Oct. 22, 2013)

The U.S. has been interested in controlling Syria for decades, with consecutive CIA-backed coup attempts in 1956 and 1957. Since 1967, because of the Ba’athist government’s support for Palestinian and Lebanese resistance to Israeli aggression, the U.S. has kept Syria under

WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN
Brooklyn, N.Y., Nov. 5. Protest against U.S. intervention in Syria marches to Hillary Clinton’s office.

close scrutiny.

Given Washington’s long-standing desires in the region, the 2011 “Arab Spring” protests were a convenient opportunity for swift regime change. But the anti-government movement has been thoroughly corrupted by Salafist military groups like the Islamic State group (IS) and al-Nusra (an al-Qaida offshoot).

The involvement of the United States in the conflict has been overwhelmingly consistent with its strategic aim of undermining the Syrian government, but its plan to support “moderate” anti-government forces has boomeranged. Washington has funded fighters who consistently join the ranks of al-Qaida or IS, it airdrops or sells weapons that wind up in the hands of IS, and it targets the Syrian army in airstrikes. The U.S. government has made its priorities clear: It values the destruction of Syria over civilian lives.

The U.S. proxy forces are all linked to al-Nusra, which sabotages U.S.-Russia cooperation. With the U.S. plan to establish a “moderate” opposition failing to carry out regime change, Washington gets more desperate and reckless. Unwilling to coordinate with Russia, the U.S. government is considering the aggressive no-fly zone strategy as a last-ditch effort.

Encirclement of Russia

U.S. involvement in Syria is only one movement in its geopolitical symphony targeting Russia and China. Between



CIA support for the Nazi-infested, right-wing coup in Kiev, Ukraine, to the covert funding of Salafist paramilitary groups in Syria, the United States is slowly but surely encircling Russia.

NATO has begun to increase its military presence, including troops and tanks, in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. NATO has also bolstered its forces elsewhere in Eastern Europe and conducted unusually aggressive military exercises in Poland.

While the U.S. quietly closes in on Russia’s borders, anti-Russian war propaganda has grown louder by the day. China and Russia have been deemed threats to U.S. national security; the Democratic Party has accused Russia of leaking hacked information about the Democratic National Committee, and Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump has accused China of economic aggression.

Within the Syrian “civil” war lies a precarious proxy war by the U.S./NATO targeting Russia. The imposition of a no-fly zone on the part of the U.S./NATO is a sure way to escalate to a full-scale intervention in Syria and possibly a direct war with Russia. Now more than ever, it’s crucial for the anti-war movement to call for NATO’s exit from Syria.

Lipatti is an anti-war activist involved in the student movement.

Families across Britain protest killer cops

By Taryn Fivek
London

Hundreds of people from across Britain gathered here in Trafalgar Square to hold a rally against police brutality on Oct. 29. For the last 18 years, the United Families and Friends Campaign has held a march from Trafalgar Square to Downing Street. Those attending told Workers World that this year’s rally has been the largest so far.

Compared to the United States, the numbers in the Britain seem low. More than 880 people have been killed by the police in the U.S. in 2016. Meanwhile, 34 have been killed in Britain, where police do not carry guns. Most people die here while in police custody after being beaten or having their medical needs neglected.

This discrepancy in numbers does not mean that victims here have been any more successful than those in the U.S. in achieving justice. Since 1990, 1,577 people in total have died in police custody. That has led to zero convictions of police.

The Independent Police Complaints Commission is supposed to investigate and prosecute these killings. The problem is that eight out of nine IPCC senior investigators are former cops.

Many of the people who die in police custody here have mental health problems and are particularly vulnerable.

Justice for ‘Paps’

Saqib Deshmukh, from Slough (a town 21 miles west of London), was at the rally on behalf of the Justice for Habib



Trafalgar Square, London. Oct. 29.

WW PHOTOS: TARYN FIVEK

“Paps” Ullah Campaign to highlight the struggles that South Asian (Indian, Pakistani and Bengali) people have to wage in Britain. Paps died in 2008 after being stopped by police and experiencing what police called “trouble breathing.” He was survived by a wife and three small children.

Deshmukh said that the struggle against police brutality is a multinational struggle. “Until we get cops who are sacked, who are imprisoned ... that will be the only deterrent to other police officers. Otherwise, they’ll continue to act with impunity, thinking they’ll actually get away with it.

“I’ve been in court,” Deshmukh continued, “and I’ve seen massive legal teams representing these officers. The officers walk in there smugly, knowing that nothing could stick on them. They’ve

got the best legal minds in the world, in this country, that are representing them. That’s such, you know, that’s what gets families angry.” Families meanwhile struggle to receive legal aid to prosecute the killer cops responsible.

“Justice looks like police officers being imprisoned for what they’re doing, which is murder — but also not just murder. We’ve got police officers who’ve lied in court,” said Deshmukh. “In Paps’ case, they committed perjury. Anyone else would have been sent down [been imprisoned] for that. Officers have to go down for that.”

Kuchenga Shenge, a Black trans woman from North London and child of Pan-African activists, told Workers World that she sees herself as part of a larger international community without borders. “I think the Black population

of America [the U.S.] should see themselves as part of a diaspora. We really do stand with them. We love Harlem. We love Oakland. We really listen. We really give a fuck about you guys! We just really want them to care about us as well.

“At the end of the day, in Paris, in Dakar, in Johannesburg — we’re having a conversation. Sometimes it feels a bit one-sided, but we’re open and we love you. We’re waiting for them to recognize us, their diasporic cousins.”

Shenge says she reads and watches a lot of material from the United States online, including material from the Sylvia Rivera Law Project, and hopes that the internet will open up more dialogue between borders.

Deshmukh stressed the importance of remembering those who have lost their lives at the hands of the police. “People have to know these names. Sometimes we look at what’s happening over in America [the U.S.] stateside, and we know those campaigns. We know their names. We may not know the names of Darrell Neville here, of Paps, and Sean Rigg, and all these other names. There’s new families who come here each year. We need to know all their names. The media need to know all their names. And the police and authorities need to be held accountable for their deaths.”

As the movement to remember the names of those killed by police grows, so too have their names echoed louder in the halls of power, while the working class and oppressed advance on centers of oppression worldwide. □



La necesidad de solidaridad internacionalista

Por Abayomi Azikiwe

A continuación publicamos la presentación dada en la Conferencia de la Liga Internacional de Luchas Populares celebrada en Chicago el 22 de octubre. Azikiwe es un reconocido líder antiimperialista de Detroit.

Hay una debilidad fundamental en el movimiento popular en los Estados Unidos, y esta es la necesidad del internacionalismo antiimperialista.

Las luchas contra el racismo, la opresión nacional y la explotación de clase no pueden separarse de la necesidad de acabar con la injerencia de Washington y Wall Street en los asuntos internos de la mayoría de los estados del mundo.

Ganar el reconocimiento en estas luchas monumentales depende en gran medida del grado en que podamos crear conciencia generalizada de la difícil situación de las comunidades de color y de la clase obrera en general. Se están realizando esfuerzos para alcanzar estos objetivos, aunque aún queda mucho por hacer.

La conciencia internacional con respecto al carácter del estado de EUA está creciendo inmensamente. Esto se debe en parte a las manifestaciones masivas y las rebeliones urbanas que han surgido espontáneamente en respuesta a la muerte de Trayvon Martin en el 2012 y el veredicto de no culpable dictado en el juicio de George Zimmerman.

El anuncio de la absolución de Zimmerman hizo mucho para cambiar la opinión pública interna e internacionalmente sobre las instituciones que devalúan la vida afroamericana y los derechos democráticos. Fue durante este período que el hashtag #BlackLivesMatter comenzó a ser tendencia. Desde entonces, se han realizado esfuerzos para construir capítulos de BLM en EUA, extendiéndose internacionalmente a Bretaña y América Latina.

Más tarde, el 9 de agosto de 2014, en Ferguson, Missouri, el joven de 18 años de edad, Michael Brown, fue abatido por un policía blanco. Inmediatamente estallaron manifestaciones en Ferguson. Estas manifestaciones se extendieron a nivel nacional, llamando la atención sobre la falsa noción de que Estados Unidos se había convertido en una sociedad post-racial en el período posterior a la elección del presidente Barack Obama en 2008.

Ningún EUA ‘post-racial’

Obama se vio obligado a abordar los problemas de la “opresión especial” de las/os afroamericanos después de los disturbios en Ferguson. La situación de las/os afroamericanos ganó la atención internacional surgiendo editoriales en periódicos significativos tanto en EUA como internacionalmente cuestionando esta falsa afirmación de post-racismo.

La administración se inclinó a favor de mantener el status quo de opresión nacional. Obama por supuesto, dio su opinión sobre el sentir de las/os afroamericanos y luego denunció la violencia, diciendo que no logrará nada. Esta es una falsedad flagrante porque el estado de EUA nació en la violencia y mantiene su existencia a través de la fuerza bruta y la coerción dentro del país y en el exterior.

Lo que estos acontecimientos expusieron fue el fracaso de la administración Obama para hacer frente a la opresión

especial de las/os afroamericanos, avanzando en su lugar una política de evasión pública ante el empeoramiento de las condiciones sociales.

Fueron las masas afroamericanas y otros grupos oprimidos los que sufrieron el peso de la crisis económica que comenzó en 2007. Detroit fue una de las zonas urbanas más afectadas. Cuando Obama asumió el cargo en 2009 hubo una considerable esperanza falsa de que estas dificultades económicas atraerían la atención de la Casa Blanca y de la mayoría demócrata de Cámara y Senado (2008-10).

Las subsecuentes rebeliones y oleadas de manifestaciones masivas en las calles, en los campus y ahora en los campos atléticos, han despojado a la administración de cualquier pretensión de legitimidad política. El atleta profesional Colin Kaepernick y otros en el ámbito de deportes profesional, universitario y de escuela secundaria ilustran que no importa cuánto les clasifiquen de “privilegiados”, el espectro de la violencia racista y las amenazas de los agentes armados del estado permanece con ellos en todo momento. El racismo está en aumento en los Estados Unidos, y el rechazo de la clase dominante y el estado capitalista para avanzar cualquier reforma en este sentido dice mucho sobre la fase actual del imperialismo y su postura pública.

Implicaciones globales de la crisis capitalista

El grado en que la clase capitalista puede reclamar cualquier apariencia de una “recuperación” económica está relacionado con la expansión de la mano de obra con bajos salarios y las mega ganancias de las corporaciones transnacionales. Esto se ve reforzado por el sistemático recorte del financiamiento de la educación pública, los servicios municipales y las medidas ecológicas.

Son demasiados los ejemplos para poderlos mencionar aquí. Podríamos hablar sobre el sistema antidemocrático de gestión de emergencias y la bancarrota forzada en Detroit y otras ciudades de Michigan que tienen la mayoría de las poblaciones afro-americanas. También está la crisis del agua en Flint y el casi colapso de las escuelas públicas en Detroit, Highland Park, Inkster y otras ciudades de Michigan.

Un movimiento coordinado a nivel nacional liderado por sindicatos que exigen un salario mínimo de 15 dólares por hora está creciendo en todo el país. Personas de todas las generaciones están trabajando más por menos dinero.

El complejo industrial penitenciario, que ahora abarca a unas 2,2 millones de personas, y otras millones más bajo supervisión judicial y policial, representa otra forma de súper-explotación y contención social relacionada con el perfil racial y el sistema judicial injusto.

Estas son algunas de las principales cuestiones que debemos abordar en los EUA. Nuestro internacionalismo debe ser formado por las condiciones específicas de las/os trabajadores y las/os oprimidos y los movimientos que han surgido en los últimos cuatro años.

Trazando vínculos entre lo nacional y el exterior

Quizás la crisis de desplazamiento más profunda de hoy es la migración de per-

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Algo sin precedentes en las elecciones presidenciales de Estados Unidos ocurrió el 28 de octubre, y hay mucha especulación en todos los medios de comunicación acerca del por qué.

Justo una semana y media antes del día de las elecciones, el director del FBI, James Comey, envió una carta a las/os miembros del Congreso sobre unos nuevos acontecimientos en la investigación de los correos electrónicos de Hillary Clinton, investigación que supuestamente había terminado meses antes.

Inmediatamente, la carta se tornó viral y fue usada por el campo de Trump como prueba de que Clinton no estaba calificada para ser presidente. El equipo de Clinton respondió de inmediato, diciendo que se trataba de una movida poco ética, pues se daba justo antes de las elecciones. Otros se unieron, hasta republicanos.

Uno de ellos fue Richard W. Painter, ex oficial de “ética” de la Casa Blanca durante el segundo gobierno de George W. Bush. Él escribió en un artículo de opinión en el New York Times del 30 de octubre: “Esta carta, que fue rápidamente publicada en Internet, hizo declaraciones públicas muy inusuales acerca de una investigación del FBI sobre una candidata en las elecciones. La carta fue enviada en violación de una antigua política del Departamento de Justicia de no discutir detalles sobre las investigaciones pendientes con otros, incluidos los miembros del Congreso”.

Painter concluyó que “una comunicación pública sobre una investigación pendiente del FBI que involucra a un candidato, que se hace en vísperas de una elección es muy probable que sea una violación de la Ley Hatch y un uso indebido de una posición oficial”. La Ley Hatch prohíbe a la mayoría de empleados federales de una participación partidista en actividades políticas.

Antes de la carta, las posibilidades de Trump de ganar las elecciones habían estado disminuyendo, según las encuestas. La carta parece haber dado a su campaña

sonas del norte de África hacia el sur de Europa. Este movimiento de personas desplazadas ha sido documentado por la Agencia de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados como el más grande desde la conclusión de la Segunda Guerra Mundial. Hay de 60 a 75 millones de personas que han sido interna y externamente desplazadas en el mundo moderno.

Estas remociones forzadas se derivan directamente de los imperativos de la política exterior de guerra y explotación económica diseñados por Washington y Wall Street. Las intervenciones en Afganistán, Irak, Haití, Libia, Siria, Yemen y Somalia están alimentando el subdesarrollo y la balcanización.

Muchas de estas guerras permanecen en gran parte ocultas al pueblo en los EUA. Gran parte del impacto social de estas guerras de cambio de régimen y genocidio se está manifestando dentro de estas regiones geopolíticas y en Europa meridional, central y oriental.

La crisis de la guerra imperialista tiene sus componentes económicos. La sobreproducción de petróleo y otros productos básicos está haciendo bajar los precios y

oxígeno.

¿Porqué ahora?

¿Deben las/os revolucionarios que entienden que tanto Clinton como Trump son políticos leales al sistema capitalista estar interesadas/os en este asunto? La respuesta es “sí”.

El FBI ha desempeñado históricamente un papel de extrema derecha en la política estadounidense, especialmente durante la campaña anticomunista del senador Joseph McCarthy en los años cincuenta y contra los movimientos de derechos civiles y liberación negra en las décadas siguientes. Debe ser de gran interés para las/os trabajadores y todos los pueblos oprimidos, cuando un organismo de represión como el FBI está dispuesto a cruzar la línea de la política habitual, en este caso con el fin de posiblemente influir en una elección.

Durante meses ha quedado claro que la mayoría de los establecimientos corporativos y financieros capitalistas han visto a Trump como una bala perdida y han movido su gran dinero detrás de la campaña de Clinton. Clinton ha demostrado, como secretaria de Estado, que entiende mejor los intereses de Wall Street en su conjunto y es leal en las cuestiones más importantes para los grandes negocios y el Pentágono. Trump, con sus discursos racistas, misóginos, antiinmigrantes y egoístas, ha alienado a grandes sectores de la población, lo que podría representar un desafío para el sistema mismo en futuras luchas.

Tal vez algunas cosas más saldrán a la luz eventualmente sobre la motivación de Comey. Creemos que es probable que incluso aquellos en la clase dominante que han abandonado Trump están ahora en pánico por si una derrota resonante para él también podría significar una derrota de un Congreso republicano que tan bien ha servido a sus intereses. Si eso es lo que los hombres de gran dinero están diciendo entre ellos, Comey lo sabría y podría tomar medidas destinadas a diluir una marea anti-Trump. □

causando mayores tasas de desempleo, pobreza, déficit de alimentos, conflictos de clase y guerra civil. Países como Somalia, Sudáfrica, Zimbabue y Nigeria, ricos en recursos naturales, terrenos y vías navegables estratégicas, se enfrentan a diversos niveles de recesión, depresión y mayor esclavitud al capital financiero internacional.

Por último, es nuestra tarea señalar la relación directa entre la política interna de los Estados Unidos y la política exterior. Una política de opresión nacional dentro de los Estados Unidos se refleja en la destrucción militar y económica de países de la antigua Unión Soviética y Europa Oriental, extendiéndose por África, Oriente Medio, Asia y el Pacífico, América Latina y el Caribe.

Los problemas que enfrentamos en América del Norte no pueden ser abordados o resueltos de manera efectiva independientemente de los pueblos de la comunidad internacional. Los pueblos del mundo debemos unirnos en un programa de antiimperialismo dirigido a acabar con todas las formas de opresión y explotación. □