

Tech workers walk out in global rolling strike

'Time's up, Google!'

By Kathy Durkin

Google employees walked out around the globe on Nov. 1 to demand an end to sexual misconduct at the multibillion-dollar technology corporation. In total, 20,000 workers demonstrated in cities in the U.S. and Canada, Europe and Asia. This coordinated job action was the first international protest against workplace sexual misconduct — and a show of solidarity with those who had experienced abuse. Also protested were gender pay inequity and systemic racism.

The groundbreaking protest was effectively a rolling strike, lasting nearly a day. Workers first walked off the job in Tokyo at 11:10 a.m., and then at exactly the same time in each time zone, in Singapore, followed by European cities, including Berlin, Zurich, London and Dublin. The work stoppage then spread to many Canadian and U.S. cities.

“Workers’ rights are women’s rights!” read a popular sign slogan at the New York City rally of 3,000 women and their allies. There, Demma Rodriguez, a leader of Black Googler Network, stressed that when Google wasn’t a place for equality for women, minorities and people with disabilities “that means the company is failing everyone. I am fed up! We will bring the consequences.” (New York Times, Nov. 2)

Hundreds of workers in San Francisco stated: “We can’t take it. Equal pay now!” and “Time’s up on sexual harassment! Time’s up on abuse of power, time’s up on systemic racism!” Outside Googleplex, company headquarters in Mountain View, Calif., workers told of Human Resources officials protecting sexual harassers and mistreating those who complained. There, thousands marched and chanted, “Stand up! Fight back!”

Clearly, the Google strikers were inspired by the #Me Too Movement, and like the McDonald’s workers before them, they took this bold action without the benefit of union protection. Moreover, this work stoppage was inspired by working-class struggles — past and present.

Amr Gaber, a walkout organizer, posted on Twitter: “Google employees borrowed tactics from historical labor organizing. ... [T]he protests’ leading organizers linked themselves to movements like the teachers’ strike in West Virginia and the ‘Fight for \$15’ demonstrations by fast food workers.

“Indeed, the San Francisco demonstration was even held in Harry Bridges Plaza [named for the late militant founder of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union]. Speakers spoke of his and other examples of historical labor organizing. Demonstrators [there] also talked about the simultaneous union strikes by Marriott employees,” wrote Gaber.

This job action opposed the scourge of gender inequity and abuse throughout Silicon Valley and beyond. This new movement, based on workplace action, is attempt-

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Google workers in New York walked out Nov. 1 in their moment of a historic global strike. More on pages 6-7.



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# Disabled artists and activists fight for minimum wage equality

By Workers World New York City Disabilities bureau  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

The Fair Wages Task Force began its campaign to eliminate subminimum wages for disabled workers at a town hall event at the Brooklyn Museum on Oct. 21. October is Disability Employment Awareness Month. Fully 65 percent of workers with disabilities are unemployed!

An audience of over 150 disabled artists, activists and their supporters held a lively discussion on the problems encountered by disabled artists. Frequently institutions which show their work ask them to set up the display and, in the case of paintings, hang them. The artists would like the institutions to include a fee for their work in the overall budget. When the artwork of the disabled artist is displayed, they are not generally paid. However, their work deserves fair compensation, and artists should not be unpaid because they happen to be disabled.

Artists, including a painter, an actor and a performance artist, discussed the need for education of the audience and education of the general public to promote real inclusion in modern culture.

Cultural workers such as sign language interpreters are skilled not only in signing the words but also in acting them out with appropriate facial expressions. It's a draining profession, so there are usually two interpreters who change places, so one can take a rest. Likewise, caption writers bring insights to an audience of the hearing impaired.

## Decades of struggle for inclusion in fair wages

A Fair Wages Task Force spokesperson with emotional and hearing loss disabilities began the event with an announcement of the campaign the coalition is waging to mandate minimum wage for disabled workers. Currently, under the U.S. Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, employers can request a waiver to not pay the minimum wage to many categories of workers, including disabled workers. Some employers pay 22 cents an hour, sell their product at market rate and pay executives six-figure salaries.

The National Federation of the Blind, formed in 1940, has fought for decades to correct this injustice. The states



PHOTO: PUSHING LIMITS

One of multiple protests in 2012 of Goodwill Industries paying sub-minimum wages to employees with disabilities.

of New Hampshire and Maryland and the city of Seattle have passed such laws, and Alaska's Department of Labor has issued an order granting minimum wage rights to disabled people. But 47 states and the federal government still have not granted disabled people minimum wage equity. This includes New York, where the Fair Wages Task Force is concentrating its immediate efforts with a petition and legislation campaign.

The Task Force speaker related how one of the first acts of the Hitler regime in Germany, which murdered many millions for the crime of being different, occurred on July 14, 1933. The "Law for the Prevention of Progeny with Hereditary Diseases" was instituted, which called for the mandatory sterilization of all people with diseases considered hereditary. It specified many disabilities including mental illness. One of the Nazis' big lies was that people with disabilities were of "less value."

The speaker pointed out that another big lie spread by employers who pay disabled people subminimum wages is that giving disabled people the minimum wage will take away jobs and benefits for them. In fact, where minimum wage equity laws have been passed, efforts have been successful to not only protect the jobs and benefits

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Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the neverending quest for ever-greater profits.

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

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and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

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# Israeli state blocks Palestinian author, can't stop her words

By Ted Kelly

An Israeli judge ordered the deportation of Palestinian novelist Susan Abulhawa after security forces held her for over 36 hours. Border security detained Abulhawa in Tel Aviv early on Nov. 1, when she arrived to attend the Kalimat Palestinian Literature Festival, where she was scheduled to speak in both Jerusalem (Al-Quds) and Ramallah.

Learning of her detention, over 2,500 people signed a petition in a matter of hours demanding her immediate release. Despite protest from festival organizers and from supporters worldwide, the Israeli court denied Abulhawa's appeal. A prison van took her to the Tel Aviv airport and she was placed on a flight back to the United States on Nov. 2.

Abulhawa is author of the critically acclaimed, bestselling novel, "Mornings in Jenin." This was the second time in three years that she was detained and deported while trying to enter the land of her birthright, Palestine. She currently resides in the Philadelphia area.

In 1967, the Israeli authorities forced Abulhawa's parents from their home at gunpoint.

In a Nov. 3 statement, Abulhawa thanked the organizers of the literary festival for their efforts to secure her safe arrival in Palestine. She also provided a preliminary account of her treatment and the conditions in the Israeli detention facility:

"We were not allowed any electronics, pens or pencils in the jail cells, but I found a way to take both — because we Palestinians are resourceful, smart, and we find our way to freedom and dignity by any means we can. ... I have photos and video from inside ... and I left for them a few messages on the walls by the dirty bed I had to lay on. I suppose they will find it

vulgar to read: 'Free Palestine,' 'Israel is an Apartheid State,' or 'Susan Abulhawa was here and smuggled this pencil into her prison cell.'" (See Abulhawa's account in the accompanying article.)

Israeli border forces are notorious for their callous and racist treatment of both Palestinians and Africans who seek to cross the state's heavily militarized border. In 2015, the Israeli Population and Immigration Authority claimed that Abulhawa did not answer soldiers' questions to their satisfaction and barred her entry then. They claimed she was again denied entry because "she landed without arranging entry in advance."

After the passage of sweeping new anti-immigration legislation in the Israeli parliament in March of last year, security forces are now empowered to block any supporter of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement. BDS was inspired and endorsed by the South African struggle against apartheid. Just last month, a U.S. student was barred entry to Israel where she had hoped to attend a university, because she supported BDS on social media.

## Wave of support for Abulhawa and Palestine

Workers World Party, along with the International Action Center, Jewish Voice for Peace, the U.S. Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel, and several Black community activists in Philadelphia spearheaded the call for Abulhawa's release. The call was also taken up by the recently concluded International Tribunal on U.S. Colonial Crimes in Puerto Rico, for which Susan Abulhawa served as a juror alongside the Rev. Luis Barrios, pastor of the Holyrood Church in the Bronx where the Tribunal was held; Ajamu Baraka of the Black Alliance for Peace; MOVE Minister of Confrontation Pam Africa; and Zoom-

WW PHOTO: TED KELLY  
Ajamu Baraka of the Black Alliance for Peace with Susan Abulhawa. Both were jurors at the International Tribunal on U.S. Colonial Crimes in Puerto Rico on Oct. 27.

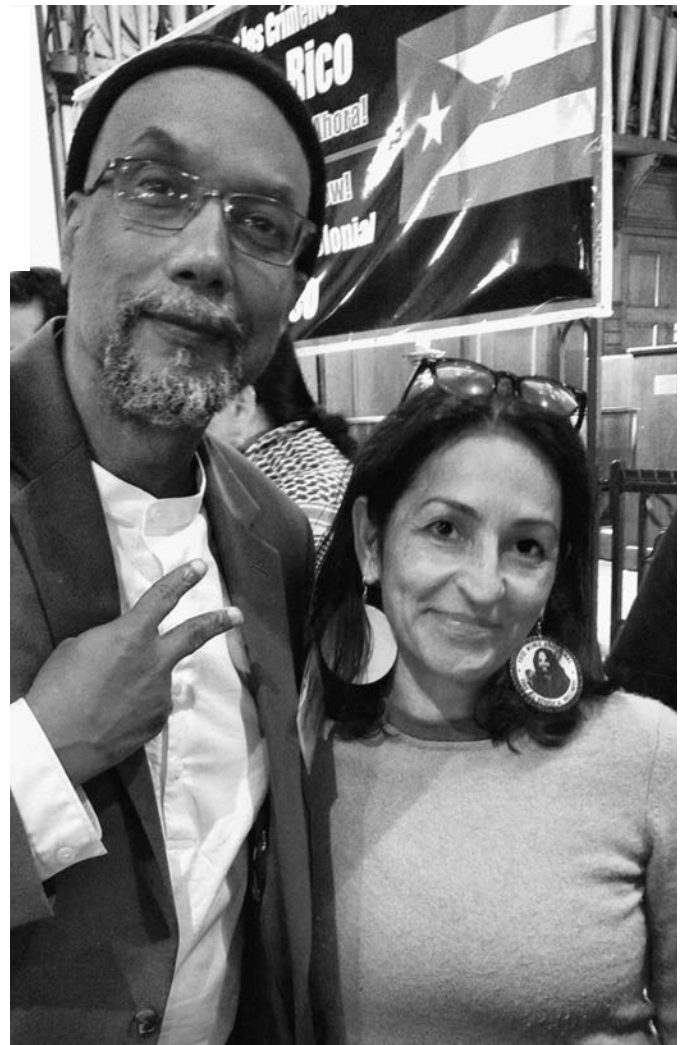
InKorea editor Hyun Lee, among others.

The Philly Don't Orchestrate Apartheid coalition initially circulated the petition. The coalition was formed to protest the Philadelphia Orchestra's decision to tour Israel this past spring and give music lessons to Israeli soldiers amidst the ongoing massacre in Gaza.

Since March, Israeli snipers have shot thousands of Palestinians, mostly youths protesting at the Gaza border, killing 168. The Great March of Return protests are ongoing, as is the massacre of Palestinians at the hands of the Zionist state.

Abulhawa's detention comes at a time of increasing ultrarightist and fascist collaboration across the globe. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu welcomed pro-fascist Jair Bolsonaro's election in Brazil's presidential elections on Oct. 28. Bolsonaro has announced his intention to move the Brazilian Embassy to Jerusalem, as has Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte, following U.S. President Donald Trump's lead.

This collaboration with fascists comes as no surprise to those who recognize Israel as a settler-colonial state that has served Western imperialist interests in



the region by attacking all progressive or sovereign forces there.

Abulhawa concluded her statement by stating: "Israel is spiritually, emotionally and culturally small despite the large guns they point at us — or perhaps precisely because of them. It is to their own detriment that they cannot accept our presence in our homeland, because our humanity remains intact and our art is beautiful and life-affirming, and we aren't going anywhere but home."

Workers World condemns the Israeli state's treatment of Susan Abulhawa and welcomes her safe return to her family and comrades. □

## Susan Abulhawa on her deportation: 'My heart doesn't ever leave Palestine'

*This is a slightly edited version of Abulhawa's "Statement to Kalimat Palestinian Literature Festival" of Nov. 3.*

As you all know by now, Israeli authorities have denied me entry into my country and I am therefore unable to attend the festival. ... It pains me that we can meet anywhere in the world except in Palestine, the place to which we belong, from whence our stories emerge and where all our turns eventually lead. We cannot meet on soil that has been fertilized for millennia by the bodies of our ancestors and watered by the tears and blood of Palestine's sons and daughters who daily fight for her.

Since my deportation, I read that Israeli authorities indicated that I was required to "coordinate" my travel with them in advance. This is a lie. ... Then, they said my first deportation in 2015 was because I refused to give them the reason for my visit. This, too, is a lie. Here are the facts:

In 2015, I traveled to Palestine to build playgrounds in several villages and to hold opening ceremonies at playgrounds we had already built in the months previous. Another member of our organi-

zation was traveling with me. She happened to be Jewish and they allowed her in. Several Israeli interrogators asked me the same questions in different ways over the course of approximately 7.5 hours. I answered them all, as Palestinians must if we are to stand a chance of going home, even as visitors. But I was not sufficiently deferential, nor was I capable of that in the moment. But I was certainly composed and — the requirement for all violated people — "civil."

Finally, I was accused of not cooperating because I did not know how many cousins I have and what are all their names and the names of their spouses. It was only after being told that I was denied entry that I raised my voice and refused to leave quietly. I did yell, and I stand by everything I yelled. According to Haaretz, Israel said I "behaved angrily, crudely and vulgarly" in 2015 at the Allenby Bridge.

What I said in 2015 to my interrogators, and which was also reported in Haaretz at the time, is that they should be the ones to leave, not me; that I am a daughter of this land and nothing will change that; that my own direct history

is steeped in the land and there's no way they can extricate it; that as much as they invoke Zionist mythological fairy tales, they can never claim such personal familial lineage, much as they wish they could.

I suppose that must sound vulgar to Zionist ears. To be confronted with the authenticity of Palestinian indigeneity despite exile, and face their apocryphal, ever-shifting colonial narratives.

My lack of deference in 2015 and choice not to quietly accept the arbitrary decision of an illegitimate gatekeeper to my country apparently got appended to my name and, upon my arrival this time on November 1, signaled for my immediate deportation.

The true vulgarity is that several million Europeans and other foreigners live in Palestine now while the Indigenous population lives either in exile or under the cruel boots of Israeli occupation; the true vulgarity is in the rows of snipers surrounding Gaza, taking careful aim and shooting human beings with no real way to defend themselves, who dare to protest their collective imprisonment and imposed misery; the true vulgarity is

in seeing our youth bleed on the ground, waste in Israeli jails, starve for an education, travel, learning, or some opportunity to fully be in the world; the true vulgarity is the way they have taken and continue to take everything from us, how they have carved out our hearts, stolen our everything, occupied our history, and tamp our voices and our art.

In total, Israel detained me for approximately 32 hours. We were not allowed any electronics, pens or pencils in the jail cells, but I found a way to take both — because we Palestinians are resourceful, smart, and we find our way to freedom and dignity by any means we can. I have photos and video from inside that terrible detention center, which I took with a second phone hidden on my body, and I left for them a few messages on the walls by the dirty bed I had to lay on. I suppose they will find it vulgar to read: "Free Palestine," "Israel is an Apartheid State," or "Susan Abulhawa was here and smuggled this pencil into her prison cell."

But the most memorable parts of this ordeal were the books. I had two books in my carry-on when I arrived at the jailand

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On the picket line

By Alex Bolchi and Sue Davis

Black women call center workers lead fight for a union in Miss.

In Hattiesburg, Miss., hundreds of call center workers — almost all of them Black women — rallied Oct. 29 to protest poverty wages and demand a raise and a union. These workers for federal contractor General Dynamics Information Technology (GDIT) recently got a raise to \$10.35 an hour, but that still keeps families in poverty. The workers handle complex questions about Medicare and the Affordable Care Act’s Marketplace.

Workers state that both the qualifications for and the nature of their work demand better wages. In February the Communications Workers (CWA) filed a complaint with the Department of Labor that GDIT misclassified call center agents

at a lower rate than job duties merit. Under federal law, once workers join a union and collectively bargain better wages and benefits, the government can open up funds to cover these improvements at no cost to the company. Despite that, GDIT launched an anti-union campaign. A federal lawsuit filed in Mississippi’s Southern District in September against GDIT alleges wage theft and charges of racial discrimination. (Hattiesburg American, Oct. 29)

The rally coincided with a report from Georgetown University, “Strengthening Families and the Hattiesburg Economy: The Impacts of Improved Pay for Federally Contracted Call Center Workers.” The report shows that the GDIT low wages “compound existing racial and gender income disparities because the majority of employees are women and people of color.” (cwa-union.org, Oct. 29) Organizing can only help these workers fight their way out of discrimination and poverty wages!

AFSCME launches 3-day strike at University of Calif.

The 24,000 members of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 3299 unleashed a three-day strike on the University of California’s five medical centers on Oct. 23. The Local 3299 support staff and patient care workers in the five-unit medical and school system are majority Black and Brown women workers. The local is UC’s largest union, and this was its second walkout this year. The strike was joined by 15,000 members of University Professional and Technical Employees Local 9119.

University management abuses forced Local 3299’s hand. Workers were without a contract for 20 months, while the UPTE contract expired a month ago. Management wants to deny pay increases, hoodwink workers into taking 401(k)s instead of pensions and raise health care premiums. GDIT has also increased outsourcing jobs to contractors. Several reports conducted by Local 3299 highlight pay differences over race and gender. (CALmatters, Oct. 25)

Every day strikers halted scab deliveries to various campuses. The second day, hundreds of workers in green T-shirts with “We Run UC” marched, chanted and staged an impromptu dance party at UC San Francisco. They were joined by UNITE HERE members striking at Marriott hotels in the Bay Area, resulting in a majestic 1,000-strong rally. (Truthout, Nov. 2) Fighting unions roar for their members!

No to sexual harassment in Calif. hotel industry!

From McDonald’s to Google, workers are staging walkouts demanding an end to sexual harassment on the job. Hotel workers are especially vulnerable to such attacks. Take the case of dishwasher and chef assistant Sandra Pezqueda who filed a lawsuit last year against the luxurious Terranea Resort, just outside Los Angeles in Rancho Palos Verdes, and the staffing agency employing her. Pezqueda reported constant sexual harassment and assault by her supervisor, who retaliated against her rejections by changing her work schedule. Honored as a silence breaker in Time Magazine’s Person of the Year 2017 issue as part of the #MeToo movement, Pezqueda received a \$250,000 settlement in May from Terranea. Though the resort was cleared of wrongdoing, reports have continued of management’s sexist-racist work culture. In response to pressure from Terranea management, the Rancho Palos Verdes City Council tabled a ballot initiative to install panic buttons for hotel workers until 2019.

Voter initiatives to protect hotel workers from sexual harassment are on the ballot in Long Beach and Oakland, Calif. If passed, the cities will join Chicago, which enacted a Hands Off, Pants On ordinance in 2017. While a statewide bill was introduced in early 2018 and passed by the state assembly in May, it was held up by the state senate appropriations committee. (Guardian, Oct. 16) Obviously catering to sexism in the state’s tourist industry is more important than worker safety. □



Hattiesburg, Miss., call center workers, Oct. 29.

Susan Abulhawa on her deportation: ‘My heart doesn’t ever leave Palestine’

Continued from page 3

I was allowed to keep them. I alternated reading from each, sleeping, thinking.

The first book was a highly researched text by historian Nur Masalha, “Palestine: A Four Thousand Year History.” I was scheduled to interview Nur on stage about his epic audit of Palestinian millennia-old history, told not from the politically motivated narratives, but from archeological and other forensic narratives. It is a people’s history, spanning the untidy and multilayered identities of Palestine’s Indigenous populations from the Bronze Age until today. In an Israeli detention cell, with five other women — all of them Eastern European, and each of them in her own private pain — the chapters of Nur Masalha’s book took me through Palestine’s pluralistic, multicultural and multi-religious past, distorted and essentialized by modern inventions of an ancient past.

The bitter irony of our condition was not lost on me. I, a daughter of the land, of a family rooted at least 900 years in the land, and who spent much of her childhood in Jerusalem, was being deported from her homeland by the sons and daughters of recent arrivals, who came to Palestine mere decades ago with European-born ethos of racial Darwinism, invoking biblical fairy tales and divinely ordained entitlement.

It occurred to me, too, that all Palestinians — regardless of our conditions, ideologies, or the places of our imprisonment or exile — are forever bound together in a common history that begins with us and travels to the ancient past to one place on earth, like the many leaves and branches of a tree that lead to one trunk. And we are also bound together by the collective pain of watching people from all over the world colonize not only the physical space of our existence, but the spiritual, familial and cultural arenas of our existence. I think we also find power in this unending, unhealed wound. We write our stories from it. Sing our songs and dabke there, too. We make art from these aches. We pick up rifles and pens, cameras and paint brushes in this space, throw stones, fly kites and flash victory and power fists there.

The other book I read was Colson Whitehead’s acclaimed, spellbinding novel, “The Underground Railroad.” It is the story of

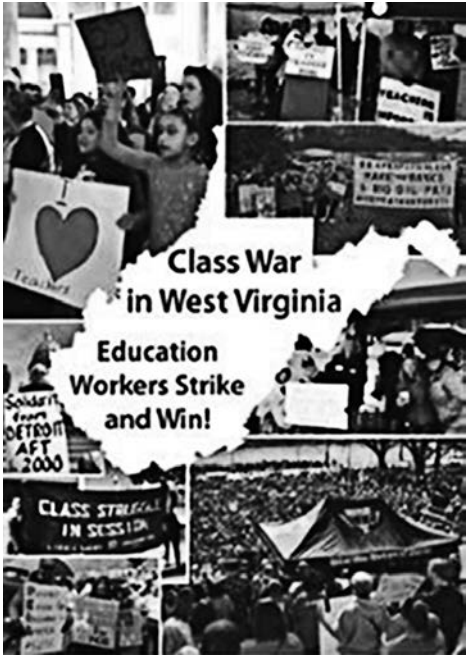
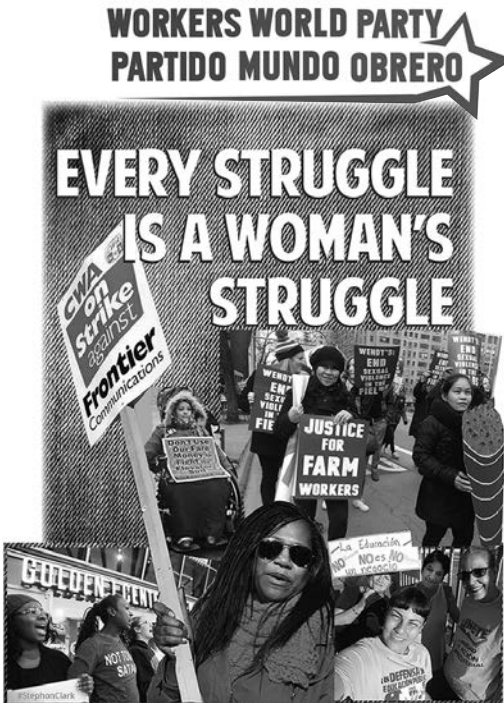


Cora, a girl born into slavery ... [who] escapes the plantation with her friend Caesar, their determined slave catcher Ridgeway on their trail in the Underground Railroad — a real-life metaphor made into an actual railroad in the novel. The generational trauma of inconceivable bondage is all the more devastating in this novel because it is told matter-of-factly from the vantage of the enslaved. Another people’s collective unhealed wound laid bare, an excruciatingly powerful common past, a place of their power too, a source of their stories and their songs.

I am back in my house now, with my daughter and our beloved dogs and cats, but my heart doesn’t ever leave Palestine. So, I am there, and we will continue to meet each other in the landscapes of our literature, art, cuisine and all the riches of our shared culture.

After writing this statement, I learned that the press conference is being held at Dar el Tifl. I lived the best years of my childhood there, despite my separation from family and the sometimes difficult conditions we faced living under Israeli occupation. Dar el Tifl is the legacy of one of the most admirable women I have ever known: Sitt Hind el Husseini. She saved me in more ways than I suppose she knew, or that I understood at the time. She saved a lot of us girls. She gathered us from all the broken bits of Palestine. She gave us food and shelter, educated and believed in us, and in turn made us believe we were worthy. There is no more appropriate place than Dar el Tifl to read this statement.

I want to leave you with one more thought I had in that jail cell, and it is this: Israel is spiritually, emotionally and culturally small despite the large guns they point at us — or perhaps precisely because of them. It is to their own detriment that they cannot accept our presence in our homeland, because our humanity remains intact and our art is beautiful and life affirming, and we aren’t going anywhere but home. □



Read at workers.org/books.

# After the Pittsburgh massacre

# Solidarity against racism, anti-Semitism

By Shelley Ettinger

Solidarity against racism, anti-immigrant xenophobia and anti-Semitism has swept the United States since the Oct. 27 Pittsburgh synagogue massacre. Individuals and organizations from many communities are uniting to push back the rise of openly fascist forces.

At the same time, these forces have stepped up their attacks. There's been a surge of racist and anti-Semitic vandalism and violence. President Trump eggs this on with his ever-escalating campaign to demonize Central American refugees and pump up all forms of racism.

In the days leading to the Pittsburgh killings, the shooter Robert Bowers wrote on the white-supremacist social network Gab that Jews are “the enemy of the people.” Just hours before he entered the Tree of Life synagogue shouting, “All Jews must die,” and murdered 11 people, Bowers posted: “HIAS likes to bring invaders in that kill our people. I can't sit by and watch my people get slaughtered. Screw your optics, I'm going in.”

HIAS is the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. According to its website, HIAS was founded in 1881 “to assist Jews fleeing pogroms in Russia and Eastern Europe,” and “now welcomes all who have fled persecution.” Recently HIAS has supported Central Americans seeking asylum in the U.S.

In July, HIAS led 40 rabbis on a solidarity trip to the Texas border. On Oct. 19-20, a week before Bowers shot up the Pittsburgh synagogue, HIAS organized “National Refugee Shabat 2018,” encouraging synagogues across the country to dedicate their Sabbath services to supporting immigrants.

This is the kind of solidarity Trump seeks to break. He announced his candidacy in June 2015 by calling Mexicans rapists and criminals. He began his administration by trying to ban anyone from Muslim countries from entering the U.S. After Klan and Nazi thugs marched through Charlottesville, Va., in



Protesters sat shiva for victims of the Pittsburgh synagogue massacre and banged on the doors of the Metropolitan Republican Club, New York City, Oct. 27.

August 2017, killing Heather Heyer and injuring many, he characterized them as “very fine people.” Throughout the current election campaign, he has unleashed ever more brazen white nationalist rhetoric.

### Assault on oppressed people and working-class unity

To block working-class unity against his boss class, Trump has given the green light for the most vile scum to rise to the surface.

A sharp rise in racist attacks against Black, Latinx and other communities of color is the direct result. Just three days before the Pittsburgh killings, another white supremacist, this one in Jefferson-town, Ky., tried to enter a Black church to kill parishioners. Failing to gain entry, he shot up a nearby Kroger supermarket, killing two Black people.

Five days after Pittsburgh, someone defaced the African Burial Ground Monument in New York's lower Manhattan with terrible racist graffiti.

Though most don't make the national news, many more racist acts happen every day around the country. Racist police routinely shoot down Black people, rarely with any repercussions.

When Dylann Roof murdered nine Black people in a racist massacre at Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal

Church in Charleston, S.C., on June 17, 2015, he did so the day after Trump announced he'd run for president.

Anti-Muslim violence has been on a sharp upswing. Since Trump's inauguration, the group South Asian Americans Leading Together “has documented 416 incidents of hate violence and xenophobic political rhetoric against Muslim, Sikh, South Asian,

Arab and Middle Eastern communities,” according to a statement.

The synagogue slaughter, driven by both anti-immigrant racism and anti-Semitism, was the worst violence against Jewish people in U.S. history. But it cannot come as a surprise. The number of anti-Jewish incidents in this country surged by over 50 percent in 2017. They ranged from anti-Semitic graffiti, to vandalism against cemeteries, community centers and synagogues, to physical assaults.

Even in New York City — with a Jewish population of over 1.5 million, by far the biggest in any city in the world — there has been a sharp rise in such incidents. In the week after Pittsburgh, anti-Jewish graffiti was found in synagogues in several different parts of the city. Swastikas appeared on the walls of Jewish schools and on graves in Jewish cemeteries.

### Sorrow and solidarity

Grief, rage and solidarity marked the aftermath of the Tree of Life massacre. In Pittsburgh, thousands marched in sorrow and anger — and to tell Trump he was not welcome. Tens of thousands signed a letter with that message.

On Nov. 3, Pittsburgh's first Sabbath services were held since the killings. Jewish people said they were overwhelmed at the outpouring of support as Muslims,

Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and nonreligious people attended.

Within days of the synagogue killings, Arab-American, Iranian and Muslim organizations had raised hundreds of thousands of dollars in donations to the victims' families. The Rev. Eric S.C. Manning of Mother Emanuel Church flew to Pittsburgh, where he spoke at the funeral for Rose Mallinger, one of Bowers' victims.

In New York, 14 young Jewish activists were arrested for sitting shiva — the Jewish mourning ritual — at the Metropolitan Republican Club. Just last month, the club had hosted a meeting of the white supremacist grouping calling itself the Proud Boys, after which the fascist thugs had attacked protesters outside.

Strong statements against anti-Semitism and racism were issued by the AFL-CIO and many national unions, including AFSCME, UNITE HERE, CWA and SEIU. Internationally, vigils, marches and services were held in cities on every continent. The Cuban Embassy in Washington sent condolences to the mayor of Pittsburgh.

And in Palestine, statements denouncing the synagogue killings were issued by both the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora and by Hamas, the elected governing party in Gaza.

Israeli politicians, meanwhile, used the tragedy to defend Trump and attack supporters of the Palestinian national liberation struggle. The newspaper Ha'aretz headlined its report: “American Jews may never forgive Israel for its reaction to the Pittsburgh massacre.”

In Washington, Sen. Cory Booker of New Jersey announced Nov. 2 that he will support the so-called Israel Anti-Boycott Act. The likely 2020 Democratic presidential candidate framed his announcement as a response to anti-Semitism.

In fact, the bill is an unconstitutional measure to outlaw support for the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign against the Israeli apartheid settler state. Rabbi Alissa Wise of Jewish Voice for Peace called Booker's statement “a sad, wrong and truly dangerous decision.” □

## Commentary

# Labor against racist, anti-Semitic, anti-LGBTQ attacks

By a Jewish New York City public sector worker and union member

When I arrived at my Local's union meeting Oct. 30, I was wondering whether anything would be mentioned about the horrific Pittsburgh synagogue massacre. I am one of very few Jewish members of my Local.

My Local has fought to make the city of New York comply with the 1963 Equal Pay Act, so that our predominantly women-of-color membership is paid the same salaries with the same job titles as Caucasian males like myself. This is a cause that I have proudly supported on the bargaining committee.

After the massacre, I was depressed and remembered the stories of U.S. anti-Semitism that my father related to me when I was a teenager. About how bullies would pull down the pants of my father and his brothers “to see if they were circumcised.” (Circumcision is a common medical proce-

duce experienced by Jewish male children.) About how his schoolmates in Jim Crow Atlanta tormented him by saying they'd taken part in lynching a Jewish man.

My father was a schoolboy in 1913, when an innocent Jewish man, Leo Frank, was found guilty of murdering a young Gentile girl, Mary Phagan in Atlanta. After his death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment, Frank was ultimately kidnapped and lynched in 1915 by a group calling itself the Knights of Mary Phagan. A few months later, the group changed its name to the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan when they burned a cross on Stone Mountain, marking the second rise of the Klan in the U.S.

These stories deeply affected me and helped instill in me a passion for fighting against racism and all bigotry wherever it shows its ugly head. When my father died, I thanked him again at his funeral for this gift to me.

My Local allowed me to write an arti-

cle in its newspaper on Frank's case on the 100th anniversary of the lynching, titled “An Injury to One Is an Injury to All.”

At our meeting after the Pittsburgh massacre, my Local president, the first African-American woman ever to hold such a position in my Local, asked for a moment of silence. Unfortunately, the announcement she made was that 11 people had been murdered in a church for praying.

I passed a note to the chair, and when the next speaker had completed his report, the president corrected her mistake, saying that 11 Jewish people had been murdered in the synagogue in the worst anti-Semitic attack in U.S. history. She added that our Local does not condone any type of anti-Semitism. Then, she asked me in front of the membership, “Was that OK?” to which I emotionally responded with two thumbs up.

When I got home and checked the Internet, I noticed that on Oct. 29, Chris

Shelton, the president of my Local's international, Communication Workers of America, which represents more than 700,000 workers in the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico, had issued the following awesome solidarity statement:

“Events of the past week have shaken our nation. Violent extremists have targeted African Americans, Jewish Americans and political leaders, and the Trump administration has declared its intention to dehumanize transgender and gender non-conforming members of our communities.

“I call on all CWA members and retirees to honor those who lost their lives this week in Jeffersontown, Ky., and Pittsburgh, Pa., by rededicating themselves to the fight for justice. We must put our union values into action by building stronger connections within our communities and by confronting white supremacist and anti-Semitic ideologies at every opportunity.” □

# Rank-and-file work

## Victory in Detroit hotel strike

By Martha Grevatt

After almost a month of 24-hour pickets at the swank Westin Book Cadillac hotel in downtown Detroit, UNITE HERE Local 24 has reached a settlement with the Marriott-owned hotel. While details have not been made public, a union news release indicated that its concerns about wages, health care costs and working conditions have been addressed.

Workers on the line were jubilant when they got the news Nov. 3. The victory came shortly after the news media acknowledged what Local 24 had been saying for weeks: The hotel's vacancy rate, normally around 10 percent, had risen to 60 or 70 percent as a result of the strike. Even then supervisors and the few workers who scabbed could not keep up with basic housekeeping.

One of the chants on the noisy lines, where a drumbeat was constant during

the hours the city allowed it, was “Dirty rooms! Dirty sheets! Take your business down the street!” Some notables did just that, including the Toronto Maple Leafs hockey team and pop superstar Elton John.

After the 160 housekeepers, cooks and other workers walked off the job, a constant stream of supporters stopped by to walk the line with them. The strike shut down the hotel's Starbucks store, so a sign offered an alternative: Have coffee with the strikers.

Congratulatory tweets have been arriving, including from other UNITE HERE locals that are still striking Marriott around the country. Two days before the victory, leaders of the worldwide walkout at Google tweeted solidarity.

Local 24 tweeted: “Union workers at the Westin Book Cadillac proved that even in a right-to-work state, when working people stand in solidarity, we win.” □



WW PHOTO: MARTHA GREVATT

Striking hotel workers in Detroit were staying strong here on Oct. 29, remaining on the picket line 24 hours a day for a month for the win.

## Tech workers walk out in global rolling strike: ‘Time’s up, Google’

Continued from page 1

ing to strike a blow at the very corporate culture that enables sexual misconduct.

### Tech workers fed up!

Silicon Valley workers have become disgusted with the misogyny, racial inequality, anti-LGBTQ bigotry and elitism within the technology industry. It is notorious for its lack of workplace diversity and its tolerance of sexual misconduct.

At Google, the catalyst for the strike was the Oct. 25 New York Times revelation about a secret severance package of \$90 million given to Andy Rubin, Android software creator, despite the

company finding credible a sexual harassment claim against him. Two other executives accused of sexual misconduct were given substantial exit packages. A third was kept in a highly paid position.

The Rubin story sparked an immediate outcry. At a staff meeting, Google workers objected to the corporation's mishandling of sexual misconduct claims, and the next day called for a walkout on Nov. 1. Protest information was posted on Twitter at #GoogleWalkout, and it spread like wildfire. Thousands of workers instantly responded. Some actions were organized in one day! What began as a “women's walkout” quickly became a multigendered movement.

In New York magazine dated Nov. 1, the seven initiators of the Google walkout — Claire Stapleton, Tanuja Gupta, Meredith Whittaker, Celie O'Neill-Hart, Stephanie Parker, Erica Ander and Gaber — told of thousands of incidents of sexual misconduct throughout the company for years. Brimming with exasperation, they declared: “No one is going to do it for us. We are here standing together, protecting and supporting each other. We demand an end to the sexual harassment, discrimination and the systemic racism that fuel this destructive culture.”

Organizers thanked the McDonald's workers who struck against sexual abuse and the thousands of women in the year-old #Me Too Movement who emboldened them by publicizing their stories of mistreatment. (The Time's Up organization, an outgrowth of that movement, backed the Google strikers.)

The core group broadened the walkout demands to cover pay equity, an end to racist and gender bias, and protections for “gig” workers not covered by labor laws. They called for an end to forced arbitration in cases of harassment and discrimination; a commitment to end pay and opportunity inequity, with a commitment to have women of color at every company level; and accessible data on gender, race and ethnicity compensation gaps, promotion rates and job advancement opportunities.

The initiators insisted that executives make public reports on sexual harassment complaints and their outcomes, and establish a global, safe, anonymous process for employees to register sexual harassment complaints. This would be accessible to all full-time workers and gig

workers such as temporary employees, vendors and contractors. Finally, they called for an employee representative on the company board and a chief diversity officer who speaks directly to the board.

On the question of diversity, although Google claims to have “an open and inclusive environment,” the facts say otherwise. The June 15 Washington Post reported that Google's global workforce is 69 percent male, with only 20 percent of tech jobs held by women. In the U.S., Black workers comprise only 2.5 percent of the workforce, while Latinx employees are 3.6 percent. The company has been sued for systemic gender pay inequity. Pro-diversity advocates have been harassed both on and off social media.

Irene Knapp, software engineer and protester, explained that the high pay and perks are meant “to make people feel special for working here and like normal working conditions don't apply. But ... Google is a large corporation and it treats its staff badly in certain ways in certain situations.” (wired.com, Nov. 1)

This isn't the first protest at Google. The activist workforce has also opposed racism and pro-war policies. In April, 3,000 employees denounced the company's contract with the Pentagon to develop technology to better identify human targets for drone killings. A dozen engineers resigned. The company backed down.

### Misogyny, abuse and the class struggle

Through the #Me Too Movement, women thought that, by publicizing their stories, major changes would occur. Companies would root out their culture of misogyny, gender inequity and sexual harassment. That movement did make ad-

## Disabled artists and activists fight for minimum wage equality

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of disabled people but also improve them.

The speaker, a member of a New York City public sector workers union's Committee on People with Disabilities, drew the applause of the audience when he stated, “Just as women and minorities are protected from discrimination in wages by the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, we workers with disabilities need protection against wage discrimination too. We invoke the slogan of the labor movement: ‘An Injury to One Is an Injury to All.’ If even one disabled worker in the U.S. is paid a subminimum wage, then all U.S. workers are injured!”

### The message: inclusion

The message was clear: inclusion. It's not a difficult goal to achieve, but it is often overlooked. When disabled people are included, they are often underpaid or not paid at all.

Educators are critical in developing this understanding of inclusion. Teachers can bring this message to their students. One teacher said he thought it made him a better teacher when disabled students were mainstreamed into his classes and he had to redevelop his curriculum to make it instructive for all his students.

The second half of the town hall was the presentation of artworks created by

the panelists. There was a series of paintings, followed by a short, silent, black-and-white video that was particularly thought-provoking. It was a video of a man pushing against an immovable wall. He would brace himself, push against the wall, and nothing happened. He would change his position, dig in his heels and push a little harder, but the wall still didn't fall. He squared his shoulders, widened his stance and pushed again, and the wall stood firm.

It was a metaphor for many things — the struggle of people with disabilities to be included in mainstream society, the struggle of the Puerto Rican people for independence, in short, any quest which is difficult to attain — you supply the metaphor.

The final performance was a poem delivered by a disabled author entitled “We All Pile Up.” The poem included: “At the gas station, we all pile up. At the gas station, we all pile up.” And then he crumpled up a piece of paper and tossed it on the floor. He continued with different locations, crumpling up other pieces of paper and tossing them on the floor, where they all piled up.

Ableist bosses and their friends in government should take notice: Disabled workers and artists are not willing to let the injustices committed against them just pile up! □

## Google sued for pay discrimination

A hearing for a proposed class action lawsuit was conducted in San Francisco Oct. 26 on behalf of 8,300 women who had worked for Google in California since September 2013 in such jobs as product management, software engineering and technical writing. The case follows a major inquiry by the U.S. Department of Labor in 2017, which reported that its audit of Google revealed “systemic compensation disparities against women pretty much across the entire workforce.” The inquiry came after Google, a federal contractor subject to equal opportunity laws, refused to hand over employment records to the DoL. Google was subsequently ordered to disclose salary documents to DoL, which found that Google was paying women less than men doing similar work, while denying promotions and career opportunities to qualified women.

— Report by Sue Davis

# Workers on the move!

## Why capitalists love Trump's NLRB

By Martha Grevatt

A majority of the five-member National Labor Relations Board are currently Trump appointees. With one seat vacant, they hold three seats, and that will jump to four when Trump replaces an outgoing board member. The president also appointed NLRB General Counsel Peter Robb.

This year John Ring — who along with Marvin Kaplan, William Emmanuel and Robb had previously been attorneys in the field of “union avoidance” — was made chair of the NLRB.

Since the last year's appointments of Kaplan, Emmanuel and Robb, a number of NLRB rulings have made it harder to organize unions and harder for unions to represent members. The business mouthpiece



Los Angeles janitors rally on April 29, 2016.

Wall Street Journal ran a story last Jan. 31 headlined, “Trump's Appointees Are Restoring Reason to the NLRB.” One example of this “reason” occurred when Emmanuel was caught in a conflict-of-interest scandal, having previously represented a company whose case was before the board.

The board's bias toward capital has been demonstrated repeatedly. Most recently on Oct. 26, General Counsel Robb imposed new limits on a union's fundamental right to picket. This right has been constricted since passage of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947, which has been used repeatedly to disallow mass picketing that effectively deters scabbing.

Robb's latest order, targeting janitors picketing a building where they worked, further erodes this basic right. Robb ruled that they could not picket the building because it was not owned by the cleaning company they worked for.

Robb's interpretation of Taft-Hartley provisions prohibiting “secondary” actions — against employers who do not directly employ a group of workers — goes against NLRB rulings under earlier administrations that recognized “joint employment.” Robb overturned a decision of an NLRB administrative judge who had determined that Preferred Building Services, which contracted with the janitors' direct employer, Ortiz Janitorial Services, was involved in supervising the workers and was thus considered a “joint employer.”

Millions of workers in today's economy, with its tangled web of supply chains, are

now employed by third-party subcontractors, where the company that contracts with other businesses still has a say on terms of employment and sometimes even supervises the workers.

Unions need the right to target a larger company that dictates terms to a smaller one.

Last December, the board made the definition of joint employment more restrictive. As the WSJ article gleefully points out, this could allow McDonald's to refuse to bargain with workers directly employed by a franchisee.

Now, with the latest ruling against picketing, could workers trying to unionize a particular franchise or group of franchises be prohibited from picketing McDonald's headquarters or a meeting of McDonald's stockholders?

**A broad assault on workers in motion**

In the actual case of the California janitors, as well as the hypothetical case of McDonald's cited by the WSJ, the NLRB is deliberately acting to weaken the powerful movement of low-wage workers, who are overwhelmingly people of color, immigrants, women and youth.

The NLRB also attacked retail workers in 2017 when it denied the right of salespeople in Macy's fragrance and cosmetics department to organize as a “micro-unit.” Now, a union would have to organize all the store's employees who are involved in similar work.

This decision could impact the drive to organize Volkswagen in Tennessee, where

the company is refusing to honor an earlier NLRB decision that skilled maintenance workers who voted for union representation are a bona fide micro-unit and are entitled to bargain with VW.

In September, the board amended the standard under which a member can charge their union with violating the Duty of Fair Representation. Up until now a union member could file charges if a grievance handler failed to make “a good faith effort” on their behalf. Now a union can be held liable for “mere negligence” or “weak representation.”

On the surface this might not seem like an anti-union ruling: What's wrong with compelling union representatives to do their

job? But this ruling forces local unions to devote additional resources to tracking every grievance at every step and to keeping up with communications with every single member who has a grievance. Of course, every effort should be made to achieve this standard when resources permit. But a smaller local union that can't afford full-time staff or representatives could find itself underwater trying to stay on top of every dispute with management.

A “weak representation” charge could also be leveled when a grievance handler, who makes a good faith effort on behalf of a member, nevertheless loses a grievance due to management intransigence or arbitrator bias. A charge could even be filed by a member disciplined for just cause — such as documented racist or sexual harassment — if their representative cannot get the discipline or discharge reversed.

Considering the general orientation of the NLRB, it can be concluded that this ruling is intended to hurt unions rather than help members.

The NLRB has never been a consistently reliable friend of unions. Its original purpose was to maintain class peace, not to make it easier for unions to engage in class struggle. Now, in the generalized anti-labor climate epitomized by the 2018 Supreme Court Janus decision, the board is openly functioning as a union-busting agency.

Unions were born in class struggle. Now it should be crystal clear that class struggle is the way forward. Teacher strikes, Fight for \$15 and the mass worldwide walkout at Google are examples to follow. □

## gle!

vances by breaking the silence and the denial surrounding these issues and showed this aspect of women's oppression exists throughout every sphere of U.S. society.

Actors told their stories. Young athletes publicly denounced sexual abuse they experienced. Farmworkers and service workers spoke out. All of these courageous people deserve recognition and appreciation. Even though this movement has shaken things up, many companies resist change and retain backward practices, allowing inequality, discrimination, harassment and abuse to continue.

This struggle takes place within capitalist society, in which misogyny, racism and bigotry against im/migrants and LGBTQ individuals are entrenched. The capitalist class enforces oppression and inequality — and promotes backward ideologies to keep the multinational, multigender and multigenerational working class divided. The bosses and their political representatives always aim to stop people's movements. However, building a united fightback of workers and allies is essential to holding on to basic rights and making gains.

The workers have tools with which to fight back. History has shown that their ability to withhold their labor power is a strong weapon. The bosses are well aware of this. The many strikes and job actions that have taken place throughout the U.S. — and the world — show that workers can make progress by using this tactic to improve workplace conditions, push the bosses back and challenge their oppression.

The heroic McDonald's workers, led by Black and Latinx women, im/migrants and LGBTQ people, held a one-day, 10-city strike against workplace sexual abuse on Sept. 18. They showed the way forward for other workers not only in the service sector, but in other industries as well.

Women and gender and sexually oppressed people are workers. When they assert their power and fight back together against the bosses, as part of the multinational, multigendered and multigenerational working class, they advance their struggles and those of all workers.

*Sue Davis and Martha Grevatt contributed to this article.*

### 'Every Struggle is a Woman's Struggle'

Read pamphlets that are compilations of WW articles online at: [www.workers.org/books](http://www.workers.org/books)



New York  
WW PHOTO: RENEE IMPERATO

Trans activist group STRIVE rallies on Oct. 28 in Pensacola, Fla.

eradicate the progress made on trans issues in recent years. With only a few days' notice almost 300 people attended. This is another sign of trans people's fierce

determination to beat back the bigoted attacks of Trump and his backers. Stone-wall Means Fight Back!

— Report by Rene'e Imperato.

# Protest forces Pa. prisons to back off

By **Betsey Piette**  
Philadelphia

Corrections Secretary John Wetzel admitted that a month of protests, public hearings and social media campaigns have forced the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections to back down on new rules blocking prisoners' access to books, letters and even legal correspondence.

With over 300 donated subscriptions of Workers World newspaper sent to prisoners in Pennsylvania, WW has had to challenge prison bans on specific issues several times since January 2017. Along with individual prisoners who have filed grievances when they do not receive an issue, WW has successfully forced the prisons to let most "banned" papers in.

On Nov. 1, the state DOC revised its new draconian policy and allowed book orders to again be sent "directly to inmates." The move is hailed by organizations like Pittsburgh-based Book 'Em and Philadelphia Books Through Bars, which for years have provided free, donated books to prisoners who request them.

Book shipments must still go through a centralized processing facility before getting to prisoners. Questions remain about how the DOC will ensure books



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

In Philadelphia on Oct 10, prisoner solidarity groups protested new harsh, exploitative regulations in Pennsylvania prisons.

reach the inmates who ordered them.

Under the September DOC policy, no books could be sent directly to prisoners, whether from donation groups or purchased for inmates directly from publishers. The policy required prisoners to order from a catalog of 8,500 high-priced ebooks selected by the DOC, plus purchase expensive ebook readers. Or they had to request books from prison kiosks that severely limited prisoners' access.

**Punitive mail policies still need reversal**

Under the new policies, all prisoners' mail must still be sent to and scanned by Smart Communications, a private for-profit company in Florida. Scanned copies are emailed to the DOC before they get printed and delivered to prisoners. Originals are destroyed while the DOC keeps copies in a searchable database.

Legal mail is now copied and given to the recipient, with the original — and

## Prison crackdown, prisoner boycott

*This Workers World interview was conducted with Pennsylvania prison activist Bryant Arroyo in SCI Frackville on Sept. 23. The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections started a crackdown on prisoners in the middle of the nationwide prison strike that took place from Aug. 21 to Sept. 9. The repression included restrictions on visitors, increased health risks and a new for-profit mail system that violates prisoner-attorney confidentiality. In response, Arroyo called for a prisoner boycott of the DOC corporate mail system.*

**PART 2**

By **Ted Kelly**

The prison crackdown is meant to exacerbate the breakdown of social ties caused by mass incarceration. Some friends and family understandably are scared to put themselves at the mercy of prison officials at a time of such intense repression.

The day Arroyo called for the mail boycott, an older couple who came to visit the man's brother was turned away because the woman was wearing a bra with a small metal clasp, which set off a metal detector.

"It's straight-up sexual harassment," Arroyo commented to WW. The "no-bra" policy is apparently unique to SCI Frackville and reportedly not in force at other Pennsylvania Department of Corrections facilities.

The PDOC crackdown also included a punitive 90-day suspension of commissary food during visits. Friends and family are usually permitted to purchase from vending machines in the visiting room. Now a row of six machines stands completely empty at the back of the room.

"We literally can no longer break bread with our community," said Arroyo.

Visits with children are necessarily shorter when parents and guardians can't buy them snacks. Without access to vending machine drinks, visitors are also subjected to the same water that prisoners are forced to drink, with little kids hoisted up to toxic water fountains to quench their thirst. The guards and prison staff still have access to bottled spring water and soda.

Many Pennsylvania prisons, including Frackville and Mahanoy in Schuylkill County, are situated in a coal mining and fracking region that has become known as a cancer cluster site. Arroyo points out that Schuylkill has a remarkably high incidence of polycythemia vera, a rare blood cancer caused by waterborne pathogens.

Arroyo calls these health risks from the prison system "environmental terrorism." He himself is awaiting a second round of throat surgery to remove polyps growing on his vocal cords; he is confident these are the result of 25 years of drinking poisoned water in Pennsylvania prisons.

In the prison lobby, this reporter also witnessed two toddlers being subjected to magnetic wand and swabs meant to detect trace residue of narcotics, the same security protocols required of adult visitors.

When Arroyo's daughter called to plan a visit with her small children, he was compelled to tell her to wait until the punitive three-month visitor policy expires. "I'm not going to subject my grandchildren to this."

### Democrats lead the crackdown on prisoners

Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf is just one of many new law-and-order Democrats who display a ruthless dedication to expanding the system of mass incarceration. This reactionary cadre includes Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney and District Attorney Larry Krasner, as well as national figures like former California Chief Prosecutor Kamala Harris, now U.S. senator from California.

Wolf also steadfastly refuses to hear demands from im/migrant rights activists demanding he issue an emergency order to close Pennsylvania's Berks Family Detention Facility, which is under contract with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Other immigrant and refugee concentration camps across the country are among the 50 facilities the new Smart system counts as "clients."

ICE's kidnappings, imprisonment and rampant abuse get defended under the guise of "national security." Similarly, Wolf's strategy is to tie the crackdown on prisoners to "security and safety" in state

facilities, creating a strong obstacle to efforts to fight recent prison repression in the courts.

Additionally, a poorly fabricated "health crisis" among prison staff was the apparent excuse for the August lockdown. But staff accounts of being sickened by synthetic drugs transmitted through the mail system collapsed under public scrutiny.

Arroyo notes that the PDOC appears to have concocted the "health crisis" to justify smothering prison strike efforts in Pennsylvania, which coincided with the Aug. 21 to Sept. 9 national strike.

The emergency lockdown was implemented in late August. After the Labor Day weekend, the omnibus prison regulations were already being implemented, including a more repressive visitor policy estimated to cost the state an additional \$15 million to put in place.

Meanwhile, the commonwealth of Virginia under Democratic Gov. Ralph Northam has announced a similar set of repressive measures for its prisons. Warden David Call of Nottoway Correctional Center in Burkeville released a Sept. 20 memo that referred to "feminine hygiene products being an ideal way to conceal contraband." In an outrageous move that mirrors the Frackville "no-bra" policy, he declared that "the use of tampons and or menstrual cup hygiene items during visitation are prohibited." (Richmond Times-Dispatch, Sept. 24)

The Virginia DOC memo continues: "Offender visitors who have been recognized by the body scanner machine having a foreign object that could possibly be a tampon and has failed to remove such item prior to being screened, will have their visitation terminated for the day and will have their visitation privileges reviewed."

Gov. Roy Cooper of North Carolina,

highly sensitive — documents kept on file for 15 days.

On Oct. 30, Davon Hayes, a prisoner challenging a life sentence, filed a lawsuit claiming that the state's policy concerning legal correspondence violates his First Amendment rights. The Pennsylvania American Civil Liberties Union, the Pennsylvania Institutional Law Project, the Abolitionist Law Center and the Amistad Law Project also filed lawsuits seeking an injunction against the DOC, saying the policy "deprives Mr. Hayes of an indispensable — and often the only viable — means of communication with his attorneys."

Often prisoners find that scanned letters arrive with pages missing. Cards, photographs and even drawings from children are scanned, with the prison destroying the original items and giving inmates black-and-white copies. Families continue to demand this practice be stopped.

It remains unclear exactly how the new regulations will impact prisoners' receipt of weekly publications. Workers World editors say they will continue to fight for prisoners' right to have access to news written by and for workers and oppressed people. □



WWP members Joe Piette and Ted Kelly with Bryant Arroyo (center) at SCI Frackville.

another Democrat, failed to evacuate prisoners held in state facilities even as Hurricane Florence wreaked havoc across the state.

### 'There is a face, there is a voice.'

Arroyo insists that we must see prisoners as individual human beings to fuel needed collective action. Millions of people are incarcerated in this country, which means millions more family members and friends are affected by this system. He urges his fellow inmates to continue to fight, and to find people on the outside who will actually listen — not just cynical aspirants to elected office. Above all, he urges prisoners across the country not to give up.

Arroyo himself is an innocent man who has been sentenced to life in prison for a crime he did not commit. He says: "I could be bitter. But I choose not to take that path. Nah, that's not what I want. They want you to mess up so they can put you in the hole. I don't give them that privilege."

Of his beloved daughter, Genesis, he says he "raised her through the confines." This summer he condensed a lengthy essay he wrote, "A Dad's Honor, a Daughter's Dream," and managing to get it down to 15 minutes, he called in to Genesis' wedding ceremony to read it as a toast to his daughter.

Despite this particularly trying time of reaction and repression, Bryant Arroyo retains his optimism through one of his most contagious tactics: a sense of humor.

"You've heard the tune that goes, 'Video killed the radio star?'" he asks, breaking into song. "Well, the DOC killed the mail!"

# New economic plan for Puerto Rico

## ‘A cruel ordeal through austerity’

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

“The people of Puerto Rico need and deserve plentiful good jobs, a dynamic and prosperous economy, affordable and reliable electricity, and an efficient and responsive public sector.” That is how the summary of the draft of the Fiscal Control Board’s new fiscal plan for Puerto Rico begins — like a fairy tale. Titled “Restoring Growth and Prosperity” and dated Oct. 23, it was published on the Board’s (called Junta in Puerto Rico) website, oversightboard.pr.gov.

But this tale, conceived by armies of consultants and law firms, mostly based in the United States, who charge millions to people who “deserve a good economy,” reveals a cruel austerity process that would destroy the Puerto Rican people’s very future.

Enclosed in air-conditioned offices, these consultants add and subtract the future of a people, expressed in multicolored graphics representing human lives reduced to simple numbers, who have to adjust to the Junta’s Machiavellian projections.

This is how the consultants determine, for example, that the University of Puerto Rico — the only public higher education entity in the archipelago and the institution that prepares its future — will be dismembered, rendered useless and ultimately destroyed. The only goal is to save money that the consultants will eventually use to pay the bondholders of the massive public debt of \$74 billion.

Founded in 1903, the UPR has great international prestige. It has provided the intellectual and scientific support for advances made in the colony despite the obstacles of colonization. The UPR is where U.S. agencies such as NASA recruit scientists for their projects; this brain drain is one more way of stealing from the people who subsidize these studies in the hope of achieving a more promising future.

Not only does the UPR prepare professionals for the development of the country, it is also an important source of critical thinking and active resistance against the neoliberal policies that for several decades the local government, at the behest of its colonizing master, has tried to implement in Puerto Rico.

### UPR promotes social justice

The UPR has also been a leveling agent of social justice, where the students with the least money can achieve their dreams of university studies without the heavy debt that their peers carry in the United States.

Now that will change if the Fiscal Control Board gets its way. Part of its plan is to increase tuition. In the next academic year, each credit will cost \$115, an increase of \$57. For students who can barely pay for their studies now, and who benefit from self-managed projects such as Community Cafeterias (Comedores Sociales), this increase will mean that continuing their studies will be impossible.

The Community Cafeterias emerged as a voluntary initiative of students who saw that many of their peers did not have enough money to maintain adequate nutrition. In these cafeterias the students pay what they can and thus have at least one guaranteed hot meal a day.

Besides increasing the cost per credit, the austerity measure for the UPR projects a decrease in the payroll of both teaching and nonteaching employees, a decrease in their pensions, the elimina-



Above, the Tribunal jury listens to the testimony of Rafael Cancel Miranda. Right, jurors at the International Tribunal on U.S. Colonial Crimes in Puerto Rico, Oct. 27 in New York.

tion of the Christmas bonus, an adjustment in payments for sick days, and a cut in the university’s contribution to the medical plan. These measures add up to impoverishing the working class of the UPR and its professors, leading them to a poor and insecure old age.

Not content with these devastating plans, the dictatorial Junta proposes the elimination of jobs and the reduction of the number of students and of university campuses.

Currently, the UPR consists of 11 campuses distributed throughout the island, including the Medical Sciences campus. The restructuring proposal contemplates the conglomeration by 2023 of the 11 campuses into three groups, plus the Medical Sciences campus. Within this plan, there would also be the anarchic elimination of subjects and specialties.

This reorganization, like all measures outlined by the Junta, has been put together without considering the needs of the people, without public hearings, and by ignoring proposals for savings by Puerto Rican specialists. The only criteria has been to pay the bondholders by economizing through elimination of services.

All these measures will have the effect of preventing people’s access to higher studies. Only the wealthiest class will be able to take advantage of them. Poverty will deepen at all levels.

If we add the impact of closing public schools — generally those that served the poorest sectors and those in the mountains — the result is that people with no possibility of education at any level, poor and desperate, will seek flight as refugees to the United States, increasing the depopulation of Puerto Rico.

Its Department of Education is now under the control of a U.S. mercenary, Secretary of Education Julia Keleher. Although not all the plans have yet been put into practice, already Keleher has, literally, blood on her hands. A few days ago, a teacher committed suicide as a result of the harassment and anarchic “educational” reforms imposed by the department.

### Tribunal on U.S. Colonial Crimes against Puerto Rico

A portion of the International Tribunal on U.S. Colonial Crimes against Puerto Rico, held in New York City on Oct. 27, featured Puerto Ricans presenting testimonies on the state of the economy.

National hero Rafael Cancel Miranda discussed the dictatorial role of the Junta. After mentioning some of the dictators imposed by the U.S., like Batista in Cuba, Trujillo in the Dominican Republic and Pinochet in Chile, he said that in Puerto Rico, the U.S. imposed not just one dictator, but a dictatorial board composed of seven members.

Economist Dr. Martha Quiñones Domínguez, who is also a UPR profes-



WW PHOTOS: JOE PIETTE

sor and president of Women Economists, presented a magnificent exposition of how U.S. colonial power in PR has been expressed in successive laws that have consolidated the legal framework for domination over the people. This includes military domination, the usurpation of land and the imposition of decisions against the welfare of the people, up to the current forced bankruptcy.

The latest of these laws is PROMESA, approved in 2016 by the U.S. Congress during President Barack Obama’s administration. This law established the dictatorial Junta. Dr. Quiñones showed how during the 1970s, when there was a resurgence of the independence movement, the U.S. created a dependency through federal “aid” to defeat anti-colonial resistance.

Rolando Emmanuelli Jiménez, an expert on the PROMESA Law and author of the book on the topic, testified on why it was imposed. Given the colonial condition of PR, the law expedites wealth extraction, the goal of U.S. colonial rule. He explained how Puerto Rico went bankrupt: “It cannot meet the levels of indebtedness it had to incur in order to subsidize direct foreign investment by United States investors.

“Puerto Rico built roads, prepared engineers, employees, gave subsidies, gave tax exemptions based on indebtedness, and these companies extract profits of the order of \$34 billion annually that are taken from PR with no contributions. Therefore, this imbalance where the government has to borrow to invest in roads, in services for this type of investment. ...

“That imbalance caused the colony to collapse and led to creating this Junta; but the problem with this Junta is not only that it imposes austerity measures to pay the creditors of the bonds. It also destroyed the limited scope of local government the U.S. Congress delegated to Puerto Rico based on Law 600 of the federal Congress of 1952 that allowed PR to establish a constitution.”

### Odious debt

For his part, José Nicolás Medina Fuentes, an expert on odious debt and author of the book on it, testified about how the “problem of the odious colonial-territorial public debt that is being imposed on the people of Puerto Rico is of a political character.

“Odious debt is a recognized legal concept ... it is a debt or a loan contract that occurs in a series of situations of great injustice for the affected populations. ... [A]n emblematic example of odious debt is the Cuban public debt to Spain [as of 1898]. ... In the Treaty of Paris in ... the

deliberations of the Spanish commissions and the U.S. commission prior to the signing of the Treaty of Paris, one of the most controversial judgments during those negotiations was the issue of Cuba’s colonial debt.

“On the one hand, the Spanish commissioners claimed that if they were going to cede some possessions, if they were going to renounce sovereignty over Cuba, then Cuba’s territorial public debt had to be assumed by the U.S. or by the Cuban people. And the U.S. commissioners were emphatic in saying that this debt was not a debt of the Cuban territorial treasury, but a debt of the Spanish treasury. ... In a colonial relationship, the public debt is the responsibility of the colonial power.

“That was the solution of the Cuban public debt in the Treaty of Paris.”

Therefore, the PR debt is the responsibility of the U.S. colonial power.

### Tribunal verdict

The verdict of the Oct. 27 Tribunal regarding the economy of PR concluded with the following points:

That this colonial imposition, through the so-called Fiscal Control Board, is directly responsible for the disastrous conditions that still exist in Puerto Rico more than a year after Hurricane Maria. U.S. corporations and banks, under the pretext of helping with reconstruction, have expropriated billions of dollars from the treasury, creating a humanitarian crisis.

That this colonial imposition has used the hurricane as a pretext to promote the U.S. government’s deep-rooted neoliberal and right-wing policies to privatize fundamental social services and destroy labor movements, especially in the fields of education and electricity.

And that the U.S. government imposed protocols that allowed and encouraged the corporate plundering of Puerto Rico’s natural resources and wealth, and the exploitation of Puerto Rican labor, promoting the myth and legend that Puerto Rico owes something to the U.S. government; in fact, the U.S. government and U.S. corporations owe an extraordinary debt to the people of Puerto Rico.

The Tribunal’s demands on the U.S. government were three:

1. The government of the United States acknowledges and apologizes for the aforementioned crimes against the Puerto Rican people.
2. The United States surrenders all property and power taken by force from the Puerto Rican people.
3. The United States pays reparations to the victims of the crime of colonialism. □

# Border war crimes

Four days before the midterm election, the U.S. “provocateur in chief” spewed poison deeds and words. He ordered 15,000 federal troops to police the border with Mexico. And he called for shooting any refugee trying to cross the border who throws stones.

While Trump isn’t the first U.S. president to send troops off to commit war crimes, he may well be the first to order a massacre of civilians on CSPAN. Two days later, after some troops laid barbed wire at the border, he praised the “beauty” of the wire.

When this president lies — which is when he breathes — he does it without mincing words. Some mistake that for being frank. It’s really being fascist. He gives a green light to the worst reactionary scum of capitalist U.S. society.

This particular attack on the refugees aims to provoke his racist, anti-immigrant base at campaign rallies. The result? Armed fascist “militia” say they’ll patrol the border. Overseas, the Nigerian army used Trump’s words to justify gunning down 49 civilians.

Those opposing Trump are organizing solidarity with the refugees from Central America. It’s now an integral part of opposing Trumpism. Worldwide, the Palestinian Grassroots Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign has called for a Nov. 9 action against all walls, from those in Palestine to the one on the U.S. border with Mexico.

Closer to home, military veterans appealed to active-duty GIs sent to the border to refuse and resist. Rory Fanning, former U.S. Army Ranger and War-Resister, and Spenser Rapone, former U.S. Army Ranger and Infantry Officer, War-Resister, write:

“To all active-duty soldiers:

“Your commander in chief is lying to you. You should refuse his orders to deploy to the southern U.S. border should you be called to do so. Despite what Trump and his administration are saying, the migrants moving north towards the U.S. are not a threat.

“These small numbers of people are escaping intense violence.

“In fact, much of the reason these men and women — with families just like yours and ours — are fleeing their homes is because of the U.S. meddling in their country’s elections. Look no further than Honduras, where the Obama administration supported the overthrow of a democratically elected president who was then replaced by a repressive dictator.

“These extremely poor and vulnerable people are desperate for peace. Who among us would walk a thousand miles with only the clothes on our back without great cause?

“Consider this as you are asked to confront these unarmed men, women and children from Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador. ...

“By every moral or ethical standard, it is your duty to refuse orders to ‘defend’ the U.S. from these migrants. History will look kindly upon you if you do. There are tens of thousands of us who will support your decision to lay your weapons down.” (tinyurl.com/ya8dwn6v)

Workers World joins this call and its promise that tens of thousands will support GIs who refuse to become war criminals.

Solidarity with the refugees!

**‘TURN THE GUNS AROUND’**  
Mutunies, Soldier Revolts and Revolutions  
Available at online booksellers

# Lessons of the election

In what could turn out to be the most expensive midterm election ever, preliminary results as of this writing show that the Democratic Party has gained 26 seats in the House of Representatives, giving it a 229 to 206 majority there.

At the same time, the Republican Party gained two Senate seats to boost its control over this millionaires’ club to 51 versus the Democrats’ 45. (Four additional Senate seats are still undecided.

What we need to ask is this: What effect will this election, within the framework of the two-party capitalist system, have on the struggles of workers — particularly women, people of color, im/migrants and the LGBTQ community?

Women played a major role in this election, both as candidates and as volunteers who for months canvassed and reached out to voters. Of the 26 House seats gained by the Democrats, it appears that a full 16 will be occupied by women.

Some of the hardest fought races, especially in the South, involved African-American candidates. One is Democrat Stacey Abrams, running for governor of Georgia, who reportedly trailed her Republican opponent by less than 1 percent of the vote. She announced early Wednesday morning that she was not conceding and that her campaign would make sure every vote was counted. A long history of voter suppression in Georgia has aimed at minimizing the Black vote.

Democrat Jered Polis won in Colorado — the first time an openly gay person has been elected governor of a state. Also for the first time, a transgender candidate was nominated by a major party. Christine Hallquist ran for governor of Vermont as a Democrat and got 40 percent of the vote — not enough to win, but a real breakthrough.

All this points to rejection of racism,

sexism and homophobia by a significant section of the population after two years of the virulently reactionary politics of the Trump administration.

In exit polls, voters said health care was the most important issue, ahead of the economy. Some 39 percent also said they went to the polls to express their opposition to Trump.

Trump’s election two years ago encouraged the rise of far right, openly racist and even fascist groups. This in turn has been countered by a growing progressive movement in the streets that has far outnumbered the bigots. Low-wage workers and teachers have held walkouts demanding higher pay and better conditions. Women have marched in the millions against misogyny and sexual abuse.

There’s no question that the energy of these mass struggles has now been reflected to some degree in the capitalist electoral arena. But this arena can also be a trap that limits, rather than enhances, these progressive movements.

Nancy Pelosi will become Speaker of the House now that the Democratic Party has a majority there. She has already announced, “We will have accountability and strive for bipartisanship with fairness on all sides.”

That is more than just an olive branch to the Republicans. It is a declaration that the Democratic Party leadership does not want a war with the racist, reactionary Trump administration and will seek to compromise with it. But this administration is already at war with all the progressive forces in this country.

Now is not the time to celebrate an illusory victory. It is the time to build the movement independent of both capitalist parties, taking nourishment from the progressive sentiments expressed by so many millions in this election. □

# Hidden history behind the Yemen war

By Deirdre Griswold

There is a huge gap in all Western reporting on the horrific tragedy unfolding right now in Yemen, where half the population faces starvation after years of brutal bombing by Saudi Arabia, using U.S. planes and satellite targeting.

This whiteout by the corporate media ignores the highly successful earlier history of socialist revolution in the southern half of Yemen, a time of great hope for the working people, especially youth and women.

The People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen lasted from 1967 to 1990. It made great strides in organizing the people of this small country at the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula to overcome poverty and underdevelopment.

Britain had seized the strategic port city of Aden in 1839 and held it tightly in its huge colonial web for more than a century. But by the 1960s, revolutionary movements in many formerly colonized nations fought to free their economies

from imperialist domination and empower the masses of people.

The optimism that existed in southern Yemen during that revolutionary period is heartbreaking to read about today, when the hopes of the people for social change are being drowned in a growing sea of blood.

The following descriptions of the history of the PDRY are from two bourgeois sources.

The Encyclopedia Britannica online writes: “By the early 1970s the government of the south had nationalized almost all land and housing, along with most banking, industrial, and other business enterprises in the country; thereafter, all new industries and businesses of any size were state-owned and state-operated. ...

“In North Yemen, women in cities and towns wore the sharsaf, a black skirt, scarf, and veil ensemble that covers the entire body. In South Yemen, the regime that succeeded the British after 1967 vigorously opposed this women’s dress code, and this opposition prevailed espe-

cially in the towns and cities. ...

“The decision [was made in 1990] by Mikhail Gorbachev, then president of the Soviet Union, to abandon that country’s support of the governments and policies of a number of eastern European states, some of which were South Yemen’s principal sources of financial, technical, and personnel assistance.”

After the fall of the Soviet Union, the socialist government in South Yemen was defeated in a civil war in which Saudi Arabia played a big part. The EB continues:

“Following the 1994 civil war, the regime of Col. ‘Alī’ Abd Allāh Šālih negotiated an agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank that committed Yemen to a multi-year matrix of structural adjustments in exchange for financial and economic incentives. The package of reforms and aid ... was designed to make Yemen both economically viable in a post-remittance era and more attractive to foreign investors in an increasingly globalized international economy.

“The reforms, which included the elimination of subsidies on many basic necessities, cuts in budget deficits, and the downsizing of the government and the public sector, were painful for many and generated widespread discontent and public protest.”

Encyclopedia.com acknowledges that the PDRY “made progress in bridging the gap between Aden and the rest of the

country, pursued social goals with some success, and made good use of limited resources in efforts to develop a very poor country. Despite pressures toward fragmentation, especially urgings from Saudi Arabia ... South Yemen held together during difficult political and economic times. This was largely the result of political will, agitation and organization.

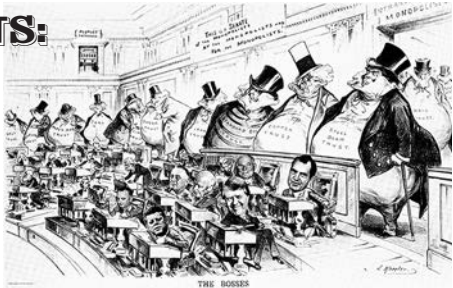
“The gap between city and countryside remained a constant concern of the leadership, and progress was made in extending education, medical care, and other social services beyond Aden and the other urban centers. In addition, a campaign was waged to extend women’s rights and other progressive ideas and institutions to the countryside. Great differences in wealth and property were eliminated, and the economy was organized along socialist lines, most notably in terms of a variety of agricultural and fishing collectives and cooperatives. ... [T]he regime remained relatively committed, egalitarian and free of corruption.”

An excellent and detailed eyewitness account of both the challenges and achievements of the PDRY, “Socialist Revolution in Arabia,” was published by MERIP Report in March 1973 and can be found at tinyurl.com/ybcdnglr.

How different life would be today for the people of Yemen had the imperialists and their henchmen in Saudi Arabia not targeted that brave revolution for obliteration. □

## MARKET ELECTIONS: How Democracy Serves the Rich by Vincent Copeland

Yes, elections are bought and sold — for increasingly astronomical sums of money. But that’s not the whole story.  
<https://tinyurl.com/MarketElections>



# At the U.N. General Assembly World says ‘No!’ to the blockade of Cuba

By Cheryl LaBash

The world said “No!” on Nov. 1 to the U.S. economic, financial and commercial blockade of Cuba. In the United Nations General Assembly, the final tally was 189 to 2 approving a resolution introduced by Cuba that denounces the unilateral, extraterritorial stranglehold imposed by the U.S. on its Caribbean neighbor. In this 27th U.N. vote on such a resolution, only the U.S. and Israel voted against it.

The Assembly also soundly condemned heightened U.S. aggressiveness toward socialist Cuba by overwhelmingly rejecting eight U.S. amendments to Cuba’s resolution. These amendments were the latest U.S. attempt to negate Cuba’s internationally recognized contribution to, and example of, human rights and human development.

Cuba’s Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla introduced his country’s resolution by documenting four examples of Cuban children who could not get the optimum medication they needed because of the U.S. blockade.

Although these children did survive, Rodríguez Parrilla reported, “In 2017, 224 people per 100,000 inhabitants died in Cuba without these treatments due to the blockade.” He added, “In the last year, more than 30 U.S. companies, such as Agilent, Cook Medical and Thermo Fisher Scientific, refused to sell Medicuba medicines, supplies and equipment essential to our health system or did not respond to repeated requests.”

Rodríguez Parrilla pointed out the blockade qualifies as an act of genocide under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. These facts may be a surprise to U.S. travelers enjoying direct flights from U.S. airports to many Cuban destinations on numerous airlines. But the blockade is real for Cubans who experience the human damage and suffering behind the headlines.

Rodríguez Parrilla’s stressed in his remarks to the Assembly: “The objective of the blockade, anchored in the Cold War, has not changed over time.

“The infamous classified memo of Deputy Secretary of State Lester Mallory of April 6, 1960, guides the policy of the current U.S. government toward Cuba when [Mallory] writes: ‘There is no effective political opposition [to Fidel Castro and the Cuban government]. The only foreseeable means of alienating internal support is through disenchantment and disaffection based on economic dissatisfaction and hardship. ... [Every] possible means to should be undertaken to weaken the economic life of Cuba ... [by] denying Cuba money and supplies.’ ” (tinyurl.com/h6tm8e5)

### Human rights? Look at the record

A linchpin of the aggressive U.S. turn is to falsely accuse Cuba of human rights violations. Remember that in the U.S., profiteering corporations are afforded the same rights as humans!

Cuba’s internal and international record for human development is well known, as it leads the region in education and health outcomes. Cuba has lower infant mortality and fewer maternal deaths than the U.S.; the latter is actually increasing, particularly among Black women.

Cuba’s Latin American School of Medicine produces new doctors who return to their homelands to practice. Cuba’s Yo Si Puedo literacy program teaches people around the world to read and write, liberating them to decide their own futures.

Cuban youth denounce the U.S. blockade, defend their future.



PHOTO: RICARDO LÓPEZ HEVIA

Rodríguez Parrilla said, “The government of the United States does not have the slightest moral authority to criticize Cuba or anyone else in the field of human rights. We reject the repeated manipulation of human rights for political ends, and the double standards that characterize it.

“The United States is party to only 30 percent of human rights instruments and does not recognize the right to life, nor to peace, nor to development, nor to security, nor to food, nor does it recognize the rights of children. No one can be surprised that you have left the [U.N.] Human Rights Council,” he said, addressing the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N.

Rodríguez Parrilla cited historic U.S. crimes like the only use of nuclear weapons against civilian populations, the militarization of cyberspace and outer space, the establishment of military dictatorships and the engineering of bloody coups d’etat in other countries, leading to countless deaths and waves of refugees. He pointed out the extrajudicial executions, kidnapping and torture in the pris-

on at the U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, which illegally occupies Cuban territory.

He extensively described U.S. human rights violations against the people of the U.S., “especially African-Americans and Hispanics, minorities, refugees and migrants. ... Equal opportunity in the United States is a chimera. The government that you are part of is a government of millionaires that imposes savage policies.” (The full statement in Spanish is at tinyurl.com/ycx36deb.)

### U.S. aggression aims at Latin America

On the same day as the U.N. vote, U.S. National Security Advisor John Bolton further ramped up aggression against Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua, characterizing them as the “troika of tyranny.” Simultaneously, he welcomed the Oct. 28 election of Brazil’s next president who is the racist, homophobic, anti-woman, anti-worker Jair Bolsonaro. Bolton called Bolsonaro a “like-minded” partner. (tinyurl.com/yc7exly4)

Bolton has a long reactionary histo-

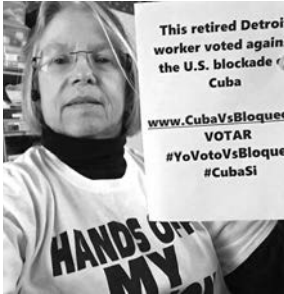
ry. He was a senior Justice Department official in meetings that managed the Iran-Contra scandal in 1986 by funding the illegal U.S. war against the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. (tinyurl.com/ybozokqx) As U.S. Under-Secretary of State for Arms Control in the George W. Bush administration, Bolton helped mount a disastrously destructive U.S. war by falsely claiming that Iraq maintained weapons of mass destruction. (tinyurl.com/qpbpyo) During the same period, Bolton falsely accused Cuba of developing a biological weapons threat to the U.S. (tinyurl.com/yd874pt5) Currently, Bolton also supports aggression against Iran and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. (tinyurl.com/yckkd6da)

### No U.S. blockade!

Demonstrations against the U.S. blockade were held in four U.S. cities: Chicago, Minneapolis, New York and Washington, D.C. Internationally activists used Twitter to voice support for Cuba’s U.N. resolution.

Nine U.S. cities have issued resolutions supporting an end to the blockade: Richmond, Va.; Berkeley, Oakland and Sacramento, Calif.; Helena, Mont.; Brookline, Mass.; Hartford, Conn.; Minneapolis, Minn. and Pittsburgh, Penn.

On Oct. 31, the day the debate began in the U.N. General Assembly, Cuban television featured a live TV broadcast from the José Antonio Echeverría University of Technology. According to Granma International, the university was headquarters for a nationwide beehive of activities at universities and secondary schools denouncing the U.S. blockade. The broadcast could also be viewed on Facebook, along with live Cuban reporting from the United Nations. □

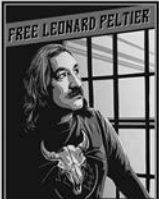


# Get on the bus to National Day of Mourning!

By Kathy Durkin

The 49th National Day of Mourning will take place on Thursday, Nov. 22, the so-called “Thanksgiving” holiday, in Plymouth, Mass. Participants will gather at noon on Cole’s Hill above Plymouth Rock and march through the town’s historic district. A speak-out, where Native people tell of their history and today’s struggles of Indigenous peoples throughout the Americas, will be followed by a potluck social.

United American Indians of New England, organizer of the day’s commemoration, issued an appeal on its website for “respectful allies to unite with us in our struggle to create a true awareness of Native peoples and demonstrate the unity of Indigenous peoples internationally. Help shatter the untrue, glass image of the Pilgrims and the unjust system based on racism, sexism, homophobia and the profit-driven destruction of the Earth.”



Since 1970, UAINE has planned the National Day of Mourning on “Thanksgiving,” a day that is a reminder of the genocide of Native peoples, theft of Indigenous lands and assaults on Native culture. Participants honor Native ancestors and the struggles of Indigenous peoples to survive today. “It is a day of remembrance and spiritual connection as well as a protest against the racism and oppression which Native people continue to experience,” says UAINE.

This year the group vows: “We will show our solidarity with Indigenous struggles throughout the world. We will defend Indigenous sovereignty in all territories, from Mashpee to Maya and Mapuche lands. We welcome all of our Indigenous relations who have been crossed by the U.S. border and Immigration Customs and Enforcement.”

There will be a special message from 74-year-old Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier.

This very important annual day

## 49TH NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING

THURSDAY, NOV. 22, 2018

12 NOON - COLE’S HILL (above Plymouth Rock)

PLYMOUTH, MASS.

For more information contact United American Indians of New England at info@uaine.org or Facebook.com/events/2105455459507095. Orientation/fliers at uaine.org.





Berta Joubert-Ceci hablando en el Tribunal el 27 de octubre.

# Nuevo Plan Fiscal para Puerto Rico

## ‘Un cruel proceso de austeridad’

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

“El pueblo de Puerto Rico necesita y merece muchos trabajos buenos, una economía dinámica y próspera, electricidad asequible y confiable, y un sector público eficiente y receptivo...” Así comienza, como un cuento de hadas, el resumen del borrador del Nuevo Plan Fiscal para Puerto Rico de la Junta de Control Fiscal. Este, titulado “Restaurando el Crecimiento y Prosperidad” con fecha del 23 de octubre del corriente año fue publicado en la página de la Junta, [juntasupervision.pr.gov](http://juntasupervision.pr.gov).

Pero este cuento, concebido por ejércitos de consultores y bufetes de abogados, la mayoría precedentes de los Estados Unidos, y quienes le cobran sumas millonarias a ese pueblo que “merece una buena economía”, lo que revela es un cruel proceso de austeridad que intenta destruir el mismo futuro de ese pueblo boricua.

Estos consultores, encerrados en oficinas con aire acondicionado, suman y restan el futuro de un pueblo contenido en gráficas multicolores cuya representación – equivaliendo vidas humanas – son reducidos a simples números que tienen que ajustarse a sus maquiavélicas proyecciones.

Es así como determinan que por ejemplo, la Universidad de Puerto Rico, UPR, la única entidad de educación superior pública, sea descuartizada, inutilizada y finalmente destruida como institución que prepara el futuro del archipiélago. Sólo para ahorrar dinero que eventualmente utilizarán para pagar a los bonistas de la enorme deuda pública de \$74 mil millones.

Fundada en el 1903, la UPR tiene un gran prestigio a nivel internacional. Ha sido el sostén intelectual y científico que aportó a los avances logrados en la colonia, a pesar de las trabas del coloniaje. Es ahí donde agencias del mismo Estados Unidos como la NASA, van a reclutar científicos para sus proyectos; una forma más de robo al pueblo quien subsidia sus estudios con la esperanza de lograr un futuro más prometedor.

### La UPR y justicia social

La UPR, no solo prepara profesionales para el desarrollo del país, sino que es una importantísima fuente de pensamiento crítico y de resistencia ante las políticas neoliberales que ya por varias décadas el gobierno criollo a instancias de su amo colonizador, ha tratado de ejecutar en PR. Ha sido también un agente nivelador de justicia social, donde las y los estudiantes más pobres pueden lograr sus sueños de estudios universitarios sin la pesada deuda que llevan sus pares en los EUA.

Pero ahora, eso cambiará si la Junta de Control Fiscal se sale con la suya. Parte de sus planes son el aumento de la matrícula. En el próximo año académico, se pagará el crédito del bachillerato \$115, un aumento de \$57. Para las/os estudiantes que apenas pueden pagar ahora sus estudios y que se benefician de proyectos autogestionarios como lo son los Comedores Sociales, este aumento significará la imposibilidad de proseguir estudios.

Los Comedores Sociales surgieron como una iniciativa voluntaria de estudiantes al ver que muchas/os de sus pares no tenían suficiente dinero para mantener una nutrición adecuada. En ellos, las/os estudiantes pagan lo que pueden y así tienen al menos una comida caliente asegurada al día.

Además del aumento en el costo por crédito, la medida de austeridad para la UPR contempla la disminución en la nómina de empleadas/os tanto docentes como no docentes, la disminución de sus pensiones, la eliminación del bono de navidad, un ajuste en las liquidaciones por días de enfermedad y el recorte de la aportación de la universidad al plan médico. Medidas que equivalen a la pauperización de la clase trabajadora de la UPR y su profesorado, conduciéndoles a una vejez pobre e insegura.

Pero no contentos con estos planes devastadores, la Junta dictatorial contempla la eliminación de puestos de trabajo, del estudiantado y de recintos universitarios.

Actualmente, la UPR consta de 11 recintos distribui-

dos por la isla, incluyendo el de Ciencias Médicas. La propuesta reestructuración, contempla además la conglomeración, para el 2023, de los 11 recintos en tres grupos más el recinto de Ciencias Médicas. Dentro de este plan, estaría también la eliminación anárquica de asignaturas y especialidades.

Esta reorganización, al igual que todas las medidas propuestas por la Junta, han sido tomadas sin tener en cuenta las necesidades del pueblo, sin vistas públicas e ignorando las propuestas de ahorro de especialistas boricuas. La única consideración ha sido la eliminación de servicios para economizar y poder pagar a los bonistas.

Todas estas medidas tendrán el efecto de impedir el acceso del pueblo a estudios superiores, los que serán solo aprovechados por la clase más pudiente. Habrá una profundización de la pobreza a todos los niveles.

Y si añadimos los efectos causados por el cierre atropellado de escuelas públicas -generalmente las que servían a los sectores más pobres y de la montaña – el resultado es el de un pueblo sin posibilidad de educación a ningún nivel, pobre y desesperado que buscará la huida como refugiadas/os a los EUA. Aumentando el exilio y la despoblación de PR.

Aún no se han puesto en funciones todos estos planes y ya el Departamento de Educación, en manos de la secretaria-mercenaria estadounidense Julia Keleher, tiene las manos ensangrentadas. Hace unos días, una maestra se suicidó resultado del hostigamiento y las reformas “educativas” anárquicas impuestas por ese departamento.

### Tribunal sobre los crímenes coloniales de EUA contra Puerto Rico

Este Tribunal, celebrado en la Ciudad de Nueva York el pasado 27 de octubre, tuvo una sección donde se oyeron testimonios de boricuas sobre el aspecto económico.

Sobre la Junta es interesante mencionar lo que el héroe nacional Rafael Cancel Miranda dijo destacando su función dictatorial. Luego de mencionar algunos de los dictadores impuestos por los EUA en la Republica Dominicana, Chile y otros países latinoamericanos, concluyó que en PR, se ha impuesto no un dictador, sino una junta compuesta por siete miembros.

La economista Dra. Martha Quiñones Domínguez quien además es profesora de la UPR y Presidenta de las Mujeres Economistas, presentó una magnífica exposición del poder colonial de EUA en PR expresado en las leyes sucesivas que han consolidado el marco legal para el dominio sobre el pueblo, desde el dominio por militares, la usurpación de terrenos, la imposición de decisiones ajenas al bienestar del pueblo, hasta la quiebra forzada actual. La última de esas leyes siendo PROMESA, aprobada en 2016 por el Congreso estadounidense bajo la administración del presidente Barack Obama. Esta es la ley que impuso la Junta dictatorial. La Dra. Quiñones mostró cómo durante los años 70, cuando hubo un resurgimiento independentista, EUA creó una dependencia por medio de las “ayudas” federales, para derrotar la resistencia anticolonial.

El Licenciado Rolando Emmanuelli Jiménez, experto en la Ley PROMESA y autor del libro del mismo nombre, testificó sobre el por qué de su imposición, la cual dada la condición colonial de PR, es una que cumple las funciones de la extracción de riqueza, razón de ser del coloniaje por los EUA. Explicó cómo quebró Puerto Rico: éste “no puede cumplir con los niveles de endeudamiento que tuvo que incurrir para sufragar la inversión externa directa de los inversionistas norteamericanos.

Puerto Rico le construyó carreteras, le preparó los ingenieros, los empleados, le dio subsidios, le dio exenciones contributivas a base de endeudamiento y estas compañías extraen ganancias del orden de los \$34 mil millones anuales que se llevan de PR sin pagar contribuciones y por ende ese desbalance donde el gobierno tiene que tomar prestado para invertir en carreteras, en

servicios para este tipo de inversión... Ese desbalance ha ocasionado que la colonia haya colapsado y se haya nombrado está Junta; pero el problema de esta junta no es solamente que viene a imponer unas medidas de austeridad para pagarle a los acreedores de los bonos sino que también destruyó el poco ámbito de gobierno local delegado por el Congreso que tenía PR a base de la ley 600 del Congreso federal del ‘52 que permitió que PR hiciera una constitución...

Por su parte, el Licenciado José Nicolás Medina Fuentes, experto en la deuda odiosa y autor del libro sobre ésta, testificó sobre cómo el “problema de la deuda pública odiosa colonial territorial que se le pretende imponer al pueblo de Puerto Rico es de naturaleza política”.

### Deuda odiosa

“Deuda odiosa es una figura jurídica reconocida... es una deuda o un contrato de préstamo que ocurre en una serie de situaciones de gran injusticia para las poblaciones afectadas.... un ejemplo emblemático de deuda odiosa es la deuda pública cubana con España. En el Tratado de París en sus deliberaciones que aparecen en este libro rojo, documentos presentados a las Cortes en 1898; aquí se resumen las deliberaciones de las comisiones española y la comisión de EUA previas a la firma del Tratado de París. Uno de los juicios más controversiales durante esas negociaciones fue el tema de la deuda colonial cubana.

“Por un lado, los comisionados españoles reclamaban que si iban a ceder unas posesiones, iban a renunciar a la soberanía sobre Cuba, pues la deuda pública territorial de Cuba debía ser asumida por EUA o por el pueblo cubano. Y los comisionados de EUA fueron enfáticos al decir que esa deuda no era una deuda del tesoro territorial cubano, sino que era una deuda del tesoro español.... En una relación colonial, la deuda pública es responsabilidad de la potencia colonial.

Esa fue la solución de la deuda pública cubana en el Tratado de París”.

Por ende, la deuda de PR es responsabilidad de la potencia colonial EUA.

El veredicto del Tribunal, respecto a la economía, concluyó los siguientes puntos:

Que esta imposición colonial, a través de la llamada Junta de Control Fiscal, es directamente responsable de las condiciones desastrosas que aún existen en Puerto Rico más de un año después del huracán María, en el cual las corporaciones y los bancos de los Estados Unidos, bajo el pretexto de ayudar con la reconstrucción, han expropiado miles de millones de dólares del erario, creando una crisis humanitaria.

Que esta imposición colonial ha utilizado el huracán como pretexto para promover las arraigadas políticas neoliberales y derechistas del gobierno de los Estados Unidos para privatizar los servicios sociales fundamentales y destruir los movimientos sindicales, especialmente en los campos de la educación y la electricidad.

Y que el gobierno de los Estados Unidos impuso protocolos que permitían y alentaban el saqueo corporativo de los recursos naturales y la riqueza de Puerto Rico y la explotación de la mano de obra puertorriqueña, dando al traste con el mito y la leyenda de que Puerto Rico le debe algo al gobierno de los Estados Unidos; De hecho, el gobierno de los EUA y las corporaciones estadounidenses le deben una deuda extraordinaria al pueblo de Puerto Rico.

Las exigencias del Tribunal al gobierno de los EUA fueron tres:

1. El gobierno de los Estados Unidos reconozca y se disculpe por los delitos antes mencionados contra el pueblo puertorriqueño.
2. Los Estados Unidos entreguen toda la propiedad y el poder tomados por la fuerza del pueblo puertorriqueño.
3. Los Estados Unidos paguen reparaciones a las víctimas del crimen de coloniaje. □