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 #MeToo 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-
Disability 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 per cent of workers with disabilities are unemployed!

An audience of over 150 disability artists, activists and their supporters filled a lively discussion on the injustices 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 just 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 Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), 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 themselves salaries.

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

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

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

The Workers’ World Party is the only organization that not only aims to abolish capitalism, but to build a socialist society because it’s the only way forward!

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Vol. 60, No. 45 • Nov. 8, 2018
Closing date: Nov. 6, 2018
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Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis. The ruthless ruling class today seeks to wipe out decades of gains and benefits won by hard-fought struggles by people’s movements. The super-rich and their political representatives have intensified their attacks on the multinationals, multigender and multigenerational working class. It is time to point the blame at — and challenge the capitalist system.

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

Since 1959, Workers World Party has been out in the streets defending the workers and oppressed here and worldwide. If you’re interested in Marxism, socialism and fighting for a socialist future, please contact a WWF branch near you.
Susan Abulhawa on her deportation: ‘My heart doesn’t ever leave Palestine’

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 give a talk on the festival’s opening day.

Abulhawa is author of the critically acclaimed, bestselling novel, “Mornings in the Trenches” and “What I Said in 2015 to my interrogator.” Both were jurors at the International Tribunal on U.S. Colonial Crimes in Puerto Rico on Oct. 27.

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

Israeli state blocks Palestinian author, can’t stop her words

By Ted Kelly

This is a slightly edited version of Abulhawa’s “Statement to Kalimat Pal- estinian Literature Festival” of Nov. 3.

As you all know by now, Israeli au- thorities 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 ex- cept 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 daugh- ters who have shed their blood in desper- ate struggle to defend their 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 smugged this pencil into her prison cell.’ (See Abulhawa’s account in the accompanying article.)

Israel border forces are notorious for their callous and racist treatment of both Palestinians and Africans who seek to cross the state’s heavily militarized borders. In 2015, the Israeli Immigration and Authority claimed that Abulhawa did not answer soldiers’ ques- tions to their satisfaction and barred her entry. They claimed she was again denied entry because “she landed with- out arranging entry in advance.”

After the passing of sweeping new anti-immigration legislation in the Israe- li parliament in March of last year, secu- rity forces are now empowered to block any supporter of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement. BDS was in- spired and endorsed by the South Afri- can 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.

Waves 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 a several Black com- munity activists in Philadelphia spear- headed 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 along- side 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-

in Pictures

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 Or- chestrate Apartheid coalition initially circu- lated the petition. The coalition was formed to protest the Philadelphia Orches- tra’s decision to tour Israel this past spring and give music les- sons to Israeli soldiers amidst the ongoing massacre in Gaza.

Since March, Israe- li snipers have shot thousands of Pales- tinians, mostly young protesting at the Gaza border, killing 180. The Great March of Return protests are ongoing, as is the mass- sacre of Palestinians at the hands of the Zionist state.

Abulhawa’s detention comes at a time of increasing ultrarightist and fascist col- laboration 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 Jeru- salem, as has Philippines President Ro- drigo 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, emotional- ly and culturally small despite the large guns they point at us — or perhaps pre- cisely 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 ar- en’t going anywhere but home.”

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Black women call center workers lend force to 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 $10.33 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 a union. 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 mandated 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)

Organizers said they hope these workers help their fellow workers fight against 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 a year after 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 by Local 3299’s professional and Technical Employees Local 9119. (University of California, Oct. 23)

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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 shoeshiner and chef assistant Sandra Pequeda 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. Pequeda reported constant sexual harassment and assault by her supervisor, who retaliated against her 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, Pequeda received a $250,000 settlement in May from Terranea. Despite the resort’s 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.

Continued from page 3

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

The first book was a high- ly recommended 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 millennials-old history, not told from the politically motivated narratives, but from archeological and other forensic narratives. It is a people’s history, spanning the unidy and multilayered identities of Palestine’s Indigenous populations from the Bronze Age until today. In an Israeli concentration 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 Pal- estine’s pluralistic, multiracial and multilingual past, distorted and essentialized by modern inventions of an ancient past.

The bitter irony of my own captivity made me feel like I, a daughter of the land, of a family rooted at least 500 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 dance to them, too. We make art from these aches. We pick up rifles and swords, 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 ineradicable 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 on 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 Tiff. 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 Tiff is the legacy of one of the most admirable women I have ever known: Sitt Hind el Hussein. 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 Tiff 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.
Solidarity against racism, anti-Semitism and anti-LGBTQ attacks
By Shelley Ettinger

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

After the Pittsburgh massacre
Solidarity against racism, anti-Semitism, and anti-LGTBQ attacks

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

August 2017, killing Heather Heyer and injuring many, he characterized them as “very fine people.” Throughout the current election campaign, he has unleashed even 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, 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 Togetherness “has documented more than 200 acts of violent and xenophobic political rhetoric against Muslims, Sikhs, 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, given the number of anti-Jewish incidents in this country surged by over 50 percent in 2017. They range 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 outsourcing of support as Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and nonreligious people attended.

Within days of the synagogue killing, anti-Muslim organizations had raised hundreds of thousands of dollars in donations to the families of the victims. The Rev. Eric S.C. Mann of Mother Emanuel Church flew to Pittsburgh, where he spoke at the funeral for Rose Mallinger, one of Bow- ers’ victims.

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

Strong statements against anti-Semi- tism 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. President Donald Trump and his boss class, the Democratic presidential candidate, announced he’d run for office that day after Trump announced he’d run for president.

Solidarity against racism, anti-Semitism and anti-LGBTQ attacks

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 1965 Equal Pay Act, so that our predominantly women-of-color membership is paid the same as men. My Local has also fought for the right of non-conforming members of our community.

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 grandfather and his brothers “to see if they were circumcised.”

(Circumcision is a common medical proce- dure experienced by Jewish male children.) About how his schoolmates in Jim Crow Atlanta tormented him by saying they’d “hang him from a tree” after school.

My father was a schoolboy in 1933, when an innocent Jewish man, Leo Frank, was found guilty of murdering a young Gentile girl, Mary Phagan in At- lanta. After his death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment, Frank was ultimately acquitted and lynched in 1935 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 newsletter on Frank’s case on the 100th anniversary of the lynching, tit- tled “An Injury to One Is an Injury to All.”

At a 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 peo- ple had been murdered in a church for praying.

I paused a note to the chair, and when the next speaker had completed his re- mark, the president corrected her mis- take, 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 con- done 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 Inter- net, I noticed that on Oct. 29, Chris Shelton, the president of my Local’s in- ternational, Communication Workers of America, which represents more than 200,000 workers in the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico, had issued the following awesome solidarity statement:

“It’s not just the Jewish community that has suffered in this attack. Whites and others have targetted African Americans, Jewish Ameri- cans and political leaders, and the Trump administration has failed to publicly denounce hate crimes, the concept of dehumanizing transgender and gender non-conforming members of our community.

“While I was on CWA members and re- tires to honor those who lost their lives this week in Jeffersonstown, 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 commu- nity to dehumanizing white suprem- acist and anti-Semitism ideologies at every opportunity.”
Tech workers walk out in global rolling strike: ‘Time’s up, Google’

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 Google workers acknowledged what Local 24 had been saying for weeks: The hotel’s vacancy rate, normally around 10 percent, had risen to 60 percent as a result of the strike. Even then supervisors and the few workers who scabbed could not keep up with basic housekeeping.

Google workers, like those 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.

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

Congratulations 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 ‘right-to-work’ state, when working people stand in solidarity, we win.”

Continued from page 1

Disabled artists and activists fight for minimum wage equality

Continued from page 2

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 plan of action which 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. Why? All 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 budge. He squared his shoulders, widen ed 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 artist entitled “We All Pile Up.” The poem included these lines:

"...in the middle of the gas station, we all pile up. At the gas station, we all pile up." And then he crum ped up a piece of paper and tossed it in the air. He continued with different locations, crumpling up other pieces of paper and tossing them on the floor, where they piled up.

Ablist bosses and their friends in gov ernment should take notice: Disabled workers and artists are not willing to let the injustices committed against them just pile up.

In New York magazine dated Nov. 1, the seven initiators of the Google walkout—Claire Stapleton, Tamiya 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. Britaining 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 fuels 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 to publicize their stories of mistreatment. (The #Me 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 ar bitration 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 work environment,” the facts say otherwise. The June 15 Washington Post reported that Google’s global workforce is 66 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 9.6 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 workers.” Every detail is meant “to make people feel special for working here and like normal workers.” Every detail is meant to feel like work and like normal workers.” Every detail is meant to feel like work and like normal workers.”

Google sued for pay discrimination

A hearing for a proposed class action lawsuit was conducted in San Francis co. 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. Depart ment of Labor in 2017, which reported that it’s 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
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 Emmen and Roll had previously been attorneys in the field of “union avoidance”—was made chair of the NLRB.

Since the last year’s appointments of Kaplan, Emmen and Roll, a number of NLRB rulings have made it harder to organize unions and harder for unions to represent members. The business mouthpiece of 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 Emmen 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 Unions were born in class struggle. Now, in the generalized anti-labor movement as a whole, the NLRB has become a union-busting agency. It is deliberately acting to weaken the power of labor movement of low-wage workers, who are overwhelmingly people of color, immigrants, women and youth.

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-capitalist climate epitomized by the 2016 Supreme Court Janus decision, the board is openly functioning as a union-busting agency.

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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 since January 2017. Along with other prisoners who have filed grievances when they do not receive an issue, WW has successfully forced the prison system to “reconsider” 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 Pittsburg-based Book ‘Em and Philadelphia Books Through Bars, which for years have provided limited book orders to prisoners who request them.

Book shipments must still go through a centralized processing facility before getting to the prisoners. The debate continues about how the DOC will ensure books reach the inmates who ordered them.

Under the Sept. 8 DOC policy, no books could be sent directly to prisoners, whether from donation groups or purchased for inmates directly from publishers.

This reactionary policy requires prisoners to order from a catalog of 8,500 high-priced ebooks selected by the DOC, plus purchase expensive ebook readers. Or they can order books online from Amazon kiosks that severely limited prisoners’ access to literary works.

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

Punitive mail policies still need reversal

Under the new policies, all prisoners’ mail must now be screened and scanned by Smart Communications, a private for-profit company in Florida. Scanned mail items are not delivered until prisoners have paid to have them get printed and delivered to prisoners. Originals are destroyed while the DOC keeps copies in a searchable database.

“The new policy is an attempt to destroy the prison’s uniform system of mail,” explains the獠去 ownership of the prison system’s legal department.

At least two-thirds of the letters and cards sent to prisoners are cheaper, more personal and provide a sense of security that expensive e-books and sometimes “for sale” publications cannot.

Violations of the DOC’s new rules permit serious punitive measures, including fines and even a three-month suspension of visitation privileges. The DOC is currently appealing an injunction against the DOC, saying the policy “deprives Mr. Hayes of a constitutional right — and often the only viable means of communication with his family.”

Many prisoners feel that their letters will be destroyed or delayed by the DOC’s new policy, which they see as an attempt to keep them from communicating with family and friends.

“Many prisoners feel that their letters will be destroyed or delayed by the DOC’s new policy, which they see as an attempt to keep them from communicating with family and friends.”

Amidst these concerns, many prisoners are resorting to sending letters and postcards to compañeros to ensure that they receive their letters.

“Prisoners are forced to resort to sending letters and postcards to compañeros to ensure that they receive their letters.”

Another concern is the potential misuse of prison mail for personal gain.

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Despite these challenges, many prisoners remain committed to fighting for their rights and communicating with loved ones.

“The new policy is an attempt to destroy the prison’s uniform system of mail,” explains the prison system’s legal department, which is currently appealing an injunction against the DOC, saying the policy “deprives Mr. Hayes of a constitutional right — and often the only viable means of communication with his family.”

As the DOC continues to revise its policies, prisoners and advocates alike are likely to continue their efforts to ensure that prisoners’ rights are protected and that they are able to communicate with their loved ones.

By Ted Kelly

The prison crackdown is meant to eradicate 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 DOC crackdown also included a punitive 90-day suspension of communal family visits during protests. Arroyo and many others are usually permitted to purchase food and beverages 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 usually arranged in advance and parents and guardians can’t buy them snacks. Without access to vending machine drinks, visitors are also subjected to the same water that guards and prisoners are subjected to.

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

Arroyo calls these health risks from the prison system’s “environmental terrorism.” He himself is awaiting a second round of throat surgery to remove polyps growing on his vocal cords. He is confident that 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 scanning and swabs meant to detect traces 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 pro- tive threed-month visitor policy expires.

“I’m not going to support my grandchil- dren to this.”

Democrats lead the crackdown on prisoners

Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf is just one of many new law-and-order Demo- crats who display a ruthless lack of empathy towards expanding the system of mass incarceration. The new system is counting on a new version of the “prison industrial complex” that has been expanded in the past.

Wolf also steadfastly refuses to hear demands from im/migrant rights activ- ists demanding he issue an emergency order to close Pennsylvania’s Berks Fam- ily Detention Facility, which is under security protocols required of adult visitors.

The Virginia DOC memo continues: “Offender visitors who have been recog- nized by the body scanner machine hav- ing 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 revoked.”

In response, Arroyo called for a boycott of the DOC corporate mail system.

“This Workers World interview was conducted with Pennsylvania prison activist Bryant Arroyo in SCI Frack- ville on Sept. 29. 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, including the potential for a new for-profit mail system that would charge per letter. The DOC also implemented in late August. After the Labor Day weekend, the omnibus prison regula- tions were already being implemented, including a more restrictive visitor policy estimated to cost the state an additional $15 million to put in place.”

Gov. Roy Cooper of North Carolina, 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 pris- oners as individual human beings to fuel needed collective action. Millions of people are incarcerated in this country, which means millions more family mem- bers and friends are affected by this sys- tem. He urges his fellow inmates to con- tinue 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 day her father called for the mail boycott, he wrote, “A Dad’s Honor, a Daugh- ter’s Dream,” and managing to get it down to 30 minutes, he called in to Genes- sis’ wedding ceremony to read it as a toast.

Despite this particularly trying time of rest and reflection, Bryant Arroyo retains his optimism through one of his most contagious tacts: 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!”

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

WWP members Joe Piette and Ted Kelly with Bryant Arroyo (center) at SCI Frackville.
New economic plan for Puerto Rico

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

“The people of Puerto Rico need and deserve plentiful good jobs, a dynamic and efficient economy, affordable and reliable electricity, and an efficient and responsive public sector.” That is how the Junta de Gobierno 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 lawyers in Washington, firmed up and made law in the United States, charges millions to the people who “deserve a good economy,” reveals a future in which they would destroy the Puerto Rican people’s very future.

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

This is how the consultants determine, for example, 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 eventuallyOur consultants add and subtract the future of a people for them 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. ... An 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 in 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 similar 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.

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 policies that allowed and encouraged the corporate plundering of Puerto Rico’s natural resources and wealth, and the expropriation 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.
Four days before the midterm election, the White House announced a chief immigration enforcement official had been fired. President Trump's most vocal and controversial immigration enforcer used Trump's words to justify gunning down migrants moving north towards the U.S. border, he praised the “beauty” of the wall. 

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 re-election of the fascist “militia” say they’ll patrol the border. Overseas, the Nigerian army used Trump’s words to justify gunning down dozens of civilians.

Those opposing Trump are organizing solidarity with the refugees from Central America. It’s now an integral part of organizing in many nations: from protests of migrants being turned away at the border, the praise heaped on refugees, to the stories of the terrible violence migrants and their children are fleeing their homes 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.

“There 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 guarantees?”

“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.”

Workers World joins this call and its promise: “tens of thousands will support GLs who refuse to become war criminals.”

Solidarity with the refugees!

“TURN THE GUNS AROUND”

Mutinies, Soldier Revolts and Revolutions Available at online booksellers

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. The country’s population faces starvation after years of brutal bombing by Saudi Arabia, using U.S. planes and satellite targeting.

This whitewash by the corporate media ignores the highly successful earlier history of socialist revolution in the south 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 an increasingly globalized international economy. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the socialist government in Southern Yemen was defeated in a civil war in which Arabi Arajia played a big part. The EUB continues.

“Following the 1994 civil war, the regime of Col. ‘Ali Abd Allâh ‘Sâlih 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 and capable of growing at a faster rate and more attractive to foreign investors in an increasingly globalized international economy. The IMF, which included the elimination of subsidies on many basic necessities, cuts in budget deficits, and the downsizing of the government and the public sector, has been successful for Yemen and generated widespread discontent and public protest. The government acknowledges that the PDGY 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 fragmen...
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 strangeland 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 Cuba in 2018, including rejecting eight U.S. amendments to Cuba’s resolution. The final tally was 232-6 in favor of the resolution. The resolution condemned heightened U.S. aggressiveness toward Cuba, a country that has been internationally recognized 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 U.S. support for regimes that could not get the optimum medication they needed because of the U.S. blockade.

Although these children did survive, Rodríguez Parrilla said, 200,000 children, 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 Agenl, Cook Medical and Thermo Fisher Scientific, refused to sell Medicu medicines, supplies and equipment essential to our healthcare. They did not respond to repeated requests.”

Rodríguez Parrilla pointed out the blockade that has been in place under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. These facts may be a surprise to U.S. companies engaging direct flights from U.S. airports to many Cuban destinations on numerous airlines. But the blockade is real for Cubans who experienced the human damage and suffering behind the headlines. Rodríguez Parrilla 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 dissatisfaction based on economic dissatisfaction and hardship. ... [Every] possible means to respond to should be undertaken to weaken the government of Cuba ... [by] denying Cuba money and supplies.’” (tinyurl.com/hotmilc)

Human rights? Look at the record

A lineup 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 due process while Cuba has a right to life.

Since 1970, UAPNE 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 assets 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 peoples continue to experience,” says UAPNE.

This year, the group says, “We will show our solidarity with Indigenous struggles throughout the world. We will defend Indigenous sovereignty in all territories, from Mashpee to Maya and Mputche 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 leader Leonard Peltier. This very important annual day of solidarity draws Native people and their supporters from throughout Massachusetts, other New England states and beyond. Here is information on buses traveling to Plymouth:

- **Manhattan:** The International Action Center will send a bus to Plymouth, leaving at 6 a.m. sharp from the Solidarity Center at 147 W. 24th St., second floor, in Manhattan. It will depart from Plymouth at 4:30 p.m. and return to New York at about 7:30 p.m. Purchase tickets in advance at the Solidarity Center from 2 to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday. Tickets cost $30-$45/sliding scale. Buy your tickets now! For information, call 693-6646 or go to LACEcenter.org.

- **Brooklyn:** Eritye Papa Desalin is organizing a bus, which leaves at 6 a.m. from 208 Parkside Ave. (between Flatbush and Ocean avenues). Tickets cost $30. Contact Dahoud Andre at 347-730-3620 or email erityepapadesalin@gmail.com.

At the U.N. General Assembly

World says ‘No!’ to the blockade of Cuba

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

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.

American Indians of New England, organizer of the day commemorating, 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 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, UAPNE 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 assets 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 UAPNE.

This year the group says, “We will show our solidarity with Indigenous struggles throughout the world. We will defend Indigenous sovereignty in all territories, from Mashpee to Maya and Mauche 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 leader Leonard Peltier. This very important annual day of solidarity draws Native people and their supporters from throughout Massachusetts, other New England states and beyond. Here is information on buses traveling to Plymouth:

- **Manhattan:** The International Action Center will send a bus to Plymouth, leaving at 6 a.m. sharp from the Solidarity Center at 147 W. 24th St., second floor, in Manhattan. It will depart from Plymouth at 4:30 p.m. and return to New York at about 7:30 p.m. Purchase tickets in advance at the Solidarity Center from 2 to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday. Tickets cost $30-$45/sliding scale. Buy your tickets now! For information, call 693-6646 or go to LACEcenter.org.

- **Brooklyn:** Eritye Papa Desalin is organizing a bus, which leaves at 6 a.m. from 208 Parkside Ave. (between Flatbush and Ocean avenues). Tickets cost $30. Contact Dahoud Andre at 347-730-3620 or email erityepapadesalin@gmail.com.
Nuevo Plan Fiscal para Puerto Rico

‘Un crúel proceso de austeridad’

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

El pueblo de Puerto Rico necesita y merece muchos trabajos bienes, una educación pública de primera línea, 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, juntacorporacion,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 hízico. Los consultores, enserados en oficinas con aire acondicionado y cubiertos de papel de un pueblo contenido en gráficas multicolores cuya representación – equivaliendo vidas humanas – son reducidos a simples números que tienen que ajustarse a sus maquiavélicos proyecciones.

Es así como determinan que por ejemplo, la Universi dadday 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 los científicos que aportaron a los avances logrados en la colo nia, a pesar de las trabas del coloniaje. Es ahí donde agencias del mismo Estados Unidos como la NASA, van a recaudar científicos para sus proyectos; una forma más de robo al pueblo quien subsidia sus estudios con la es peranza de lograr un futuro más prometedor.

La UPR y justicia social

La UPR, no solo prepara profesionales para el desar rolo del país, sino que es una importante fuente de pensamiento crítico y de resistencia ante las políticas neoliberales que ya por varias décadas el gobierno cri tical primero a instancias de su amo colonizador, ha tratado de ejecutar en PR. Ha sido también un agente nutrimental y de resistencia 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 de su manifiesto. Parte de sus planes es el plan de liquidación de la deuda pública cubana de $476 mil millones. Fundada en el 1903, la UPR tiene un gran prestigio a nivel internacional. Ha sido el sostén intelectual y científico que ayudó a los avances logrados en la co lonia, a pesar de las trabas del coloniaje. Es ahí donde agencias del mismo Estados Unidos como la NASA, van a recaudar científicos para sus proyectos; una forma más de robo al pueblo quien subsidia sus estudios con la es peranza de lograr un futuro más prometedor.

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 República Dominicana, Chile y otros países latinoamericanos, concluyó que en PR, se ha impuesto 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 la Asociación Dominicana de Mujeres Economistas, presentó una magnífica ex posición del poder colegial de EUA en PR expresado en las leyes sucesivas que han consolidado el marco le gal para el dominio sobre el pueblo, desde el dominio por militares, la usurpación de la tierra, la imposición de decisiones ajenas al bienestar del pueblo, hasta la quiebra forzada actual. La última de esas leyes sien do PROMESA, aprobada en 2016 por el Congreso es tan odiosa que fue denunciada ante la administración del presidente Barack Obama. Esta fue la ley que impuso la Junta dictatorial. La Dra. Quiñones mostró cómo durante los años 70, cuando hubo un resurgimiento independentista, el gobierno usa tó una de las “medidas” federales, para derrotar la resistencia anticolonial.

El Licenciado Rolando Emmanuelli Jiménez, experto en la Ley PROMESA, reconoció que Puerto Rico “no puede cumplir con los niveles de endeudamiento que tuvo que incurrir para sufragar la inversión externa directa de los inversionistas norteamericanos. Por eso se aprobó la ley que creó la Junta de Control Fiscal...”

A pesar de la prosperidad o de los incentivos fiscales que ofrecían para el desarrollo de la producción, el gobierno no fue capaz de pagar sus deudas. Por ello, en 1967, se crea la Junta de Control Fiscal, la cual se autodescribe como una compañía que no tiene una perspectiva de la economía de Puerto Rico. La Junta imponía servicios 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 hízico.

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