



Tell Philly DA not to obstruct Mumia's appeal for new trial

By **Betsey Piette**
 Philadelphia

Nearly 200 people, enduring steady rain, demonstrated outside the office of Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner on Jan. 5. It was the second protest there in just over a week after Common Pleas Court Judge Leon Tucker issued a ruling that gives political prisoner and journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal the chance to overturn his unjust 1982 conviction.

Activists held a brief rally celebrating Tucker's Dec. 27 decision before taking to the streets with the message: "Tell DA Krasner: Don't stand in the way of justice for Mumia!"

The event, billed as a "People's Constitutional Protest Party for Mumia's Freedom," was sponsored by the Mobilization4Mumia and endorsed by the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, International Action Center, Free Mumia Abu-Jamal (NYC), Campaign to Bring Mumia Home, Educators for Mumia, MOVE, Food Not Bombs Solidarity, Workers World/Mundo Obrero, Labor Action Committee to Free Mumia and others. People attended from New York City, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Delaware and New Jersey.



Philadelphia, Jan. 5

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Historic ruling opens way for broader appeals

Judge Tucker's historic Dec. 27 ruling granted Abu-Jamal new rights to appeal convictions and rejected appeals between 1995 and 2012 and gave him 30 days to file his appeals. Krasner also has 30 days to appeal Tucker's ruling.

Speakers at the rally called on Krasner to cease defending former Philadelphia DA and then Pennsylvania Supreme Court Judge Ronald Castille's now discredited claim of impartiality.

Tucker, whose decision chastised Castille for his obvious bias and lack of impartiality, ruled that allowing Abu-Jamal to go forward with re-arguing his appeals "would best serve the appearance of justice." The groundbreaking decision could impact many other prisoners whose appeals were denied by biased and pro-cop judges.

A march following the rally stopped at busy intersections, blocking traffic with brief speakouts, before ending at the William Way LGBT Community Center for an indoor speakout and organizing meeting. Attendees included a broad spectrum of activists, from many who knew Mumia and have fought for his freedom for decades, to newer and younger people, many of whom were born after Mumia was imprisoned.

Longtime activists Pam Africa and Ralph Poynter kicked off the indoor event. James Chisolm Jr. recounted being a high-school organizer with Mumia at Benjamin Franklin High School, fighting racism within the school system in the 1970s. Wayne Alexander Cook, Mumia's nephew, marched and later spoke about the ways his Uncle Mumia and other family members helped guide him to become more politically aware. The rally was chaired by Johanna Fernández from the Campaign to Bring Mumia Home.

Megan Malachi, with Philadelphia REAL Justice, described Mumia's struggle as a key part of the ongoing fight against racism and police brutality. REAL Justice has led a two-year campaign to take down a statue of former Philadelphia Mayor Frank Rizzo from a prominent location near City Hall. Malachi noted that the removal of this tribute to one of Philadelphia's most notoriously racist politicians would not be just a symbolic victory.

Palestinian activist Susan Abulhawa brought messages of solidarity from Palestinians struggling against state repression and some of the highest rates of incarceration globally. She recounted attempts by Israeli supporters to label Black activists like Marc Lamont Hill, and more recently Alice Walker, as "anti-Semitic" because of their support for Palestine, while she and other Palestinian activists have been attacked for supporting Mumia.

Monica Moorehead, a leader of Millions for Mumia of IAC, urged younger activists to learn the lessons of the struggle to free Mumia and to make it their own. The group brought more than 25,000 people to Philadelphia in support of Abu-Jamal in the late 1990s.

The final hour of the indoor event was devoted to addressing necessary organizational tasks as the movement to free Mumia shifts into higher gear. Media work, social media networking, education, community and labor outreach, and fundraising are needed. Plans

for a rally in Philadelphia on April 20 were also discussed. There was clearly a buzz of excitement in the hall as nearly everyone participated in an organizational breakout group.

Still time to sign petition to Krasner

As DA Krasner is clearly under pressure from the Fraternal Order of Police to oppose Tucker's decision and block efforts to free Mumia, Abu-Jamal supporters have bombarded his office with daily phone calls and emails, plus a Twitter storm on Jan. 4, the day before the rally.

Letters to Krasner in support of Abu-Jamal have come from labor unions, including the International Longshore and Warehouse Union in San Francisco; the Oakland Education Association; Philadelphia IWW; Doro-Chiba, the Japanese rail workers' union; and the 100,000-member International Dockworkers Council based in Spain.

A petition to Krasner to "do the right thing" continues to gather signatures. More than 500 signed petitions were delivered to Krasner on Jan. 2. Since then, RootsAction has picked up on the petition initiated by Mobilization4Mumia via Actionnetwork.org. Collectively, over 4,000 more people have signed the online challenge; these names will be delivered to Krasner this week.

To sign the petition, visit tinyurl.com/mumiapetition. □

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Racism, sexism, Islamophobia—and double standards

By Martha Grevatt
Detroit

Congressperson Rashida Tlaib made history Jan. 2 when she proudly took the oath of office with her hand on the Koran, wearing a traditional dress from Palestine. Representative Tlaib is the first Palestinian woman elected to the House of Representatives and, with Ilhan Omar, one of two first Muslim congresswomen.

Islamophobes were up in arms, posting outrageous claims that the congressperson from Michigan's 13th District was disrespecting or even violating the Constitution by choosing the Koran over the Christian Bible.

These backward attitudes, however, do not reflect Tlaib's constituency. The population of the 13th District is 56 percent African American and more than 70 percent people of color, with the largest Arab population outside of the Middle East. As state representative and Detroit councilperson, Tlaib represented her Southwest Detroit neighborhood, the heart of the city's Latinx community. She has a large Muslim constituency.

As a congressional candidate, Tlaib — whose seat was previously held by John Conyers — appealed to progressive sentiment. She was arrested during the hotel workers strike here and ran on a record of supporting reproductive rights as a state legislator. Among her popular campaign promises were pledges to push for the impeachment of President Donald Trump and fight for a \$15-an-hour minimum wage.

Tlaib made front-page news nationwide last week with comments made during a reception held by the liberal group MoveOn. Her exact words were: "We're gonna go in there and we're going to impeach the mother----er." This drew the ire of Trump and his ilk, but also of moderate Democrats. (Detroit Free Press, Jan. 4)

"This is a person that I don't know. I assume she's new," said Trump, revealing complete ignorance of Tlaib's groundbreaking achievement in being elected. He accused her of "disrespect" and called her statement "disgraceful." This is the president who repeatedly displays bigotry against immigrants, people of color, Muslims, women,

LGBTQ2S+ people and people with disabilities — and isn't shy about using swear words.

"You can't impeach somebody who's doing a great job," he boasted, claiming mass popularity. In fact the president has lower approval ratings than every president since Harry Truman.

Tlaib tweeted back: "I always speak truth to power. #unapologeticallyme." (Detroit News, Jan. 4)

Two trends in the Democratic Party

Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi criticized not only Tlaib's use of curse words, but also the call for impeachment, saying it would divide the country. Congressional Democrats, including most from Michigan, distanced themselves from the congressperson's remarks. Liberal news columnists are accusing Tlaib of hurting the Democrats, even making it harder for them to beat Trump in 2020.

More moderate Democrats argue that the Mueller Commission has to complete its investigation before impeachment can be considered. Tlaib's campaign pledge, however, appealed to millions of working-class and oppressed voters, who have been saying "Not my president" since the 2016 election. This base sent a record number of women, people of color, younger candidates and out LGBTQ2S+ people to Congress.

Many of these voters were activated by the Bernie Sanders campaign in 2016. In the midterm primaries they chose new candidates, such as Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of Queens, N.Y., over longtime incumbents favored by the party's establishment. Ocasio-Cortez denounced Republicans' "faux outrage" over the curse word.

There is clearly a biased double standard employed here against an Arab Muslim congressperson, who was speaking off the cuff at a reception and not in any official capacity.

The backlash against Tlaib is a rightist reaction to the midterm elections. Revolutionaries should have no illusions that any real, dramatic changes can be made through the bourgeois parliamentary process. However, they should be prepared to oppose any racist, Islamophobic and otherwise bigoted attacks on the right of oppressed people to elect progressive candidates from their communities. □

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Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the never-ending quest for ever-greater profits.

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on im/migrants, misogyny, LGBTQ oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and impoverishment and lack of hope for the future. No social problems can be solved under capitalism.

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

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Contact a Workers World Party branch near you:

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

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

Austin
austin@workers.org

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

Bay Area
bayarea@workers.org

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

Charlotte
charlotte@workers.org

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

Detroit
detroit@workers.org

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

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

Knoxville, Tenn.
knoxville@workers.org

Minneapolis
minneapolis@workers.org

Pensacola, Fla.
pensacola@workers.org

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

Portland, Ore.
portland@workers.org

Salt Lake City
801.750.0248
slc@workers.org

San Antonio
sanantonio@workers.org

San Diego
sandiego@workers.org

Tucson, Ariz.
tucson@workers.org

Washington, D.C.
dc@workers.org

West Virginia
westvirginia@workers.org

workers.org/wwp



Workers World
147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl.
New York, NY 10011
Phone: 212.627.2994
E-mail: ww@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org

Vol. 61, No. 2 • Jan. 10, 2019
Closing date: Jan. 9, 2019

Editor: Deirdre Griswold

Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell,
Monica Moorehead, Minnie Bruce Pratt;
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Copyediting and Proofreading: Paddy Colligan,
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Contributing Editors: G. Dunkel, K. Durkin,
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Berta Joubert-Ceci, Betsey Piette, Gloria Rubac

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Alberto García, Teresa Gutierrez, Carlos Vargas

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

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On the picket line

By Sue Davis

Los Angeles teachers to strike

In “a hail-Mary pass” to stop the projected Jan. 10 strike by over 35,000 Los Angeles public school teachers and professional staff represented by United Teachers Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Unified School District filed a lawsuit Jan. 3 requesting an injunction to stop special education teachers from joining the strike. A federal court swiftly dismissed it on Jan. 4.

A UTLA statement noted: “This sneaky maneuver — especially coming from a district that has repeatedly ignored UTLA’s contract demands for special education class-size caps to relieve the burden of overcrowded special education classrooms — is beyond cynical and counterproductive.”

After nearly two years without a contract, months of bad-faith bargaining and many unfair labor practice charges, the UTLA is set to strike unless the LAUSD comes to the Jan. 7 final negotiating session ready to meet UTLA’s demands.

The teachers want LAUSD to use its \$1.9 billion unrestricted reserves to fund smaller class sizes, more nurses, counselors and librarians; more support for special, early, bilingual and adult education classes; end “toxic overtesting”; empower parents and educators through stronger Local School Leadership Councils; and address the \$600 million charter industry drain from public funding.

Given that 50,000 union and community members marched together on Dec. 15 supporting these social unionism demands for the district’s 600,000 students, UTLA President Alex Caputo-Pearl stated: “Our students and families are worth the investment, and the civic institution of public education in L.A. is worth saving.” (utla.net, Jan. 4) Support the LA teachers’ strike!

Court affirms controversial pro-worker ruling

The U.S. D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld one of the most significant pro-labor rulings of the Obama administration on Dec. 28. The National Labor Relations Board ruling in the Browning-Ferris decision held corporations could be responsible for issues like wage discrimination or illegal job termination if employees were hired by contractors or worked for a franchised company.

As the NLRB noted about its 2015 ruling: “With more than 3.87 million of the nation’s workers employed through temporary agencies in August 2014, the Board held that its previous joint-employers standard has failed to keep pace with changes in the workplace and economic circumstances.”

No wonder Browning-Ferris Industries, supported by business groups and corporations like Microsoft, have loudly and fiercely fought the NLRB ruling.

But because the appeals court ruled that the NLRB failed to properly define what constitutes “indirect control” for purposes of meeting the joint-employer test, it sent the issue back to the NLRB for clarification.

But that “throws a big wrench into the business groups’ plans to overturn the joint-employer standard,” wrote The Intercept. “It also significantly constrains what the Republican-controlled NLRB can do to curtail labor rights going forward. The Trump administration, which has argued against expanding the meaning of joint-employers to include those who have indirect control over workers, will now have to comply with the court ruling.” (Jan. 3)

By contrast, the ruling has exciting implications for McDonald’s workers who initiated the struggle for Fight for \$15 and a union. If this is eventually decided in their favor and McDonald’s is declared a joint employer, the road to unionizing will be much easier. On with the struggle for justice for all franchise and temporary workers!

19 states raise minimum wages Jan. 1

Due to struggles by workers and their allies, minimum wages in 19 states rose this year, with raises due in three states later in 2019. The highest rate is in the District of Columbia at \$13.25 an hour, with Massachusetts and Washington state at \$12. The lowest rates are in Georgia and Wyoming at \$5.15, though the \$7.25 federal (poverty) wage may apply.

New York City instituted \$15 an hour for workplaces with 11 or more employees and \$13.50 for those with 10 or fewer. The minimum is \$12 in three counties and \$11.10 elsewhere in the state. The minimum will reach \$15 by 2022. The hourly minimum wage in Oregon, effective July 1, depends on the region: metro Portland \$12, rural areas \$10.50 and elsewhere \$10.75. For businesses in California with 26 workers the minimum is \$12 (\$15 by 2022); for those with less, it’s \$11 (\$15 by 2023).

The rate rose to \$11 in Arkansas (thanks to ballot initiative) and Maine, while it’s \$11.10 in Colorado. Vermont’s minimum is \$10.78, with Rhode Island’s \$10.50. Ranging between \$9.89 in Alaska and \$9.10 in South Dakota are rates in Arkansas, Michigan and Minnesota. Ranging between \$8.85 in New Jersey and \$8.50 in Montana are Delaware (\$9.25 on Oct. 1) and Missouri (due to ballot initiative). Only Mississippi has no minimum wage, so the \$7.25 federal rate applies. □

\$15 an hour

‘Nothing is impossible’

By Deirdre Griswold
New York City

Spearheaded by a struggle of fast food workers that began more than six years ago, New York City has finally put into practice a \$15-an-hour minimum wage.

“Fifteen dollars an hour is catching on everywhere,” commented Jorel Ware, a McDonald’s worker from New York and member of Fight for \$15. “When we first went on strike in New York in 2012, people said we had no chance, but we are showing the whole country that when workers stick together, there’s no such thing as impossible.”

When their struggle began, fast food and other low-paid workers in the city were getting only \$7.25 an hour — if that. Since then, the cost of living in the city has soared, led by skyrocketing rents. Earning \$15 an hour is a big improvement, but it still falls far short of what workers in this city need to have a stable existence.

This struggle has been led mainly by Black and Latinx workers, a majority of them women, with the help of the Service Employees union.



WWW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

Low-wage fast food workers occupied McDonald’s in Times Square on Dec. 5, 2013.

These very oppressed workers have helped lift up all those who are low paid and in so doing are forging multinational unity, at a time when the government and the ruling class are trying every racist, sexist, anti-immigrant, anti-LGBTQ trick in the book to divide workers.

Solidarity forever! □

After 100 years and 200 attempts

Congress finally passes an anti-lynching bill



PHOTO: EQUAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE

Crawford family members bring soil from the Abbeville, Ala., location where Anthony Crawford was lynched in 1916, as part of a “Community Remembrance Project” acknowledging the horrors of racial injustice in the U.S.

By Dolores Cox

There’s a saying, “Better late than never.” In this case, “late” refers to the century-long attempt to pass anti-lynching legislation in the U.S.

More than 200 anti-lynching bills had previously been introduced into Congress without any of them being passed. Southerners and other racist congresspeople resisted any anti-lynching legislation for over a hundred years.

The first anti-lynching bill was introduced in 1901, and then a wave of bills followed, starting with an attempt in 1917. This targeted Missouri state officials for “failing to provide equal protection under the laws to anyone victimized by a mob.” (Washington Post, Dec. 28; tinyurl.com/yrc2vrl9)

Finally, on Dec. 19, the U.S. Senate unanimously passed the Justice for Lynching Act, making lynching a federal hate crime. The bill was introduced in June 2018 by Democratic Sens. Kamala Harris (Calif.); Cory Booker (N.J.); and Republican Tim Scott (S.C.). The bill classified lynching as the “ultimate expression of racism in the U.S. following Reconstruction.” (tinyurl.com/y8a28s72)

Lynching — terror tool of white supremacy

According to the Washington Post, between 1882 and 1968, at least 4,742 reported lynchings of African-American men, women and children took place at the hands of white mobs, predominantly in the South. Lynching of African Americans was used as a terroristic strategy and

tool to maintain white dominance and supremacy throughout the U.S. Ninety-nine percent of perpetrators went unpunished by state and local officials, including those who admitted to and bragged about committing the act. (Dec. 28)

The 1863 Emancipation Proclamation had been followed by the Reconstruction “experiment” period and then by close to 100 years of the Jim Crow/apartheid system of legal segregation between white and Black citizens.

In 1892, journalist Ida B. Wells-Barnett publicly exposed the rape myth that justified lynchings and racist oppression with false accusations of Black men for supposedly raping white women. Wells-Barnett, born into slavery in 1862, provided the true facts in “Southern Horrors: The Lynch Law in All Its Phases.”

The NAACP, founded in 1909, issued a report on 30 years of lynching between 1889-1919, denouncing the U.S. as “the only advanced nation whose government had tolerated lynching.”

Noted scholar and activist W.E.B. DuBois published articles in the NAACP magazine, the Crisis, highlighting the horrors of lynching, and advocated legislation to stop it. Beginning in 1920, after every lynching the NAACP hung a flag from its New York offices with the words: “A Man Was Lynched Yesterday.” In the 1930s the NAACP continued its attempts to secure federal anti-lynching legislation. However, Southern Democrats and Northern Republicans defeated every sponsored bill.

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Contradictions sharpen between Washington & European 'allies'

By Ángeles Maestro

Maestro represented the United Left (IU) in the Spanish Congress, elected in 1989, 1993 and 1996. She is a militant in Red Roja. This article, first published on redroja.net (Red Network, an organization in the Spanish state) on Dec. 27, was translated by Workers World Managing Editor John Catalinotto.

Some apparently surprising events have recently erupted on the international arena. As the World War I armistice centennial was being celebrated in Paris last November, U.S. President Donald Trump, in an attempt to confront France and Germany and remind everyone of Washington's dominant role in Europe, said that when Americans landed in Normandy in 1944, "the French were learning to speak German." (British Daily Mail, Nov. 14)

Trump's comment should be interpreted as a further broadside in the escalation of clashes between the U.S. and the EU — rather than a clumsy attempt to get European countries to increase their economic and military contributions to NATO. For the time being, these clashes have culminated in the EU's decision to create an independent European army.

Are these momentary outbursts from Trump his usual loose cannon, or have major changes been occurring in inter-imperialist relations for some time?

Confrontations at the summits of power

Red Network has long focused its analysis of the current phase of capitalism precisely on the inter-imperialist contradictions between the European Union — above all the hegemonic power, Germany — and the United States. This interest stems from the need to know as much as possible about the confrontations that take place among the summits of power, which are sharpened in such times as the current general crisis of capitalism.

In the struggle for the conquest of political power, the decisive fact that defines the correlation of forces is the weakness of the enemy.

The strategic objective that has prevailed in all the plans of imperialism from the victory of the October Revolution in 1917 to the collapse of the USSR in 1991 has been the defeat of communism. The common purpose of destroying the first proletarian state made it possible for all the capitalist powers that had fought against each other in the two world wars to wage a joint struggle against the USSR.

In the face of this higher objective, inter-imperialist contradictions were buried and Washington's hegemony was assured.

After World War II, Washington's interest as a great victorious power and heir to British imperialism was focused on controlling Europe. The Marshall Plan and NATO were its tools for building a Western Europe coupled to U.S. interests

and totally dependent on the U.S. in the military arena.

The historic goal of the White House, which is now collapsing, was to control the Eurasian continent, the "pivot of the world." To do so, it was necessary to prevent the emergence of a European power with its own will, with sufficient economic and military power to oppose Washington and with the ability to establish relations with the USSR (or with Russia today) in a sovereign manner against U.S. interests. The procedure was to repeatedly promote confrontations between the countries of the Continental Heartland, so that none could emerge strong enough to become an obstacle to North American/British hegemony.

The confrontation between the two great socialist powers, the USSR and China, the subsequent disappearance of the USSR and the placement of China within capitalist parameters seemed to ensure a bright future for U.S. plans. Additional positive developments for U.S. imperialism were the integration into the Atlantic Alliance of a good part of the countries of the extinct Warsaw Pact and the establishment of NATO bases in most European countries (the main ones in Germany and Kosovo, after the liquidation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia).

'And yet it moves'

The defeat of the communist movement, and the enormous general crisis affecting capitalism since the early 1970s — the latest shock of which began in 2007 — are having economic, political and social consequences. These imply qualitative changes in the world order established after 1945.

The political and trade union organizations of social democracy in the Spanish state — Socialist Workers Party (PSOE), United Left-Communist Party (IU PCE), Workers Commissions (CC.OO.), General Union of Workers (UGT) and now United (Podemos), have always been ready to assist the capitalist system.

These organizations' analyses of this crisis have been to contrast "social and humane" European capitalism with "savage and brutal" U.S. capitalism. This discourse of a "return to the welfare state" has provided enormous advantages to the bourgeoisie here and abroad. [Because capitalism is in a systemic crisis — at a dead end — it is impossible to revert to the period of capitalist expansion when limited class struggle could win reformist demands; no other form of capitalism is possible now. —WW]

Now this attempt to give capitalism a botox facelift is cracking and leaking, unleashing a flood of different forces that grow more radical and occupy the institutional stage with increasing force. The existing political superstructure is crumbling along with the discredited system.

The powerful eruption of Chinese industry and its occupation of major markets in virtually every sector has led to a sharp drop in the U.S. manufacturing

economy. The White House's response has been to impose significant tariffs on Chinese imports and to establish new sanctions on Russia. This economic siege has been followed by a military siege — the expansion of U.S. military bases in Asia and greater NATO harassment of Russia along all its European borders.

A new inter-imperialist economic confrontation has been developing with the defeat in Syria of the U.S. and the EU (especially France and Britain). This took place at the hands of the Axis of Resistance — Hezbollah, Syria, the Palestinian resistance and Iran — supported by Russia.

A nuclear agreement with Iran and the lifting of sanctions in 2015 had been painstakingly prepared by Germany. Immediately after that was signed, Berlin established trade relations with Tehran, making way for other EU countries. The White House was relegated to the sidelines in the competition to turn the territory of the "Shiite" enemy into a field of business.

In November 2018, pushed by its Israeli and Saudi Arabian cronies in the region and already in open withdrawal from Syria and Iraq, Washington imposed new sanctions on Iran and any company or country that negotiates with Iran. This was a poorly concealed attempt to prevent EU competitors from taking commercial advantage of the powerful new Iranian market.

'Insubordination' from U.S. satellites

The outcome of this whole complex process could not be more damaging to the U.S. From Turkey to the Spanish state — to give the clearest examples of states historically under U.S. influence — the declarations have been emphatic and unusual.

Turkish President [Recep] Erdogan declared, "We do not accept impositions of U.S. imperialism." Spain's foreign minister, the lackey [Josep] Borrell, suddenly abandoning his usual servility, asserted: "That of you being with me or against me belongs to another era, and Spain is not going to allow that kind of approach."

If satellites express themselves in this way, it is not because of a sudden spasm of sovereignty and independence, but because they are changing their sun.

On behalf of the EU, German Chancellor Merkel addressed Iran, saying bluntly: "Keep your commitments. We will keep ours."

The threat of sanctions by the U.S. has resulted in a growing list of countries declaring themselves insubordinate to Washington and deciding to carry out their transactions in currencies other than the dollar. The repercussions for the United States, only just beginning to be evident, are serious and affect its entire framework of domination.

Imperialism is a relationship of power that can be exercised as long as the subordinate countries accept it. Everything indicates that the U.S. cocktail of

sanctions, plus advancing de-dollarization, threatens the Yankee empire with a shot, not in the foot, but higher up.

The seeds of the new European army

This escalation of tension between the U.S. and the EU tends to grow because it is based on conflicting economic interests. These, in turn, favor the EU's rapprochement with Russia. The latest episodes deepen the confrontation: the U.S. support for Brexit to weaken the EU and its attempt — condemned to failure — to prevent the EU from purchasing Russian gas through Nord Stream [pipeline transport from Russia to the EU that avoids Ukraine —WW].

The long period in which Euro-American contradictions were reconciled under NATO's umbrella seems to be coming to an end. The collapse of the USSR cancelled out the need for "protection from the communist threat."

Now the general crisis of capitalism manifests itself as a fierce struggle for markets and raw materials in an attempt to control the fall in the rate of profit.

The inter-imperialist economic confrontation will have its military consequences. Merkel proclaimed in May: "The time when we could trust the U.S. to protect us is over. Europe must take its destiny into its own hands." (bloomberg.com)

The PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation in Security and Defense) project [introduced in 2007 and begun in 2017 —WW] has been created by the EU with an initial budget of 12 billion euros. This initiates the creation of a strictly European army and a base for the production of armaments and technological innovation based exclusively on European companies and explicitly independent of the U.S.

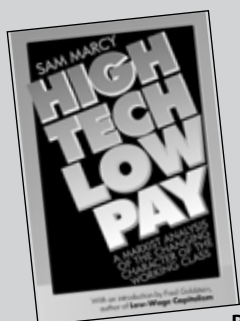
Class struggle and inter-imperialist relations

The relative economic decline of the U.S. may also have consequences for the maintenance of its enormous military structure with nearly 1,000 military bases on the planet. This does not mean, however, that Washington's aggressive capacity will diminish.

The EU's relative independence from the U.S. and NATO has not yet been achieved. But, if completed, that would not mean that European imperialism is "good" or "humane."

The European rulers are guided by exactly the same objectives as the U.S. in the struggle to the death to compete under more favorable conditions in the jungle of capitalism. These objectives are built on the exploitation of the working class and of nature, without any limits other than those imposed by the class struggle.

There is no other way out. The dilemma remains: socialism or barbarism. The conquest by the working class of political power is the only possibility for destroying the capitalist monster that can annihilate humanity. That conquest requires knowing capitalism's weaknesses and, above all, its divisions and contradictions. □

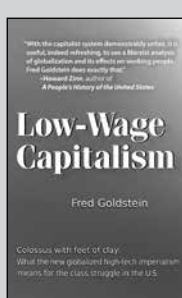


High Tech, Low Pay

A Marxist Analysis of the Changing Character of the Working Class

By Sam Marcy with an updated introduction by Fred Goldstein, author of *Low Wage Capitalism*.

Books are available at major online booksellers.



Low-Wage Capitalism

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



Capitalism at a Dead End

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

For more information on these books and other writings by the author, Fred Goldstein, go to LowWageCapitalism.com

High-tech, low pay and capitalist crisis

The following excerpt (pages 81-84) from the book “Low-Wage Capitalism” by Fred Goldstein, written in 2008, deals with Sam Marcy’s classic, groundbreaking work “High-Tech, Low Pay.” Marcy, the founder and theoretical leader of Workers World Party, wrote HTLP in 1986 in the midst of a furious technological restructuring carried out by the capitalist class during the presidency of Ronald Reagan. The book foreshadowed the development of capitalism into the 21st century. (HTLP can be read online at workers.org/marcy.)

Marcy’s central point was to explain the declining rate of profit as the driving force of capitalist competition, which pushes inevitably in the direction of economic crisis. It also dealt with the resulting problems facing the working class.

Also relevant is the recent article by Deirdre Griswold on how capitalist overproduction is behind the present stock market turmoil and ruling class fears of an impending economic crisis. (Search for “The unfolding economic crisis” at workers.org.)

By Fred Goldstein

The late Sam Marcy, chairperson and founder of Workers World Party, in a very important book entitled “High Tech, Low Pay: A Marxist Analysis of the Changing Character of the Working Class,” published in 1986, analyzed the early stages of the high-tech revolution and its effect on the working class in the United States.

In a section devoted to its impact on the unions, he traced the phases of development of the productive forces under capitalism from the manufacturing phase of simple cooperation to the industrial revolution and large-scale machinery to mass production — primarily assembly line production — in the early twentieth century. He then described the high-tech phase:

“This [mass production] stage has now given way to another phase of technological development. The mass production period which began with Ford and continued for a period of time after the Second World War was characterized by expansion. But the current stage, the scientific-technological stage, while continuing some of the earlier tendencies of development, contracts the workforce.

“Like all the previous stages of capitalist development, the current phase is based on the utilization of workers as labor power. But its whole tendency is to diminish the labor force while attempting to increase production. The technological revolution is therefore a quantum jump whose devastating effects require a revolutionary strategy to overcome.”

Marx’s studies had shown that the advance of capitalist technology subordinated the workers more and more to the machine, made work more and more monotonous, increased the division of labor, and reduced the skills of the workers. The final result was to lower the wages of more and more workers by setting them in competition with one another, all to increase the profits of capital. The high-tech revolution, Marcy showed, has accorded completely with Marx’s analysis.

Marcy noted the decline of manufacturing jobs and the growth of service jobs. But he did not simply talk about them as a bourgeois category. The main aspect of the shift from manufacturing to service was, for the vast majority of workers forced into this change, a shift from high-wage jobs to low-wage jobs.

Changed social composition of the working class

Marcy promoted various tactics and strategies for the struggle against the anti-labor assault, many of which are completely applicable today. But also important were the sociological observations he made and the political conclusions he drew.

“It is this highly significant shift from

the higher paid to the lower paid which is dramatically changing the social composition of the working class, greatly increasing the importance of the so-called ethnic composition of the working class, that is, the number of Black, Latin, Asian, women and other oppressed groups, particularly the millions of undocumented workers.”

The changed social composition of the working class—both from the point of view of the growing numerical significance of the oppressed and the increasing preponderance of low-wage workers over the higher-paid, more privileged workers —“matters a great deal,” wrote Marcy, “because in terms of political struggle, the objective basis is laid for political leadership to be assumed by the more numerous segment of the class.”

Quoting from an earlier piece he had written on the effect of high technology on the workers, Marcy wrote:

“What has happened, particularly in the last decade, is that the very speed of the introduction of high technology, the very sophisticated type, has undermined the privileged sectors of the working class (such as those in steel and auto) on a world scale and has begun a leveling process which has undermined the living standard of the working class as a whole. ...

“While it continues to ravage the living standards of the workers, at the same time it lays the objective basis for the politicization of the workers, for moving in a more leftward direction and for organization on a broad scale. The political consciousness that ought to correspond to the new material conditions of life has lagged behind, as it almost always does.”

The tendency of imperialism to build up the privileged layers of the working class at home, which Lenin had observed, was already in the 1980s beginning to be counteracted by the application of automation, robotization, and new industrial processes, mini-mills, etc. The higher-paid workers in heavy industry — such as steel, auto, rubber, and electric, the bastions of the AFL-CIO — were being undermined by capitalist technology and pushed into the lower-paying service industries or long-term unemployment.

Marcy and other communists were rightfully anticipating that the high-tech assault on the workers would lead to an upsurge of the class struggle in the near period. The basis for this prognosis was both subjective and objective.

The process of pauperization of the working class would project forward the more militant sections of the workers, while the increase in the productivity of labor would turn out more and more commodities which would be harder and harder to sell in the limited world capitalist markets. This would intensify the classical capitalist malady of overproduction, accelerate an economic crisis, and stimulate the class struggle.

But the collapse of the USSR

transformed the world situation and postponed the immediate prospects for class struggle in the United States and the imperialist camp as a whole.

Declining rate of profit and capitalist crisis

Marcy’s work was designed to show the destruction of working-class living standards wrought by the development of the productive forces, the subsequent change in the composition of the working class, and how these developments formed the basis for the revolutionary revival of the class struggle.

His focus was on the spread of technology by the ruling class inside the United States. He analyzed the internal restructuring of U.S. capitalism and charted the early stages of the widening pauperization of the proletariat.

Marcy shone a spotlight on new trends in the development of capitalism in the age of the scientific-technological revolution. He explained the laws of its development flowing from the innermost features of capitalism, as they had existed since its inception — the struggle to increase surplus value and to reduce labor. And he catalogued their effects on the workers and the oppressed, with an emphasis on how this affected the labor unions.

In analyzing the decline of the labor unions and the rise of technology, Marcy invoked Marx’s law on the decline in the rate of profit. “The bourgeois press is full of the wonders of high technology and the introduction of robots in almost fully automated factories. But they neglect to mention an extremely important element in the economic laws of motion governing capitalist society: Robots do not produce surplus value.

“As Marx demonstrated long ago, machinery or constant capital is the result of past labor and past surplus value. Profit does not come from machinery itself. It is the labor of a worker, known in Marxist terms as variable capital, that produces surplus value, from which profit is derived. Workers produce a greater value than they receive back in wages, and it is the unpaid portion of their labor that produces surplus value. But a robot is not a worker. A robot is fixed or constant capital, which does not produce profit. Only unpaid human labor produces profit.”

The entire purpose of introducing new technology is to have fewer and fewer workers producing more and more commodities in shorter and shorter time. But new technology is usually very expensive and the high cost can outweigh the savings on labor. Since the rate of profit is calculated by dividing the total profit by the total investment in both constant and

variable capital — that is, in machinery and raw materials as well as wages — costly new means of production reduce the rate of profit.

The capitalists who are willing to spend money on new technology before their rivals get it temporarily escape this problem. In fact, new technology produces

a great leap in how much unpaid labor can be gotten from the workers. The capitalists who get it first garner super-profits, i.e., profits above the level of the rival capitalists using the older technology. The first capitalists using the new technology sell at or slightly below the general price of the commodity and still make extra profit.

Following Marx’s argument in “Capital,” Marcy wrote: “With fewer workers and more constant capital, the organic composition of capital changes, resulting in a falling rate of profit. This is an invariable law of the capitalist process of production. It cannot be gotten around.

“The more dead or constant capital and the less human or variable capital used in production, the higher the organic composition of capital. This invariably leads to a decline in [the rate of] profit.

“Despite this, the individual capitalists are driven to substitute labor-saving machinery for workers because it gives them a competitive advantage. For a certain period, the capitalist who is able to utilize the new technology and lower the unit cost of his product can actually enjoy a greater profit because the market reflects a generalized cost still based on the old technology. Eventually, however, the new technology itself becomes generalized and the rate of profit falls.

“The advantage to a higher composition of constant capital [new technology — FG] is always temporary. It spurs on destructive competition, in which much equipment that could still be socially useful is made prematurely obsolete.

“In order to compensate for the falling rate of profit, the owners are forced to increase the volume of profit. This can only be done by further increasing production.”

This is what leads to capitalist overproduction and economic crisis. As Marcy pointed out, “automation does not solve the problem of the capitalist contradiction that leads to economic crisis. On the contrary, it exacerbates it precisely because of the decline in the rate of profit.”

Marcy was writing before the new phase of global restructuring, but the essence of his Marxist analysis applies completely to the current worldwide wage competition generated by the capitalists. □

“The bourgeois press is full of the wonders of high technology and the introduction of robots in almost fully automated factories. But they neglect to mention an extremely important element in the economic laws of motion governing capitalist society: Robots do not produce surplus value.”

WORKERS WORLD

editorial

As gov't shutdown bites

Will Dems talk about the real crisis?

Jan. 8 — In the middle of a partial shutdown of the government which has already hurt millions of workers and shaken the economy, the U.S. president is scheduled to commandeer the airwaves this evening to talk about a “crisis.”

Which crisis?

Trump’s invented crisis? The one about “hordes of criminal immigrants” trying to enter the U.S., for which he is demanding more than \$5 billion to build a wall along the border with Mexico? The shutdown is because Congress so far won’t vote him the funds for his wall.

Seeing the tragedy of migrant children dying in custody after being brutally separated from their parents, most people in the U.S. seem to realize by now that the “immigration crisis” is phony — although Trump’s demagoguery will still appeal to the hopelessly racist and xenophobic elements in his right-wing base.

But what needs to be said, loud and clear in answer to Trump is that YES, workers in the U.S. ARE facing a crisis. Will the Democratic Party leaders who take to the airwaves to answer him tonight talk about the real crisis?

A deep crisis exists that has nothing to do with immigration. In the early decades of the 20th century, the percentage of new immigrants in this country was much higher than now. That didn’t stop the economy from surging ahead during that period of capitalist expansion. But things are different now, and will only grow worse as long as the capitalist system, in its dying monopoly stage, prevents rational economic development.

Crisis for workers

Now, even as the fortunes of the super-rich have skyrocketed, and even as the official figures report a low unemployment rate, conditions for a large section of the

working class are critical. This includes those with jobs.

Recently, after much struggle, a number of states and cities have raised the minimum wage to as much as \$15 per hour. But the federal minimum remains at \$7.25 per hour. Here’s what economists wrote about the minimum wage just last summer:

“The minimum wage does not provide a living wage for most [U.S.] American families. A typical family of four (two working adults, two children) needs to work nearly four full-time minimum-wage jobs (a 76-hour work week per working adult) to earn a living wage. Single-parent families need to work almost twice as hard as families with two working adults to earn the living wage. A single mother with two children earning the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour needs to work 138 hours per week, nearly the equivalent of working 24 hours per day for 6 days, to earn a living wage.” (Bare Facts About the Living Wage in America 2017-2018 by Carey Anne Nadeau and Dr. Amy K. Glasmeier, Aug. 30)

Is it any wonder that millions of people need some form of welfare or food supplements just to survive? Is it any wonder that millions will hustle and/or fall into despair, addiction and other attempts to dull their pain?

But consciousness is changing.

After years with fewer and fewer strikes, the number of workers on strike spiked last year. Many who withheld their labor had to break existing anti-labor laws to fight for better pay and working conditions. From teachers to nurses to airline and fast food workers, they knew they couldn’t just hope things would get better. They had to organize, unite and act.

This comes even as the U.S. economy is poised on the brink of another downturn. While the stock market has its ups and downs, long-term predictions are far from rosy.

Crude oil prices hover around \$50 a barrel, after predictions just a few months ago that it could climb to more than \$100. The demand for oil is a basic index of economic growth in today’s fossil-fuel-driven capitalist world. Generally, oil prices go up after competitors are driven out of the market (think Iran and Venezuela) or when OPEC, dominated by Saudi Arabia, agrees to cut production. But that didn’t happen. Instead, as Markets Insider wrote on Dec. 20: “The oil market is yet another signal in a long line of indicators that global growth is slowing.”

Global trade is slowing, as seen in the sagging profits of Moller-Maersk, the world’s biggest operator of container ships. Trump’s trade war against China is an attempt to bend that socialist country to Wall Street’s demands. But, said one Wall Street voice, Business Insider: “Trade tariffs may end up stifling global container shipping by as much as 2 percent in the next two years.”

If Trump’s trade war against China also bites the capitalists here in the ass, workers have to be warned that their necks will be on the chopping block. □

CORRECTION

In the front-page article titled “Education Secretary DeVos attacks abuse survivors” in the Dec. 20 issue, the deadline for submitting public comments about Title IX revisions is Jan. 28 (not Feb. 28).

Congress finally passes an anti-lynching bill

Continued from page 3

In 1935, the Communist Party USA exhibited anti-lynching art in New York to confront the horrors of lynching. Showing grotesque mangled and burned bodies, the art also displayed crowds of white onlookers, including children, celebrating these atrocities.

In 1939, singer Billie Holiday recorded a historic song about lynching, “Strange Fruit.” The words were written by Abel Meeropol, a Jewish poet and high school teacher, after he saw photographs of Black victims dangling from trees. These photos were lynching “souvenirs,” often made into postcards for racists to send to friends. A member of the Communist Party, Meeropol adopted the sons of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, who were executed in 1953 after a bogus conspiracy conviction by the U.S. government for allegedly giving or selling secrets to the Soviet Union.

The death penalty as lynching

Today, the fight against lynching continues in the South with efforts sparked by Bryan Stevenson, who founded the Equal Justice Initiative based in Montgomery, Ala., in 1994. Stevenson holds that fighting racial injustice is critical to advancing equal justice for all, and racism must be challenged in order to protect basic human rights.

Stevenson also stresses the link of enslavement and lynching to the modern-day prison-industrial complex and death penalty. Stevenson said in a May 1 interview with Democracy Now!: “I think the death penalty is lynching’s stepson.” (tinyurl.com/y78w6evv)

The EJI has opened the “Legacy Museum: from Enslavement to Mass Incarceration” in Montgomery, as well as the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, paying tribute to victims of lynching. The memorial includes hundreds of jars of soil collected from lynching sites as well as iron rectangles dangling in the air, engraved with the names of those murdered. (museumandmemorial.eji.org/museum)

The power of institutional racism and the unchecked violence of hatred still permeate all aspects of politics, law and culture in U.S. society. The civil and human rights of African Americans have been violated since the first forced arrival of enslaved Africans in 1619. Domestic terrorism targeting Black people continues to this day.

The year 2019 marks 400 years of inequality and oppression of Black people in the U.S. Let it also mark renewed struggle against white supremacy. □

10 years later

Oakland remembers Oscar Grant

By Workers World Bay Area bureau

Jan. 1 — Over 200 people gathered at the Fruitvale BART Station in East Oakland to commemorate Oscar Grant and condemn his murder by police. Family members, clergy and community activists loudly proclaimed, “We are all Oscar Grant.”

Grant was killed by Oakland BART police on Jan. 1, 2009. In response, the streets surged with massive demonstrations against police terror and the murder of Black and Brown youth.

At the rally, speakers recalled both the death of the 22-year-old African-American man and also the movement against police murders that developed in its aftermath. Wanda Johnson, the mother of Oscar Grant, said: “People know Oscar all around the world. I believe that Oscar’s life was a catalyst to change our society. It brought an awareness, and it has caused us to examine what has happened.” Johnson has helped organize a national movement involving mothers of Black and Brown men and women who have suffered “death by cop.”

Cephus Johnson, Grant’s uncle (known by all as “Uncle Bobby”), recalled that Grant’s case made history when bystanders took out their cell phones and recorded his nephew’s murder by BART cop Johannes Mehserle.

Mehserle was later convicted of involuntary manslaughter and sentenced to two years in prison for Grant’s murder, but he only served 11 months.

“For the first time in California state history, an officer was arrested, charged, convicted and sent to jail — that is historical,” said Uncle Bobby. “Let us all remember that it’s your vigilance that has brought about this change.”

Cat Brooks, a founder of the Anti-Police Terror Project (APTP), former candidate for mayor of Oakland and a longtime community activist, talked about the early days of the movement for justice for Grant. Brooks paid tribute to Wanda Johnson and the Grant family who shared



Cephus Johnson and other family members, Jan. 1.

WW PHOTO: JUDY GREENSPAN

Oscar and his legacy with the movement.

Brooks recalled how this movement not only impacted Oakland but spread: “We stayed in the streets for three years fighting for justice. We were emailing and Facebooking with people around the world. People on the other side of the world were holding signs that said, ‘We are Oscar Grant.’”

Brooks noted, “Our legacy kicked off the next iteration against police terror in this country and around the world. What has stayed the same is that we are still target practice, and the state maintains its insane practice of overincarceration, overpolicing and overkilling our communities.”

Brooks urged people to get involved in the movement against police terror and for justice for all victims of racism and police violence.

The APTP will hold its fifth annual “People’s March to Reclaim King’s Radical Legacy” on Jan. 21, starting at 11 a.m., Oscar Grant Plaza, 14th and Broadway in downtown Oakland. □

Guatemala

MLP holds first multinational assembly

By Sam Ordóñez

On Dec. 29, representatives from Guatemalan Indigenous peoples and social movements gathered in Santo Domingo in the Suchitepéquez department of Guatemala for the first “plurinational assembly” of the Movement for the Liberation of the Peoples (MLP). The assembly elected an executive committee.

MLP is an initiative begun by the Peasant Development Committee (CODECA) and backed by the Indigenous communities where CODECA and other social movements operate. Last November, MLP was registered for the 2019 presidential elections. However, CODECA has insisted: “What’s being built is not another party, but a political instrument called #MLP, to propel the plurinational STATE and good living.” (tinyurl.com/y7gkx5sl)

The proposals from the plurinational assembly will be taken back to regional meetings for further debate.

Objectives and methods of the MLP

In the nearly two months between MLP’s registration and the first

plurinational assembly, there were a series of regional assemblies to determine MLP’s priorities. In addition to the regional assemblies, there was a national meeting of MLP youth.

The MLP’s proposals include lowering public officials’ salaries and renouncing parliamentary immunity, a practice which has been at the center of the recent anti-corruption struggle.

MLP is also proposing the nationalization of privatized services; recovery of lands, territories and water for human consumption; and the creation of a Popular and Plurinational Constituent Assembly in order to create a plurinational state with autonomous Indigenous regions.

Motivation for building a plurinational state comes from the experience of Indigenous peoples during the nearly 200 years of the Republic of Guatemala. At the plurinational assembly, CODECA human rights defender Thelma Cabrera explained: “They keep us like slaves, they keep us on our knees; if we defend our rights, we are called terrorists; if we defend the mother Earth, they offer us bullets, if we protest, they call us thugs.” (tinyurl.com/ybgbop82)

The assassination of Indigenous and peasant leaders was another theme of the assembly. It is another reason MLP is advocating for the construction of a plurinational state. Vicenta Jeronimo said during the assembly that the Guatemalan Peace Accords were paper agreements only: “They keep killing us with hunger, they offer us bullets when we defend the rivers, the mother Earth, our children die fleeing from poverty.” (tinyurl.com/y82q98jp)

Throughout the assembly, speakers reiterated that it was the communities that were uniting behind the MLP and that is where the drive for the plurinational state and demands for social changes needed to originate.

Migration and the plurinational state

In recent weeks at least two Guatemalan children have died in detention centers on the U.S.-Mexico border. Last May, a Border Patrol agent fatally shot another Guatemalan, Claudia Patricia Gómez González. All three, just like many Central Americans who are crossing the border, are from Indigenous communities.

In Guatemala, Indigenous peoples have always suffered the worst poverty and

violence, from genocide during the civil war to the ongoing killings of defenders of the land and of human rights.

Today, the foreign funds that come into Guatemala, supposedly for economic development, are used to build new mines and other environment-destroying projects. The big companies steal land to build these projects and criminalize any communities that protest. In this sense, the “development” imposed by foreign investment is nothing more than the continuation of colonialism.

The same starvation wages in the big plantations and in the foreign-backed projects drive many people to migrate. The MLP opposes these projects. The Guatemalan oligarchy promotes racism against Indigenous peoples. This racism and the corruption of the traditional imperialist puppet politicians block any solution to the migration crisis. At the same time President Donald Trump threatens to halt U.S. aid to the country.

The only solution for Guatemala is to “break the fences of the CACIF plantation” (CACIF is the organization of big Guatemalan businesses) and empower the communities and peoples of the country. □

China’s moon landing: a giant leap for space science

By Lyn Neeley

The People’s Republic of China successfully landed the first spacecraft, called the Chang’e-4, on the far side of the moon on Jan. 2. It is the first moon landing by any country since 2013. The probe was sent to search for rare earth metals and helium-3, used to make safer, more productive energy. Scientists hope to find answers about the evolution of our solar system and the origins of the universe. This is a stunning achievement.

The landing of Chang’e-4 is just part of China’s overall space program that is centered on improving conditions for the country’s centrally planned society. China is developing a lunar space station and plans on sending a crew to the moon as soon as 2022.

In contrast to China, the U.S. space program is driven by capitalist competition and the development of military weapons. Trump called on the Department of Defense and the Pentagon to develop a “Space Force,” a sixth branch of the military for the purpose of protecting U.S. assets in space and attacking its enemies during wars.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s International Space Station will soon be decommissioned. There are no plans for a replacement. NASA’s budget has been stalled.

Contributions of China’s space program

China now produces 90 percent of the world’s rare earth metals. The Chang’e-4 landing is searching for new sources of valuable materials like copper, aluminum, iron and rare earth metals essential for emerging technologies like cell phones, computers and other electronics and medical equipment.

Nuclear fusion, the next generation of nuclear power, will someday replace nuclear fission, which is now used to fuel nuclear power plants. Fusion can generate four times as much energy as fission without hazardous environmental problems like radioactive waste.

Helium-3, an ideal fuel for nuclear fusion, is an isotope of the element helium. There are an estimated 1 to 5 million tons of it on the moon, compared to only 15 tons on Earth. Once nuclear fusion technology matures, it will take 100 tons of helium-3 each year to meet global energy demands.

Ouyang Ziyang, a prominent Chinese space scientist, predicted 13 years ago: “Each year three space shuttle missions could bring enough fuel for all human beings across the world.” (China Daily, July 26, 2006) For now it is too expensive to haul helium-3 back to Earth, but it may be useful as fuel for future spacecraft to explore deeper into space.

Because the moon rotates just once each time it circles the Earth, only one side of its surface is visible from Earth. The far side of the moon is shielded from noise caused by radio waves, cell phones, power lines, GPS satellites and Wi-Fi.

Scientists stationed on the moon’s far side will be able to look more deeply into space. In so doing, more will be learned about the evolution of the universe, the birth of the first stars and the formation of our solar system.

Photographs from a Soviet spacecraft in 1959 showed that the far side of the moon has a thicker, older crust with deeper and more numerous craters. Scientists don’t know with certainty why the crust is thicker there. Chang’e-4 is designed to help answer that question.

Craters created by ancient asteroid hits on the thicker crust have not been filled in with lava flows since they were formed. Because of this, they may hold information about the early history of the moon’s formation and the development of our solar system.

Chang’e-4 landed inside the oldest, deepest crater, called the Von Kármán Crater, on the far side of the moon. This basin offers scientists more information on the moon’s composition, structure and evolution and may be rich in rare earth metals and iron.

Since the moon blocks transmissions

from the Chang’e-4 probe, China launched a relay satellite called “Queqiao,” or “Magpie Bridge,” which bounces information and images from the probe back to China’s receiving stations.

The Chang’e-4 lander carried the first mini-greenhouse to the moon. A mini biosphere is being set up with six live species: cotton, rapeseed, potato, fruit fly, yeast and arabidopsis, a flowering plant in the mustard family. This is a crucial step in establishing a longer visit by astronauts and developing a lunar space station.

Cooperation and education, not competition

Deng Xiaoping, China’s leader from 1978 until his retirement in 1989, told the world in 1978 that China was not taking part in the space race. He explained that the goal of China’s space program was to improve the standard of living for the Chinese people. It would focus on communications, remote sensing and meteorology.

Scientists from Sweden and Germany collaborated with China on designs for some of the eight scientific instruments used in the Chang’e-4 mission. The Swedish Institute of Space Physics developed an instrument that will investigate how solar wind interacts with the lunar surface.

Instead of working with China, President Donald Trump argued that the Chinese and Russian space programs are a threat to his Space Force. This is U.S. imperialist saber rattling.

China provides four times as many college degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) than the United States. Federal funding for education has decreased in the U.S., where a college degree is very expensive — and does not ensure better jobs for graduates. The U.S. is falling behind in space exploration and in other areas of scientific development.

Speaking about students in China, U.S. astronomer and professor Chris Impey

said, “They have very young engineers in their space program — very keen, very well trained, very ambitious.” He said China’s space program, like its economy, is growing explosively, at roughly 10 percent a year for the past decade. (NPR, May 11, 2015)

China’s impressive space program

In other areas of science and technology, like artificial intelligence and quantum computing, China is developing more quickly than the U.S. China recently launched a quantum satellite into space that physicists say can lead to a super-secure, super-fast quantum-internet system for China.

The first Chinese satellite launch, which happened in 1970, focused on commercial applications. Since 2003, China has launched two space labs and sent six crews, including 12 taikonauts (Chinese astronauts), into low orbit.

In 2016, China completed the world’s largest telescope built to detect radio signals, potential signs of life, from distant planets. That year, the country launched the Tiangong 2 space lab, which has been orbiting Earth since then.

Last year China sent 38 launches into space, more than any other country. Many of them carried GPS-type systems that already cover China and much of Asia. China is currently working on developing a space lab to be stationed on the moon, after which the country will be able to send crews of scientists to continue exploration there.

China annually spends about \$2 billion on its space budget, compared to NASA’s \$18 billion budget — and its space program is growing 10 times faster! How can China, a still-developing country, make these profound advances with less money?

Deirdre Griswold, editor of Workers World newspaper, answered this question in a WW Commentary on Dec. 20 — “because the basic infrastructure is publicly owned, not in the hands of a profit-seeking, parasitic ruling class.” □

Guatemala

MLP celebra la primera asamblea plurinacional

Por Sam Ordóñez

El día 29 diciembre 2018 se reunieron en Santo Domingo, Suchitepéquez representantes de los pueblos originarios y movimientos sociales de Guatemala para celebrar la primera “asamblea plurinacional” del Movimiento para la Liberación de los Pueblos (MLP). En la asamblea se eligió un comité ejecutivo.

MLP es una iniciativa impulsada por el Comité de Desarrollo Campesino (CODECA) y apoyado por las comunidades originarias donde CODECA y otros movimientos sociales operan. En noviembre, el MLP fue inscrito en las elecciones presidenciales que se celebrarán en 2019, pero según CODECA “No se está construyendo un partido más, sino un instrumento político llamado #MLP, para impulsar el ESTADO plurinacional y el buen vivir.” (tinyurl.com/y7gkx5sl)

Las propuestas planteadas en la asamblea plurinacional se debatirán en nuevos procesos en los departamentos antes de finalizarse.

Objetivos y métodos del MLP

En los casi dos meses entre la inscripción del MLP y su primera asamblea

plurinacional hubieron asambleas regionales para determinar las prioridades del instrumento político. Además de las asambleas a nivel regional, hubo un encuentro nacional de la juventud de MLP.

Entre las propuestas del MLP se incluyen bajar los salarios de los diputados y renunciar la inmunidad parlamentaria, algo que ha sido el enfoque de la lucha contra la corrupción en los últimos años.

También se propone la nacionalización de los servicios privatizados, recuperar las tierras, territorios, y el agua para consumo humano, e impulsar un proceso de asamblea constituyente popular y plurinacional, para construir un estado plurinacional con autonomías indígenas.

El estado plurinacional se motiva por la experiencia de los pueblos originarios en los casi 200 años de la República de Guatemala. Según Thelma Cabrera, defensora de derechos humanos de CODECA que habló en la asamblea, “nos tienen como esclavos, nos tienen de rodillas, si defendemos derechos, nos llaman terroristas, si defendemos la madre tierra, nos ofrecen balas, si protestamos nos llaman bochincheros.” (tinyurl.com/ybgbop82)

Los asesinatos de líderes indígenas y

campesinos fue otro tema de la asamblea, y es una de las razones por la que MLP cree tan necesario la construcción de un estado plurinacional. Como dijo Vicenta Jeronimo, los acuerdos de paz en Guatemala solo se firmaron en papeles, “nos siguen matando de hambre, nos ofrecen balas cuando defendemos los ríos, la madre tierra, nuestros niños mueren huyendo de la pobreza.” (tinyurl.com/y82q98jp)

Se reiteró durante toda la asamblea que el estado plurinacional y los cambios sociales tenían que venir desde las mismas comunidades que se han unido para formar el MLP.

El estado plurinacional y la migración

En las últimas semanas han muerto por lo menos dos niños Guatemaltecos en centros de detención en la frontera de los Estados Unidos. En mayo murió Claudia Patricia Gómez González por disparo de un agente de la patrulla fronteriza. Los tres, como muchos de los migrantes que cruzan esa frontera, eran de pueblos originarios.

En Guatemala siempre han sido los pueblos originarios quienes han sufrido lo peor de la pobreza y de la violencia,

desde el genocidio durante la guerra civil hasta los asesinatos de defensores de la tierra y los derechos humanos.

Hoy en día los fondos que entran a Guatemala desde el extranjero para supuestamente desarrollar la economía del país se usan para construir nuevas minas y otros proyectos que destruyen el medio ambiente. Los grandes empresarios roban las tierras para construir estos proyectos, y las comunidades son criminalizadas si protestan. En este sentido, el proceso de “desarrollo” que impone la inversión extranjera es nada más que una continuación de la colonización.

Los mismos salarios de hambre en las grandes fincas y en estos proyectos extranjeros que denuncia MLP son lo que impulsa a los migrantes. El racismo de la oligarquía contra los pueblos originarios y la corrupción de los políticos tradicionales títeres del imperialismo bloquean cualquier solución a la crisis migratoria, incluso cuando Trump amenaza con terminar la ayuda monetaria.

La única solución para Guatemala es “romper el alambre de la finca CACIFERA” (CACIF es la organización de los grandes empresarios) y empoderar a las comunidades y los pueblos. □

Cuando el pueblo cubano se levantó

Editorial del 2 de enero de 2019

Es una isla a solo 90 millas de los Estados Unidos que ha sido invadida, bloqueada y que aún está parcialmente ocupada en la Bahía de Guantánamo por el más poderoso de todos los países imperialistas.

Sin embargo, desde hace 60 años, Cuba revolucionaria ha sobrevivido como un país dedicado a construir el socialismo en el país, al mismo tiempo que ayuda a los movimientos de liberación y los pueblos oprimidos en otros países.

Cuba no solo ha sobrevivido. Ha inspirado a millones de personas en América Latina, África y en todo el mundo con su aplicación ingeniosa de la teoría y la práctica revolucionaria a los problemas impuestos por las amenazas imperialistas y el subdesarrollo.

La clave de la fuerza del movimiento revolucionario que el 1 de enero de 1959 expulsó a la dictadura de Batista, esa notoria pandilla de torturadores y explotadores que había hecho de Cuba un paraíso para los millonarios estadounidenses y un infierno para campesinas/os y trabajadoras/es, fue que destruyó el viejo estado represivo y estableció estructuras para garantizar el gobierno de las/os trabajadoras y agricultores.

Casi de inmediato, la revolución lanzó un programa de alfabetización, enviando a estudiantes de secundaria al campo para enseñar a las/os pobres de las zonas rurales cómo leer y escribir. Pronto les proporcionó materiales para construir casas reales, con agua corriente y luz eléctrica. Los cortadores de caña de azúcar se regocijaron mientras quemaban las chozas con suelo de tierra y techo de paja de los viejos tiempos.

Mujeres y hombres, blancos y negros, se unieron a la milicia popular recientemente organizada para defender su revolución contra los yanquis y sus mercenarios. Una industria cinematográfica revolucionaria describió con sinceridad estos momentos emocionales, y no tuvo miedo de mostrar un atraso que había que superar, como aquellos que todavía abrigaban actitudes sexistas que abucheaban a las milicias femeninas cuando desfilaban. Fue el comienzo del trabajo de concientización del Partido Comunista de Cuba sobre temas de sexo y género.

Cuando una invasión contrarrevolucionaria de mercenarios entrenados y financiados por los Estados Unidos llegó en abril de 1961 en Playa Girón, fue derrotada en pocos días con un pueblo armado movilizado junto al ejército regular. En medio de esa invasión, Fidel Castro, el líder inmortal de la revolución, dijo por primera vez al pueblo que Cuba había hecho una “revolución socialista” bajo las narices de los imperialistas yanquis.

El hecho mismo de que Fidel llamara socialista a la revolución en medio de la invasión era una prueba de que el socialismo era lo que el pueblo cubano quería y por lo que estaba dispuesto a morir. (Este escritor estaba en la abarrotada oficina de Nueva York del Movimiento 26 de Julio cuando el discurso de Fidel llegó a través de la radio de onda corta. Sus palabras provocaron un estallido de vítores y boinas lanzadas alegremente en el aire).

Cuba capturó 1,200 gusanos (contrarrevolucionarios) durante la invasión y



La Revolución cubana de 1959. Al centro, Fidel Castro.

obligó al gobierno de los Estados Unidos a pagar reparaciones a cambio de su liberación. Apenas dos semanas después de la invasión, Fidel habló en una gran concentración del Primero de Mayo. Sus palabras capturaron el orgullo y la alegría de las masas cubanas en su gran victoria sobre el imperialismo y sus lacayos:

“Y este 1º de Mayo dice mucho de lo que ha sido hasta aquí la Revolución, de lo que ha logrado hasta hoy la Revolución... En este 1º de Mayo, tan distinto de aquellos primeros de mayo, tan distinto sobre todo porque antes aquella fecha era la ocasión en que cada sector obrero expresaba sus demandas, sus ansias de mejoramiento

frente a quienes eran sordos por completo a los intereses de su clase, frente a los que no podían ni siquiera responder ni acceder a ninguna de aquellas demandas fundamentales, porque no gobernaban para el pueblo, no gobernaban para los obreros, no gobernaban para los campesinos, no gobernaban para los sectores humildes del país; gobernaban solo para los privilegiados, gobernaban solo para los intereses económicos dominantes. ya los obreros saben que todo lo que la Revolución hace, todo lo que el Gobierno hace o pueda hacer, tiene un solo y exclusivo propósito, y es ayudar a su clase, ayudar a su pueblo”. □