While children die at border

GOV’T SHUTDOWN

Jobs, services cut for millions

By Martha Grevatt

Dec. 31—The current government shutdown, now in its second week, is being called a “partial” shutdown. While it’s true that much of the federal government remains in operation, the crisis is hardly partial for the 800,000 federal workers without a paycheck.

Just over half have been compelled to work with no pay, forced to come to their jobs while the rest are on mandatory furloughs. Many private businesses with federal contracts are also laying off workers.

The shutdown was imposed when Congress would not authorize the $5 billion Trump was demanding for his wall along the U.S.-Mexico border to prevent migrants from entering the country. As a campaign ploy in 2016 to whip up chauvinism, the would-be president had vowed to make Mexico pay for his wall.

Now 800,000 public sector livelihoods and an untold number of jobs in the private sector are being held hostage as the president tries to force U.S. taxpayers to foot the bill for his wall.

Federal employment has been a path for millions of workers to gain secure and stable union jobs, particularly boosting economic well-being in communities of color. Black government workers comprise 20 percent of those now being deprived of a paycheck. Black communities in and around Washington, D.C., which depend heavily on federal employment, have been hit especially hard.

Now Trump has signed an executive order freezing federal pay. Unless the new Congress votes to approve an annual pay raise, federal workers will be taking a de facto pay cut when inflation is factored in. Workers are paying the price for a political deadlock they did not create, one generated by the racist, xenophobic hatred emanating from the White House.

Prolonged shutdown to hurt children, women the most

Currently, 75 percent of federal programs are reportedly not impacted because their funding was already allocated. Recipients of Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid are due to receive their benefits without interruption. However, Social Security offices have been closed, which will impact new applicants. It will be harder for recipients to do things such as updating personal information or replacing a lost Medicare card.

Funding for the Children’s Health Insurance Program was already allocated for the next 10 years. However, if the shutdown continues, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which replaced food stamps, could run out of funds by the end of January.

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Editorial

60 years: Long live the Cuban Revolution!

It is an island only 90 miles from the United States that has been invaded, blockaded and is still partially occupied—at Guantanamo Bay—by the most powerful of all the imperialist countries.

Yet for 60 years now, Revolutionary Cuba has survived as a country dedicated to building socialism at home, while at the same time aiding liberation movements and oppressed peoples in other countries.

Cuba has not only survived. It has inspired countless millions in Latin America, Africa and around the world with its resourceful application of revolutionary theory and practice to the problems imposed by imperialist threats and underdevelopment.

The key to the strength of the revolutionary movement that on Jan. 1, 1959, swept away the Batista dictatorship—that notorious gang Continued on page 10

Big court win for Mumia

Troop withdrawal from Syria

Editorial: Wrestling and cultural genocide

Australia, Africa, Yemen

France

Haiti

Brazil
The urgency of remembering Sandra Bland
By M. Matsemela-Ali Odom

This month HBO premiered the documentary “Say Her Name: The Life and Death of Sandra Bland.” The December premiere followed an October release of “The Sentence,” which chronicled the story of Cindy Shank, a Mexican-American woman unjustly incarcerated on criminal contempt charges.

Both these films show issues relating to women of color, mass incarceration, police brutality and other forms of state violence that have now been placed at a critical intersection in the center of public discourse.

Amidst the current outcry against the police killing of Sandra Bland in New York City and in the renewed defense of incarcerated Cyntoia Brown in Tennessee, both African-American women, the release of “Say Her Name” is especially timely.

The documentary places Bland’s life, family and activism at the center of the story. The film also raises crucial questions about the police detention of Bland, her jailing and her death, while oligarchs by way of much of the population many people encountered on the internet.

“Say Her Name” reveals Sandra Bland to be a dynamic individual. A member of a Black sorority, Bland had protested against police violence in college. Back home, Bland quit a corporate job once she became aware the company profited from mass incarceration. She created her own internet show, “Sandy Speaks,” where she tackled issues of police abuse and horizontal violence in the Black community. Underscoring self-reliance and self-determination among Black youth, Bland stated in a video: “You can do it. We can be successful. It is up to us.”

Politically aware and a leader, Bland worked with children and was returning to her alma mater to help administer a summer program in July 2015.

The death of Sandra Bland

That month, the death of Sandra Bland first made national headlines when a grassroots campaign arose organized by her family, friends and sorority sisters demanding an investigation into the cause of her death. Bland had recently relocated from Chicago to Waller County in Texas, home of the historically Black university Prairie View AM, her alma mater.

On the afternoon of July 10, 2015, Bland was arrested and detained on U.S. Route 290 by Texas State Trooper Brian Encinia for failure to signal a lane change.

The truth is that motorists of color are often under surveillance and profiled in that area, especially those with out-of-state license plates. Latoya Smith, a Sigma Gamma Rho sorority sister of Bland, explained in the documentary that the Prairie View community, a majority Black town, is overpoliced. At any time, students, staff and faculty are subject to five police agencies: campus police, state police, county sheriff deputies, county constables and local police.

Dashcam footage later confirmed the trivial and coerced nature of the police stop of Bland’s car that is especially timely.

Both these films show that issues relating to women of color, mass incarceration, police brutality and other forms of state violence are linked.

Sandra Bland’s life and death was not an isolated event. Sandra Bland is the latest in a long line of Black women who have been killed by police in the United States. But Sandra Bland is different.

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The urgency of remembering Sandra Bland

Continued from page 2

encircled, a white police officer, was identified as a prosecutor and then the judge, there is a finding of automatic bias and due process violation.

Defense lawyer Judith Ritter said Tucker recognized the “need for a new appeal unainted by this bias.” His decision presents a major break in the long legal struggle to free Abu-Jamal.

Abu-Jamal maintains his innocence

For more than three decades, internationally renowned political journalist and activist Abu-Jamal languished on death row and, more recently in general population (also known as level 4), the Pennsylvania criminal justice system has systematically manovereed to deny him a fair trial or any semblance of justice.

In December 1981, Abu-Jamal, who was driving a taxi, happened upon an altercation between his brother, William Cook, and police officer Daniel Faulkner. Faulkner, who had been shot, fired at Abu-Jamal as he approached. Cook’s companion, Kenneth Freeman, whom many suspect was Faulkner’s shooter, ran from the scene.

Tucker cited statements Castille made as Philadelphia district attorney that suggested potential bias. He referenced Castille’s public claims of being a “law and order” prosecutor, who was responsible for putting 45 men on death row; his support for the Fraternal Order of Police; and new evidence of Castille singling out men convicted as “police killers.”

Evidence included Castille’s campaign speeches and letters advocating the issuance of death warrants—allowing executions—in cases like Mumia’s. In his 37-page decision Tucker wrote: “The claim that Abu-Jamal was “justified” as a law and order prosecutor to pursue conviction for the killing of Officer Daniel Faulkner is discredited by new evidence.”

Tucker’s decision was split. He did conclude that the U.S. Supreme Court 2016 decision in Williams vs. Pennsylvania did not fully apply since Castille, as a prosecutor and then the judge, there is a finding of automatic bias and due process violation.

Defense lawyer Judith

The original case was heard by Judge Albert Sabo, who has sent more Pennsylvania prisoners to death row than any other judge. There is no doubt that Abu-Jamal’s trial was racially biased: The prosecution excluded African Americans from the jury, and during the trial Judge Albert Sabo declared, “I’m gonna help them try the n—.”

Denied the right to represent himself, Abu-Jamal was forced to accept the counsel of public defender Anthony Jackson, who was subsequently disbarred. Prosecutor Joseph McGill’s erroneous instructions to the jury were later the basis for Abu-Jamal’s release from death row.

The legacy of Sandra Bland’s resistance

The Bland case is of immediate importance. Sandra Bland was found dead, hanging in her cell.

While many, including her family members, have said that Bland would not have been killed had prosecutors and officers and others make one point clear: The cause of Sandra Bland’s death was the unjust stop, the lies reported by Encinia and the mismanagement by county jail officials.

Whether the most flagrant police actions that have been proposed happened, the racist profiling of Sandra Bland was undoubtedly the cause of her death.

The progressive network of women and men who loved Sandra Bland while she was alive became her standard bearers and their cause was her standard.

The urgent need for remembering Sandra Bland

Updated to include the Aristide Haiti: A Slave Revolution

By Betsey Piette

Philadelphia

A ruling issued Dec. 27 by Common Please Court Judge Leon Tucker has opened the door for political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal to appeal his 1982 conviction in a Philadelphia murder case.

On Dec. 28, less than 24 hours after Tucker issued the decision, dozens of Abu-Jamal supporters rallied outside Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner’s office demanding that he let the ruling stand that allows Abu-Jamal to seek a new appeal untainted by this bias.

Krasner’s office has said he is reviewing Tucker’s decision and has not yet decided whether to appeal Tucker’s decision or whether to appeal the decision. Krasner’s office has previously rebuffed requests from Abu-Jamal supporters to meet with him.

Abu-Jamal’s framing of Sandra Bland

“Tucker’s ruling means that Abu-Jamal’s right to appeals stemming from his 1982 conviction are restored and must be reheard in the Pennsylvania appeals court. His appeals were on the grounds that he was framed by the police, that the prosecution manufactured evidence of guilt and suppressed proof of his innocence, as well as other due process trial rights. Abu-Jamal has 30 days from Tucker’s ruling to file a notice of appeal to the Pennsylvania Superior Court.”

The pictures provided clear evidence of police tampering with evidence and showed that prosecutorial witnesses lied during Abu-Jamal’s trial. Jos Polakoff provided to police and prosecu-

tutors were never shown to the jury. The only legal remedy was a new trial told that Freeman’s driver’s license was found in Faulkner’s pocket. Polakoff reported interviewing witnesses who saw the shooter running from the scene before the police arrived.

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The progressive network of women and men who loved Sandra Bland while she was alive became her standard bearers and their cause was her standard.
Houston mourns border deaths of children from Guatemala

In December activists led by the Carnalismo Brown Berets gathered to mourn the deaths of Jakelin Caal Maquin, 7, on Dec. 8 and Felipe Gomez Alonzo, 8, on Dec. 24, two Guatemalan children who died while in custody of the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol.

Caal died in a hospital two days after she was taken to a Border Patrol station, just days after her seventh birthday. She was in custody for over eight hours with no water. Houston activists gathered a few days later outside of what is planned to be a “baby jail” for migrant children. With candles lit at the vigil, Brown Beret activist Elizabeth Lozano expressed her sadness and anger at the death: “We must stay active so no more children die at the hands of the Border Patrol.”

Janie Torres, the sister of Jose Campos Torres, who was murdered by Houston police on Cinco de Mayo in 1977 in an explosive case that received national attention, told those at the vigil: “We need unity. We must work together to stop the violence from the government.”

Participating with the Brown Berets were members of the Carrizo/Comecrudo Indigenous nation and F.I.R.E., Fight for Immigrants and Refugees Everywhere.

— Report and photo by Gloria Rubac

Gov’t shutdown

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Already, 95 percent of the workers who administer SNAP are on furlough. Funds for school lunch programs and the Women, Infants and Children nutrition service could dry up by February.

These programs are an essential lifeline for 1 in 8 people in this country who need food assistance—including 13 million children and 4.4 million seniors.

Farmers, small business people and prospective homeowners may not be able to access federal lending programs. At the Federal Emergency Management Administration, 4,400 office staffers are furloughed. Some national parks are closed.

The funds for enforcing the 1994 Violence Against Women Act and preventing and assisting victims of sexual assault have run out. Likewise with programs that uphold fair housing legislation.

Does the shutdown affect the whole government? Not at all. The Pentagon death machine budget was left untouched. And of course the White House is still spewing out its hate unimpeded.

Raceist abuse at border continues

Even without the unpopular wall, migrants and refugees are already suffering unthinkable hardships at the hands of Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Late Christmas Eve 8-year-old Felipe Gomez Alonzo became the second child this month to die in Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention after being diagnosed with the flu. The first was Jakelin Caal Maquin, 7 years old, whose death sparked protests. Both arrived from Guatemala with their parents.

The imprisonment of families with children has been the practice since the separation of children and parents provoked widespread public outcry last May. Many separated families are still not reunited. Now parents are forced to watch their kids suffer and die in detention centers, deprived of adequate food, water and medical care.

Both Democratic and Republican administrations have budgeted plenty of money to set up lackey governments in Central America, whose intense political repression, coupled with dire poverty, is driving refugees to make the dangerous and arduous journey to the U.S. border.

Washington supports these governments financially and trains their military officers at the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security and Cooperation at Fort Benning, Ga., formed as the notorious School of the Americas.

Conditions are particularly dire for Indigenous communities, whose primary language is not Spanish and who suffer a high rate of illiteracy. Guatemalan children, for example, often lack access to even basic primary education. As adults they find it difficult, if not impossible, to access social services. Indigenous leaders are arrested and jails for defending their ancestral lands from U.S. and Panamanian oil developers.

According to the Guatemala Solidarity Project, “As a result of repression and land theft these commu- nities are facing extreme hunger, water access, access to clean water, leading to widespread chronic malnutri- tion and other negative health consequences. Mental health consequences of genocide, forced displacement, imprisonment of community leaders and other forms of repression have also been significant.”

This is what the families of Jakelin and Felipe were feeling when they came to the U.S.

Only class solidarity can stop the suffering

Vicious immigrant bashing is now hurting wide sections of the working class in this country, who are suffer- ing from this shutdown over demands for a wall.

Such a wall would also separate Mexico from what was once half of its own territory—think of all the U.S. states and cities now bordering Mexico that have Spanish names—which was stolen by a Yankee military invasion in 1848-46.

While the Democrats in Washington oppose the wall, the Dems are all for policing border crossings to limit the influx of desperate migrants and refugees.

The wild gyrations on Wall Street are indications that capitalism is embroiled in a profound economic crisis. This is the source of all the attacks on the workers and oppressed, whether inside the Beltway or in a remote village in Guatemala. It should be crystal clear now that anti-immigrant bias hurts and divides all working-class people, regardless of where they were born.

Building class solidarity across borders and oceans is what’s needed to push back the capitalist assault.

Galveston, Texas

Protesting border-wall contractor

Activists protested in Galveston, Texas, on Dec. 22 outside the headquarters of the SLS Company, which has a $145 million contract to excavate the racist and climate-destroying border wall the president wants built. The Carrizo/Comecrudo Tribe of Texas organized the protest.

As two dozen people protested at night with lit-up signs, they literally shined the light on SLS by projecting large images on the front of its building. Beside its Galveston headquarters, SLS has offices in Houston, New Orleans, New York, Charleston, S.C., and the Caribbean Basin. SLS contracts with the Department of Homeland Security and the Customs and Border Patrol.

The Indigenous group, Carrizo/Comecrudo, is leading the struggle not only against the border wall but

Houston

International Migrants Day

Standing over one of Houston’s busiest freeways, Highway 59, activists held a “banner drop” on Dec. 18, International Migrants Day, to show solidarity with the caravans of refugees coming to the U.S./Mexico border. Organized by Houston F.I.R.E. (Fight for Immigrants and Refugees Everywhere), large banners and signs were held so the tens of thousands of vehicles slowly passing below during 5 o’clock rush hour traffic could see their demands.

“We were pleasantly surprised by all the honking and thumbs up we received. From 18-wheeler truckers to school buses to workers going home for the day, there was a constant cacophony of horns signaling support for the refugees, a clear denunciation of Trump’s border policies,” immigration activist Hope Sanford with the Migrant Rights Collective told Workers World.

Groups participating were CRECEN, the Central American Resource Center; the Carrizo/Comecrudo Tribe of Texas; the Houston Brown Berets; F.I.R.E.; and the Migrant Rights Collective. CRECEN’s huge banner read: “Save TPS,” referring to President Donald Trump’s decision to end Temporary Protective Status for millions of Central Americans and Haitians who had been allowed to stay in the United States after natural disasters in their home countries.

— Report and photo by Gloria Rubac
The unfolding economic crisis: political, systemic or both?

By Deirdre Griswold

Dec. 23 — There is no doubt that political turmoil in the U.S. is contributing to growing panic in the stock market.

The shutdown of the government over Trump’s demand that Congress allocate $5 billion to build a wall on the Mexican border is not only obscene politically but also impacts the economy.

So does the growing hostility toward China, as seen in the Trump administration’s imposition of tariffs on hundreds of billions of dollars worth of Chinese goods, which started last April. China then imposed an equal amount of tariffs on U.S. goods, affecting particularly farmers in the U.S. who produce soybeans and pork. Prices for U.S. soybeans and pork have already dropped.

But these shocks to the economy that have originated from the Trump administration’s political edicts are far from the whole story. There are many indications that the turmoil in the stock markets reflects much deeper trends in the capitalist economy.

Stock markets and commodity prices

U.S. stocks have just ended their worst week since August 2011, sinking some 17 percent since their record highs.

Beneath the ups and downs of the stock market, however, lurks growing evidence that the capitalist economy is overdue for a “correction”—a crash—of the type that occurred in 2008 or worse.

The website tradegazetteconomics provides detailed charts on the current and projected prices of currencies, stocks, commodities and bonds. As can be imagined, they reflect the price declines that have occurred in many areas of the economy over the past few days—especially in the price of oil.

But what about the longer-term perspective?

Price projections for most commodities are generally nothing but educated guesses based on the historical price of the market—which is based on the anticipated direction of the economy—show how mercurial such guesses may be.

But there is an indicator based on something more substantial—the Baltic Dry Index. The price of shares in the BDI is based on the volume of goods to be shipped over the coming year. This is a benchmark for where the global economy is headed.

“Because the bulk primarily consists of materials that function as raw material inputs to the production of intermediate or finished goods, such as concrete, electricity, steel and food, the index is also seen as an efficient economic indicator of future economic growth and production. The BDI is considered by some people as a blue chip stock, an indicator because it predicts future economic activity.” (tradegazetteconomics.com)

Shares in the BDI fell 3 percent on Friday, Dec. 21. They are expected to decline every quarter over the next year, from the current $1,279 a share down to $950 by the third quarter of 2019.

This anticipated decline in global shipping is a much more reliable indicator of where the economy is headed than the prices of other stocks.

Prices of basic commodities fall

At the same time, the prices of basic commodities like oil have also plummeted. Oil is particularly sensitive to the overall demands of economic activity, once it feeds both commercial and individual needs.

When the U.S. administration unilaterally imposed sanctions on Iran, oil producers in the U.S. were delighted. Steve Austin of oil-price.net wrote in August that “the loss of 2.7 million barrels a day from Iran is a gaping hole for global oil supplies.” He predicted the oil price would soar to $150 a barrel.

More recently, other analysts predicted that Brent crude oil, which sold for $85 a barrel in October, could go as high as $100. They all must be biting their fingers now. Brent crude is selling for $54 a barrel today. The BDI hit record lows in January of 2009, when it predicted that China’s demand for oil would be $17 million a day.

In addition, China is expected to buy little or no crude oil from the U.S. in 2009, citing “policy uncertainty” in its relations with Washington. The U.S. already maintains record deficits, with over $45 billion in its trade with China, which is now expected to grow even faster.

Low oil prices can kill the U.S. frack ing business. Fracked oil, in which rock is fractured by pressurized liquid, costs $939 by the third quarter of 2019.

The big struggle over the Dakota Access Pipeline two years ago involved blocking an oil pipeline that runs out of the fracking fields of North Dakota. Hundreds of protesters, invited by Indigenous nations to come and protect their threatened water sources, were arrested and subjected to injuries when the federal government sent in the National Guard and local police to brutally suppress the protesters and destroy their encampment. This military operation started during the Obama administration and was continued by the Trump gang.

Also, auto sales in the U.S. in the coming year are expected to fall short of 17 million for the first time in four years. All these figures and projections point to tougher times ahead for workers and small businesses in the U.S.

Capitalist crises and overproduction

What is a capitalist economic crisis? Where does it come from? Can palla tive measures prevent these periodic collapses from happening?

Such questions have been debated by generations of Liberal bourgeois analysts, often called “Keynesians” after the British econo mist John Maynard Keynes, insist that government policy can prevent such crises.

Their view, called the “underconsumption theory,” holds that when workers are not paid enough to buy back the products they produce, a crisis follows. They argue for higher wages and benefits as a way to avoid these periodic collapses of the system.

This sounds like a pro-worker point of view, but in fact it conceals a pro-capitalist point of view, since it argues that capitalism can be tamed and reformed.

Karl Marx and his collaborators rejected this view. Marx showed that the crises of capitalism are built into the system. They do not come from underconsumption but overproduction, and they will reassert themselves as long as capitalism exists.

They argued that underconsumption existed in previous class societies. Under slavery and feudalism, the masses lived in dire poverty while the rich lived in opulence. The masses never earned enough to buy all that they produced and needed. Yet these two earlier forms of class oppression, brutal though they were, did not produce recurring crises of production.

Crises of overproduction are a uniquely capitalist feature.

So what is overproduction? Is it just producing more than what people need? Not at all. And while it does mean producing more than what the public can buy, it also means much more than that.

The capitalist system is driven by the need of the owners of capital to capture more of the market and thus expand their ability to produce. “Expand or die” lies at the heart of this system.

The owners of capitalists must enhance their profits, not only to have a richer life style for themselves, but in order to blow back into their businesses the means to expand production and thereby push out their rivals. It is this competition for the market that continually drives expansion at the point of overproduction. The capitalists who can expand their field of exploitation survive; those who cannot must die.

All capitalists must try to do it. While they may appear to be a billionaires’ club, they are actually a pack of wolves who are at each other’s throats even as they collectively work to crush their rivals. The Great Depression of the 1930s was the result of worldwide capitalist overproduction. It led to the collapse of stock markets in all the developed capitalist countries. That then meant the collapse of literally millions of companies, corporations and banks, which in turn laid off workers, producing mass unemployment and suffering. Prices also dropped, but without an income, who could enjoy the lower prices?

It should be noted that, of all the larger crises in the world, only the Soviet Union, which had overturned capitalism, escaped the mayhem of the Depression. With its state-owned planned economy, the USSR’s industrial development actually sped up in the 1930s.

What ended that general collapse of capitalism? World War II. The most destructive war the world has ever seen. And with it came the obliteration of much of the older means of production, opening space for a new round of capitalist development—at the cost of hundreds of millions of lives.

The coming struggle

Whether it comes sooner or later, another capitalist crisis is inevitable. The pain and suffering it will cause the working class—and especially the most oppressed sections of the working class—will open up many new struggles and add impetus to existing progressive movements.

The capitalist political establishment—particularly the Democratic Party—will try to capture and limit these movements, arguing that reforms can solve the problems.

Of course workers need to fight for major reforms. They need higher wages and guaranteed incomes now, not some vague “future social security.” They need affordable health care and functioning schools. The racist offensive that threatens the very lives of people of color must be ended. Immigrants need to find a safe home. Women and LGBTQ people need to overcome misogyny, male domination and sexual violence.

But all these struggles for reform will not get rid of the basic problem.

For that, these popular movements can and must become part of the struggle to end capitalism, which instigates and spreads every type of discrimination and oppression. It is only the social revolution to end capitalism that can eradicate economic crises and, in doing so, redirect our energies to meeting the needs of humanity and the planet.
Syria, Afghanistan

What's behind announced U.S. troop withdrawals?

By Sara Flounders

Dec. 31—Since this article was written on Dec. 23, several events have confirmed the unsolvable contradictions of U.S. imperialism.

In a quick public relations photo op on Dec. 26, President Donald Trump visited the U.S. Al Asad Base on Iraq’s border with Syria. “In fact we can use this base if we want to do something in Syria.” The Pentagon has made clear that the official withdrawal from Syria might take many months, Special Forces teams will operate from the base into Syria, and they can continue to bomb Syria from the giant U.S. base in Qatar. Israel bombed Syria on Dec. 25.

But the U.S. doesn’t hold all the cards. Turkey is in a similar position. Turkey, the Syrian army has entered the city of Manbij, long held by anti-Damascus rebel forces, following a political-deal between Kurdish YPG forces (People’s Protection Units) and the Syrian government. Government forces now hold almost all of Syria.

Trump’s surprise visit to Iraq stirred a firestorm of opposition in Iraq. Trump’s withdrawal is seen as a violation of Iraqi sovereignty. Iraqi officials refused to meet with Trump based on the arrogant conditions imposed by the U.S. military. The Iraqi Parliament announced they will schedule a special session to vote the U.S. out of Iraq. Iraqi militia units will force the U.S. out by other means.

French, British and German troops, part of NATO forces, are still massed on the ground.

President Trump’s Dec. 19 announcement concerning withdrawal of the remaining 2,000 U.S. troops from Syria and a partial troop withdrawal from Afghanistan does not mention an end to the Pentagon’s aggressive military posture that has been endless wars in Syria, Afghanistan, in the region or globally. The Pentagon has 170,000 troops stationed in 150 countries in over 800 overseas bases. But this huge military force is not merely a presence intended to create instability and conflict in every part of the world. Pro-militarist criticisms of Trump are reactionary.

A progressive working-class analysis of Trump’s abrupt announcement—with no known discussion with policy makers or consultation with co-sponsors in the NATO war alliance—is a departure from U.S. corporate rulers’ strategy of haphazard withdrawal of U.S. military forces to avoid destabilizing the ISIS proxy state in the oil-rich area of northeast Syria, armed by the U.S. and a U.S. naval blockade, its proxy, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates have been defeated, along with the fanatical Islamic State forces (ISIS) who held large areas of Syria.

National pride in Syria’s accomplishments and defense of its territory was a major political factor.

Pro-militarist criticism of Trump is reactionary.

The U.S. has spent eight years orchestrating participation of Western imperialist powers and Gulf monarchies in its endeavor. Despite four years of bombing that decimated Syria’s infrastructure, introduction of tens of thousands of heavily armed mercenaries, intense international media and strategic economic sanctions, the country still remains unconquered.

Solidarity combats sectarian divisions

Syria resisted the attempted takeover on two fronts. The government organized a defensive military struggle. But the most important weapon was reliance on Syria being a mosaic of many religious, ethnic and national groupings that can coexist within a secular state.

The positive face of the struggle to maintain national independence was visible in every picture, delegation and mass rally. The government stressed the rich cultural diversity and unity of the entire population. Syria also invited Hezbollah’s well-organized military units from Lebanon, and then Iranian and Russian military assistance to aid in defense against this imperialist attack, part of the expanding regional conflict.

Almost all the tens of thousands of reactionary foreign mercenaries funded and trained by the U.S., Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates have been defeated, along with the fanatical Islamic State forces (ISIS) who held large areas of Syria.

National pride in Syria’s accomplishments and defense of its territory was a major political factor in Syria’s success.

Diminishing U.S. ability to dominate globe

The U.S. has been doled a but similar failure in Afghanistan. Despite the U.S. invasion in 2001 and years of occupation, with the rotation of a million troops, Washington’s brutal “pacification” program has failed. The war is endemic in an occupa-

tion. Today, not one base of occupation or one national road is secure. The Afghan war is now the longest in U.S. history, with no end in sight and no prospect of ending, at least in the short run.

Another crisis for U.S. imperialism is mounting inter-national opposition to the civilian casualties and starva-

tion in Yemen. The U.S. has split Assad and a U.S. high-tech and a U.S. naval blockade, its proxy, Saudi Arabia, has not crushed resistance there.

Meanwhile, against all odds, the Palestinian resistance insists against U.S.-proxy Israel. This resistance is a force that even the latest generation of U.S.-provided weapons cannot seem to reverse.

Despite the confident, aggressive tone of Trump’s announcement, it nevertheless reflects diminishing U.S. capacity to dominate the world—regardless of who is in the Oval Office. The media and political brouhaha is a distraction. It is all about U.S. remaining capacity—and how to reverse the slide of U.S. power.

Turkey and the Kurds

The day before Trump’s troop withdrawal announcement, a meeting was held in Geneva about Syria, which excluded the U.S. and imperialist European Union countries. Instead, they met with ministers of Russia, Iran and Turkey and met about Syria’s future.

For different reasons and interests, these countries oppose the destructive U.S. role in Syria. In Geneva, says the International Action Center and helps coordinate the United National Antiwar Coalition, the Hands Off Syria Campaign and the Coalition Against U.S. Foreign Military Bases.

Turkey’s break with NATO— or a military confronta-

tion in Syria and launch a new imperialist initiative. There are many ways to rebrand or rename U.S. military interventions.

Russia, Iran: Which country is next?

The antiwar movement must remain vigilant. U.S. forces are still massed on the ground in the Near East, at drone bases in African countries and in naval convoys off China’s shores.

There are still U.S. troops, aircraft carriers and nuclear submarines around Syria, looking for a new opportunity or a staged provocation. As the Pentagon did in Iraq, there are many ways to rebrand or rename U.S. military interventions. Syria and Libya have been “wars of legitimation.” Antivar and progressive forces must clearly and consistently demand: Bring all U.S. troops home! Close all bases! End all occupations and sanctions!

Sara Flounders traveled twice to Syria in solidarity delegations during the U.S. war against that country. She is co-director of the International Action Center and helps coordinate the United National Antiwar Coalition, the Hands Off Syria Campaign and the Coalition Against U.S. Foreign Military Bases.
Metro Detroit

Bigots’ attempts to shut down Drag Queen Storytime fall flat

By Martha Grevatt

In December 2017, the Detroit suburb of Huntington Woods became the first community in Michigan to have a Drag Queen Storytime. Every month Raven Cassidine, Miss Motor City Pride 2017, reads to preschool and elementary school children. The Huntington Woods Public Library is one of a growing number of venues around the country to host these unique events.

“Drag Queen Storytime is just what it sounds like —” writes the library, “drag queens reading stories to children in libraries, schools, and bookstores. DQS captures the imagination and play of the gender fluidity of childhood and gives kids glamorous, positive, and unabashedly queer role models.” (tinyurl.com/ycw5a7g)

The story hours have been well-attended and popular with both children and parents.

Cassidine, an African-American drag queen who grew up in Huntington Woods—which is 96 percent white—described her involvement as a “homecoming.” She was nervous before the first reading, telling the children, “There’s a lot of little people in this room and it made me nervous. I didn’t know if guys were going to like me or not. Do you like me? The children applauded, yelled “Yay” and hugged the storyteller. (Between the Lines, Dec. 19)

Reacting to the program’s success, a right-wing campaign was aimed at shutting down DQS or making it an “adult” event forbidden to children. In other parts of the country, the campaign even disrupted story hours. Here, Huntington Woods City Commissioner Allison Iversen attacked DQS for “provocative, controversial, ‘unashamedly queer’ dem- onstrations of diversity.” Iversen acted in concert with Mass Resistance, an out-of-state hate group that has also attempted to shut down DQSs in New York and Alaska.

The City Commission announced that the issue would be discussed at its Dec. 18 meeting, where public comment was allowed. It was clear before the meeting that there would be mass support for DQS. When the meeting began, however, there was an empty seat at the table where the Commissioners sat. Iversen had resigned abruptly after seeing how unpopular her position was. The chambers were packed to overflowing. Only five people spoke against DQS; four of them were not even Huntington Woods residents. In a resounding victory against transphobia and racism, the Commission voted unanimously to continue the monthly story hour.

It remains to be seen if the humiliated bigots will follow through on announced plans to picket DQS on Jan. 26. In any case the Commission vote demonstrates that, even with the current political makeup in Washington and the Michigan state house, the LGBTQ+ community can score a win.

Available at online bookstores.
Australia and its Aboriginal prison population

By Dolores Cox

Australia is the sixth largest nation in the world, as well as the continent of the Indian and Pacific oceans. In 1788, it was illegally occupied by British settler-colonists. The First Nations people were exempted from the death penalty because they agreed to be “transported” there, as part of a ruling-class plan to colonize the continent “for England.”

The British colonists in power instituted a white-supremacist government to dominate and control the original Aboriginal inhabitants of Australia.

But as Jenny Muno, Wiradjuri nation, has stated: “[A]s from time immunemal, we were here when the day dawned. We have been here from the first sunrise, our people have been here along with the continent, with the first sunrise. We know our land was given to us by Baisei; we have a sacred duty to protect that land.”

(aboriginalheritage.org/history)

The Aboriginal Heritage Office states: “It would not be an exaggeration to claim that the island continent was owned by over 400 different [Aboriginal] nations” before the first British arrived.

A world-renowned journalist for the Washington Post.

The United States has a “proven track record” of trying to gain control of the Indian and Pacific oceans. In 1788, it was illegally occupied by British settler-colonists. The First Nations people were exempted from the death penalty because they agreed to be “transported” there, as part of a ruling-class plan to colonize the continent “for England.”

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Back and after 1901, when Australia gained independence from England, additional British and Irish settlers increased the white population and now form the majority population.

Aboriginal people are estimated to be about 3 percent of the population of Australia. According to Australia’s Justice Project, their racialized incarceration rates are 10 times that of the white-prison population.

Australia’s 2017 Bureau of Statistics revealed an increase in the total prison population during the past 10 years. The largest increases were of Aboriginal men and women. Thirty-three percent of those incarcerated were “on remand,” charged without conviction or before finding guilt.

Aboriginal people also have higher arrest rates than whites, more convictions and longer sentences than non-Aboriginal people. Non-Indigenous prisoner rates have not increased since 2008.

Structural disadvantages play major roles in overpopulation in prisons. Poverty, overpolicing of the mentally and cognitively disabled, institutional discrimination and greater severity by the criminal justice system in the treatment of Aboriginal offenders are contributing factors. Racial disparities continue to exist.

In 2016, the U.S. Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division announced that the main aim of U.S. strategy is to oppose and, if possible, to prevent China’s and Russia’s good and cooperative relations with African countries. These U.S. competitors are rapidly extending their financial and political influence across Africa and “are deliberately and aggressively targeting their investments in the region to gain a competitive advantage over the United States.” (Civil Rights Division, Dec. 13)

In essence, there is no change of strategy. But Bolton’s speech raises concerns about his threat to recognize or fund U.S. teams. The U.S. strategy to be one of meddling, military interventions, coups and coups in Africa.

By Carlos Lopes Pereira

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By John Catalinotto

The United States has a “proven track record” of trying to gain control of the Indian and Pacific oceans. In 1788, it was illegally occupied by British settler-colonists. The First Nations people were exempted from the death penalty because they agreed to be “transported” there, as part of a ruling-class plan to colonize the continent “for England.”

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FRANCE

Macron, austerity, repression and the Yellow Vest revolt

By Rémy Herrera

Paris, France

Dec. 23 — According to representatives of police trade unions leaving the Ministry of Interior on the evening of Dec. 19, “the negotiations were difficult, very difficult.” Nevertheless, it took only a few hours for them to win “the highest salary advances” for their members in nearly 20 years.

Interior Minister Christophe Castaner had to concede: Police salaries were increased by 120 euros ($137) a month for beginning cops and 150 euros ($171) for veterans. This was more than what other civil servants were winning during the negotiations on Dec. 20 and more than what President Emmanuel Macron had promised the Yellow Vests movement ten days earlier — which was almost nothing.

Police officers had been complaining for ages about poor working conditions and pay, not to mention the 24 million hours of overtime that the state has still not paid them, nor the costs of reimbursement for when they are injured that the Social Security workers’ compensation fund takes a long time to deliver. Never-greater austerity also affects the police.

More recently, on television or on the Internet, anonymous police officers have expressed their frustration and some even unhappiness with their (political) superiors’ orders that they step up repression: against the Yellow Vests or, before that, the student protesters, political activists occupying “Zones to Defend” (ZAD), environmental activists or demonstrators against laws that make the labor market flexible, that is, laws that remove protection for workers. Tongues are loosening: “It is our friends, our brothers, our parents, our children whom we are being told to repress,” we hear from police officers.

As early as two days after the Dec. 15 “Act V of the Yellow Vests,” several national police unions, which are not allowed to actually go on strike, announced their intention to hold a “national relaxation” day on Dec. 19. Because the Emmanuel Macron government has become dependent on the repressive force of the cops to stop the movement of the Yellow Vests, it would try to keep the police satisfied.

An atmosphere of fear

The tipping point for this development is clearly identifiable: the state of emergency that the government declared in November 2015 after the terrorist attacks that struck here has triggered a terrifying spiral of repression and has allowed those in power to create an atmosphere of fear.

It was under pressure and threats from this extreme right-wing of Islam, the political Islam from Al-Qaida to the Islamic State (IS) to the state of emergency was imposed on the French people and renewed five times in a row, until last month, just in front of the Yellow Vests.

Although the state of emergency was lifted at the end of 2017, the fact is that most of the exceptional provisions it contained are still in effect: the force of law, preventive arrests, protective perimeters, individual house arrest and border control techniques, suspensions of collective union rights, strengthening internal security and the fight against terrorism” of Oct. 30, 2017. Hence the misuse of this exceptional legal arsenal to re-establish public freedoms in France, to the point that what are in danger now are the rights to demonstrate or express one’s opinions.

All those who have recently participated in demonstrations in the country know what human rights organizations, and even police officers, have been denouncing for months, as we have mentioned, and sometimes even journalists, when they, too, are beaten up: that the many interventions by the police are disproportionate and excessively violent.

These interventions include intense flash-ball fire at ground level, frequent use of sound or stun grenades, systematic use of tear gas and water cannons against peaceful protesters, the practice of containment that stops people from joining other protesters, arbitrary arrests, confiscation of medical equipment from street medics who volunteer at marches to treat injured demonstrators, intimidation, provocations for no reason, sometimes insults, and keeping minors in police custody.

The state aims to stop the revolt

All these facts shock and worry the French. But that anxiety is precisely what the state aims for: to make the people stop their revolt.

From the very first days of the mobilization of the Yellow Vests, rumors circulated that the protesters were being manipulated by the ultra-right National Rally (formerly National Front), that it was a “power grab” remotely controlled by the far-right party whose leader is Marine Le Pen. The second jaw of the vise is the argument of the Interior Minister’s speech. What “evidence” did he provide? Only that there were some xenophobic comments noted here and there among the demonstrators.

Of the several hundred thousand Yellow Vests participating, it would have been miraculous if none of them were racist. From there to extragrade that the ultra-right is leading this movement was a big leap that Interior Minister Castaner was only too happy to take. It’s a clever joke and mock the mass arrival of the police.

That is to say, if their odiously iniquitous capitalist order were really threatened; if the French people, thirsty for justice, their hearts full of renewed hopes, shouting for their dignity, in focusing their anger, were tired of repressions and presence of the police, the ultra-right would be transformed into the political party of the ultra-right party of the French people,之人

President Macron, who has slowly bowed at the feet of billionaires, chose not to satisfy the deep needs of the French people and even sinks deeper into the path of repression and violence. The “police strategy” plays into the hands of the National Rally.

Despite differences between the right and the far right — differences dramatized by the media, which are differences in degree, not in their essence — there is in reality no discontinuity. The right wing of high finance, which Emmanuel Macron serves, and the extreme right of the reactionary bourgeoisie of Marine Le Pen form a terrible, dramatic political continuum that unites to defend a dying capitalism. One is neoliberal-globalist, the other obscurantist-nationalist, but both want the current economic system.

Macron and Le Pen share class interests

Overt and above manifest personal hatreds, which exist, common class interests. The far-right and the Yellow Vests will surround them: fear of terrorist al-Qaida-type attacks on one side, selfish bourgeois and racist chauvinism on the other side.

Meanwhile, on Saturday, Dec. 22, for the “Act VI” of their mobilization, the Yellow Vests tested the effectiveness of the intelligence services. Watched very closely by the eyes of the Ministry of the Interior, their social networks called for a rally — a highly symbolic one — in front of the gates of the Château de Versailles. The prefect quickly ordered its closure and immediately sent the CRS (riot police) to guard the area and protect the businesses.

The protest was a decoy! Some 200 Yellow Vests, no more, were present on the scene that morning, to laugh at the joke and mock the mass arrival of the police.

At the same time, in Paris, most of their comrades dressed in yellow, who, to keep the action a surprise, were notified at the last minute, gathered around the Place de l’Étoile or around the Basilique du Sacré-Cœur at the top of the slopes of the Montmartre hill, among others.

And since Parisian security devices had boasted of being “extremely mobile” in previous weeks, groups of Yellow Vests played cat and mouse with them, making them run all day long in the streets of the capital, blocking the traffic routes at random, here and there, to a concert of horns of supportive motorists and the applause of amused tourists.

On Dec. 22, however, the police did succeed in stopping, at different points in the territory, particularly several “symbols” of Yellow Vests. This was the case with Eric Drouet, arrested at mid-day in the Madeleine district of Paris and placed in police custody for “unlawfully organizing a demonstration, participat in a group formed for violence or degradation, and carrying a prohibited weapon.”

The weapon in question was a piece of wood. Its owner, a professional truck driver, keeps it in his hands at all times as a means of defense, according to his lawyer.

Immediately after the announcement of Drouet’s arrest, hundreds of Yellow Vests emerged from this sovereign people, all proclaiming themselves “leaders of the movement” and demanding Drouet’s release … or their own arrest!

Herrera is a Marxist economist, a researcher at the Centre national de la Recherche scientifique (CNRS), who works at the Centre d’Économie de la Sorbonne, Paris. WW staff translated this article.
What was supposed to be just another amateur wrestling match held in southern New Jersey on Dec. 19 turned into a brutal act of unprovoked violence, prompting a viral response on Twitter.

A white male referee, Alan Mahoney, gave a white woman a pair of scissors to cut off the dreadlocks of 15-year-old African-American wrestler, Andrew Johnson, 90 seconds before his match. Johnson, a black wrestler, faced an ultimatum from his opponent...
Brazilian elections: a political discussion

This is Part 2 of an exchange between Manuel Raposo and Fred Goldstein over Brazil’s Workers World Party in the U.S. They are discussing Trumpism and fascism at the class election in Brazil. Raposo’s text was translated by WW Managing Editor John Catalinotto.

Manuel Raposo

Oct. 23 — When the process of removing Dilma Rousseff from the presidency of Brazil began, and even when it was brought to a conclusion, the Portuguese right-wing and the “institution-respecting” democrats said that Bolsonaro is a Trump, but worse.

It is this same behavior that leads cautious democrats to classify European or U.S. fascists only as “extremists” and “populists” — just because they act, for the moment, within democratic norms.

Democracy in imperialist countries, however, is in itself an apparatus to beat back workers’ interests while running the country — and therefore deserves this name: a dictatorship of a bourgeois minority over the majority of the people. That’s true even though a ritual vote consecrates bourgeois rule. The extreme right’s use of democratic institutions is merely tactical and is really just the first step in a long road to smash any attempt to represent popular voices.

The “democratic” tolerance towards the fascists repeats, under today’s conditions, the coincidence of European and American democracies with the rise of Hitler and Mussolini after World War I, as well as with the crushing of the Spanish Republic. This was followed by the assassination of anarchist Federico de Olomar [dictator of Portugal, 1932-68] and Francisco Franco [dictator of Spain, 1939-75], the Greek colonels [1967-74] and the Brazilian military junta of the Pinochet period [1973-90] and Jorge Vilela [Argentina, 1976-81], etc.

There’s a reason for the parallel. Then, as now, the bourgeoisie fears above all the revolt of the masses and presents to the popular strata (who are usually the first victims of that criminality) as a solution to make order — and for their benefit — a authoritarian use of force against the population. This population is up to its neck in bad living conditions and does not envisage another social system besides one where the bosses hold power. But this situation also shows the bourgeoisie’s “legitimacy” to exert power or restore the capacity of capitalism to generate a new surge of progress.

On the contrary, the fascist drift shows a bourgeois minority over the working majority, what the bourgeoisie is preparing to take a reactionary offensive. As long as there are bourgeois beliefs. This includes belief in the virtues of nationalism, hatred of immigration and a class confrontation. The illusion thus makes the proletariat a docile mass when faced with the drift to the right. Instead of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, the class response of the bourgeoisie is weakened and the institutions of democracy as it presently exists — which is the “real existing democracy,” or the “possible democracy.” The bourgeois democratic apparatus is rotting from within, accompanying the decline of the economic system.

We must ask what effect the content of the parliamentary democracy of the country has. Together with the whole economic force in the hands of an increasingly restricted bourgeoisie layer that monopolizes political power. No one knows in which of these groups, see their class interests represented.

The democracies human have experienced have been based on the accumulation of wealth in capitalist societies. The capitalist metropolitan countries these democracies owed their stability to continuous economic growth. Only this way could the ruling bourgeoisie have the financial means to buy the support of the petty bourgeoisie, the new middle class, for their order.

With this growing mass, as it is now, the base supporting the bourgeoisie is weakened and the institutions of formal democracy lose practical effectiveness and even symbolic value.

If the bourgeoisie is unable to guarantee progress and an improvement of living standards for the mass of the population, this shows the majority that the bourgeoisie is a useless, parasitic and undesirable class. The social foundation of bourgeois power is therefore shaken, because that class loses the arguments capable of convincing the great majority of the people, on which its domination rests, is better than anything else.

Under those conditions fascism can gain adherents among the ruling classes, as the ratifying classes, as the fascists express their preference for the “argument” of force — all-powerful police and military, a manipu- lated judicial apparatus, laws that restrict individual liberties, cutting social rights, etc. This is the response of the ruling classes to the crisis of the capitalist social system, in all its aspects, is not a lark.

The fascists use the denun- ciation of corruption and crime as a weapon. Or they might use nationalism, hatred of immi- grants, whatever — this only con- cerns the methods of propaganda that they put in place to regiment the population. Trade unionism is up to its neck in bad living conditions and does not envisage another social system besides one where the bosses hold power. But this situation also shows the bourgeoisie’s “legitimacy” to exert power or restore the capacity of capitalism to generate a new surge of progress.

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The current stagnation has shaken not only the eco- nomy and business, but also all state institutions and all bourgeois beliefs. This includes belief in the virtues of democracy as it presently exists — which is the “real existing democracy,” or the “possible democracy.” The bourgeois democratic apparatus is rotting from within, accompanying the decline of the economic system.

“The ruling classes know better than the working class that the general crisis of capitalism is irreversible.”
— Fred Goldstein

Goldstein’s response

Now the fascist Bolsonaro has been elected. No sur- prise. The international monopolies and Brazilian agri- business got behind the rest of the Brazilian bourgeoisie to throw their weight behind him. They cannot wait to throw their weight behind him for their base support — and to cash in on wholesale privatizations.

Although your document is an analysis of the present situation in Brazil, this analysis can also be applied in Europe and the U.S. I fully agree with it.

As you wrote, maximum inequality brings minimum democracy.

You excellently explain that capitalist democracy has been associated historically with capitalist growth, expansion and enough surplus value to maintain a growth of consumption. The British Paris International stu- dy, the French Republic, U.S. capitalist democracy have all been based on expanding consumption.

These conditions are vanish- ing. Capitalism is at a dead end for both internal and external reasons. The historic stage of growth and prosperity, which allows the masses to look for- ward to some life improvement, is over. The quality of life for the workers, as well as large sections of the middle class, is declin- ing. In the absence of a revo- lutionary socialist alternative, political reaction is on the rise everywhere.

Your analysis also applies to the developing right-wing poli- tics of Trump and his growing relations with finance capital. He is in a constant stage of testing how far he can go to the right and appeal to neo-fascist elements in the ruling class and the population. He is feeling out how many democrat norms they can disregard and how much seizing of authority he can get away with.

Your explanation of the Brazilian crisis is illuminat- ing. As you point out, capitalism generates crime and brutality, not only in the Philippines or Brazil, but also in Europe and even here in Portugal.

Bourgeois apparatus rotting from within

Social revolution is now visible in any part of the world. But the capitalism of today is creating the condi- tions for social revolution to mature.

This process does not only the economy and business, but also all state institutions and all bourgeois beliefs. This includes belief in the virtues of democracy as it presently exists — which is the “real existing democracy,” or the “possible democracy.” The bourgeois democratic apparatus is rotting from within, accompanying the decline of the economic system.

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Aunque este producto está diseñado para ser medicamento de un solo uso, todavía existe el riesgo de desviación y abuso. El grupo defensor Public Defensa para acelerar los productos de Entendimiento con el Departamento de Defensa y la FDA será inevitablemente la causa de muchas muertes, ya que el sufentanilo podría convertirse fácilmente en un producto de corte en la heroina y otras drogas o el abuso a sabiendas. Los funcionarios de salud pública ya tienen preocupaciones de que este producto será desviado.

Ha habido decenas de miles de muertes por opioides en el último año, y muchas más en 2018, con el sufentanilo involucrado en más de 82% de los casos. La FDA estableció una estrategia contra el sufentanilo, que se encuentra en el bloque de recortes. Esta acción es irresponsable de parte de la compañía farmacéutica AcelRx y la FDA será inevitablemente la causa de muchas muertes, ya que el sufentanilo podría convertirse fácilmente en un producto de corte en la heroina y otras drogas o el abuso a sabiendas. Los funcionarios de salud pública ya tienen preocupaciones de que este producto será desviado.

Por Princess Harmony

Dusvai. Ese es el nombre comercial del último opioido de alta potencia que pronto aparecerá en el mercado. Su nombre científico es sufentanilo, y es un análogo del infame y fatal opioido fentanyl. Es aproximadamente 5 a 10 veces más fuerte que el fentanilo y 1000 veces más fuerte que la morfina. Se administra por vía sublingual, toma 15 minutos para comenzar a trabajar y proporciona alivio del dolor durante aproximadamente 3 a 4 horas. Fue aprobado el 12 de octubre por la Administración de Drogas y Alimentos en la reunión de 10x3.

Dusvai, al igual que otros productos de fentanilo en el mercado, tenía la intención de tratar un dolor insoportable, famoso por personas que en realidad no los necesitaban. Aunque este producto está diseñado para ser medicamento de un solo uso, todavía existe el riesgo de desviación y abuso. El grupo defensor Public Citizen dijo al Washington Post que “si se agruebla, Dusvai puede ser abusado y comenzará a matar gente tan pronto como llegue al mercado”. (Psmag.com, 2 de noviembre)

GM recorta empleos: los trabajadores se defienden

Por Martha Grevatt

Detroit — General Motors anunció el 26 de noviembre que planea recortar más de 14,000 empleos y cerrar cuatro plantas en los EE. UU., una en Canadá y dos más en ubicaciones aún no nombradas.

La CEO de GM, Mary Barra, quien a Suexo $22 millones el año pasado, eligió sus palabras con cuidado cuando reveló el plan. Dijo que en varias ocasiones el próximo año las plantas se quedaran “sin asignar”. Eso significaba que los problemas de trabajo de un sindicato limitado en la planta se suspenderán y que no se asignarán nuevos productos a las plantas mencionadas en el anuncio.

Barra evitó decir las palabras “cerrado” o “inactivo”. El contrato actual entre GM y United Auto Workers dice: “[La] compañía no cerrará, inactiva, ni venderá parcial o totalmente, escisión, escisión, consolidar o eliminar de cualquier otra forma, cualquier planta, activo o unidad de negocios de cualquier tipo”. La UAW ha rechazado el doble discurso de GM. Cualquier cierre o cierre de la planta, independientemente de la selección de palabras, infringe el contrato actual, que no expira hasta septiembre de 2019.

El presidente de UAW Internacional, Gary Jones, citó la “crue decisión de GM”, declarando: “La UAW y nuestros miembros se enfrentarán a esta decisión de la empresa de todas las vias legales, contractuales y de negociación colectiva abiertas a nuestra membresía”. (The Hill, 6 de diciembre)

Miembros, aliados y sindicatos no se les pide que escriban cartas a la compañía mostrando su oposición a los cierres. GM afirma que los cierres son esenciales porque hay más plantas de las que necesita la empresa para el mercado actual de vehículos y muchas plantas solo están ejecutando un turno de producción.

El presidente de la UAW, Jones, dice que esto se debe a las decisiones de la compañía de trasladar cada vez más la producción a México y otros países de bajos salarios.

Sin embargo, Jones está adoptando un tono más agresivo y condena el “uso de palabras de traidor” en las iniciativas de GM. La oficialidad sindical persigue una estrategia legalista y estriba, combinada con una táctica dudosa de escribir cartas. Lo que se necesita es un activismo militante.

Las compañías ricas violan rutinariamente todo tipo de leyes: la antidiscriminación, el derecho a organizar sindicatos, la protección del medio ambiente, solo una lucha de masas los hará responsables.

Activistas de base planean lucha laboral-comunitaria

Caravanas de trabajadores, celebraron una reunión el 8 de diciembre en Detroit para establecer una estrategia contra una eliminación de más de 14,000 empleos. El video creado por Sean Crawford, quien trabaja en la planta de GM Detroit-Hamtramck, que se encuentra en el bloque de recortes.

Crawford dijo que las ciudades de Michigan de Flint, Pontiac y Saginaw habían sido “machacadas y esquilmadas” por GM. Añadió: “Todos sabemos qué es lo que realmente busca GM, lo único que han buscado, más dinero”. Su video terminó con un llamado a “unirse a través de las fronteras para construir un movimiento de personas de clase trabajadora”. Esto marcó la pauta para escuchar una serie de oradores y una animada discusión sobre por qué los cierres de plantas no son aceptables y qué acciones podría tomar una lucha real. En la reunión se dirigieron el presidente emérito del Ayuntamiento de Detroit, Jann Watson; La representante estatal y senadora electa del estado, Stephanie Chang; Andy Gooderis, representante de la congresista electa Rashida Tlaib; Ghana Goodwin-Dye, presidente de la Local 909 de la UAW, cuya planta en Warren está programada para cerrar; y Jerry Goldberg, en representación de Moratorium Now! Coalición para detener ejecuciones hipotecarias, desahogos y cierres de servicios públicos.

La reunión fue copresidida por el ex presidente de Local 909 y presidente de la tienda, Frank Hammer, y por Martha Grevatt, fideicomisaria local de UAW 869.

Los oradores señalaron el hecho de que los cierres de la planta no solo violaron el contrato, sino que también violaron los términos de las exenciones fiscales estatales y federales que habían atado los donativos a la creación de empleos por parte de GM.

El capitalismo en un calzado sin salida

Por Fred Goldstein

La tesis de este libro es que la crisis económica, que se inició en agosto de 2007, marcó un punto de inflexión en un contexto en el que el autor sostiene que el sistema no se recuperará, no volverá al ciclo capitalista normal de auge y caída. Goldstein utiliza las leyes de la acumulación capitalista de Marx, y la tasa decreciente de ganancia, para demostrar por qué el capitalismo ha llegado fatalmente a un punto de inflexión. El continuo estancamiento Y el desempleo generado provocarán inevitablemente un resurgimiento de la lucha de clases.