

Historic win

Break in Mumia case opens road to appeal

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

April 17 — A major hurdle was cleared today for political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal to win a new trial and freedom. The office of the Philadelphia District Attorney filed a notice that it was rescinding its appeal against Common Pleas Court Judge Leon Tucker’s decision granting Abu-Jamal new appellate rights.

This filing opens the door for Abu-Jamal’s attorneys, Judith Ritter and Sam Spital, with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, to proceed with a filing to have previously denied Post Conviction Relief Act (PCRA) appeals reheard before a new panel of Pennsylvania Supreme Court judges.

Tucker issued a historic ruling last Dec. 27 that former State Supreme Court Justice Ron Castille should have recused himself from hearing four of Abu-Jamal’s appeals between 1995 and 2012. Tucker’s decision further clarified, reinforced and confirmed in his Form 1925 document of March 26 what Mumia Abu-Jamal’s attorneys have argued for years — the innocent prisoner did not get a fair hearing before the State Supreme Court and deserves a new hearing.

Abu-Jamal’s current appeal, first heard in April 2017, was based on the 2016 U.S. Supreme Court decision in Williams v. Pennsylvania that Castille, as the District Attorney who oversaw the William’s case, should have recused himself from ruling on the state appeals.

In January 2019, District Attorney Larry Krasner’s office appealed Tucker’s Dec. 27 ruling, claiming it was overly broad and that it would overburden the court system if thousands of defendants used this decision as precedent.

In his March 26 filing, Tucker shattered Krasner’s argument, explaining that former DA Castille gave the appearance of bias not only because of his prior role as district attorney but also because of his pro-death penalty

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April 18 march for Mumia in Philadelphia.

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

WWP salutes May Day's living legacy

Workers World Party celebrates the indomitable fighting spirit of masses of workers and oppressed peoples who are marching on May 1, International Workers’ Day.

May Day — born in the class struggle for justice — continues today in the global rising of millions against exploitation imposed by transnational capitalism.

This day of workers began in the United States on May 1, 1886, when a nationwide strike, initially called by the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions (later the American Federation of Labor) demanded an 8-hour working day. As Martha Grevatt, WW editor and longtime

autoworker, wrote in a March 23, 2012, article:

“About a quarter of a million took part in many cities, but Chicago, with its militant, left-wing labor movement, had the largest demonstration. There, tens of thousands laid down their tools, and women and men poured into the streets. The demonstrations continued past May 1, and on May 3 police attacked and six workers were killed.

“The next day a protest over the killings was held in Haymarket Square. A bomb was thrown, a policeman was killed, and a struggle broke out that left seven police and four workers dead. Eight workers’ leaders were convicted

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Stop & Shop strike update

Bulletin: After eight days on the picket line, Stop & Shop workers in New England are returning to work. Despite all kinds of inclement weather, strikers kept the lines strong from early morning to late evening. They begin voting on a new contract April 24 which the Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW) says “preserves health care and retirement benefits, provides wage increases, and maintains time-and-a-half pay on Sunday for current members.”

Read **workers.org** for more coverage.



PHOTO: UFCW

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Nabila Bey, Deandra Patrice Jefferson, Monica Moorehead, April 13

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

The significance of reparations — *then and now*

By **Betsey Piette**
Philadelphia

A “Conversation on Reparations,” held here on April 13, featured Monica Moorehead, Workers World Party 2016 presidential candidate and editor of “Marxism, Reparations and the Black Freedom Struggle”; Nabila Bey, with Philadelphia N’COBRA (National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America); and facilitator Deandra Patrice Jefferson, from Philly for REAL Justice and WWP, were also on the panel.

While there has been a struggle to raise the demand for reparations for slavery in the U.S. for some time, now this discussion is reaching broader audiences. It is being discussed in the corporate media and has surfaced as a key issue among potential candidates for the Democratic Party nomination leading up to the 2020 presidential primary.

Moorehead opened the discussion by stating that her book was inspired by the struggles for reparations led by N’COBRA following the World Conference on Racism in Durban, South Africa, in 2001. She noted, “The trans-Atlantic slave trade netted untold trillions of dollars — money owed to our enslaved ancestors. But how do we put a price tag on the trauma that came from slavery, lynching, Jim Crow laws (political lynching), and police killings of Black people today?

“The original promise of ‘40 acres and a mule’ was never realized because of the rise of the Ku Klux Klan. But the ‘Free the land’ demand raised by the Republic of New Africa continues today through struggles for community control of schools, affirmative action on the job, community control of the police and taking down racist statues

honoring the Confederacy. The issues are not confined to the U.S. The African Diaspora spread throughout the world including to Brazil and Puerto Rico.”

Moorehead pointed out that most of Africa is still reeling from the impact of colonization and neocolonization. The wealth of Africa is still being stolen on a daily basis through the debt crisis created by the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and greedy, parasitic corporations and banks.

“The bottom line,” she noted, “is that reparations on a global basis can only be permanently won by replacing the capitalist system with a socialist society that guarantees free, quality health care, jobs, education, housing, etc.”

Moorehead quoted the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. from 1964 when he said: “No amount of gold could provide an adequate compensation for the exploitation and humiliation of the Negro in America down through the centuries. ... Yet a price can be placed on unpaid wages. ... The payment should be in the form of a massive program by the government of special, compensatory measures which could be regarded as a settlement in accordance with the accepted practices of common law. Such measures would certainly be less expensive than any compensation based on two centuries of unpaid wages and accumulated interest.”

King proposed, “[J]ust as we granted a GI Bill of Rights to war veterans, America [should] launch a broad-based and gigantic Bill of Rights for the Disadvantaged, our veterans of the long siege of denial.”

In her opening remarks, Nabila Bey picked up on this,

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Press conference celebrates new legal opportunities for Mumia

By **Betsey Piette**
Philadelphia

An air of celebration energized the press conference held by supporters of political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal on April 18. The day before, Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner announced that he was withdrawing his appeal of the Dec. 27 decision by Common Pleas Court Judge Leon Tucker granting Abu-Jamal new appellate rights.

The decision opens the way for four Post Conviction Relief Act (PCRA) appeals, involving more than 20 separate complaints, to be reheard before the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

The April 18 press conference was held outside City Hall next to a statue honoring 19th-century African-American educator, writer and fearless civil rights activist Octavius V. Catto, who was murdered by a racist mob in 1871. Installed in September 2017, it is Philadelphia's only monument to a historic Black leader and stands on the opposite side of City Hall from the much denounced statue of racist former Police Commissioner and Mayor Frank Rizzo.

The outdoor location also offered the opportunity to do outreach for an April 27 rally for Mumia to people passing by, many of whom stayed to listen to speakers.

Pam Africa, MOVE member and Minister of Confrontation of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, chaired the noontime event, which brought out more than 75 people from community, political and religious organizations. While applauding Krasner for bowing to public demands to drop his appeal, speaker after speaker raised that Abu-Jamal, unjustly imprisoned since 1981 because of police, judicial and prosecutorial misconduct, should be released now!

Supporters are reinvigorated to demand that charges against Abu-Jamal be dropped and that he be freed because he is factually innocent. Mumia has always maintained his innocence.

While noting that DA Krasner's April 17 decision contained distortions about Tucker's filings, Rachel Wolkenstein, a former attorney for Abu-Jamal,

nonetheless called the reversal "historic." She noted it was "the first time there has been a direct legal push-back against the Fraternal Order of Police" in Philadelphia since the case began in 1981. Wolkenstein cautioned, however, that "it can't be seen that Krasner is on our side. The boxes of hidden evidence 'suddenly discovered' by Krasner in the DA's office [one day after Tucker's initial ruling] are proof of everything we say and more about this frame-up."

Professor Johanna Fernandez, with the Campaign to Bring Mumia Home, challenged the corporate media for historically carrying the FOP line vilifying Abu-Jamal. "Mumia was an award-winning journalist and president of the Association of Black Journalists. Had Mumia been a white journalist, would we be having this conversation today?"

"Mumia was part of the Black Power movement fighting for justice in the 1970s. He was the only journalist in Philadelphia who humanized members of the MOVE organization," she asserted.

Fernandez put the case in historic context, noting that within months of Abu-Jamal's 1982 conviction, 15 of the 35 officers who collected evidence in his case were tried and convicted of corruption, evidence tampering and falsifying evidence to obtain convictions in several other cases.

Fernandez noted that Albert Sabo, the judge in Abu-Jamal's initial 1982 trial who was brought back from retirement to hear his first PCRA appeal in 1995-96, was known as the "hanging judge." She recounted some of the key issues that will be addressed when Abu-Jamal's PCRA appeals are reheard.

"Exculpatory evidence [evidence that could exonerate a defendant in a criminal trial] was withheld during Abu-Jamal's initial hearing. There was proof [a driver's license found in slain police officer Daniel Faulkner's pocket] that Kenneth Freeman, a trained sharpshooter, was present and matched eyewitness descriptions of a man seen fleeing the scene. This evidence was not provided to Mumia's attorney.

"When Mumia comes home," Fernandez concluded, "the entire establishment of Philadelphia will be on trial. As Judge Tucker noted in his decision,



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Youth in support of Mumia in Philadelphia, April 18.

this case is one of the most famous, if not the most famous, trial in the world."

'Either Krasner lets Mumia out or he should get out of office'

Megan Malachi with Philly for REAL Justice spoke as one of a generation of younger people for whom Mumia has been imprisoned their entire lives. "I grew up in Philadelphia with the background of the attacks on MOVE and Rizzo's impact on how, as a Black person, you think about yourself and about racism in this city. My father was beaten by cops under Rizzo's command.

"They freed [rapper] Meek Mill, but without freedom for Mumia that means nothing. We didn't vote for Krasner to make things better — that's our job. We put him in office to do the right thing. Either Krasner lets Mumia out or he should get out of office. The movement around mass incarceration in this city is about Mumia. Let's get on point!"

Mike Africa Jr., whose mother and father, MOVE 9 members Debbie Africa and Mike Africa Sr., were released in 2018 after 40 years in prison, challenged the crowd to never give up on our political prisoners. "The judges are not going to do the right thing on their own. We have to keep up the pressure."

American Postal Workers (APWU) Local 10 activist Bill Bachmann from New York City called on the national AFL-CIO, Change to Win and other major union formations to mobilize members in defense of and for the release of Mumia Abu-Jamal: "This would put a big dent in the overall armor of the so-called criminal justice system set out to terrorize Black and Brown people. Justice for Mumia is justice for us all."

Brother Gregory Muhammad of the Nation of Islam Mosque #12 recounted how Abu-Jamal's successful challenge to the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections won hepatitis C treatment for all prisoners in the state: "The power of the people will not be denied."

Other speakers included Imam Al-Hajj Talib, Muslim Alliance of North America/National Jericho Movement; Matt Myers, War Resisters League; Betsey Piette, Workers World Party; and Ant Smith, REAL Justice. After a short march to the DA's office, a youth speakout wrapped up the event there.

Documents listing the PCRA claims to be filed on Abu-Jamal's behalf, a timeline of his struggle for freedom and his biography can be found at Mobilization4Mumia.com/resources. □

The significance of reparations—then and now

Continued from page 2

noting that when King called for the 1968 Poor People's March on Washington, D.C., he said, "We come to Washington to get our checks."

Bey called out some of the major banks and corporations that profited from the slave trade, including Chase Manhattan Bank, AETNA Insurance, Lehman Brothers Bank, JP Morgan, New York Life and Wachovia (now Wells Fargo) Bank. "They didn't stop with slavery," Bey stated. "They used the so-called 'mortgage crisis' in 2008 to steal the homes and land from millions of poor people."

The conversation took up the HR40 bill on reparations, first introduced by Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.) in 1989 to establish a commission to examine the institution of slavery in the U.S. and its first colonies and to make recommendations for remedies. Moorehead said: "Any demands made regarding reparations have to come from the mass struggle. Conyers called for material compensation

for Black people at a time when President Bill Clinton would not even apologize for slavery."

Reparations — symbolic and concrete

"Symbolism and materialism are connected," observed Moorehead. "When a Confederate statue is taken down, it's a psychological victory, but why not replace it with a statue to Harriet Tubman or Malcolm X! Everything is about the struggle and how we can move it forward. One of the most important struggles for reparations right now is the demand to take down the statue of former racist Mayor Frank Rizzo in Philadelphia."

Bey called for HR40 to be updated to include the release of all political prisoners, with Mumia Abu-Jamal at the top of the list, and for the repeal of the "except clause" in the 13th amendment that allows for slave labor to continue in U.S. prisons.

She added, "Restitution includes abolishing the criminal justice system, creating media for African Americans to run

their own stations, compensation for stolen land, forgiveness for education loans, free education through the doctoral level and dual citizenship with any country of choice in Africa."

Deandra Jefferson raised the demand "abolish the police," to which Moorehead added: "There are 2 million people in prison, with an additional 6 to 7 million on probation or parole. Black people make up around 40 percent — way out of proportion to their numbers in the general population. Abolishing the prisons would be a good start."

Audience members joined the conversation, including representatives of Black Alliance for Peace, Philly for REAL Justice and the International Action Center. They brought up other aspects of the struggle for reparations, including the need to support im/migrants and reconciling the fight for decolonization with recognition that the land in question, while worked by enslaved Africans, was stolen from Indigenous peoples.

Palestinian activist and author Susan

Abulhawa noted that the reparations granted to date seem to be exclusively for wealthy white people, including compensation for French slaveholders in Haiti and payments to white farmers in Zimbabwe: "The push back against formerly and currently colonized nations seeking reparations — people who have been exploited and robbed — is always, 'Oh, it's too much to ask.'"

Moorehead responded: "The legacy of slavery impacted every aspect of the African Diaspora. The fact that from the 1500s through the 1800s over 40 million African people were kidnapped had a devastating impact on the African continent, still the most underdeveloped — everything was stolen including the minerals, gold, diamonds that could have been used to build up infrastructures."

"The struggle for reparations cannot be carried out in a vacuum," Moorehead concluded. "We need to support the call for May Day: 'There are no walls in the workers' struggle.' Capitalism cannot be reformed. It's over!" □

BOSTON ACTIVISTS SAY: NO to regime-change architect Ricardo Hausman

Activists in Boston gathered April 16 in front of the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library to protest a forum featuring the former Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos and Harvard Professor Ricardo Hausmann.

Inside the library, a leader of the Venezuela Solidarity Committee interrupted the speakers to denounce their roles in destabilizing Venezuela. Hausmann is a top advisor to the coup government, having recently been named its representative to the Inter-American Development Bank. He has also authored many of the opposition's neoliberal economic proposals.

During Santos' term, Colombia took a number of actions against Venezuela. One was passing a law allowing exchange houses

on the Colombia-Venezuela border to use black-market exchange rates, destabilizing the Venezuelan currency.

Protesters also denounced Santos for his role in creating the repression now faced by Indigenous communities in the Cauca region in Colombia. Protesters heard a report back from a local activist who had recently returned from a solidarity delegation to Venezuela sponsored by the Alliance for Global Justice.

Activists included members of United Steelworkers Local 8751, Boston School Bus Drivers; the International Action Center; the Boston Venezuela Solidarity Committee; the Boston May Day Coalition; and Workers World Party.

—Workers World Boston bureau



Protesters gather in front of JFK Library, April 16.

WW PHOTO: STEVAN KIRSCHBAUM

PORTLAND, ORE.

Solidarity with the Bolivarian Revolution



PHOTO: BRENT STENGER

The Hands Off Venezuela Coalition in Portland, Ore., displayed banners and placards calling for “No Sanctions, No Coup, No Media Lies” over the I-5 freeway for two hours during heavy early morning commuting traffic on April 19.

The largest banner read, “Trump and Dems wage war, We say No More.” A dozen placards had messages like: “Guaidó, made in the U.S.A.,” “Media sells war for oil” and “Maduro was elected by 67%.”

Coalition members were met with a constant stream of supportive honks, fists and thumbs up, with an occasional middle finger. Encouraged by the success of reaching so many people, the coalition plans on repeating the action weekly or a few times a month over the many congested highways leading into Portland.

— Report by Lyn Neeley

Build Workers World! Defend the environment and workers' rights

April 22 is Earth Day, initiated in 1970 to make people aware of the earth and environmental health. After that push, laws were passed to promote clean water and air, enact safety regulations, and pass measures that promote health and life. Not until 1990 was climate change raised. Now, with a far-right climate-denier in the White House, while floods and tornadoes surge in the U.S. and shorelines rise around the globe, we know the need to fight the overuse of fossil fuels and dethrone the billionaires who sell them.

Ten days after Earth Day we celebrate May Day. Established to honor the historic 1886 struggle of Chicago workers for the 8-hour day, May 1 now marks the worldwide fight for workers' rights. There's lots of good news this year: Education workers all over the U.S., from K-12 schools to universities, have started a strike wave, organizing for higher wages and better working conditions. Well-paid Amazon and Google workers are joining low-wage workers in walkouts.

While Trump and the global ruling class are waging war on the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela, his administration is also making war on Central American im/migrants and refugees seeking entry into the U.S. Workers are

threatened with deportation after escaping horrific conditions caused by U.S. intervention in their home countries. Neo-fascist U.S. policies separate infants and children from their parents at the border and jail under-age migrants crossing the border alone.

The perpetrators of global environmental destruction and workers' oppression are one and the same. If you want to fight against capitalist reaction and for socialist change, we invite you to join the WW Supporter Program. The program was founded in 1977. Ever since, our subscribers and friends have helped build the only revolutionary socialist weekly in the U.S. that's in print as well as on the web.

For a donation of at least \$75 a year—and much more if you're able—members receive a year's subscription to WW, a monthly letter about timely issues and five free subscriptions to give to friends. Write checks (either monthly or once a year) to Workers World and mail them, with your name and address, to 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. Or sign up to donate online at workers.org/donate/; it's easy to set up monthly deductions. We're grateful for your help in building Workers World—sign up today! □

Historic win: Break in Mumia case opens road to appeal

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statements, ties to the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), and lobbying for speedy death penalties in capital cases involving the murder of police officers.

Just being a district attorney does not disqualify a State Supreme Court justice from hearing a case. The appearance of bias must also be present. Hence, Tucker stated: Mumia's “appeal has established by a preponderance of the evidence that ... there was an unconstitutional potential for bias. [His] claims should be reviewed in the interest of justice.”

Multiple constitutional violations to be heard

The constitutional violations that Abu-Jamal's attorneys will argue, and Krasner as district attorney will have to defend, include racial bias in jury selection, to such an extent that it produced an inherently biased jury and therefore an unfair trial (based on “the Batson challenge”); ineffective assistance of counsel; witness intimidation and coercion; and more.

One significant appeal concerns the blatant bias of Judge Albert Sabo, a lifetime supporter of the FOP. Sabo presided over Abu-Jamal's 1982 trial and was brought back from retirement to preside over his 1995-96 PCRA hearings. A court stenographer testified she heard Sabo say in a court anteroom about his role in the case, “Yeah, and I'm going to help them fry the n----r.”

Once Abu-Jamal wins just one of these arguments he gains the right to a new trial in which he can present evidence of his innocence, plus expose police and prosecutorial manufacturing of guilt—false hospital confession, phony ballistics evidence, lying witnesses, and suppression of other evidence.

Immediately after Tucker's Dec. 27 ruling closed off the opportunity to introduce new evidence, DA Krasner suddenly announced that his staff had “discovered” additional file boxes pertaining to Abu-Jamal's case which had been hidden in a remote storage room. Because of public pressure and scrutiny of the case at that time, Abu-Jamal's attorneys were given access to review those files.

Public pressure on Krasner

Thousands of petitions were sent to Krasner urging him to drop his appeal. Over a dozen community groups that had supported his run for office in 2017 signed

a letter expressing their sense of betrayal when he issued his appeal.

Pressure on Krasner's office to do the right thing gained momentum in early February when Yale Law School students publicly withdrew their invitation to Krasner to deliver a keynote address to their Rebellious Lawyering (Reb/Law) conference. The law students instead invited Mumia to speak at their conference as a keynote speaker. In his remarks, Mumia quoted radical lawyers such as Fidel Castro and Nelson Mandela.

In Philadelphia, activists confronted Krasner whenever he spoke in public with signs calling on him to take back his appeal.

Pam Africa, of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, states in a press release dated April 18: “We demonstrated against Krasner because he wasn't telling the truth about Tucker's ruling. Now the judge's latest document has made his ruling perfectly clear. In fact, we call for Mumia's release, because of 37 years of police, judicial and prosecutorial misconduct. Such practices permeate the whole injustice system. They are major causes of mass incarceration of Black, Brown and poor people in the U.S.”

Abu-Jamal, who turns 65 this month, has been in prison since 1981.

Noelle Hanrahan who broadcasts Mumia's words worldwide through Prison Radio, recently wrote: “While Philadelphia DA Larry Krasner might not feel a sense of urgency, we need to. Mumia Abu-Jamal will be 65 years old in a few weeks. His eyesight has been severely compromised, making it hard for him to read, because he is suffering from as-yet untreated cataracts and serious glaucoma. He is recovering from life-threatening complications of hepatitis C and diabetic shock caused by a reaction to treatment for debilitating skin rash conditions.” (prisonradio.org)

An innocent man, and in poor health, Abu-Jamal should be released immediately. □

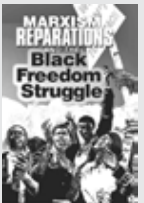


MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper

Edited by Monica Moorehead

Read at workers.org/books



War crimes

Trump's assault on migrants

By Teresa Gutierrez

Taken from a talk by Teresa Gutierrez, national coordinator of Fight for Im/migrants and Refugees Everywhere (FIRE) and Workers World Party secretariat member, at a public forum in New York City on April 20.

The fact that white supremacists are running the White House must alarm everyone not part of the ruling elite.

This administration is carrying out policies that are attempting to destroy every gain the working class has ever made. It cares nothing about the destruction of the planet. It is reckless, neofascist and dangerous.

It was immigrants, especially the undocumented, who revived May Day in this country. The anti-immigrant assault that began in 2005 led to immigrant workers marching in the millions several times in the spring of 2006. It was amazing to see!

The U.S. working class must pay tribute to immigrant workers for establishing May Day, a day of struggle the entire world commemorates, first in the 19th century and then again in this country in 2006.

But what is May Day like within the immigrant community today?

For current conditions we can thank the deporter-in-chief Barack Obama, a Democrat, who deported more migrant workers than any other U.S. president — over 2 million workers. The streets are emptier in Muslim and Arab communities as well, as a result of [Department of] Homeland Security policies after Sept. 11, 2001.

Trump got elected on the most racist, vitriolic, anti-migrant campaign perhaps ever. Shouts of “Build the wall” resonated at reactionary events. He called migrant workers “thugs,” “animals,” “murderers.”

Trump's contempt for Black people is well known. All I have to say is “Central Park Five” or quote his racist “shithole”-countries diatribe when he spoke of our beloved Africa. And I cannot ignore Trump's misogyny.

The Trump administration has created a climate of fear, trauma, dread and terror in every immigrant and refugee community, not only in this country but really around the world.

It will be no surprise if few migrants come out on May Day 2019 in this country. Conditions are hard, desperate, demoralizing.

That is why the efforts of the People's Power Assemblies and all the organizations organizing for May Day are so important. Not just for migrants, but for the teachers or Stop & Shop workers out on strike. These efforts are heroic and vital to the class struggle.

Where is Trump heading?

What are the effects on migrants of two years of the Trump administration? And what is the primary task of our movement today in relation to the migrant struggle?

Trump appointed Jeff Sessions as U.S. attorney general. He is the true architect of Trump's immigration policies, even though he has left the administration.

A senator from Alabama, Sessions is synonymous with Southern, Bull Connor-type racism. He fought against the Voting Rights Act. This anti-immigrant hardliner's entire career is based on undermining the rights of oppressed people.

In 2018, he spoke at the National Sheriffs' Association where he thanked the sheriffs for their service. “Since our founding, the independently elected sheriff has been the people's protector, who keeps law enforcement close to and accountable to people,” Sessions said.

He went on: “The office of sheriff is a critical part of the Anglo-American heritage of law enforcement. We must never erode this historic office.” Disgusting.

That Trump ousted Sessions is just a reminder that Trump does whatever the hell he wants. Trump is attempting an unprecedented, almost fascist turn to repress and control this vulnerable and super-exploited source of [migrant] labor more than ever.

Migration to the U.S. has changed. It is no longer Mexicans who come here in large numbers; it is primarily Central Americans. The point of contention is the southern border, of course — never the northern border, although anything could happen.

But not just Central Americans are threatened. Haitian and other Caribbean migrants are under attack. Many Somalian and Nepalese immigrants are at risk to



WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

Teresa Gutierrez at April 20 forum

lose their temporary status, and we must fight for their right to stay here.

We are hearing that among the Central Americans languishing at the border, there are more and more Africans waiting to come into the U.S. with them. Imagine that trek from Africa to Mexico — the danger, the horrors many experienced.

“We want a defeat of Trump's war on migrants, but it must be based on class solidarity, not alliance with the Democrats. It must be based on unity of the workers and oppressed and clarity that it is we who have the power, not the Democrats.”

— Teresa Gutierrez

Defeat Trump's war on migrants with class solidarity

Since the Trump election, there have been huge progressive demonstrations. The largest has been the women's struggle, which we support despite all its contradictions.

Texas is trying to enforce the death penalty against any woman who has an abortion. We have to be cognizant of the right to defend our bodies, as we fight for the rights of all gender-nonconforming people.

There have been huge demonstrations for migrants. But all these demonstrations have occurred with the leadership of the Democratic Party. What a tragedy.

Were it not for the fact that anti-Black racism is so entrenched and so deeply rooted in the foundation of this country, there would also have been huge demonstrations against mass incarceration, because this too is a humanitarian [crisis] and war crime. U.S. prisons also have children caged like animals.

If all these large demonstrations have been at the hands of the Democrats, what does that mean? That the message to “GET TRUMP OUT” will dominate in the coming period.

We have to monitor the 2020 elections, because, in some ways, it reflects a new day. We know elections don't matter much; they are mainly a barometer of where the masses are at. But let's keep in mind that in 2008 when Obama was elected, it was a historic day for the Black community and others as well.

Fast forward to 2016 and we go from a charming, intelligent president to a misogynist, white supremacist buffoon. This is not coincidental. It was a sign that, first, Obama perhaps [did not go far enough] for the ruling class; second, the ruling class was going to give the ultra-right a chance. And third, that the reactionary ultra-racists in this country could not stomach that a

Black person had risen so high.

Today, women of color are in Congress [and] shaking things up in ways not seen in decades. Before that, a democratic socialist ran for president and spurred a more progressive movement, one where everybody is talking about socialism.

This is something the working class and revolutionary socialist movement must monitor. Not because we care who gets elected, but because in the war — not only for the hearts and minds of the working class, but to win concessions — if there is an opening, communists and socialists must fight to widen that window, must raise class consciousness and talk about revolutionary, not democratic, socialism in a winning and thoughtful way.

Is it our perspective to get Trump out and put in a Democrat? Will that really help migrants? NO, not really.

We want a defeat of Trump's war on migrants, but it must be based on class solidarity, not alliance with the Democrats. It must be based on unity of the workers and oppressed and clarity that it is we who have the power, not the Democrats.

As the presidential election approaches, Trump is becoming ever more agitated about his bedrock issue. He is frustrated that his goals are not being implemented. He carried out a major shakeup in his administration so that he could go “tougher.”

Trump fired Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen April 7 because she was afraid to break the law for him.

The firing of Nielsen, and others before her, must set off alarm bells to the progressive and working-class movements. Trump could easily unleash even more criminal, racist and atrocious acts against migrants and refugees. That is his plan — to undermine the right of asylum and so on.

So what do we do in light of this war against migrants and its acceleration under a white supremacist administration?

If you follow the news on im/migration, you will see in the more progressive readings a comparison of the stolen and lost migrant children to the historical [and continuing] atrocity of Native children torn from their parents' arms. To the African parents who had their children ripped from their arms under slavery.

One article I want to quote from: “Nine months after a federal judge ordered the Trump administration to reunite thousands of immigrant children taken from their parents at the border, the whereabouts of thousands of children remains unresolved. Some 15,000 migrant children are in government detention. That figure is growing by the day. ... The most recent Border Patrol data shows that 76,103 migrants were apprehended at the border — two-thirds more than during the prior month. More than 40,000 were families travelling together. Children and newborns continue to be taken from their parents.” (“America's Dirty War on Immigrant Children,” blog.lareviewofbooks.org, April 3)

Recently, armed right-wing militias in New Mexico captured a group of migrants, called ICE [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] and held them at gunpoint until the “migra” arrived. There it is for the world to see — the collusion between the capitalist state and armed fascists.

But what if our side carried out such an act? What if revolutionaries went to the border, welcomed migrants and took them to people's homes in an organized and public way?

What if we had a major campaign called RETURN THE MIGRANT CHILDREN NOW. What if our side demanded: Provide the services, give them psychologists and the items to feed not only their stomachs but their souls, because these are children who will never be the same.

Is the movement strong enough today to fight for the return of the children? I want to think it is, and I hope that it is the communists who lead it.

On May Day 2019, and every month with Workers Solidarity Day, let us raise the flag of solidarity with migrants and refugees.

**NO TO THE WAR ON MIGRANTS AND ALL WORKERS!
IMMEDIATE ASYLUM FOR ALL!
RETURN THE MIGRANT CHILDREN NOW!**

Lucy Gonzales Parsons: ‘more dangerous than 1,000 rioters’

By Monica Moorehead

Reprinted from April 30, 2017 at workers.org

It is fitting to honor the fighting spirit of Lucy Gonzales Parsons on May Day — International Workers Day — since she was one of its founders in 1886. Parsons was a woman of African, Mexican and Indigenous descent who was born into slavery in Texas in 1853.

She and her spouse, Albert Parsons, were forced to leave Texas due to miscegenation decrees that outlawed interracial marriages. Albert was white and helped register formerly enslaved Black people to vote during Reconstruction.

They moved to Chicago, an emerging industrial center during the 1870s where the battles between the mainly immigrant working class and the bosses were emerging; where working conditions were intolerable because there were virtually no collective bargaining contracts; where workers were worn down like machinery by profit-hungry capitalists.

In 1877, a major railroad strike helped lay the basis for the national fight for the eight-hour day, a goal that would come to the forefront nine years later.

Lucy Parsons emerged as an important labor leader along with Albert, who became a Haymarket Square martyr. She was declared by the Chicago police as “more dangerous than a thousand rioters.”

A supporter of anarchist and anti-racist causes, she defended Sacco and Vanzetti, two Italian anarchists falsely accused of murder who were executed, and the Scottsboro Brothers, nine Black youth framed for the rape of two white women in Alabama.

She was one of two women, the other being Mary

Harris “Mother” Jones, who founded the Industrial Workers of the World. The union welcomed all workers, regardless of nationality, religion, gender or skill, into its ranks.

Lucy was a fierce anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist, and above all else, a socialist, who wanted to empower the workers through revolution. Below is an excerpt from a speech she gave in 1905 at an IWW convention:

“We, the women of this country, have no ballot even if we wished to use it, and the only way that we can be represented is to take a man to represent us. You men have made such a mess of it in representing us that we have not much confidence in asking you. ...

“We [women] are the slaves of slaves. We are exploited more ruthlessly than men. Whenever wages are to be reduced the capitalist class use women to reduce them, and if there is anything that you men should do in the future it is to organize the women. ...

“Now, what do we mean when we say revolutionary Socialist?

“We mean that the land shall belong to the landless, the tools to the toiler, and the products to the producers. ... I believe that if every man and every woman who works, or who toils in the mines, mills, the workshops, the fields, the factories and the farms of our broad America should decide in their minds that they shall have that which of right belongs to them, and that no idler shall live upon their toil ... then there is no army that is large enough to overcome you, for you yourselves constitute the army. ...

“My conception of the strike of the future is not to strike and go out and starve, but to strike and remain in and take possession of the necessary property of production. ...



“Let us sink such differences as nationality, religion, politics and set our eyes eternally and forever toward the rising star of the industrial republic of labor; remembering that we have left the old behind and have set our faces toward the future. There is no power on earth that can stop men and women who are determined to be free at all hazards. There is no power on earth so great as the power of intellect. It moves the world and it moves the earth. ...

“I hope even now to live to see the day when the first dawn of the new era of labor will have arisen, when capitalism will be a thing of the past, and the new industrial republic, the commonwealth of labor, shall be in operation.”

Source of speech: Minutes of 1905 IWW Convention in Chicago, Tamiment Library of New York University's Bobst Library.

WWP salute to May Day’s living legacy

Continued from page 1

of murder, five of them sentenced to death. Four were hanged [in 1887] and one reportedly committed suicide.”

The deaths of those who became known as the Haymarket Martyrs inspired the Socialist (or Second) International to designate May 1 as International Workers’ Day in 1889, creating an international day of fiery militancy and solidarity.

After Haymarket, the U.S. state apparatus launched widespread reprisals against immigrants, as well as against organizers perceived to be “reds” — anarchists, socialists or communists.

But these im/migrant-radical connections were not imaginary. Of Haymarket’s eight leaders convicted of murder, seven were immigrants — six from Germany and one from England. They brought highly developed labor organizing skills — both tactics and theory — with them when they came to the U.S.

The eighth leader, Chicago Typographical Union Secretary Albert Parsons, was Alabama born. A former Confederate soldier, he pursued a path that present-day white workers should emulate. He turned his back on white-supremacist former slave owners and embraced multinational, anti-racist worker solidarity.

His spouse, who moved with him from Texas to Chicago where they became organizers, was Lucy Gonzalez Parsons, an African, Indigenous and Mexican woman who devoted her life to fighting poverty, racism, sexism and capitalism.

Lessons of the first May Day

The lessons from that first May Day remain relevant today — the imperative need for global worker interconnection and multinational solidarity.

In the U.S., we are again seeing attacks on im/migrant workers and on union organizing. The federal government has set up concentration camps for migrants, including their children. Federal agencies and state legislatures have found new ways to incapacitate unions.

The mobility and power of multinational capitalism have grown exponentially, increasing the offshoring and outsourcing of jobs and pitting workers in different countries — and within the same country — against each other.

But, with globalization, the power of the international, multinational working class is growing. The number of

workers worldwide has more than doubled between 1990 and 2016, from 1.5 billion to 3.2 billion. The number of women in the global labor force has grown across all income levels. Meanwhile, more than 2 billion people work in the informal or “precarious” sector, with no legislative or union safety net.

Globalization means increased communication within this massive class bloc. We saw this last November when 20,000 Google tech workers poured out of 40 offices around the world in a rolling strike. They made history by building solidarity among full-time workers, temporary workers, vendors and contractors, and by pressing for an end to sexist and racist practices by their transnational boss.

In the U.S., May Day emerged once more in 2005, in a protest called by class-conscious Black labor unionists in the Million Worker March Movement. They emphasized the need for workers to fight in their own name, independent of big-business political parties.

Then in 2006, migrant workers, led by Latinx organizers, used May Day as a rallying point against racist anti-immigrant legislation. This general strike shut down parts of the U.S., bringing May Day back with a roar.

The tide of class struggle continues to rise. Massive education worker strikes began in 2017 in West Virginia and continue, from kindergartens to colleges. Up against global austerity, education workers are not only defending themselves as workers, but are advancing the right of children of color, migrant children, children with disabilities and rural children to have access to quality public education.

More U.S. workers, from teachers to hotel workers to fast food workers, took part in strikes and other

work stoppages in 2018 than in all the previous 30 years. These actions were most often led by women and other gender-oppressed people, im/migrants and people of color.

‘May Day every month!’

As the global ruling class attempts to divide and conquer the global working class with racism and bigotry, let us rally together in a “May Day every month!”

Workers World Party is endorsing a global campaign for monthly Worker Solidarity Days, militant actions that boldly assert: “No Walls in the Workers’ Struggle!”

Every community and every workplace has some point of struggle. Now is the time for solidarity. The struggle is rising!

Ultimately, May Day should be every day!

For more information on Worker Solidarity Days, visit workersolidarity.net.

NO WALLS IN THE WORKERS' STRUGGLE

BUILD MONTHLY WORKERS SOLIDARITY DAYS

Launch Date: MAY DAY 2019

Workers Solidarity Day will be a May Day every month to:

- **BUILD** coordinated support to workers' struggles locally, nationally, and internationally
- **RAISE** consciousness about workers' struggles everywhere
- **INVOLVE** more people in workers' solidarity efforts
- **SHOW** that all struggles are workers' struggles and workers' struggles are central to every struggle
- **FIGHT** against every effort to divide workers from each other

Visit **workersolidarity.net** today and

- sign on to **Workers Solidarity Days** as an endorser
- download the 'Call To Action' leaflet
- learn more about the campaign
- get involved!

workersolidarity.net

May Day 100 years ago

Police, vigilantes riot against ‘reds’

By Martha Grevatt
Cleveland

May Day 2019 marks the 100th anniversary of what became known as the “Cleveland May Day Riots.” The only “rioting,” however, was by police and vigilantes targeting “reds” (term includes all radicals). By the end of the day, 200 people were injured, two fatally.

The year 1919 was one of fierce class battles. There were strikes across the U.S. in steel, auto, coal, textile and other industries. Seattle saw a five-day general strike in February. The working class was inspired by the workers’ revolution in 1917 that was establishing the Soviet Union.

May Day itself indicated the temperature of class struggle in the U.S. Marches were called in cities and towns from coast to coast. Many protests were organized in Ohio, not only in Cleveland — the fifth largest U.S. city with almost 800,000 residents — but in Akron, Toledo, Youngstown, Warren, New Philadelphia and even Sandusky, population 23,000.

The ruling class was hell-bent on squashing every semblance of “Bolshevism” that could possibly threaten its political grip. Newspapers ran scare headlines: “Reds plan to overthrow U.S. on May Day” and “Reds plan murders on May Day.” Demonstrations were prohibited in many cities. Sandusky organizers were unable to rent a hall; police blocked a parade in Youngstown.

The Cleveland May Day demonstration, drawing 30,000, was one of the largest in the country and the biggest protest in the city’s history. Marches from four different contingents, from both sides of town — the Cuyahoga River divides Cleveland east and west — were set to converge downtown on Public Square. However, a Victory Bond rally was also planned in Public Square on May Day, featuring Seattle Mayor Ole Hanson, who had denounced the recent general strike as Bolshevik-inspired.

Victory Bonds were essentially war bonds sold during peacetime — World War I was over — to “defend” the U.S. against an imaginary Bolshevik threat. Bond rallies, which pulled in many returning soldiers, were used to mobilize popular sentiment against “reds.” The Cleveland Press and the Plain Dealer, the city’s two major newspapers, promoted the bond sales on a daily basis.

Cleveland: a socialist stronghold

Socialists had been unilaterally opposed to imperialist wars before the outbreak of WW I. But once war broke out in Europe, the socialist movement’s Second International split. The anti-imperialist socialists who opposed the war were at odds with the “social-imperialists,” as Lenin called them. The “social-imperialists” supported their own country’s ruling class in “defense of the fatherland.”

This split carried over into the U.S. Socialist Party. When WW I ended, the SP remained split, with the revolutionary left wing in support of the Russian Revolution. The Socialist Party was strong in Ohio, particularly in Cleveland, with the anti-imperialist left wing predominant. Cleveland organizer Charles Ruthenberg and other Ohio SP leaders had been jailed for opposing the war.

Eugene Debs, a frequent SP presidential candidate, visited Ruthenberg in jail in Canton where the SP was holding its convention. On June 18, 1918, Debs spoke to a large enthusiastic crowd across the street from the jail. His speech was

fiercely anti-war and anti-capitalist, and supported the Bolshevik Revolution.

For this speech, Debs was arrested June 30 and charged with violating the federal Espionage and Sedition Acts (1917-18). The acts criminalized anti-war speech and allowed for imprisonment of up to 20 years. A Cleveland jury convicted Debs and sentenced him to 10 years in September 1918.

Debs continued to speak publicly while he appealed his case to the U.S. Supreme Court. Many of the May Day marchers were inspired by his March 19, 1919, speech in Cleveland. With the triumph of the Russian working class, Debs said, the worker was “beginning to think. That is Bolshevism! That is the revolution in Russia! That is the beginning of the end of capitalism and the end of the beginning of socialism.” (marxists.org)

On April 12, after losing his appeal, Debs was taken to federal prison in Atlanta. “Free our comrade Gene Debs” was a common May Day sign. Other signs supported Tom Mooney, a Socialist Party leader in California who was wrongfully imprisoned for a bombing at a pro-war parade in San Francisco.

Attack on May Day

On May Day, a series of violent attacks on marchers began about half a mile from Public Square, after a contingent left the SP’s downtown headquarters.

Pro-socialist soldiers in uniform were in the lead, carrying red flags. They were met by a hostile group of soldiers and civilians. When a lieutenant demanded the red flag be lowered, the socialist soldier refused. When the lieutenant attempted to confiscate the flag, a big fight broke out.

The marchers were beaten with clubs as mounted police moved in, and half of the march was prevented from reaching Public Square. On the square a German tank, confiscated by U.S. troops during the war and used for Victory Bond propaganda, was commandeered by Cleveland police and used to disperse the crowd.

Fighting between the two sides — with police anything but neutral — continued in several parts of town throughout the day.

The right-wing mob, having shut down the May Day demonstration, then destroyed the SP’s headquarters and tossed typewriters, furniture and other property out on the street. The red flags they seized throughout the day were burned in a huge bonfire on Public Square.

During the fighting, police fatally shot 17-year-old Samuel Pearlman and 38-year-old Joseph Ivanyl. Ambulances were called to the scene for the most seriously injured; several dozen were sent to the hospital. Scores more suffered lesser injuries.

Of the over 120 arrested, all were with the march, save for a few bystanders — but not a single “loyalist.” Most marchers were charged with a misdemeanor, “disturbance” and sentenced to 30 days. But SP leader Ruthenberg faced bogus charges — later dropped — of “assault with intent to kill.”

Scapegoating the radicals, the city then prohibited all outdoor political activities by the SP, banning red flags and ribbons. Cleveland police announced plans to purchase up to six tanks “to disperse any mobs.” (Cleveland Plain Dealer, May 4, 1919) The city prosecutor proposed limiting the sale of socialist literature to counter the party’s influence and deprive it of income.

City governments elsewhere took similar repressive measures, including banning red flags. While Cleveland witnessed the most

serious anti-socialist violence, these incidents were not isolated. Soldiers and sailors attacked the SP headquarters in New York City, where members were celebrating its opening. Police attacked parades in Boston, Detroit, Chicago and elsewhere.

Eastern European immigrants — the vast majority of those arrested — were subjected to xenophobic threats and bias. At sentencing, they were told they would be deported upon release. The Plain Dealer harped on the fact that only a handful of arrestees were U.S.-born.

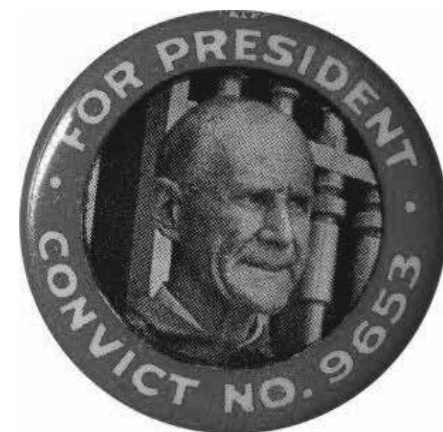
The composition of those arrested showed that the march attracted a broad cross section of the city’s population. They came from Poland, Hungary, Germany, Greece, England, Italy, Russia, Sweden, Lithuania, Serbia and other places. Many were Jewish. Their addresses were spread out across the city and included neighboring suburbs.

Ruthenberg wrote in “Revolutionary Age,” “The Socialist organization remains intact in spite of the destruction of party headquarters.... The workers have had their lesson. They have learned how ‘democracy’ meets a peaceable protest. They know from the thousands who marched that their power is greater than ever.”

‘Red scares’ and continued resistance

The Cleveland SP chapter grew following May Day. The Plain Dealer admitted that Victory Bonds sales weren’t meeting their goal. All was not well for the capitalists.

The Palmer Raids, begun in 1919 by U.S. Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer and carried out by future FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, inflicted terror on thousands of socialists, communists and anarchists. Repression continued with the frame-up and eventual execution of Italian immigrant anarchists Nicola Sacco and



Bartolomeo Vanzetti on Aug. 23, 1927.

Despite the political climate induced by the “First Red Scare,” in 1920 Eugene Debs ran for president from his prison cell and drew almost a million votes. Ohio was dubbed the “red state” after casting almost 90,000 votes for Debs and Ruthenberg, the SP’s gubernatorial candidate.

A year later the new U.S. president, Warren Harding, commuted the sentences of Debs and other political prisoners to “time served.” Debs died five years after his release, at the age of 70.

Ruthenberg was part of the grouping that eventually left the SP to form the Communist Party of America; he became its first executive secretary. In 1927, when he was only 44, he died suddenly of appendicitis. Ruthenberg is buried in the Kremlin along with only two other U.S. citizens: author John Reed and labor leader “Big Bill” Haywood.

In 2019, Cleveland May Day will commemorate the people and events of 100 years ago. As the Committee for 100 Years explains, “The issues being protested 100 years ago are still deeply relevant today: for justice in immigration, in opposition to war and police brutality, and against capitalism.” □



March 8, 2019

NYC: Support laundromat workers on May Day 2019

On May Day in New York City, there will be a demonstration on Wall Street at 2 p.m. in front of the Trump building. However, International Workers’ Day will actually begin earlier that day at 12 noon with a Workers Solidarity Day action to support the laundromat workers at TYS Laundry in East Harlem.

For years, these laundromat workers were making less than minimum wage and were never even provided protective gear to help them deal with filthy laundry. Since last June, when their struggle began, the workers have won better wages and safer working conditions, but

are continuing to fight for back pay to compensate for years of wage theft.

The Laundry Workers Center has assisted these and many other migrant workers who face the most exploitative and oppressive conditions: illegal wage theft, lack of safety, and verbal and sexual abuse. This important solidarity action is part of the launch of the International Workers Solidarity Network. The action will start at 12 noon at 215 East 116th St. Following the rally, participants will take the subway to join the demonstration on Wall Street.

— Report and photo by Toni Arenstein

Racial, political profiling against the New Black Panther Party

By Gloria Rubac

“This government does not consider Black people to be citizens. It was so blatant. We were kicked out in the snow in Canada, a foreign land, where we changed planes to make a trip from New Orleans to London,” reported Krystal Muhammad to the media after a trip to London was denied.

Muhammad, the national chair of the New Black Panther Party, and two other NBPP leaders, had tried to fly from New Orleans to London for a special showing of a film about their organization called “What Are You Going to Do When the World Is On Fire?”

The film was featured in film festivals across the world and won best film in 12 countries on three continents.

In Toronto, Muhammad was told her passport was not in order and to go to the U.S. Consulate to get another one. The

consulate threw Muhammad out after she presented the proper documents and got a new passport. Yet the new passport was also denied. After four days the trio had spent thousands of dollars for hotels, passports and transportation in Toronto.

They missed the event in London, although they were Skyped in for the Q&A session. Then they tried to fly home.

They were denied entry to the U.S., lied to and told they were on a “No Fly List.” They only got home because veteran U..S Congressperson Sheila Jackson-Lee intervened. Jackson-Lee had been in constant communication with Muhammad during this whole ordeal.

“Government harassment was partly caused when the Southern Poverty Law Center wrongfully labeled us as domestic terrorists. It intensified when the Department of Justice falsely declared the NBPP as Black Identity extremists. We are being double labeled because we

stand up and show dignity. Because we have no fear of our open enemy. And because we encourage other people to stand up. This is what the U.S. government is trying to stop,” Muhammad told the media.

Muhammad told Workers World that she and the organization are now intent on finding legal representation to sue all parties involved in this racist and COINTELPRO-type ordeal. They are waiting for a reply from the American Civil Liberties Union and are contacting other legal organizations and civil rights attorneys. “We plan to sue for reparations everyone from Air Canada to the State Department to Homeland Security,” she declared. □



WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

Sister Krystal Muhammad with Kofi Taharka, national chair of National Black United Front (right), and Dr. Abdul Haleem Muhammad, Nation of Islam student minister and host of Connect the Dots on Pacifica's KPFT-Houston.

Terrorism at U.S.-Mexico border

By Gloria Rubac
Houston

The U.S. border with Mexico has become a site of domestic terrorism — inflicted by acts of the president of the United States, the Department of Justice, Customs and Border Patrol, Homeland Security and racist anti-immigrant vigilante groups.

The terrorism is tormenting people desperately trying to escape violence, death, rape, joblessness and poverty in Central America.

This terrorism is legal. And it is terrifying, traumatic and life altering for its victims: poor people with no alternative except to seek asylum in the U.S.

Since the beginning of Donald Trump’s presidential campaign, racist and anti-immigrant rants have been broadcast on every big-business news outlet and in print media. Trump has emboldened anti-immigrant racists to take action. He has set policies that result in government agencies ripping children from their parents’ arms. He has imprisoned migrants in brutal detention centers where private prisons make a fortune, while the people locked up are victimized over and over.

Racist vigilantes emboldened

Though private militia organizations have been patrolling the border for many years, they had not yet detained migrants on the U.S. side of the Rio Grande. Now, in New Mexico, an armed group, United Constitutional Patriots, is impersonating the Border Patrol and has held at gunpoint hundreds of migrants who have crossed over.

The American Civil Liberties Union of New Mexico responded to this armed militia by sending a letter to the U.S. government asking it to intervene: “We cannot allow racist and armed vigilantes to kidnap and detain people seeking asylum. We urge you to immediately investigate this atrocious and unlawful conduct.”

The letter continues: “The Trump administration’s vile racism has emboldened white nationalists and fascists to flagrantly violate the law. This has no place in our state.” (aclu-nm.org)

Peter Simonson, executive director of the New Mexico ACLU, told CNN that while militia groups have patrolled near the border before, they are now being

given permission by the White House. (April 19)

The New York Times quoted Jim Benvie, who posts online for these racist vigilantes, as saying that he issues “a verbal citizen’s arrest. If these people follow our verbal commands, we hold them until Border Patrol comes. Border Patrol has never asked us to stand down.” (April 4)

Concentration camps for profit

The Corpus Christi Caller Times reported on April 19 that the federal government has awarded a \$39 million contract to Deployed Resources LLC in Rome, N.Y., to build “shelter” for those seeking asylum.

According to Border Patrol figures, more than 361,000 migrants were apprehended at the southern border during a six-month period ending March 31. Of that total, nearly 36,000 were unaccompanied children.

The number of migrants landing in federal detention has been relentlessly increasing since the advent of “zero tolerance” in April 2018, as families continue to flee gang violence and political repression, in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala in particular.

There are around 50,000 people in detention centers on a daily basis. Numerous accounts speak of filthy conditions, inedible food, temperatures that are either extremely cold or unbearably hot, illnesses that have proven fatal in nine cases this year, and sexual assaults.

Recent photos from El Paso, Texas, have shown detained migrants, including families with young children, sleeping on rocky gravel under a border bridge in the cold with only foil blankets and two bologna sandwiches a day.

“[Immigration and Customs Enforcement] takes people from [U.S.] homes and communities in early morning raids, from courtrooms and workplaces, and from the border where they arrive seeking safety and protection, and jails them thousands of miles from their lawyers and their loved ones. Inside, they suffer solitary confinement, unsafe conditions, and severe isolation,” said Heidi Altman, the National Immigration Justice Center’s policy director.

Detention Watch Network notes that an “astonishing number of people ... separated from their families and communities ... [are being] held within a system



WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

Tent camp of Honduran migrants in Tijuana, Mexico.

that Department of Homeland Security’s own Inspector General has criticized for abusive conditions.”

Human rights and civil rights flouted

U.S. Attorney General William Barr announced on April 17 that the Department of Justice would deny bond and indefinitely jail any detained asylum seekers who enter the U.S. outside official ports of entry. Barr’s “Matter of M-S-, Respondent” decision will result in the unlawful prolonged incarceration of asylum seekers and strip immigration judges of authority to consider individuals for release on a case-by-case basis.

Many asylum seekers are unable to reach one of the official ports of entry to present their claims for asylum. In fact, the Trump administration has been turning people away from ports of entry. As they wait in difficult conditions in Mexico for weeks or months, many are forced to find other routes to safety in the U.S.

When an asylum seeker is detained by the Department of Homeland Security, a bond hearing often is their only opportunity to have a judge from outside DHS review their case and determine whether they should be allowed to pursue asylum protection from outside a jail cell.

“By eliminating the right to a bond hearing, the attorney general has made DHS the judge, jury, and jailer for those who come to our border seeking safety and freedom,” said National Immigrant Justice Center Executive Director Mary Meg McCarthy. (immigrantjustice.org, April 17)

McCarthy emphasized: “The decision also is the latest attack on the judicial branch by an administration that has repeatedly attempted to weaken the authority of immigration judges. As this administration continues to consolidate the power of an anti-immigrant president, this unilateral ruling should alarm all Americans.”

Solidarity with detainees

While there are numerous protests at immigrant detention centers around this country and protests of deaths in detention, an unusual action was led in late March by Japanese survivors of federal detention during World War II. They were held, beginning December 1943 and officially ending February 1948, in a camp in Crystal City, Texas, located in the Rio Grande Valley.

These survivors and their descendants made a pilgrimage to the site of the Family Internment Camp where about 4,000 people of Japanese ancestry were held for indefinite detention during WW II.

Then they traveled to the South Texas Family Residential Center in Dilley where mothers and children are currently being incarcerated while seeking asylum in the United States.

There, survivors of racist federal detention and their descendants protested the present-day repetition of unlawful mass incarceration. Among their demands were humane treatment for the imprisoned and compassion for immigrants and refugees.

This was historic solidarity. □

Goodbye era of cathedrals

Indecency, hypocrisy reign in Macron’s France

By Rémy Herrera
Paris

Herrera is a Marxist economist and researcher at France’s Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS). He works at the Centre d’Économie de la Sorbonne, Paris, and wrote this sarcastic commentary on April 18 on the response of the French ruling class and government to the burning of Notre-Dame cathedral. Workers World staff translated it.

A cathedral burned down. One of the most beautiful, on the Ile de la Cité, the ancestral heart of Paris; one of the most imposing, built in the Central Middle Ages over the course of nearly two centuries (probably started in 1163, under King Louis VII The Pious, and finished in 1345).

Notre-Dame is one of the most magnificent cathedrals, which was built thanks to the talents of generations of architects of the new Gothic art and the golden hands of a host of craft and traditional workers and then to those of the “compagnons du devoir” (crafts guilds) who restored it in the 19th century after the genius Victor Hugo’s writings were published. This is the same Hugo who celebrated the sans-culottes (revolutionary masses) of the 1789 French Revolution and opened his door to the communards and revived popular appreciation for this masterpiece.

Notre-Dame is the most visited monument in Europe: 20 million people flock to its square and 13 million enter it every year. Its roof ignited and the fire devoured the “forest” — 100 meters long of 1,300 oaks used to build its framework, along with its lead tiles and its large arrow.

Before firefighters extinguished the fire’s last embers, the billionaires, like vermin that had already been flushed and smoked out, had pulled out their bloated wallets. The “leaders” [in charity] elbowed each other aside in order to achieve a nice “publicity coup” — and for among those who believe — a ticket to box seats in paradise. Obscenely competitive donations flowed in.

The bids flew about in the spiritual auction house. “Hear, hear, hear, good people, bow down at the feet of your master. Thank them for their kindness and generosity and rally to the banner of national unity!”

Everything is monetized

Repulsive indecency runs rampant in their world where everything is a commodity and publicity for them, and where everything is monetized, bought, sold, redeemed, resold, degraded, corrupted and desecrated. Put up your cash!

To my right, 10 million euros were donated by brothers Martin and Olivier Bouygues, the masters of construction, TF1, telecoms (and even Canadian oil and Ivorian offshore gas), through their family holding company SCDM. Both of them receive more than 100 million euros in dividends per year. They have fallen in love with Château Montrose in the Médoc, which was bought for 130 million euros, and would like to divest themselves of their 62-meter yacht for the “clever price” of 59.95 million euros. The Bouygues empire brings in 33 billion euros in total sales each year and has more than 115,000 employees.

Here 10 million euros come from Marc Ladreit de Lacharrière, owner of the financial company Fimalac, for “the national reconstruction effort” and “the arrow — symbol of the cathedral.”

The important thing in this competition is that the bidders show up, are seen and hold their place. So, the auctioneer continues, with his hammer sealing any transfers of ownership.

The Pinault family donated 100 million euros through the Kering group (formerly Pinault-Printemps-Redoute) of the Artemis holding company. The fortune of François Pinault, who is active in luxury, culture and distribution businesses and owns Château Latour, Yves-Saint-Laurent and Christie’s, among other companies, exceeds 30 billion euros. His fortune has more than doubled since President Emmanuel Macron came to power; it is 310 times the value of the donation.

Who can do better, asks the auctioneer? On this side, the Bettencourt-Meyers family donates 200 million euros! This represents 0.2 percent of the market capitalization of L’Oréal, the company which is currently the world leader in cosmetics products. Françoise Bettencourt-Meyers is the heir to this corporation, which was founded by a Nazi collaborator during the Occupation in World War II. To your good cheer, ladies and gentlemen!

And another 200 million euros is put in the basket by the Arnault family, which will mobilize its “creative, architectural and financial teams” to “help in the reconstruction!” Bernard Arnault, head of the world’s leading luxury group, LVMH, and also active in mass retail, finance and the press, is the richest person in France. His 200 million euro donation is barely 0.25 percent of his assets, which are estimated at 73.2 billion euros — compared to 46.9 euros only a year ago!

Billionaires even cried!

Reportedly, they were all sincerely moved and affected by the terrible tragedy. Some felt it in their gut. Some may have even cried. These billionaires are such charitable souls!

Let us not forget the moral people who came forward and spontaneously provided help as soon as they learned of the tragedy. A brief advertising screen shows that the CapGemini IT group gave 1 million euros. The recently privatized and already generous La Française des Jeux gave 2 million euros for the Easter lottery!

The Crédit Agricole bank contributed 5 million euros, and the pharmaceutical laboratory Sanofi gave 10 million, as well as the Société Générale bank and the insurer Axa. BNP Paribas, with a balance sheet showing 2,000 billion euros — twice the total expenditure of France’s public administrations — donated 20 million euros. The same for the advertising group JCDecaux. The oil company Total, which currently rakes in 209 billion in total sales, but paid no taxes from 2009 to 2014, gave 100 million euros.

Above all, since it is a question of

appearing in a beautiful photograph of the “capitalist family,” others have offered “pledges” without specifying the amount. This includes the Vinci public works group, tire manufacturer Michelin and Air Liquide, industrial gas specialist. They are all there! The MEDEF (entrepreneurs’ association) called on all French firms to contribute to the fundraising campaign.

Such touching gestures: The insurance company Groupama will donate oak trees from its private forests as a gift for the new structure — assuming it is made of wood. Steel manufacturer ArcelorMittal will give steel to reinforce the building. The Saint-Gobain group offers construction materials. The airline company Air France will transport without charge official participants in the “reconstruction.” And then there is Château Mouton Rothschild! It will donate the proceeds from the sale of wine boxes!

And there are the French Professional Football League. And also Apple, the American investment fund KKR, French Heritage Society of New York, and the University of Notre Dame in Indiana. Certainly, this includes the Walt Disney Company which reaped \$300 million in revenue with its “Hunchback of Notre Dame” movie. There was a big ruckus at that gate.

The only thing missing from this picture was Ubisoft, the video game publisher from Morbihan, which announced a donation of only half a million euros, intended for reconstruction. The company added a bonus free download of its iconic game Assassin’s Creed Unity to celebrate Holy Week in its own way, allowing a virtual and adventuresome visit to Notre-Dame.

A total of 1 billion euros disbursed in 48 hours! Plus a free video game! It’s Christmas at Easter! Don’t throw any more money in! The cup is full! It’s just as well as the Vatican, although rich as Croesus and stingy as Harpagon [The Miser], will apparently keep its purse tightly closed. But it has declared itself ready to offer its “technical advice” and “world-renowned know-how.” □

Yellow Vest protest

“Macron: You take from the poor to give to the rich” was emblazoned on the Yellow Vests of protesters in Paris on April 20. It was the latest in a five-month series of street actions by the Yellow Vest movement aimed against grotesque, growing income inequality in France.

This demonstration took place five days after a fire raged at the historic Cathedral of Notre-Dame. It was larger than the one the previous week, with about 9,000 participating in Paris and 28,000 people demonstrating across the country.

President Emmanuel Macron’s economic “reforms” have further enriched the wealthy, while harming the masses of people. The people are furious! Now, flaunting their wealth, French billionaires have pledged nearly 1 billion euros (\$1.12 billion) to renovate Notre-Dame, while the working class is suffering. (See accompanying article.)

The anger at this ostentatious display of wealth was expressed at the Yellow Vests protests. Signs read: “Millions for Notre-Dame, none for us, the poor!” Banners criticized the hypocrisy of billionaires who are offering enormous sums to repair the cathedral, while ignoring the worsening plight of workers and poor people.

Further enraging the masses is the fact that international fundraising for Notre-Dame’s restoration has ignored their plight.

— Report by Kathy Durkin

20,000 march in Quito to protest Ecuador's president

By Zoila Ramírez and Michael Otto
Quito, Ecuador

More than 20,000 people from all over the country marched in Quito on April 16 to protest President Lenín Moreno’s betrayal of his party, the national sovereignty of Ecuador, and his policies of privatization and political repression.

Students, Indigenous and precarious sectors of Ecuadorian society were repressed by police using gas, clubs and horses, resulting in many injuries and arrests.

The marchers called the demonstration “16A Not One Right Less.” 16A refers to the devastating coastal earthquake of April 16, 2016. As a chant, it is a condemnation of Moreno’s unwillingness to continue former President Rafael Correa’s popular program of reconstruction that was managed by his Vice President Jorge Glas, who is currently a political prisoner.

Thousands of banners and chants raised the slogans: “Moreno, puppet of U.S. imperialism,” “Out, Moreno get out,” “Bring back the homeland, not the IMF” [International Monetary Fund], “Freedom for Assange!” “No flexibilization [removal of worker protection],” “Moreno, show your INA bank account.” A favorite was: “What’s this bullsh-t! Money for Moreno’s INA, nothing for the people!” Wikileaks has exposed that Moreno has an account in the INA Investment Corporation, a bank located in Panama.

Moreno has sold out to the bankers and the IMF.



Quito, Ecuador, April 16.

PHOTO: TELESUR

Correa’s call to march against repression and privatization was echoed in the city streets of Europe and the U.S., with hundreds more people coming out. Julian Assange was raised because he has suffered a fate similar to that of Vice President Jorge Glas, who was framed and sentenced to six years in prison after he exposed Moreno’s corruption in August 2017.

This march is the biggest expression of Ecuadorian discontent with “Morenismo” to date. The struggle is growing in the popular neighborhoods, Indigenous communities and social networks on the internet.

Moreno’s “judicial system” is prosecuting political opponents [called “Lawfare” in Ecuador], forcing former officials into exile, and dismantling the “Correista” welfare state, with daily trashing of the Constitution and of international asylum conventions in the case of Julian Assange. □

Stop U.S. sanctions!

The gang that announces Washington’s policies has laid out a program of punishment, aimed at populations of countries on three continents. Any honest international court would charge them with crimes against humanity.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, National Security Adviser John Bolton and President Donald Trump declared at different times in March and April that there will be new, harsher sanctions on Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua. Sanctions against Zimbabwe will be extended another year and Iran will not be allowed to export oil.

Existing sanctions directed at Russia bring in a fourth continent, Europe. In addition, companies in European Union countries that have begun to do normal business with, for example, Cuba or Iran, face U.S. economic punishment.

To impose its decadent and now decaying domination on the rest of the world, U.S. imperialism uses its still pre-eminent destructive military power — with 800 bases on all continents — along with its propaganda machine and its waning but still impressive economic power.

Remember the sanctions against Iraq that began in 1990, continued under Republican and Democratic administrations, and ended only with the U.S. invasion in 2003. In that period sanctions were responsible for the deaths of 1.5 million Iraqis, including 500,000 young children.

The war machine kills quickly. Sanctions, even if slower, are as deadly as invasions.

In this hemisphere, imperialism’s economic weapons target Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua with the goal of overturning their sovereign governments. In Cuba’s case the socialist government has defied the U.S. sanctions, blockade and direct aggression for 60 years. Bolton,

Pompeo and Trump’s goal is to make the populations of those countries suffer so much that they revolt and overturn their governments.

But sanctions don’t always change government policies or remove governments. Reactionary imperialist politicians like Bolton and Pompeo often underestimate the determination of the masses or their governments to resist subjugation. The plans of the U.S. criminals may fail.

Sanctions, however, nearly always make the population suffer, with the poorest and most vulnerable hurt most — unless they are protected by a popular socialist government such as Cuba’s.

Part of the current new wave of sanctions, said Bolton, is aimed at stopping the delivery of oil from Venezuela to Cuba, hurting the people of both countries. Bolton didn’t say if he was involving the U.S. Navy in this type of blockade, which is an act of war.

The governments of all the countries involved have declared their determination to confront U.S. sanctions without changing their principled policies. Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel said it well on Twitter: “Those who hold a sword against us will not change our attitude. We Cubans do not surrender. ... In Cuba, Cubans rule.”

In that same spirit, anti-imperialists in the U.S. have to treat U.S.-imposed sanctions the same way we treat U.S. wars and threats of war. We must mobilize to resist them. And on the basis of the administration’s criminal sanctions, our own goal can be to charge this gang of cutthroats with crimes against humanity.

Stop sanctions on Zimbabwe, Iran, Russia, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua!

End all U.S. sanctions! □

Smoke, mirrors and the old shell game

Capitalist politics have long been a shell game.

While the masses of people are told to look to elections to address their myriad of grievances — the real issues of poverty, racism, lack of good-paying permanent jobs and affordable health care, the struggle for women’s and LGBTQ rights — these all take a back seat in the programs of the major capitalist parties.

The same goes for the corporate media, especially the supposedly “liberal” wing, which at the moment is focusing intensely on the Mueller report and the Trump campaign’s efforts to get Russian help in hacking Hillary Clinton’s emails before the 2016 presidential election.

Why does this get so much attention? There are so many other reasons to expose and oppose the horrible character of the Trump administration.

It openly flaunts its crimes against people of color and immigrants, tearing children away from their parents and locking both up for trying to escape the horrors created in their home countries, especially in Central America, by U.S.-abetted right-wing coups.

It has created a climate in which Klan and Nazi types and other neofascists feel free to spread their vile calls for white nationalism, doing the bidding of those who fear the resurgence of a multicultural, multi-ethnic working class united in solidarity against the profit-gouging bosses.

It is trying to starve and demoralize the people of Venezuela with crushing sanctions in order to install a government more to the liking of U.S. oil interests.

It is heating up the whole planet as payback to its wealthy backers in the fossil fuel industry, who profit off the destruction of the environment.

As for the 2016 election, where is the uproar, day after day, in the media about how millions of voters, so many of them Black and Brown, were excluded from

casting a ballot by reactionary voting restrictions? These wrongs certainly tipped the vote toward the Republican Party and Trump.

But instead of getting justifiably lathered up about these violations of working and oppressed peoples’ rights, the media and the Democratic Party are focused on what the administration did to get Russian support for Trump. It’s the old shell game — look over here, not at my hands.

This, by the way, is not the first time that one of the major capitalist parties in the U.S. — again the Republican Party — used “foreign influence” to tip a presidential election to its benefit.

The Vietnam War, begun in 1963 under Democrat John F. Kennedy, continued under his successor, Lyndon Johnson. In 1968, when the population was increasingly opposed to the war and millions had been in the streets calling for the U.S. to get out, the Johnson administration came up with an “October surprise” just before the election. It announced that peace talks were about to begin, involving North Vietnam, South Vietnam and the U.S.

This was supposed to cement the vote in the Democrats’ favor, after years of anti-war marches where the popular slogan was “Hey, hey, LBJ, how many kids did you kill today?”

But the Republican Party deprived the Democrats of some of the “peace vote” by secretly enlisting the support of a wealthy Chinese supporter of Taiwan’s president, Chiang Kai-shek, to persuade South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu to refuse to participate in the talks. The peace talks never happened. (See “Foreign Governments Have Been Tampering With U.S. Elections for Decades,” Politico magazine, July 27, 2016 — a not very progressive piece but interesting.)

So Richard Nixon won the election — and the war continued, now under the Republicans for seven more years. It ended not because of any vote in the U.S. for the Republican or Democratic parties, which both shared in the war’s crimes, but only after the Vietnamese people were able to drive the U.S. forces out to sea and take back their country.

Nothing has changed fundamentally today with capitalist politics — except for the names and faces of those who defend this corrupt, vile system. □

Global climate crisis Extinction Rebellion protests

By Kathy Durkin

Extinction Rebellion, a grassroots environmental organization, called for civil disobedience protests around the world starting April 15 to spotlight the global climate crisis and demand immediate action to address it. Activists heeded the call in 33 countries, and millions of people worldwide learned from the militant protests that followed.

In England, Extinction Rebellion’s plans for an April action were underway for a year. Thousands of people, worried about global weather disasters, signed up, willing to disrupt and even be arrested. Demands included that Parliament implement concrete measures by declaring a climate emergency, decrease the country’s greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2025 and establish a people’s assembly on climate and ecological justice.

Protests began with a bang April 15 in London. On day one, demonstrators occupied four major sites in the city — and they blocked traffic at Marble Arch, Parliament Square, Waterloo Bridge and Oxford Circus. Encampments were set up as thousands of people from different classes occupied the sites — parents with children, young people, seniors, workers, scientists, academics and celebrities — and disobeyed the police and held their ground.

Berta Cáceres, hero

A bright pink boat, named the Berta Cáceres after the murdered Honduran Indigenous leader and world-renowned environmentalist, was moored April 15 at Oxford Circus in central London. Cáceres is a symbol of resistance in this movement. On April 20, after cops cut through the hull — to which people had glued themselves — hundreds of activists blocked nearby roads, surrounding police. To haul the boat away and clear out protesters, cops roughly dragged away people, including those who had chained themselves to the road.

Other actions were held outside the Shell Oil building and at the House of Commons’ public gallery. People blocked the doorway of the London office of the French oil company Total. Twenty youth unfurled a banner near Heathrow Airport asking: “Are we the last generation?”

On April 20, police began removing protesters who had blockaded Waterloo Bridge for five days. The next day they forcibly removed remaining protesters, including those who were locked and glued to a truck there. Cops also swept Parliament Square and aggressively grabbed occupiers.

In total, 963 environmental activists were arrested in London from April 15 to 21. Criticisms mounted of police who used pepper spray on demonstrators and otherwise mistreated and intimidated them, with



April 15–20 protest, London. PHOTO: RABBLE.CA

detainees held in cells for long periods.

Other protests in response to the call by Extinction Rebellion were held across Europe and in India, Pakistan, Ghana, South Africa, Uganda, Mexico, Canada and many cities in the U.S. Some were huge. In Australia, protesters climbed onto train tracks and blocked a moving coal train on the way to Brisbane. No one was hurt, but arrests took place.

Demanding their governments act immediately to address the environmental crises, thousands participated in sit-ins, die-ins and blockades of banks and corporate and government buildings, among other creative activities. (Read about international actions at tinyurl.com/y28z3h5s.)

Greta Thunberg, 16-year-old climate activist, summed up the emergency at a London rally on April 21: “We are facing an existential crisis, the climate crisis and ecological crisis which have never been treated as crises before. They have been ignored for decades.” (The Guardian, April 21)

These protests are a welcome development. But this movement needs to take aim at global capitalism, the main polluter and menace to the planet. □

Planning can save the planet

Continued from page 11

A newly formed Ministry for Ecology and Environment has broad powers and responsibilities to oversee all water-related policies, from ocean water to groundwater. It oversees policies on climate change that were once scattered among different departments.

It is important in a crisis to understand the problem and evaluate the direction in which developments are going. The changes happening in major population centers of China show that it is possible, if decisive actions are taken, to restore the environment.

The problem in the U.S. that holds back and even reverses programs to mitigate pollution and climate change is that this highly developed country is dominated by a decaying capitalist system and ruling class desperate to maximize its quarterly profits at the expense of any long-term planning. □

Planning can save the planet

China chooses renewable energy

By Sara Flounders

The very corporations that are responsible for the problem are denying global warming, with immediate consequences for the whole world.

Carbon emissions from the burning of oil, gas and methane are heating the planet, creating a crisis of rising sea levels, droughts, extreme weather, poisoned ground water and polluted air that puts all life at risk.

Is that problem reversible?

The United States and China are the largest consumers of coal and oil. The choices made by the leaders of the two largest industrialized economies are having an impact on climate and on air quality for everyone.

But the decisions being made in these two countries are going in totally different directions. Their choices reveal a lot about the different social and political bases of each country.

In China, dramatic changes in major population centers show that it is possible, if decisive actions are taken, to restore the environment and dramatically improve the quality of life.

The Trump administration, on the other hand, is not only ignoring the consequences of global warming, but actively and aggressively denying it. Meanwhile, he's pushing forward with coal mining, fracking and other methods of oil extraction, doing away with Environmental Protection Act clean air regulations and opening up drilling in pristine areas of Alaska's Arctic preserves.

While this is immediately profitable for a few, it has dangerous consequences for the planet and all life forms. Regardless of who is president, U.S. policy is set by the needs of the largest oil, gas and industrial corporations to maximize profit. U.S. policies are set by the relentless drive for wars to defend their empire. The Pentagon is the world's biggest polluter, the largest user of oil and many more dangerous chemicals. Their wars have created the worst environmental devastation and humanitarian disasters.

Trump's actions embolden other arrogant climate deniers. The extreme right-wing president of Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro, has decided to more forward with massive clear-cutting of trees in the Amazon region, the world's largest tropical rainforest.

Capitalist media on China's choices

It is especially noteworthy that major capitalist business publications are concerned with the implications of China's drive for sustainable energy.

Their worry is not about the survival of the planet. It is whether China will get an economic advantage over Wall Street.

As a Jan. 11 headline in Forbes business magazine put it, "China is set to become the world's renewable energy superpower." Journalist Dominic Dudley cited a report issued that day by the Global Commission on the Geopolitics of Energy Transformation, which laid out the geopolitical implications of the changing energy landscape.

The commission's report, said Dudley, showed that China had become "the world's largest producer, exporter and installer of solar panels, wind turbines, batteries and electric vehicles."

"The report argues that the geopolitical and economic consequences of the rapid growth of renewable energy could be as

profound as those that accompanied the shift from biomass to fossil fuels two centuries ago," wrote Dudley. It will "change patterns of trade and the development of new alliances. It could also spark instability in some countries that have grown dependent on oil and gas revenue."

However, Olaf Grimsson, chair of the commission that wrote the report, added that this shift is also bringing "energy independence to countries around the world."

An article in the Economist magazine of March 15, 2018, had already reported that China, "[T]hrough a combination of subsidies, policy targets and manufacturing incentives" had "spent more on cleaning up its energy system than America and the EU combined."

Back on Jan. 5, 2017, an article in the London-based Financial Times titled "Wave of spending tightens China's grip on renewable energy" quoted Tim Buckley, director of the U.S.-based Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, who cautioned Wall Street: "As the U.S. owned the advent of the oil age, so China is shaping up to be unrivalled in clean power leadership today."

A report from the same institute released a year later confirmed yet again that China continues to lead the world in clean energy investment.

China's socialist revolution made the difference

Learning more about what China is doing to clean the environment and understanding why it is structurally and politically able to do so should open the eyes of environmental activists about what is possible.

To evaluate the historic significance of these gains, it is first important to understand that China is coming from a position of great poverty and semicolonial underdevelopment.

The revolution in China, led by Mao Zedong and the Communist Party, triumphed in 1949 after a generation of armed struggle. It ended 150 years of foreign occupation and civil war, which had produced uncontrollable droughts and famines.

U.S. corporate power had sided with the corrupt landlord and military grouping around Gen. Chiang Kai-shek as their best option for continued Western domination of China. After its defeat on the mainland, this grouping, with U.S. assistance, militarily occupied the island of Taiwan.

After 1949 the U.S., in an effort to economically strangle the revolutionary determination of the People's Republic of China, imposed a total embargo on all trade and investment. This blockade lasted until the 1972 visit of President Richard Nixon to China, which normalized political relations — but China was still cut off from world trade and economic development.

Special economic zones: a compromise

In 1979, in an effort to gain access to modern technology and world markets, the Chinese government, then led by Deng Xiaoping, created four Special Economic Zones to attract Western corporations dominating the world economy to invest in China.

Western corporations surged into these zones. Their goal was to set up assembly

factories and maximize profits through cheap labor costs by employing what had been a largely peasant population in zones with few regulatory restrictions. They also dreamed of overturning the Chinese government.

These corporations gave little thought or planning to their impact on the environment.

The British-controlled colony of Hong Kong sits at the tip of the Pearl River Delta just south of China. Especially attractive to foreign investors was a Special Economic Zone established in a rural area of China north of Hong Kong, where land was easily available and close to a world-class seaport.

These investors used the same tactics in China that had been used a century or two earlier, when the building of thousands of capitalist factories created the crowded, polluted, industrial cities of London, Manchester, Chicago and Buffalo.

After opening up to foreign investment in the 1980s, China surged through 35 years of uneven rapid industrialization. Tens of millions of Chinese peasants, a floating migrant population, flooded into the newly created economic zones. They worked incredibly long hours for six months to two years and were then sent home when orders declined.

Even as capitalist private enterprises flourished in socialist China, state-owned industries in essential economic areas also gained strength through joint ventures and government investments. The contradictions and dangers were enormous.

This compromise policy of opening up to foreign capital, allowing the growth of Chinese capitalists and modernizing state-owned industries, is called "building socialism with Chinese characteristics."

North of Hong Kong, the primarily agricultural area of the Pearl River Delta and Guangdong Province careened through an unprecedented growth spurt. In 30 years, it became the largest contiguous urban region in the world, according to the World Bank.

Its population in the 2015 census was 108 million. The zone had a staggering growth rate of 40 percent a year from 1981 to 1993. The Pearl River Delta is now the biggest economic hub in the country.

The city of Shenzhen in the Delta grew from a population of 30,000 in 1979 to a megacity today of 20 million, with the largest migrant population in China. It became a polluted factory town of sweatshops spewing out clouds of dark toxic smoke.

Shenzhen's economic output ranks third, after Beijing and Shanghai, among 659 Chinese cities. It has the second-busiest container terminal in mainland China and the third busiest in the world.

Just north of Shenzhen, the city of Guangzhou, formerly known by its European name of Canton, became China's most polluted city.

Over the years, factory production in the megacities of the Pearl River Delta went from predominantly labor-intensive consumer goods like toys and clothing to light industry, then heavy industry like machinery, chemical products and autos. Now it is focused on producing high-tech electronic equipment.

While the hundreds of factories and power plants drove economic growth forward, they also polluted the air, water and soil to the tipping point.

Turning point

Five years ago, on March 4, 2014, China made a serious national decision. The 3,000 delegates to the National People's Congress voted to reassert greater national control over development through conscious plans to reduce poverty, increase social programs and benefits, combat extreme pollution and build a sustainable environment.

This was a break from China's 35-year policy of stressing economic growth ahead of the environment and of health and social benefits for the working class.

An article titled "Four years after declaring war on pollution, China is winning" ran in the March 12, 2018, New York Times: "To reach these targets, China prohibited new coal-fired power plants in the country's most polluted regions, including the Beijing area. Existing plants were told to reduce their emissions. If they didn't, coal was replaced with natural gas. Large cities, including Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, restricted the number of cars on the road. The country also reduced its iron- and steel-making capacity and shut down coal mines."

Shenzhen and Guangzhou: cities reimagined

Today, some of the most interesting and radical changes undertaken through environmental experiments are in the Pearl River Delta, which has become a new model of urbanization due to extensive state planning and spending.

"Science is so important," says Tonny Xie of the Clean Air Alliance of China. "If you have better planning, you will have better air." (BBC World News, March 7, 2017)

Shenzhen in five years' time has become one of the most livable cities in China, with extensive parks, tree-lined streets and the largest fleet of electric buses in the world (16,000), along with all-electric cabs. The city aims to have 80 percent of its new buildings green certified by 2020. It is now full of apartment blocks, office towers and modern factories with advanced equipment manufacturing, robotics, automation and giant tech startups.

Once-smoggy Guangzhou, after extensive clean up and rebuilding, is now considered China's most livable city. The Guangzhou-Shenzhen Science and Technology Innovation Corridor is a creative plan for future development.

All the cities of the Pearl River Delta are well connected by high-speed trains and modern highways. The world's longest bridge-tunnel sea crossing connects Shenzhen, Macau and Hong Kong.

Even the World Economic Forum says the world can learn from China's example. Some 90 percent of the world's estimated 385,000 electric buses are in China today. Only 1.6 percent of the world's electric city buses are in Europe, and less than 1 percent are in the U.S.

In just four years since the launch of its war on pollution, Chinese cities by 2018 had already cut concentrations of fine particulates in the air on average by 32 percent.

150 coal plants eliminated

Other decisions in the war on pollution included the dramatic decision to stop or delay work on over 150 planned or under-construction coal plants.

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Soñando en Miami

Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada

Entre 1993 y 2013 Alarcón fue Presidente de la Asamblea Nacional del Poder Popular de Cuba. Este artículo fue publicado el 19 de abril al sitio poresto.net.

Luego de tres meses de amagos y amenazas y en un escenario doble -el Departamento de Estado en Washington DC y un teatro de Miami- finalmente la Administración yanqui anunció lo que se propone hacer para intensificar su guerra económica contra Cuba.

El día 17, a media mañana en breve ceremonia, apenas unos minutos, en la capital, el Secretario de Estado Mike Pompeo hizo saber que aplicarán completamente el Título III de la Ley Helms-Burton. No ofreció mayores explicaciones aunque sí dijo que a partir del dos de mayo los “cubanoamericanos” podrán actuar ante los tribunales de Estados Unidos contra quienes utilicen de algún

modo las propiedades que, alegan, fueron suyas o de sus familias.

No hubo preguntas ni fue entregado algún texto que respondiese a las interrogantes que semejante decisión debía provocar entre quienes recuerden que durante veintitrés años –Clinton, W. Bush, Obama y el propio Trump – habían adoptado una posición contraria a lo que ahora se anuncia.

Se produjeron inmediatamente declaraciones oficiales de España, Canadá, México y de las autoridades de la Unión Europea que, además de protestar advirtieron que adoptarán las medidas que sean necesarias para neutralizar cualquier intento de dañar sus legítimos intereses y recordaron que están en capacidad de hacerlo tomando en cuenta que no son pocas las inversiones norteamericanas en sus países.

El espectáculo más notorio fue reservado para Miami y John Bolton, Asesor Nacional de Seguridad, desempeñó la función principal. Su auditorio eran los

integrantes de lo que queda de quienes fueron parte de la Brigada 2506, o sea, los restos del grupo invasor que 58 años atrás fue derrotado por el pueblo cubano en 66 horas.

Bolton repitió lo antes dicho por Pompeo respecto a las demandas judiciales y anunció asimismo la reimposición de severas restricciones a los viajes de los cubanoamericanos a su país de origen y a las remesas que envían a sus familiares en la isla, medidas estas que antes aplicó W. Bush y generaron el rechazo de la inmensa mayoría de esa comunidad lo cual ha sido reflejado desde entonces en las elecciones del Condado Miami-Dade.

El show miamense fue tan patético como grotesco.

Los viejos y cansados veteranos fracasaron cuando eran jóvenes, y organizados por la CIA y con el apoyo de las fuerzas armadas yanquis fueron a Cuba a recuperar “sus” latifundios, “sus” fábricas y “sus” mansiones. Ahora Bolton les



FOTO: TELESUR

Quito, el 16 de abril: ‘¡Fuera, Moreno, fuera!’

promete que, finalmente, la quimera será realidad.

El espectáculo lo resumió Nicolás Gutierrez Castaño: “Ni en nuestros sueños más febriles pudimos concebir que un gobierno de Estados Unidos lo haría. Ninguno lo hizo nunca. Olvídense de Reagan. Olvídense de Bush”.

Emocionado, el habilidoso abogado gestor de la Helms-Burton, cree llegado el momento de “recuperar” las cuantiosas propiedades que robó su bisabuelo.

Soñador desafortado, Bolton, por su parte, invitó a hacer un brindis por la Doctrina Monroe que, según él, está viva y saludable.

Embriagados, “celebrando” su fulminante derrota, los invitados al extraño banquete, lo aplaudieron con delirio.

Es hora de hacerlos despertar. □

Editorial Una palabra muy maltratada

La palabra "democracia" se usa mucho en EUA. La mayoría de las veces se usa para engañar un sistema político que pretende cumplir los deseos de la mayoría de las personas a través de elecciones, mientras que de hecho el sistema sirve a los intereses del capital: los grandes bancos y las compañías de seguros, los contaminadores corporativos de la tierra, los explotadores del trabajo. Y los agentes inmobiliarios fanáticos multimillonarios como el presidente actual.

Este fue elegido "democráticamente", ¿no es así? De hecho, es un ejemplo vivo de cómo el dinero grande compra una oficina política en una "democracia" capitalista.

Estos súper ricos tienen la capacidad sin restricciones en esta "democracia" para comprar políticos y votos. Apartan fondos para que sus títeres (¡o ellos mismos!) Sean elegidos al igual que reservan un presupuesto publicitario. Si bien recientemente ha habido algunas excepciones notables, el gran dinero aún se abre camino en la gran mayoría de las elecciones.

Y luego está el partido "demócrata". Durante décadas, los liberales de este partido mostraron lo que querían decir con democracia con cenas anuales en las que se elogia a Thomas Jefferson y Andrew Jackson. Rara vez se menciona, por supuesto, ni siquiera como una nota a pie de página a todos los elogios, fue el

hecho de que ambos eran grandes propietarios de esclavos y Jackson un asesino de nativos. Y que los estados del sur, tan sólidamente en el campo del Partido Demócrata mientras se llevaban a cabo estas cenas, encontraron que la segregación es compatible con ser "demócrata".

La democracia, en opinión de los primeros demócratas, Jefferson y Jackson, era completamente compatible con la esclavitud, tratando a los seres humanos propiedad para ser comprados, trabajarlos hasta casi a la muerte y vendidos "rio abajo", donde las personas esclavizadas nunca podrían volver a ver a sus cónyuges, sus hijos o sus amigos.

La esclavitud de Chattel fue finalmente derrotada. Muchos de los que lucharon contra ella en la Guerra Civil, blancos y negros, lo hicieron por razones de principio y de humanidad. Pero para el gran capital en el Norte, el factor principal no fue el anhelo de democracia. Era que la esclavitud de bienes muebles era un modo de producción menos productivo y menos rentable que el sistema que lo reemplazaba: la esclavitud asalariada.

Bajo la esclavitud la muerte de un trabajador en régimen de servidumbre era una pérdida material para el dueño de esclavos. Bajo la esclavitud asalariada, si el trabajador vive o muere no tiene mucho interés para el jefe, siempre que haya otros trabajadores disponibles para ser contratados y explotados. La esclavitud de Chattel fue reemplazada por un sistema que aún se basa en la sobreexplotación de personas de color y las encarcela a millones de personas, en prisiones con fines de lucro, por el delito de ser pobre.

El capitalismo en estos días no es muy popular, especialmente entre las generaciones más jóvenes que están consternadas por lo que este sistema de ganancias le está haciendo al mundo. Sin embargo, todavía tiene sus defensores liberales. Uno de ellos escribió recientemente una columna de opinión para el New York Times preocupada por la "oligarquía venidera de Estados Unidos". (¿Viene? ¿Ya

está aquí?) Michael Tomasky señala que, sorpresa, los ricos se están haciendo más ricos. Esta es una amenaza para nuestra gran democracia, escribe. ¿Y a quién cita? Vaya, Thomas Jefferson, quien, según Tomasky, estaba horrorizado por la creciente disparidad entre ricos y pobres. (Nuevamente, no se menciona la disparidad entre la riqueza de Jefferson y aquellos a quienes esclavizó). Todo esto lo lleva a la conclusión de que se debe

preservar el "capitalismo democrático".

El "capitalismo democrático" ha existido por mucho tiempo. Coexiste con el imperialismo y el racismo y el sexismo y la guerra, aunque a veces se quejan de ellos. La parte "democrática" es una cubierta de lo que es básico sobre el capitalismo: la explotación de los trabajadores por parte de los súper ricos, que está en la raíz de todo lo demás que es intolerable. □

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2pm rally
5pm marcha

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Hoy, la unidad de los trabajador@s del mundo es crítica en la lucha contra Trump y los multimillonarios que él representa, quienes están tratando de usar el racismo para dividir y oprimir a los trabajador@s. La guerra contra los trabajador@s inmigrantes es una guerra contra toda la clase obrera. Unámonos el 1 de mayo para decirles a los ricos que no hay muros ni fronteras en la lucha obrera.
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El capitalismo en un callejón sin salida

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

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