Puerto Rico strike
Twelve days rattle the empire

By Makasi Motema

Thousands crowded in front of the governor’s mansion — La Fortaleza — as riot cops, armed to the teeth, locked shields. “The Fortress” was under siege. Here and there, the night sky was aglow with the amber light of distant flames. For 12 days, protesters stormed barricades and braved fusillades of rubber bullets, tear gas and flash grenades. Why? Their demand was the immediate abdication of the governor of Puerto Rico, Ricardo Rosselló.

This latest conflagration was sparked by the release of confidential text messages between the governor and his allies. His messages were loaded with homophobic and sexist language and callous “jokes” about the rising death toll following Hurricane Maria. That was the last straw.

Repeated attempts were made to storm the governor’s mansion, and crowds quickly grew from thousands to hundreds of thousands. Rosselló attempted reconciliation, vowing to stay in office but forgoing a reelection campaign. It was not enough.

On July 22, after 10 days of agitation, Puerto Ricans launched a general strike. Millions shut down the major highway running through San Juan. Two days later, Rosselló announced his resignation. How were the people of Puerto Rico able to unseat the governor in less than a fortnight? And what drove them?

Corporate media have focused on Rosselló, and his despicable comments, out of convenience. Attributing the blame for the current upheaval to one man’s disgusting lack of character is convenient for corporate interests. It obscures the role of finance capital in spurring the pain and anger of the Puerto Rican people.

Underpinnings of the current uprising

The Puerto Rico Management, Oversight and Economic Stability Act, or PROMESA (promise), was enacted in 2016. PROMESA was designed by U.S. federal law to restructure the debt acquired by the Puerto Rican government over the last several decades. The plan was simple: unrelenting austerity.

The unelected PROMESA board members rolled out a plan of crushing budget cuts. Almost 200 schools were closed, pension and health care spending was reduced, and the hourly minimum wage for workers under the age of 25 was reduced to a paltry $4.25 (compared to $7.25 on the mainland). It was clear what was being promised — and delivered — to the Puerto Rican people: humiliation piled on top of indignity.

No peoples could endure such degradation indefinitely, nor could they survive such hardship. Under these conditions, rebellion was inevitable.

What’s worse is that Puerto Rico’s debt crisis was entirely due to the machinations of Wall Street. The Puerto Rican economy was dealt a fatal blow when the Promesa

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Freed MOVE members welcomed in Brooklyn, N.Y.

By Monica Moorehead
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Long-time MOVE supporter, Orie Lumumba, organized a welcome-home reception on July 27 for Janine Africa, Janet Africa and Eddie Africa, members of the MOVE communal family. These fighters for environmental justice and for revolution were falsely arrested and convicted in 1978 for killing a white cop in Philadelphia, when their house was attacked and destroyed by the police. The three of them, now out on parole, became known in the progressive movement as members of the MOVE 9, political prisoners sentenced to 40–100 years in prison.

Five MOVE members have been released from prison — Janine, Janet, Debbie, Eddie and Mike Africa — after spending at least 40 years or more behind bars. Two of the MOVE 9 — Merle Africa and Phil Africa, Janine’s partner — died in prison. Delbert Africa and Chuck Africa are incarcerated.

Delbert Africa called into the reception, held at the historic House of the Lord Church in Brooklyn, to bring greetings to the gathering of close to 50 activists and other MOVE family members. Delbert, who has a parole hearing in September, told the crowd that the Workers World newspaper he receives on a regular basis is shared and welcomed by many prisoners.

Janine, Janet and Eddie Africa told the gathering that they will not rest until all the MOVE 9 are released, along with African-American political prisoner, Mumia Abu-Jamal, also a MOVE supporter, imprisoned since 1981 for supposedly killing a white police officer.

Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a multinational, multigendered and multigenerational organization that not only aims to abolish capitalism, but to build a socialist society because it’s the only way forward! Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the never-ending quest for ever-greater profits.

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

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

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

WWP fights for socialism because the working class produces all wealth in society, and this wealth should be socially owned and its distribution planned to satisfy and guarantee basic human needs.

Since 1959, Workers World Party has been out in the streets defending the workers and oppressed here and worldwide. If you’re interested in Marxism, socialism and fighting for a socialist future, please contact a WWP branch near you.
Sanctions kill

By Dianne Mathiowetz

Atlanta

July 26 — The CNN Center was the site of a rally for the imprisoned freedom fighter, Imam Jamil Al-Amin, formerly known as H. Rap Brown.

A national annual gathering of Muslims initiated by Al-Amin, the Rajahad, was taking place here and brought supporters of the political prisoner from cities across the country. Including New York City and St. Louis.

A fearless leader of SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) in the dangerously violent Jim Crow South, Brown built powerful campaigns for voting rights and local empowerment in rural Alabama in particular. He was targeted by the FBI’s infamous COIN-TRAP, under constant surveillance and harassment.

Tary’s description of the shooter as being 5’10’’ with “cold grey eyes.” The deputy insisted the perpetrator had been wounded in the exchange of gunfire. The 6’5” brown-eyed Imam had no injuries when he was captured, but was convicted in 2002 and sentenced to life without parole. Fearing Al-Amin’s influence among prisoners at the state institution where he was held, Georgia turned him over to the Federal Bureau of Prisons in 2007. For the next seven years, Al-Amin was incarcerated in solitary confinement in Colorado’s supermax Florence ADX.

While his spirit has stayed strong, the years of medical neglect and harsh prison conditions have impacted Al-Amin’s health and spurned the movement to win his freedom.

The rally heard from a variety of national and local speakers, including Al-Amin’s son, Kairi, who called for a maximum effort to bring his father home because “we need his leadership now.”

There are plans for numerous educational outreach events to the public during the month of August and a national conference in Atlanta in October to mobilize a grassroots movement on his behalf.

For more information, go to imamjamilactionnetwork. weebly.com or write Jamil Al-Amin #99974-555, USP Tucson US Penitentiary, PO Box 24550, Tucson, AZ 85734.

Mathiowetz was an invited speaker at the rally, representing Workers Party World.
West Virginia tells Trump ‘No hate in my holler!’

By Otis Grotewohl Wheeling, W.Va.

The bigot-in-chief, Donald Trump, attended a “fundraiser” here the evening of July 24 and was met with protest throughout the day. The event was a $150-a-plate dinner, hosted by coal industry boss Robert Murray.

The first rally was organized by members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 1112 from nearby Lordstown, Ohio, who had just lost their jobs after the recent closing of the General Motors plant there. Speakers angrily commented that Trump had come to West Virginia to brag about how great jobs are now, but what to expect now: “That’s a lie. Things aren’t great.”

Bruylin Rushton, a militant African-American activist within Local 1112, said to the crowd who came to town to celebrate their first two weeks following severe hurricane response from the U.S. government.

And just three days before the leaks, Rosselló’s friends in the private sector. “Only a massive police presence—

Secretary Julia Keleher, a Republican from Plainfield, was one figure in expressing unity with their homemade signs. “Trump made America hate again,” while a woman in sunglasses held up the slogan, “Don’t be a fossil—Let W.Va. shine!” A nearby protester flourished a down-home sign: “No hate in my holler.”

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manufacturing sector pulled out of the island in pursuit of lower wages. Banks swept in and bought Puerto Rican government bonds which were sold to cover in 2016 and promised more jobs. Since that time, his policies have made it easier for corporations to flourish at the expense of working families. When GM closed, 43,000 people lost their jobs and Trump said, “That’s OK.”

Later in the day, another protest of about 500 people was arranged by Marchers Ohio Valley Empowered. MOVE’s major focus was the racist mistreatment of migrant families. MOVE supplied signs and imagery calling out the current U.S. administration for incarcerating migrants in concentration camps.

The protest was joined by other community activists, clergy, trade unionists and members of the Industrial Workers of the World. Also present were educators who have been fighting against privatization for the last two years. Their historic West Virginia actions ignited a national teacher watchdog in 2018. Women represented the majority of those at the rally.

An Ohio Valley Pride contingent marched in to join the protest, waving rainbow flags and other flags representing the LGBTQ2S+ community. Some people had signs calling Trump out for his misogyny, as well as his saber-rattling against Bolivarian Venezuela and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

As attendees walked into the ice hockey arena where the fundraiser was being held, the angry crowd chanted: “Little kids need liberation, not your racist deportation” and “Donald Trump, you racist swine, being Muslim is not a crime.”

In Puerto, a 25-year-old Maoist, told Workers World, “Capitalism-imperialism is destroying the world through colonial plunder. As oppressed people starve, Trump is coming here today to accept an obscene amount of cash from one of the richest coal magnates.”

JW member Michael Mochaidean stated, “While many people here have ideological differences, we are all in solidarity against Trump.”

The angry crowd was energetic in expressing unity with their homemade signs. One read: “Trump made America hate again,” while a woman in sunglasses held up the slogan, “Don’t be a fossil—Let W.Va. shine!” A nearby protester flourished a down-home sign: “No hate in my holler.”

North Carolina workers rally against anti-immigrant law

By Dante Strobino Raleigh, N.C.

Immigrant groups and union workers rallied in front of North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper’s mansion in downtown Raleigh on July 12, urging him to veto House Bill 370, the so-called “Show Me Your Papers” law.

HB 370 is an anti-immigrant bill that circumvents the local authority of sheriffs by requiring them to cooperate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement and assist in the federal government’s deportation pipeline or face financial penalties. It would also lead to Black and Brown people having their detention extended in jail, even after they posted bail.

The bill is blatant political retaliation against the growing number of sheriff's across North Carolina who have pledged they will not assist ICE in targeting or detaining community members for so-called immigration offenses.

Black sheriffs were elected last fall in Wake, Durham and Mecklenburg counties after promising to end their cooperation with the federal government.

The protest was joined by other communities of color, including Black and Brown people. Unlike the large crowd at the fundraiser, the number of Black and Brown people who have been fighting for immigration rights in the past two years, their historic West Virginia actions ignited a national teacher watchdog in 2018. Women represented the majority of those at the rally.

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Workers rally in union solidarity with im/migrants, Raleigh, N.C., July 12.

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The protesters were determined to prevent the conference at any cost … demonstrators blocked the avenue leading to the hotel. Although it was not a massive demonstration, the demonstrators did have enough presence to successfully block the way for those trying to get to the conference.

Protesters sat in the middle of the avenue and built barricades with stones. They surrounded those who tried to attend the conference and tried to discourage them. Many people turned around. Demonstrators also threw water at people in order to discourage them from participating.

A herd of protesters occupied five blocks, but excellent for bond traders.

The hurricane response from the U.S. was callous. While states like Texas and Florida received over $100 million in the first two weeks following severe hurricanes in those states, the U.S. forced Puerto Rico to make do with just $9 million in the same time frame.

At every stage, the destruction of Puerto Rican life and economic stability has been planned and exacerbated by the U.S. government.

So what did Roselló’s text messages really show? Beyond his bigotry and callousness, it was revealed to the world that money — intended to assist the recovery after Hurricane María — was diverted to corporate lawyers and consultants. Confidential information about government contracts was shared with Roselló’s friends in the private sector.

And just three days before the leaks, Roselló’s former secretary of education was arrested for money laundering.

The power of the people is extraordinary, and when concentrated, no empire can resist its force.

This article, by an Afro-Puerto Rican activist, is based on a talk at the July 25 Workers World Party meeting in New York City that addressed the theme “Fighting against Racism and for National Sovereignty.”
The strength of women

Venezuelan commune members confront the blockade

By Marco Teruggi

Caracas


Women in Caracas slums have a plan. They are setting up an economic system that allows them to ensure that food arrives directly from producers to their tables. Organization is key; it is what they are calling people’s power.

“It looks like a star-spangled horizon at night. If you could see it when the lights are switched on,” says a commune member on the roof of an unfinished house in the La Libertad neighborhood of Caracas. It’s in the area where the hills of the poor meet green mountains, at the border at the end of the city. As usual, there is a class and political geographic division.

The heights belong to the poorest—most of them Chavistas [named for late president Hugo Chávez]. The lower areas are for the lower-middle classes who are, in general, opponents of the government.

The commercial epicenter is in the lower part; a street roundabout in a neighborhood district is the most important area. Everything you need can be found there. There, the problem is about prices, as in the rest of the country. There you find retail stores, supermarkets and grocery stores. And there is a corridor in a small shopping mall where the seat of the System of Communal Socialist Economic Initiative (“the System”) was set up a month ago.

This store has packages of cornmeal, coffee, sugar, salt, laundry soap bars and shelves stocked with butter and butter milk. There is little left. Almost all of it has been distributed, and [the commune members] are waiting for a new shipment. The previous shipment had around 1,000 kilograms of coffee obtained on credit. The hardest part was to convince the commune members to set up in the state’s western area, to send that amount without prepayment, while taking care of the transportation as well.

Both confidence and the legitimacy of the communes meeting in Caracas were decisive. Taking its first step, the System brought together 13 communes in one district of Caracas.

Communal economy begins with coffee

The commune members started with 1,000 kilograms of coffee obtained on credit. The hardest part was to convince the commune, located in the state of Lara in the country’s western area, to send that amount without prepayment, while taking care of the transportation as well.

Both confidence and the legitimacy of the communes meeting in Caracas were decisive. Taking its first step, the System brought together 13 communes in one district of Caracas.

The second step was to receive the coffee without yet having a storage center. It is now open in the small shopping center. Each commune is in charge of distribution and sales, gathering the money and paying the coffee-growing commune. In this way, the commune members get to keep their own capital and coffee surplus.

With that surplus we took the risk of more links with producers and other food staples, Yaritza explained. In a scenario of currency devaluation, the women decided to reinvest in more products, as it’s better to have food than money. They used the surplus on an essential tool: a communal truck, as there was broken and they did not have money to repair it.

People’s power in action

The System of Communal Socialist Economic Initiative started. It was designed to deal with three elements at the same time: economics, organization and politics. The goal was never to open a store to trade products from rural communes, but to strengthen every territorial organizational means through concrete actions. This is called people’s power.

Commune member Luisa Gragirena showed me a copy of the Organic Law on Communal Economy and explained: “This is our foundation. Our beloved president Hugo Chávez left us the legal platform so that we, as people’s power, develop and break the schemes of the capitalist system. It is not easy, of course, but it is impossible.”

Luisa read: “The present law aims at developing and strengthening people’s power, establishing the norms, principles and procedures for the creation, operation and development of the communal economic system ... to satisfy the collective needs and reinvest the surplus socially by means of strategic, democratic and participatory planning.”

There is no communal economy without people’s organization, without building democratic bodies to participate and make decisions. In the System, the members decided that this main body meets every Wednesday at 3 p.m. Commune representatives meet, evaluate, plan and decide. For instance, last Wednesday, they presented new products that will be included in the next operation. These products are manufactured by the Family Production Unit represented by Rosa Melendez, a commune member from Caricuao in southwestern Caracas: It has soap, shampoo and hair conditioner. So far, they have manufactured 4,000 bars of soap a month. They expect to reach 20,000 per month through the funding and shops provided by the System.

The target is to move toward production: “We are going to fund certified seeds, and according to the land, we are going to boost productive units. By December, we will be planting tomatoes, bell peppers and the vegetables used for our traditional food at Christmas,” Yaritza explains.

Next steps in fighting the blockade

Every step has been achieved by means of organization. The commune members expect to set up storage centers in every commune section of the System, add two new items in every new dispatch and add more communes. They also plan to achieve communal chains that may be sustained in this context, so that it ensures a fair income for producers and reinvestment of the surplus.

[The organizers] have achieved a strategic gain in three months: guaranteeing products to provide the breakfasts eaten in poor neighborhoods—coffee, arepa, butter and now buttermilk, which had disappeared from the market. They still lack cheese and animal protein sources; obtaining them is one of their goals.

The commune members have many goals. They—mostly of them women—have a strong will to face their difficult moments collectively. Chavism here has one of its clearest meanings—in each of these women, in communal councils, communes and the System. There are thousands like Yaritza and Luisa across the country.

As we said goodbye, they said, “It’s good that people know how Venezuelans are fighting against the economic blockade.”


PHOTO: MARCO TERUGGI

Women of the Revolution: MOVE

By Mumia Abu-Jamal

This column by political prisoner and journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal was written on June 14.

Several days ago, after discussion with sister Suzanne, I began thinking about a piece on the women of MOVE. This seemed especially timely after the recent release of MOVE sisters: Debbie, Janet and Janine Africa.

These women spent over 40 years in Pennsylvania’s prisons, some spent in the notorious house of correction against what they called unjust treatment.

These women weren’t strangers to me, for I interviewed some of them in the “70s, when I was part of the MOVE House on Powelton Avenue, not far from Drexel University. Some of them I interviewed when they were held in the old House of Correction in the Northeast.

Forty-plus years had passed—and behold!—these were the same women. Older? Yes, but not by much.

But it was clear that, over that book reveals they are more committed, more dedicated than the young women who entered those cells over 40 years ago! And, seeing pictures of them, I’m forced to make another observation: They are more beautiful than they were 40 years ago.

And you know what I believe, see for yourself: it is what it is.

And speaking of MOVE women, I don’t think it’s widely known, the simple but telling fact that the administrators of MOVE are women. They essentially, lead the organization.

We don’t see this example in the broader movement, unless it’s a women’s organization.

For discipline, commitment, steadfastness—and will—the women of the MOVE Organization have set a high bar, for they are women of John Africa’s Revolution.”
Immigration time bomb is ticking

By Teresa Gutierrez

The foremost motivation of Donald Trump’s immigration policy is racist terror, blatant cruelty and the promotion of social divisions so ominous they can only be characterized as white supremacist. Im/migrant workers have historically been victims of super exploitation. They have been used by the capitalists as cheap, exploitable and vulnerable labor. That is nothing new in the U.S.

But today, as capitalism is in its death throes, they are also used as pawns in the rush for power by Trump and the extreme right wing.

Fortunately, more and more people are rising up to resist these divisions and are defending migrants as never before.

These opposing stands are a ticking time bomb. What is reality today can disappear tomorrow. How much further Trump will go will depend on the people of this country.

In fact, this is a good time to reflect on the massive demonstrations against the war in Vietnam and the phenomenal mobilizations for the Civil Rights and Black and Brown liberation movements of the 1960s. That period speaks to the long history in this country of everyday folks organizing to end wars abroad and demanding social change at home.

These movements had an impact. They made history. Indeed, they changed the political climate. They are a great example of the old adage that it does not matter who is in the White House or in the courts — what really matters is who and how many are in the streets.

It is also a good time to recall that it was in this country that May Day and International Working Women’s Day were born, out of the struggles of the mighty U.S. working class.

It is time to make this kind of history again, because the time bomb of the struggle between capitalism and a solution to this voracious system is also ticking away.

Trump digs in

On July 22, white, Black and Brown neighbors in Hermitage, Tenn., near Nashville, formed a human chain around their neighbor’s van to prevent Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents from taking a Latino father into custody. This is a wonderful sign of growing resistance and true solidarity.

This kind of action will need to be multiplied a million-fold as President Donald Trump digs in.

Facing reelection, Trump continues to appeal to his reactionary nativist base to whip up xenophobia and racism. Indeed, Trump has resorted to fascist-like tactics, including strong-arming Central American politicians to do what he demands — or else.

Not only has he attempted to sidestep international laws — such as the right to asylum — but he has demanded that ICE enforce tactics that ignore laws on migrant workers already on the books.

After three years in office, Trump’s immigration policies have resulted in conditions that the Guardian described on July 26 as: “Fear, confusion, despair: the everyday cruelty of a border immigration court.”

It is also a good time to recall that it was in this country that May Day and International Working Women’s Day were born, out of the struggles of the mighty U.S. working class.

Even though fewer than 50 workers were picked up after Trump’s big announcement in June that massive raids would take place, the announcement itself served its purpose.

“Some clients will no longer leave their homes to attend counseling sessions or doctor’s appointments, or even to go to the grocery store,” wrote Leslie Peña-Sulli, a New York based therapist who works primarily with immigrants and refugees who’ve experienced trauma. (Vice, July 24)

This therapist concluded, “There is not a difference in the psychological impact of the threat of the raid and experiencing a raid in real life.”

The upside of the announcement, however, is that not only immigrant rights groups but also everyday people began to think of ways to stop this terror. “Know your rights” forums exploded across the country, especially in the 10 cities targeted by ICE in June.

In fact, after the solidarity chain in Hermitage, the Tennessee Immigrant & Refugee Rights Coalition held a forum in Nashville that attracted an unexpectedly large turnout.

TIRRC organizer Lisa Sherman-Nickolaus told the Nashville Tennessean July 27: “This really is a turning point for our community. It’s clear that Nashvillians want to learn more about what they can do and what our city can do to protect our neighbors, our family and our friends.”

We should keep in mind that this is not New York City or San Francisco where the movement for migrant rights tends to be stronger. This is in the South where racism and repression have the longest history. This is a big thumbs down to Trump and his instigation of fascist racism.

But that extreme racist view is not just in the South.

The Texas Tribune reported July 26 that Donald Trump Jr. attended an event organized by We Build the Wall, a grouping of white supremacists who raised millions through GoFundMe and built part of the wall on the same private land where the symposium took place.

Imagine if it was not white supremacists but white, Black and Brown people together raising a ‘Tea Down the Wall’ campaign on GoFundMe. How quick the FBI would shut down that account!

Trump Jr. used the occasion to defend his father’s actions as well as “warn against the spread of socialism.”

Little does Trump Jr. realize that Trump Sr.’s actions are creating the very conditions that grow the fight for socialism.

But these emboldened fascist elements will not crawl back under the rock they came from if Trump loses the 2020 election.

‘An opportunity to rock this system!’

The horrendous conditions for migrants being brought to light have exposed the core of the foundations of this country. On one side are the elite few who have built or benefited from capitalism, racism and colonialism, from anti-immigrant exploitation since day one of this country.

On the other side are the millions of people who either go to work each day or go look for work each day.

This contradiction is irreconcilable. Trump’s immigration horrors are exposing the capitalist system like never before. What an opportunity to rock this system to its core!

The Washington Post published an article July 24 headlined: “Migrants risk it all seeking asylum. The answer in court is almost always ‘no’.

It is one of thousands of articles you read that you can end up crying about. But wipe those tears away.

The same article reported that on a mural in Ciudad Juarez, across from El Paso, Texas, a worker had spray-painted in huge letters “Neither delinquents or illegals — we are international workers.”

We must get that message out far and wide. From Texas to Tennessee, from New Mexico to New York, from California to the Carolinas, everyone must realize we are part of the same international working class.

We are the only ones who can stop Trump and his ilk dead in their tracks.”

ICE OFF OUR BUSES

End Greyhound collaboration with ICE!

CLOSE THE CAMPS

End the war on MIGRANTS

ABOLISH ICE

Friday, August 23rd
6 p.m.
Port Authority
(8th Ave and 42nd)
New York City
Houston FIRE protests Greyhound–ICE connection

By Gloria Rubac
Houston

After quickly and quietly giving out “Know Your Rights” leaflets to every passenger in the Greyhound waiting room here on July 27, and before security could figure out what was happening, activists walked out of the station and set up a picket line outside the terminal where they held a street meeting, urging people to boycott Greyhound. Flight for Immigrants and Refugees Everywhere (FIRE) called the action.

Greyhound security immediately ordered activists to leave or threatened that they would call Houston police. The FIRE spokesperson responded, saying that security could call the police, but no one was leaving because they were on public property, had a right to be there and riders needed to hear their message.

Fourth immigrant dies in Georgia detention center

By Arielle Robinson
Atlanta

Pedro Arriago-Santoya died July 24 while detained in a South Georgia Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility. Arriago-Santoya was 44 years old and from Mexico. His cause of death was listed as heart infection and multiple organ failure.

Arriago-Santoya is the fourth migrant since 2017 to die while detained at Stewart Detention Center in Lumpkin, Ga.

About two hours south of Atlanta, Stewart Detention Center is recognized among Georgia organizers for its mistreatment and medical neglect of immigrant detainees.

In 2017, a Panamanian migrant named Jean Jiménez-Joseph hanged himself there after being placed in solitary confinement. Last year, a Mexican detainee named Efrain De La Rosa also died after being placed in solitary confinement for the second time. He hung himself there after being placed in solitary confinement.

In the cases of Jiménez-Joseph and De La Rosa, both of whom struggled with schizophrenia and were on “suicide watch” in the facility, employees at Stewart failed to monitor both men as often as they were mandated to.

Several guidelines say the immigrants in solitary confinement are supposed to be observed every 30 minutes. Inmates who are suicidal should be watched every 15 minutes. Stewart employees did not look into De La Rosa’s cell until two hours had passed before finding his body.

Cuban detainee Yulio Castro Garrido died of pneumonia in 2018 inside Stewart. After his death, ICE claimed that Garrido refused medical treatment. Weeks later, ICE changed its original statement, claiming that Garrido did not respond well to medical treatments.

In addition to inadequate health care, detainees in the center also report that security could call the police, but no one was leaving because they were on public property, had a right to be there and riders needed to hear their message.

Northeast Ohio says ‘Never again’

Over 100 members of the Jewish community and allies demonstrated July 22 in northeast Ohio outside the Geauga County Safety Center, used by Immigration and Customs Enforcement to detain immigrants. Among them were Holocaust survivors and their children, doctors, educators and many youth, including organizer Lexi Stovisky.

Protesters chanted “Never Again” and carried many homemade signs with slogans, including “Abolish ICE” and “No human being is illegal on stolen land.”

— Report and photo by Martha Grevatt

Central New York ‘stands against racism’

Under the slogan “CNY Stands Against Racism,” about 50 people gathered in downtown Syracuse to protest the virulent U.S. racism that enforces life-threatening im/migrant camps, the deadly prison-industrial complex and the unjust criminal “justice system.”

One speaker pointed out that all these structures break up families and attack the most vulnerable.

The protest specifically targeted local U.S. Rep. John Katko, a Republican who refused to vote for the recent House amendment denouncing President Trump as a racist for his white supremacist remarks about four congresswomen of color. The rally emcee, Kayla Kelechian, from the Workers’ Center of Central New York, said: “We see these four women whom he attacked, all from different backgrounds. Some natives here, some who came here when they were younger. He’s attacking everybody. Racism is not just an immigrant issue. It’s here at the local level as well.”

A speaker who identified himself as being from the local Jewish community emphatically said that they had seen this path before, the condemnation and punishment of an entire people, and he was there to emphasize: “Never Again Is Now.”

To drown out passing hecklers, the crowd repeatedly chanted: “Close the camps, close the camps!” and “The people united shall never be defeated, ¡El pueblo unido jamás será vencido!”

The rally was sponsored by the WCCNY, Syracuse Immigrant and Refugee Defense Network, CNY Solidarity Coalition, New York Immigration Coalition, Public Citizen and Syracuse Cultural Workders.

— Report and photo by Minnie Pratt
This article is based on a talk given at the July 25 Workers World Party meeting.

The long-smoldering fight of the Kānaka Maoli people to save sacred Mauna Kea has kicked up like a volcano on July 17 when work crews arrived to begin construction on the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT). Elders, some using only canes, were not allowed to be taken to the front line to be arrested.

The blockade forced work stoppage of dozens of researchers. Since the arrests of 35 people on July 17, thousands of Hawaiians have blocked all access to the mountain. They oppose further construction on the mountain, on which 13 smaller telescopes have been constructed since 1960. Each one was called “the last telescope.”

Hawai’i Gov. David Ige signed an emergency proclamation threatening Mauna Kea Protectors with police and National Guard. The TMT Corporation and the Hawaiian Maoli turned out in response to the arrests and threats to pack the base of the mountain.

Gov. Ige attacked the Protectors again on July 19, alleging illegal activity, but local media reported that the opposition was the case. KHON2 TV news stated: “There are absolutely no signs of drugs or alcohol. No one is even allowed to smoke here.” (July 20) The media reported that a great number of volunteers, seasoned organizers and activists from all walks of life, brought carry meals and snacks from free kitchens, running medical tents, recycling, cleaning porta potties and hauling trash.

Volunteers told KHON2 that anyone who comes into the Pu‘u‘onoa is welcome. Pu‘u‘onoa means “place of refuge of Honouma‘u”; it is the ancestral home of the Kamehameha dynasty. The Honomau guards itself as sovereign under international law, as the successor government to the Kingdom of Hawai‘i, not subject to U.S. law. The base camp is now a community of learning. Activist professors have set up Pu‘uhonua University with 20 classes a day on Hawaiian culture and language.

KHON2 reported that the resolve of the Kioa people to protect the mountain, grows stronger every day. The Star Advertiser has called the struggle a “boiling point.”

The TMT Corporation and the University of Hawai‘i planned this $1.4 billion telescope and related facilities to be 28 stories high and to cover the size of six football fields — far larger than previously opposed projects. Community resistance has blocked the massive project for years. Early protests led to waste and sewage onpu. Sacred site on stolen land

Mauna Kea is part of stolen crown lands. Queen Lili‘uliokalani of Hawai‘i was overthrown in 1893 by a cabal of sugar planters and settlers from the United States. Twenty-two years later the U.S. annexed Hawai‘i as a territory; it was made the 50th state in 1959.

Mauna Kea was targeted for development of the tallest mountain in the Hawaiian chain, with a summit 13,803 feet above sea level, the highest point in Hawai‘i. That makes the dry, mostly cloud-free skies there less affected by city light pollution. Most of the dormant volcano is underwater. When measured from its oceanic base, it’s the tallest mountain in the world, some 32,808 feet high. It is about a million years old and is the second in size in subaerial surface area of the five shield volcanoes on the Big Island. Meanwhile, the TMT corporation has an alternate site selected in the Caney Islands on La Palma. Spain wants the project.

Mauna Kea is unique for its rare indigenous plants and animals. It has deep significance to Hawaiians and all Pacific Islanders. National Geographic honored it in a special edition in January 2011, titled, “The Earth’s Holiest Places: Sacred Journeys.” It’s a sacred place for Kānaka Maoli and all Polynesian Nations. It represents creation, the embodiment of ancestors, a burial ground. It is in 100 archeological sites, hundreds of cultural sites, and historic and still-used shrines, which are directly related.

On the blockade’s first day, July 15, Protectors spent over 11 hours at the cattle guard on the access road. Kānaka Maoli Protector and professor at the University of Hawai‘i, Noeleni Goodyear-Ka‘upu, stood arm-in-arm with other women (workers) to protect the kupuna (elders) from heavily armed officers. She said, “The kupuna there had made a line and wanted to be a first line of defense.” (High Country News, July 25)

Goodyear-Ka‘upu raised three grounds for opposition to TMT: Mauna Kea is sacred, it is the watershed for Hawai‘i Island’s fresh water supply, and it is a burial ground. It is unceded, unrelin- quished, stolen Hawaiian land. Further, it is zoned for conservation to protect and preserve natural resources necessary for the survival of the people. The plan for the 30-meter telescope meets the definition of a “genocidal occupation.”

Protect the Earth, not profits!

There are online discussions of Native Hawaiians about the root of the problem being the construct of the U.S. judi- cial system in dealing with Indigenous issues — that it is rooted in colonizers’ views on spirituality which are restricted to organized, class-society-based religion. Indigenous peoples have deep connec- tions with the land and relations with all forms of life. Such kinship doesn’t trans- late well in class society, which is intel- erant of colonized peoples and regards them as “lesser than” or “uncivilized.” This lack of cultural places no intrinsic value on Mother Earth, the biosphere and life on Earth, clean water and air, indigenous animals, plants and natural habitats. Capitalists only value life for the profits they can make. Their values are therefore diametrically opposed to those of Indigenous peoples worldwide.

Significantly, nearly 1,000 astronomers have signed a letter, as of July 28, opposing the imposition of this project on the Hawaiian people. They raised conc erns about sovereignty and intrusions on Indigenous lands. The letter cites past “genocidal and racist” and “white colonizers’ obsessions with conquest.” (tinyurl.com/xyulfku)

Chanda Prescod-Weinstein, an astro- physicist at the University of New Hampshire, who signed the letter, stated, “What’s facilitated [scientific] access [to Mauna Kea] is American colonialism on Hawai‘i’s land in what we call the state of Hawai‘i. It is the American state appara- tuses that continues to play a role in enforc- ing astronomer access to the Mauna, for example, with the police forces this week arresting the kupuna, the elders, who took great physical risk to protect their family.” (earth.gimodo.com, July 18)

Resistence is growing

On July 19, students at the University of California, Berkeley demonstrated with visiting Pacific Islander students, Indigenous rights groups and elders to demand that the UC system divest from TMT, as well as other local investors. Principal investors in TMT are Gordon Moore, Silicon Valley venture capitalist, along with the California Institute of Technology. TMT is a for-profit project. The state of Hawai‘i and the University of Hawai‘i have made millions of dollars from such projects. It’s racist to alllege that the Kānaka Maoli oppose astronomy when Pacific Islanders have practiced astronom- any for ages. They navigated the Pacific Ocean by the stars.

Kānaka Maoli Bria Tennyson, a Berkeley student, answered the false accusations that Hawaiians oppose science: “Our very identity as a people is based on studying the stars. That’s how we got to Hawai‘i (in the first place).”

On July 20, and on July 21, an organi- zation of Asian-Pacific Islander gay and trans people demonstrated in New York’s Union Square.

Protests spread to the tourism indus- try: Organizers called for a one-day tour boycott Monday, July 22, and several businesses cooperated and closed, cancel- ing tours and more. A majority of tour- ists’ destinations.

Hawaii Lt. Gov. Josh Green met with Kānaka Maoli on July 22, attempting a compromise. But he left speaking about the Hawaiian people’s future. Some state representatives and city council members have asked Gov. Ige to rescind his emergency proclamation, stat- ing it violates the spirit of the law.

60-day moratorium won

Hilo County Council passed a resolu- tion on July 24 in support of state Sen. Kai Kahele’s call for a 60-day moratorium on building TMT, despite Gov. Ige’s push for it to begin.

The following testimony and more was given to the council about decades of mistreatment of the Hawaiian people and their lands. Kanamnawa Kinimaka, descended from the royal guard for King Kalaaku, said, “Our land is dying, it’s just from war. That what the Hawaiian representatives is a symbol of the Indigenous Native people of our world. The Hawaiian people have been given into a ring of symbolism.” (West Hawai‘i Today, July 28)

In addition, Ikaika Marzo stated, “TMT is just a match after so many years of gasoline being poured on our ground.”

Millicent Cummings called TMT “an act of war to the mauna and the kanaka.” And Ronald Teran, “TMT is a kat- alyst. It’s the line in the sand. Do not cross that line.”

Actor Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson, who grew up on Oahu and is of Samoan heritage, met with kupuna and organizers at the Mauna Kea Access Road on July 24. He said, “It’s bigger than a telescope. It’s humanity. It’s a culture. It’s a people, our Polynesian people, who are willing to die to protect our land.” (Hawaii News Now, July 24)

Marxists and Marxist understand that this battle, along with the struggle in Puerto Rico, is part of the struggle against the legacy of settler-colonialism. It shows what we mean by self-determi- nation for Kānaka Maoli. They should decide about any development on their islands.

The Hawai‘i Community Bail Fund for Protectors of the Mauna Kea is linked to iaconer.org. Support the Kia‘i!

WW Commentary

Mauna Kea Protectors vs. corporate profiteers

By Stephanie Hedgecocke

Hedgecocke is of Huron/French Canadian, English, Irish, Scottish, and mixed Southeastern Native heritage.
Prison officials turn away thousands of petitions for Mumia

By Joe Piette

Dozens of community activists traveled hundreds of miles from four states to Mechanicburg, Pa., on July 24 to deliver petitions signed by 3,000 people from around the world, simply requesting the right to proper vision care for political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. They expected at the very least that someone with authority in the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections would step out to accept the petitions. The PA DOC instead placed several burly Capitol District cops and a couple of DOC staff members outside the front doors to “greet” the community representatives. The activists fighting for Abu-Jamal’s freedom — representing a global movement for the freedom of all political prisoners — insisted on their right to speak to John Wetzel, head of the state prison authority or one of his near equals, before handing over the signatures from thousands of Mumia supporters.

Agreement to meet

Outside the main doors of the state facility, the first of two non-uniformed men to speak to the activists was a Mr. Barnacle. When Pam Africa, representing the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, asked who he was, he pulled out a badge marked “staff,” dated 2018. When told someone with real current identification was needed, Barnacle eventually agreed to allow three participants to enter the building to deliver the petitions to a DOC official.

While the assembled activists waited to be joined by people in two additional vehicles from New York City and Philadelphia, the DOC announced its decision. “We have reached an agreement to enter with the activists,” said a DOC spokesperson.

So far, the prison officials are discouraging and making complicated the eye-doctor’s ability to share with me the medical information that Mumia wants me to have. They have not acknowledged his surgery. Every cooperative effort on these matters is being made by Mumia’s family and friends; still there is too much stalling by prison officials.

“Additional documentation is being made by Mumia’s family and friends; still there is too much stalling by prison officials.”

Legal struggle continues

The DOC’s refusal to meet with community representatives comes less than a week after the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a lower-court decision that Corrections Department employees could be sued for their decisions regarding the 65-year-old Mumia. Abu-Jamal asserts his initial denial of treatment with two antiviral drugs for hepatitis C violated his constitutional right to be free from cruel and unusual punishment. In an unprecedented January 2017 decision, Federal District Court Judge Robert Mariani ordered the DOC to treat Abu-Jamal with direct-acting antiviral medications for his hep C infection.

Abu-Jamal’s supporters argue that because deliberate delay resulted in Mumia’s cirrhosis of the liver and because the current delay in cataract surgery may cause future deterioration in his overall health, he should immediately receive treatment to prevent the damage that could be caused by a comparable delay in treating his visual problems. “We’ve been here before and met with people. One time it was with the head of the press office. Send us the press office.”

Rev. Keith Collins, who visited Mumia on July 4 and was also appointed to deliver the petitions, said: “I’m a pastor, a decorated veteran, a paratrooper, also an ex-cop … . We just want to deliver these petitions … .”

Despite arguing for over an hour, the activists could not get the DOC to relent. Because of the commotion and that’s very important— and to let him come home. He’s served forty years for a crime he did not commit.”

Activists about to leave for prison headquarters in Mechanicburg, Pa., on July 24, say, “Accept our petitions! Free Mumia!”

Yet the DOC wanted petitions from 3,000 people to be handed over to undesignated staff, off the record, with no way of tracking the petitions, which could immediately be trashed.

Finally, Abu-Jamal’s supporters marched away, but not before Pam Africa said: “We’re leaving now, but it’s not over. Wetzel, we’re going to find out wherever you be at, cause there ain’t no power like the power of the people.” The group left chanting, with the petitions in Rev. Collins’ hands, undelivered.

A Filipino rallying cry in New York: ‘Oust Duterte!’

On July 22, in pouring rain, several dozen people occupied the sidewalk in front of the Philippine Consulate in midtown Manhattan to protest the corrupt, brutal and genocidal rule of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte. The People’s State of the Nation Address was part of a globally coordinated day of protests, from the Philippines to Europe and the Americas, in condemnation of Duterte’s “war on drugs,” a systematic assassination campaign by exploitative corporate interests and the U.S. government. Connections were also drawn to the ongoing uprisings demanding independence from the U.S. for the people of Puerto Rico and Hawaii.

Cultural performers danced, sang, chanted and symbolically destroyed a paper-mache bust of Duterte before raising a banner reading “Oust Duterte!” — their rallying cry — at the entrance of the consulate.

Puppet Duterte is ousted by People’s Power during a July 23 performance in Washington, D.C., part of a global day of protest called by Filipino organizations.

— Report by Cosima Bohannan-Blumke
Mueller and wishful thinking

Anyone who clung to the illusion that Robert Mueller’s July 22 testimony before the House Judiciary and Intelligence committees would put POTUS in a pickle had to be disappointed.

Now it should be clear: There will be no shortage to pushing the president back, let alone smashing his reactionary racial policies. And Mueller, as we have written before, is about the last person—and from the last place—you would expect help in this regard.

He was the director of the FBI, one of the most repressive and regressive state institutions. The FBI hounded Black Liberation organizations, Civil Rights leaders and communists in various stages of its history. The FBI in the 21st century hasn’t changed its stripes—or its politics.

Mueller focused his investigation solely on alleged collusion between 45 and Russia. That in itself shows the weakness and limitations of a nearly two-year pursuit. If Mueller’s investigation had produced evidence of serious collusion, U.S. imperialism would just have another pretext to target the Russian state. Mueller has managed to launch with weakening the Trump gang.

Fahrad Manjoo wrote an op-ed for the New York Times on July 25 that described on 45 reality to be impeached for, should be ever be impeached: racism.

Manjoo wasn’t the only analyst to focus on the president’s overt racism and white supremacy that, along with xenophobia, misogyny and anti-LGBTQ+ bigotry, is the bedrock of his 2020 reelection campaign. This view was widely expressed shortly before and immediately following Mueller’s testimony.

Mainstream Democratic Party leaders are reluctant to impeach POTUS, whether for collusion, obstruction, emoluments or racism. They say the Republican majority in the Senate will shoot it down. Nancy Pelosi and company look to run the 2020 election with a centrist program. There is no evidence, however, that a politician of the Hillary Clinton variety can win, nor that electing a moderate Democrat will make on war, layoffs, wage cuts or police violence.

A real pushback against the Trump agenda

The news for the week might have been all grim if there had not been movement from grassroots—especially the right not to open your home or car to ICE officials who come with warrants. ICE announced, in the end, they had arrested 35 people. Trump had boasted 2 million would be sent home.

The solidarity movement had its high moment in Nashville, Tenn., when a family in a car was threatened by ICE agents. People in the neighborhood formed a human chain encircling the car, putting their bodies between the agents and their victims—who this time were not victims but resisters. Previously, a similar action by churchgoers in North Carolina held off an arrest and deportation of an undocumented person.

If we in the working-class and progressive movements aim to get rid of Trump because we hate his policies, we can’t just look for a seemingly more reasonable version of those same policies. If we have the aim, we have to start at the grassroots. We can’t expect a Mueller or a Pelosi to do so. We must develop the best instincts and sentiments of millions of workers and mobilize them.

Is this wishful thinking? Or just hard work?

It’s certainly more realistic than relying on Mueller or any high-ranking cop in the capitalist state to take down 45 with a shallow investigation.

Food security vs. ‘border security’

As the whole world knows by now, Trump has launched major racist attacks on four congress members known as the “Squad” over the past couple of weeks. He ordered the women to “go back where they came from.”

Trump targeted the four because of their courageous and outspoken public criticism of U.S. government policy, mainly the inhumane and xenophobic targeting of migrants, including children. Trump also focused on the four because all are people of color, with three of them coming from migrant families.

Now joining Reps. Ilhan Omar (Minn.), Rashida Tlaib (Mich.), Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (N.Y.) and Ayanna Pressley (Mass.) on Trump’s target list is Rep. Elijah Cummings (Md.). The Black congressperson, who represents a group of organizations that initiated the litigation, announced the legal effort to stop the wall will continue.

In a lesser publicized, but equally important development, the Trump administration announced plans to kick at least 3.1 million indigent people off the rolls of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP.

This vital food stamp program, funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, provides access to food for an estimated 42 million people, based on income. Some people also receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, which is another federal program that helps with basic needs. The new procedures would require a family receiving TANF to pass a review of income and assets to deter mine whether the family is eligible for SNAP benefits.

This latest attack on the poor actually began when President Bill Clinton signed “The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996.” That law forced welfare recipients to work in exchange for general assistance benefits—tantamount to working at below an already inadequate minimum wage.

If approved, the new guidelines would have an impact on a city like Baltimore which in 2015 had an official poverty rate of 24 percent. In 2018 the official national poverty line was around $20,780 for a family of three. (familyusa.org)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture states that cutting SNAP would reduce the federal budget by $8.2 billion—the same amount allocated for building part of the border wall.

While Trump pushes his racist wall under the guise of “national security,” what about the food security of millions of the working poor, with a disproportionate number being Black, Latinx and Indigenous?

Will the Democratic Party members in Congress challenge these cuts in a direct way or will they continue to lay low, even knowing that the cuts will deepen and expand hunger and malnutrition in their political base?

During the 1980s, mass campaigns were launched in the streets to meet the challenge of austerity, including widespread hunger, ushered in by the Ronald Reagan presidency. Outrage demanded: “Feed the People, Not the Pentagon” and “Food Is a Right.”

With Trump and the Republican Party having declared war on migrants and other people of color, a new demand must be added: “Food security, yes! Border security, no! Food is a Right!”

Moncada: Spark of the Cuban revolution commemorated in New York

Ana Silvia Rodríguez, Cuban Ambassador to the United Nations.

A standing-room-only crowd attended the annual July 26 commemoration organized by the New York Nurses Coalition in an attempt to overthrow the government of the brutal pro-U.S. Cuban dictator, Fulgencio Batista. Though the attack failed militarily, it helped to lay the political basis for the triumph of the Cuban Revolution less than six years later on Jan. 1, 1959.

Speakers included the Cuban Ambassador to the United Nations, Ana Silvia Rodríguez; Ed Ortíz, from Call to Action on Puerto Rico; Gail Walker, director of IFCO/Pastors for Peace; William Camacaro, from the Venezuela Bolivarian Circle; and others. The program was co-chaired by Yulía Velgar, from Socialist Front of Puerto Rico, New York Committee, and Ana Marie Cardenas, law student at the City University of New York. Many of the speakers linked the impact the Cuban Revolution has had since the triumph of the Cuban Revolution against U.S. imperialism, especially in Puerto Rico and Venezuela.

BombaYo, a cultural group of percussionists and dancers, performed the ancestral rhythms of Bomba, an African-derived music and dance tradition developed in Puerto Rico.

— Report and photos by Monica Moorehead

CUNY law student Ana Marie Cardenas and Frank Velgar of the Socialist Front of Puerto Rico.
Climate change, oil profits and the new youth movement

By Deirde Griswold

Despite the know-nothing stance of the gang in the White House, climate change is a subject that hundreds of millions of people cannot ignore. Massive spring floods in the U.S. Midwest continued into June, causing billions of dollars in damage as levees were breached and fields turned into vast lakes. At the same time, California suffered numerous devastating wildfires fueled by drier than normal conditions, while a prolonged drought has spurred emigration in Europe to even more deadly conditions in southern Asia and parts of Africa.

The destruction caused by Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico two years ago has now engulfs that nation in a political crisis, as the governing colonial authorities imposed by the U.S. have been exposed for ripping off oil funds intended for hurricane relief.

Fossil fuel super-profits and war

At the same time, the super-rich class of U.S. billionaires, who own the political process, is busily privatizing the U.S. or “democracy,” continue their pursuit of super-profits from fossil fuels, especially oil and gas—major contributors to global warming and increasingly destructive storms.

Is it merely a coincidence that the major “trouble spots” in the world, where the threat of revolution is at its highest, are also producers of power—so-called “democracy,” continue their pursuit of super-profits from fossil fuels, especially oil and gas—major contributors to global warming and increasingly destructive storms?

In Puerto Rico

This past June, CTA held its fourth Call to Action on Puerto Rico, at the July 26 Montreal Day commemorative program held in New York City on July 27.

Call to Action on Puerto Rico is here tonight to join all of you in this important celebration of the 60th anniversary of the assault on Moncada, the spark that gave rise to the Cuban Revolution, a revolution that inspired and supported free riders to drill beneath our soils and burn away our futures for their profit.

The groups Fridays for Future and Youth Climate Strike have started a movement calling for a global general strike in September.

In Puerto Rico, the People United Will Win!

‘The People United Will Win!’

The slightly edited message below was presented by Ed Ortiz, on behalf of Call to Action on Puerto Rico, at the July 26 Moncada Day commemorative program held in New York City on July 27.

Call to Action on Puerto Rico is here tonight to join all of you in this important celebration of the 60th anniversary of the assault on Moncada, the spark that gave impetus to the Cuban Revolution, a revolution that inspired and supported free rides to drill beneath our soils and burn away our futures for their profit.

Now, massive protests

The people of Puerto Rico have drastically changed their political dynamic. Everything is in flux right now. The massive protests of hundreds of thousands demanding the resignation of Governor Ricardo Rossello, have made it clear that people are ready for some fundamental changes.

Right now, the Governor is slated to resign on August 2, and the interim Governor, Wanda Vazquez, the current Secretary of Justice, is under investigation due to accusations that she ignored evidence of corruption in the provision of hurricane relief.

The folks are already preparing signs saying “WANDA RESIGN.” And when Wanda is gone, it will be the next one. Today’s [July 27] N.Y. Post headline put it correctly: “Puerto Ricans are not remotely done getting rid of corrupt politicians.”

Prior to the hurricanes, people were already suffering from oppression and the contraction of the economy, an illegitimate debt that finally brought us to a U.S. Bankruptcy Court and the imposition of a Financial Control Board — La Junta. La Junta is moving forward with closures of over 300 more public schools, plans to reduce the minimum wage to $4.25 per hour for people under 21, 10 percent reduction in pensions, and other draconian measures.

La Junta, led by some of the very people who colluded with corrupt insular and U.S. officials to create the illegitimate debt, have made it clear that its job is to sell off Puerto Rican resources to satisfy Wall Street debt-holders who they would otherwise already making money off the debt.

People were already changing things by staying away from colonial elections and status plebiscites.

Hurricane Maria forced people to openly acknowledge that insular colonial administrations over time had been incapable and unwilling to deal with the island’s needs, while demonstrating that they have been at the service of U.S. corporate interests. They would not stand up to the racist Trump. The imperial power refuses to respond to the real needs of the Puerto Rican people and controls its colony with impunity.

Frankly speaking, the people have long known that the insular governments have always been corrupt. The scan-dal, generated by the leaked emails and chats and their casual depiction of that corruption, was just too much too bear. The chats exposed the wilful corruption, homophobia, misogyny and disrespect for the people.

Within two days, the demonstrations began and would not stop. They would only increase in size and intensity every day. Not party people. Everyday, sectors who have not been seen in the streets before, but led by the young people; very peaceful, except for the violence perpetrated by the police. Aided in part by the State.

All of this will eventually lead to the general agreement that we need to take our fate into our own hands; statehood is a fallacy. The general strike on Monday [July 22] was successful, and organizers showed that there is a lot more potential.

We are still waiting to see if the governor actually leaves. He needs a par-tisan to stay or he needs to make the first move. We are the ones who’ve been waiting for it.

An antidote to pessimism

This youth movement is a welcome answer to the growing pessimism over climate change. The prevailing attitude being inculcated in the U.S. is that either that is the way of the world or that it’s already too late to do much about it. Both are wrong.

A lot is already being done, but you won’t view it in prime time or in newspaper headlines.

According to the World Resources Institute: "China accounted for 45 percent of global investment in renewables in 2017 and leads the world in installed capacity (343 GW) , followed by the United States (141 GW) and Germany (106 GW)."

So the country responsible for nearly half the world’s investment in renewable energy is the People’s Republic of China! A nation that in just a couple of generations has pulled itself up from abject poverty to become the world’s leading manufacturer.

The world is changing. The struggle will be won by a few imperialist countries on the world economy is breaking down. China is showing that there can be sustainable development. Of course, it took a revolution to get to where it is.

Youth around the world get it, and they are organizing.
Nuevo apagón en la capital venezolana

Por Marco Teruggi
Canacas, Venezuela

Original en paginaww.com.ar el 24 de julio.

Canacas amaneció el 23 de julio con la incertidumbre que traen los apagones. La mañana de los jueves en la ciudad había recuperado el sistema eléctrico, y la mañana estuvo marcada por cortes de algunas horas en diferentes sectores. El día fue declarado no laborable por parte del gobierno, el servicio de metro inhabil- itado debido a la inestabilidad eléctrica, y los movimientos fue los que sucedían los apagones: compras de comida y carga de gasolina.

A las 14, el ministro de la Energía Eléctrica, Freddy Brito, información acerca de la recuperación al “ciento por ciento de la carga en la mayoría de los estados del país”. Menos de 24 horas para Caracas y el país: el apagón había sucedido a las 16.45 del día anterior. Aunque la realidad de la capital contrasta con la de muchos estados en la primera los apagones han sido contados desde principio de año, mientras que, en estados como Zulia, Lara o Táchira, los cortes de luz son diurnos.

El ministro para la Comunicación, Jorge Rodríguez, denunció que el evento ocurrido se debió a un “ataque”. “Los primeros índices recogidos de la evaluación orientan a la existencia de un ataque de carácter electromagnético que buscó afec- tar el sistema de generación hidroeléc- trica de Guayana, principal proveedor de este servicio en el país”.

Según el ministro, se trataría así de un nuevo ataque al sistema eléctrico nacio- nal, como ya lo había denunciado el gobierno nacional las veces anteriores, en particular en el apagón más grande que comenzó el pasado 7 de marzo y se prolongó durante varios días. Rodríguez anunció que la recuperación sería rápida debido a que, luego de los supuestos ataques, habían sido instruidos “protocolos de protección y seguridad”.

La oposición acusó, por su parte, al gobierno de ser responsable de lo suce- sivo. El mismo mensaje partió desde Estados Unidos, donde, por ejemplo, el senador republicano Marco Rubio, oper- nando con la estrategia contra el gobierno de Nicolás Maduro, afirmó que la causa del apagón era “el régimen”.

Junto con tensión se vio calma. En las calles existió cierta tensión por el corte generalizado, debido en particu- lar a la falta de luz y un incremento en el tráfico de vehículos, pero la resistencia se mantuvo por parte de las instituciones de la sociedad civil.

En ese contexto Juan Guaidó cumplió este 23 de julio seis meses de su autocpro- lación. Convocó a una sesión pública de la Asamblea Nacional en uno de los puntos habituales de concentración del antichavismo en Caracas. La concurren- cia a la actividad fue pequeña, aunque representativa de los sectores tradicionales de la derecha venezolana con su ausencia de sectores populares.

Allí Guaidó anunció que la aproba- ción del ingreso de Venezuela al Tratado Interamericano de Asistencia Recíproca (TIAR), el acto más significativo de la coali- ción de fuerzas interamericanas para llevar adelante una intervención militar. La aprobación del TIAR por parte de un poder público en una arquitectura de intento de golpe de Estado se dio en el marco de los diálogos de Barbados que se mantienen. El gobierno y la oposición ya han realizado cuatro encuentros públicos desde mayo, dos en Oslo, y dos en la isla del Caribe, con la mediación central del gobierno de Noruega, que ha insistido en reiteradas oportunidades en la necesidad de la discreción acerca de los contenidos.

El discurso de Elliott Abrams

Aún no se sabe cuáles serían los puntos específicos del acuerdo, en caso de lograrse. Uno de los nudos centrales de diferen- cia reside en la permanencia de Nicolás Maduro al frente de la presidencia. Elliott Abrams, enviado especial de EEUU para el caso Venezuela, declaró en una entrevista el domingo pasado que: “no es posible que haya elecciones libres y justas con Maduro en la presidencia (...) aceptar elecciones y permitir que Maduro se mantenga hasta ellas equivale a renunciar al cambio”.

El discurso de Abrams ratifica no sol- amente la necesidad de que Maduro no se presente a unas eventuales elecciones presidenciales, sino que se retire antes de las mismas. El presidente instó por su parte a la maquinaria del Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela a prepa- rarse para unas elecciones que, desde hace varios meses, anunció que serían para elegir un nuevo poder legislativo.

NINGÚN dirigente del chavismo ha aso- mado la posibilidad de elecciones presi- denciales hasta el momento, y Diosdado Cabello, presidente de la Asamblea Nacional Constituyente, afirmó su desac-uerdo respecto a esa posibilidad.

Los elementos se desarrollan en simultáneo con Barbados: el apagón pro- ducto de un nuevo ataque como denunció el gobierno, la carta del TIAR, el avión norteamericano de reconocimiento que incursionó el viernes en área interna- cional de dominio venezolano sin autor- ización y fue interceptado por dos Sukhoi, la reciente reunión del Movimiento de Países No Alineados donde 120 gobiernos reconocieron a Maduro y se opusieron al bloque norteamericano. Los diálogos no detienen las demás variables que a su vez sirven para construir la correlación de fuerzas para un posible acuerdo.

El primer de mayo, Durham, Carolina del Norte, 2019.

Un residente de Caracas regresa a su vivienda con una bolsa de compras en medio del apagón.

La SOLIDARIDAD NO ES DELITO

La plataforma de apoyo a los presos palestinos

Una lucha importante en el estado español. Firma el manifiesto contra la criminalización de la solidaridad con el pueblo palestino. Por más información y para firmar: comitesporpalestina.org

Ante la decisión de la Audiencia Nacional de encausar primero, y después de denegar el sobreseimiento de la causa seguida contra Ángeles Maestro y otras dos compañeras por el envío de fondos al pueblo palestino, al tiempo que ha dis- puesto la apertura de Sumario Ordinario por colaboración con organización terror- ista, las personas abajo firmantes mani- festamos que:

• La imputación de las tres compañeras por colaboración con organización terror- lista, basada en la recogida de fondos con destino a la reconstrucción de instalaciones sanitarias destruidas por el ejérci- to israelí, que ocasionó así mismo miles de muertes y de personas heridas en 2014 y 2015, carece de toda legitimidad. Las penas previstas en el Código Penal contem- plan entre dos y diez años de cárcel y multas por el triple de las cantidades enviadas.

• El texto esgrimido de la entrega de dichos fondos a la dirigente palestina, Leila Khaled, miembro del Frente Popular para la Liberación de Palestina considerada por la UE como organización terrorista, es inaceptable. Leila Khaled es un símbolo de la resistencia de su pueblo y es invisible con cierta frecuencia en la ocasión citada – por ayuntamientos como los de Barcelona y Madrid y otras instituciones académicas y sociales. En estas visitas ha realizado declaraciones públicas en defensa de la lucha del pueblo palestino contra la ocupación israelí, sin que su actividad haya sido de ninguna forma obstaculizada.

• La decisión de la Audiencia Nacional, al igual que la persecución realizada contra miembros e instituciones del movi- miento Rejot, Desinversiones Sanction (BDS) es una atentada contra los legít- mos sentimientos de solidaridad con el pueblo palestino, y directamente extendi- dos en nuestra sociedad.

Por todo ello exigimos:

• Que se retire toda acusación contra las tres compañeras, así como el cese de toda represión contra la actividad soli- daria con el pueblo palestino.

• Que el Estado español deje de amparar iniciativas jurídicas proas- tradas en última instancia y el Estado de Israel que pretende conseguir, no sólo la impunidad en las masacres que perpetra contra el pueblo palestino, sino acallar las voces y las actividades de solidaridad que las denuncian.

Finalmente, llamamos a todo tipo de organizaciones sociales, sindicales y políticas a no amedrentarse y a intensi- ficar las tácticas de su legítima solidaridad con el pueblo palestino. Así mismo solici- tamos a los medios de comunicación que se autodefinan como dependientes e incitar el silencio que rodea, tanto a los ataques israelíes contra Palestina, como a la represión contra la solidaridad.