

Using tariffs as club

U.S. drags Mexican gov't into war on migrants

By Martha Grevatt

President Donald Trump announced May 30 the imposition of tariffs on all Mexican imports, effective June 10, if Mexico did not agree to take strong measures against refugees seeking asylum in the U.S. Then on June 7, he suspended the tariffs, but only after Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador — popularly known as AMLO — agreed to deploy 6,000 troops primarily along the Guatemalan border to suppress migration. Asylum seekers will be illegally held in Mexico while they wait for their cases to be heard in U.S. courts.

This will create tremendous hardship for refugees fleeing violence and political repression in their home countries, primarily Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. The wait for a hearing can be six months to over a year.

Thousands of refugees have already been deported or blocked from entry by Customs and Border Patrol under the Department of Homeland Security's "Migrant Protection Protocols." As the American Civil Liberties Union points out, "The policy illegally denies access to the asylum system and forces migrants to wait in untenable conditions, vulnerable to abuse like the Castro family, even before beginning any asylum procedure in U.S. courts."

The Castro family, on whose behalf the ACLU has filed suit, left El Salvador and were turned away at the U.S. border. The mother, father and three children were then "kidnapped, extorted by Mexican officials, separated in immigration detention and threatened in Mexico by their past persecutors." The children suffered from lack of medical care. The Castros' plight is by no means unique; over 200 refugees gave similar testimony to the ACLU.

Now Trump has bludgeoned the Mexican government into cooperating with Washington's inhumane policy. Unlike Trump, AMLO did commit the country to "respecting the human rights of migrants."

The practice of keeping out asylum seekers is completely illegal under U.S. and international law. The racist-in-chief

does not care. When the protocols were instituted in January, then Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen Nielsen called them "a methodical commonsense approach." Nielsen, a Trump appointee, was the architect of the practice of separating migrant children from their parents and caging them. Trump removed her for being too soft.

Washington is largely responsible for creating the conditions that drive people to leave their homelands in the first place. June 28 is the tenth anniversary of the bloody U.S.-orchestrated coup in Honduras against democratically elected President Mel Zelaya.

Tariffs would hurt workers here

The 45th president has been unable to fulfill his ugly campaign promise to build a "beautiful" wall along the full length of the U.S.-Mexico border to keep im/migrants out of the country. So he resorted to another tactic: economic warfare. The threatened tariffs, which would have begun as a 5 percent tax on all incoming Mexican goods, to increase monthly by 5 percent until hitting 25 percent, were also deemed "beautiful."

However, the latest volley in Trump's trade war, which follows inflationary tariffs on Chinese imports,

garnered little support. The import tax would have affected a wide range of products, including agricultural goods, autos, clothing, electronics and oil. Rather than compromise their profit margin, corporations would pass on the added cost to consumers. The tariffs could take an estimated 400,000 jobs out of the U.S. economy. (Vanity Fair, June 6)

What the media are not saying is that, in addition to foisting higher prices on consumers, capital would put the squeeze on labor. The hit to Ford, General Motors and Fiat Chrysler Automobiles was projected to be in the billions, and their contracts with the United Auto Workers expire in September.

Ruling-class opposition

The trade war has drawn a negative response on Capitol Hill, with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell stating "we're not fans of tariffs." And on May 31, "[T]he drop in American stocks was sweeping," reported the New York Times. "Investors dumped industrial and machinery stocks, shares of consumer products companies and those of giant tech companies."

The stock market declined 6.6 percent in May.

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June 4, NYC. Anti-racist activists expose 2014 police murder of Eric Garner. See page 5.

WW PHOTO: HENRY LUNA

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Pride Means Fight Back!



Two heroic leaders of the Stonewall Rebellion, Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera. Pride coverage p. 3.

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A historical perspective on China

This article by Workers World Party founder Sam Marcy appeared in WW on June 3, 1993, when the bourgeois media were attacking China on the anniversary of the Tienanmen Square events. It continues to have great relevance today.

Once again, China is shaking the world. This time, however, it is not experiencing a great revolutionary convulsion like the Peiping Rebellion of the 1850s, the May 4th Movement, the Canton and Shanghai Communes of the late 1920s, the establishment of the People's Republic of China, or the Cultural Revolution. These events shook the capitalist world to its foundations and inspired revolutionary struggles of oppressed people all over the world.

The latest development, while it is shaking up U.S. imperialism, is of a very different type [and] may in the long run be of decisive importance.

A surge of production

It has become plain in the last few months that there has been a phenomenal surge of production in China. Capitalist accounts here tell us that China's economy is likely to expand at a rate of 13 percent this year, after a similar growth rate in 1992.

It is alarming the bourgeoisie here. They express concern over the plague of inflation, which of course would erode the economic gains. But why would the bourgeoisie here worry about that? The truth of the matter is they are far more worried that China has demonstrated its capacity to produce in great quantity and can compete to some extent with Western capitalism in the production of certain goods, if not services.

China's growth rate has come to the fore in the capitalist press just at a time when the Clinton administration is to decide whether to allow Chinese imports on the same basis as before, or utilize a provision of the Jackson-Vanik law that gives the president authority to ban them by imposing onerous restrictions.

New method shows much bigger economy

The New York Times disclosed on May 20 that a new calculation of the world economies catapults China into third place in world production, exceeded only by the U.S.

and Japan. It is, of course, a remarkable feat.

Under the new method, based on the purchasing power of a country's currency at home rather than its value on international exchanges, China's gross domestic product in 1991 was calculated at \$1.66 trillion, as against only \$370 billion using the old method.

Why the sudden change in methodology? Was it to do China a favor?

Under the new method, if China needs loans from the IMF or the G-7 imperialist nations, the interest would be based on a different formula. Now that China is no longer categorized as one of the poorest countries, it is not eligible for certain kinds of debt relief.

The imperialists are quite disturbed by China's ability to expand its production at such a fast rate.

Different from Gorbachev's reforms

China's economic growth is based upon the introduction of capitalist reforms similar to those introduced in Eastern Europe and the former USSR. This can scarcely be disputed.

The difference, according to Chinese sources, is that the reforms are working and that the growth in production is the biggest boon to the Chinese people since the revolution triumphed in 1949.

However, it is important to differentiate China's reforms from the way capitalist practices were introduced in the USSR. It is now seven years since Mikhail Gorbachev began to experiment with market reforms. The result has not been a socialist modernization of the industrial and agricultural apparatus but a dismantling of socialist projects in industry and in agriculture. Indeed, it has resulted in a breakdown, a vandalizing, of the achievements of socialist construction in an effort to bring about a restoration of capitalism.

In China, however, as best as we can see from here, there has been a rapid development of industry, a tremendous surge in the construction of hundreds of industrial projects, rather than the dismantling of existing socialist projects with a view to privatization, as has been going on in the former USSR.

However, China's industrial growth is being carried out

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WORKERS WORLD

Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the neverending quest for ever-greater profits.

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

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

people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

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

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

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

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Part 67

Originally published June 26, 2006, this column was part of Leslie Feinberg's series on the connections between LGBTQ2S and socialist history. The 120-part "Lavender & Red," which appeared in Workers World from 2004 to 2008, is available for free download at workers.org/book/lavender-red/.

By Leslie Feinberg

No recording device captured the roar or ferocity of the crowd outside the Stonewall bar, enraged by the police raid and the physical brutality and sexual and gender humiliation that was interwoven into the state repression.

However, the militancy and determination of those who fought back that night—June 28, 1969—is recalled in the words of the top cop who led the raid, Deputy Inspector Seymour Pine: "I had been in combat situations, [but] there was never any time that I felt more scared than then."

Pine had written the U.S. Army's manual for hand-to-hand combat in World War II and was in a mine explosion at the Battle of the Bulge.

By many accounts, the Black, Latinx and white youth, many of them homeless and/or gender-defiant—including Sylvia Rivera, Marsha P. Johnson, Zazu Nova and Jackie Hormona—fought fiercely that night.

And small wonder. These were the bodies and lives most often scarred by police terror and torture. While everyone fought bravely, historian David Carter wrote that "the preponderance of witnesses who are both the most credible and who witnessed significant amounts of the action agree that the most marginal groups of the gay community fought the hardest—and therefore risked the most—on this and the following nights." ("Stonewall: The Riots That Sparked the Gay Revolution")

Many in the [multigender,] multinational, multigenerational crowd of hundreds

amassed outside the bar began to hurl their pocket change, shouting, "Here's your pay-off!"—referring to the common practice of payoffs between bar owners, many times tied to organized crime, and the police.

The police showed signs of panic as they were hit with a hail of flying projectiles. They retreated toward the Stonewall Inn, the club they had just emptied out in the raid. One cop near the doorway was reportedly hit in the eye with a thrown object, and was visibly bloodied. The police, wrote Village Voice journalist Howard Smith, who was at the scene, "are all suddenly furious." Three of the cops rushed the crowd to try to back them away.

But the crowd would not be pushed back. The streets outside the club belonged to the people, and they could feel it. They could see the cops were scared, too. One participant, Tom, observed, "A few plainclothesmen were surveying the crowd, obviously panicked." Ronnie Di Brienza stressed in an article in the East Village Other: "During the height of the action, you could see the fear and disbelief on the faces of the pigs."

A beer can struck Deputy Inspector Charles Smythe in the head. Smythe, who had also been in World War II combat, later said, "I was still shaking an hour later. Believe me, I've never seen anything like it."

Pine reached out from the doorway of the bar and reportedly grabbed the first person he could lay his hands on, folk singer Dave Van Ronk, and pulled him inside the bar. Van Ronk later explained that the cops accused him of throwing the beer can. They held him down, punched him hard and kicked him. They left him handcuffed on the floor of the bar.

Pine came outside to evaluate the relationship of forces. He told the other cops: "Let's get inside. Lock ourselves inside; it's safer." Voice reporter Howard Smith went inside the Stonewall with the 10 members

of the police raiding squad. They barricaded the doors with overturned tables.

And then, Pine remembered, "All hell broke loose."

Smith reported, "The exit left no cops on the street, and almost by signal the crowd erupted into cobblestone and bottle heaving."

Voice journalist Lucian Truscott said he had climbed atop a garbage can to watch the action and he almost toppled when two men yanked it out from under him and heaved it at the bar's west window.

Participant Morty Manford emphasized: "And it escalated. A few more rocks went and then somebody from inside the bar opened the door and stuck a gun out. Their arm was reaching out with a gun telling people to stay back. And then withdrew the gun, closed the door and went back inside."

Yet even the threat of being shot did not stop the crowd. Historian David Carter summed up descriptions by participants of what happened next: "A general assault now began on the Stonewall Inn using anything and everything the crowd outside could get its hands on: garbage, garbage cans, pieces of glass, fire, bricks, cobblestones, and an improvised battering ram were all used to attack the police holed up inside the Stonewall Inn."

Someone, or more than one person, reportedly cut the electric and phone lines, so the police were inside without the ability to call for backup.

According to accounts compiled by historian Martin Duberman: "The cops then found a fire hose, wedged it into a crack in the door, and directed the spray out at the crowd, thinking that would certainly scatter it. But the stream was weak and the crowd howled derisively, while inside the cops starting slipping on the wet floor."

In his later Voice coverage, stinking of bigotry, Smith wrote that from the inside of the Stonewall, "The sound filtering in [didn't] suggest dancing f— —s any more;



WW PHOTO: DEIRDRE GRISWOLD

Leslie Feinberg speaking for freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal, Town Hall, New York City, 1999.

it sound[ed] like a powerful rage bent on vendetta."

Smith said he heard "the shattering of windows, followed by what we imagine to be bricks pounding on the door, voices yelling. The floor shudders at each blow."

The crowd outside roared "Gay power!" and "We want freedom!"

Pine described: "Now they really in earnest started to come after us. We covered everything [but] whatever we could find to put up against the windows and the doors didn't last very long. They began to batter this down and made some holes." The window—which the owners had reinforced with plywood and two-by-fours—was smashed and the barricaded door was swung open.

Smith peeked out a hole in the splintered plywood, and he thought it seemed that those massed outside were thousands-strong.

In anticipation of the angry crowd rushing in, the cops drew their weapons; one cop picked up a nearby baseball bat. One cop reportedly vowed, "We'll shoot the first m—f—r that comes through the door."

But it was an arm that came through the shards of the plywood covering the window. Then the scent of lighter fluid, the fiery tip of a lit match, and flames ignited inside the bar. □

Boston Pride contingent highlights solidarity

By Frank Neisser
Boston

Stonewall Warriors, International Workers' Solidarity Network and Workers World Party brought a strong contingent to the Boston LGBTQ2S Pride march of tens of thousands on June 8. The contingent represented the International Workers' Solidarity Network, incorporating and elevating the LGBTQ2S struggle as central to the workers' solidarity movement during Pride month and throughout the year.

Members of United Steelworkers Local 8751, Boston School Bus Drivers; Unite/HERE Harvard Dining Hall workers; and other union activists marched, as well as community groups and activists, including SIFMA [Supervised Injection Facilities in Massachusetts] Now.

The contingent highlighted the intersection of struggles as central to solidarity, headlining, "There are No Walls in the LGBTQ2S Workers' Struggle." It also pointed out the anniversary of the death of Roxana Hernandez in immigration



WW PHOTO: STEVE KIRSCHBAUM

'No walls in the LGBTQ2S workers' struggle.'

detention and the recent deaths of trans people of color under similar circumstances.

The contingent opposed U.S. imperialist war, chanting "U.S. out of Venezuela and Palestine!" It called for decriminalization of sex work, an end to ableism and white supremacy, and to smash capitalism.

It saluted the young trans people of color who led the Stonewall Rebellion—such as Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera. Hundreds of Workers World newspapers were handed out, as well as flyers promoting a forum on Saturday, June 15, at 4 p.m. featuring Teresa Gutierrez on the connection between the International Workers' Solidarity movement and the LGBTQ2S movement. □

Come out for Pride at 50! Come out for Workers World!

June is Pride month. Rallies and marches worldwide are commemorating the 50th anniversary of the historic Stonewall Rebellion! From the beginning, Workers World Party has a proud history of reporting on and participating in the living struggle for LGBTQ2S justice and equality. Foremost these days is fighting transgender oppression, to stop right-wing legislative attacks on both trans and gender-nonconforming youth and adults and to stop brutal physical attacks and murders, which especially target trans women of color.

Do you know that Workers World has made major theoretical contributions to the LGBTQ2S struggle? One was publication of "The Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression: A Marxist View" (World View Forum, third ed., 1993), which drew on Frederick Engels and Dorothy Ballan for a dialectical materialist explanation of LGBTQ2S oppression. Another was the body of work of Leslie Feinberg, a proud WWP leader, who created the first Marxist analysis of transgender history and struggle in such books as "Transgender Warriors: Making History," "Transgender Liberation: Beyond Pink and Blue" and "Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba."

That analysis drives Workers World's view that the LGBTQ2S struggle is an integral component of the overall struggle to



WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

A photo of Gay Caucus of YAWF (Youth Against War & Fascism, a former youth group of WWP) banner at a New York City Pride march in the early 1970s.

end patriarchy and capitalist oppression. So if you want to both fight for the liberation of LGBTQ2S people and struggle against capitalist exploitation, help build Workers World newspaper.

We invite you to join the WW Supporter Program, which was set up 43 years ago to help us publish anti-racist, anti-sexist, pro-LGBTQ2S, working-class truth and build campaigns needed to crush capitalism and usher in socialism. Write checks to Workers World and mail them, with your name and address, to 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. Or click on Donate on workers.org. Know that we are grateful for your help in building the revolutionary press in the U.S. □

Burgerville workers fight for living wage

By Lyn Neeley
Portland, Ore.

Over 60 union organizers and community members joined dinner-hour picket lines at two Burgerville restaurants here June 6. Picketers blocked both entrances of the Burgerville at the Convention Center and convinced hungry Portlanders to drive away in solidarity with the Burgerville Workers Union.

In 2018, BWU became the first officially recognized fast food union in the U.S., and employees at Burgerville have waged a boycott for over a year to demand a livable wage. They say some progress has happened on noneconomic proposals, but when it comes to wages, management is stalling and dismissing their demands. BWU plans on persistence — more pressure, more pickets.

One worker who spoke at the rally during the picketing called conditions at the chain "intolerable." Protesting



WW PHOTO: JOSHUA HANKS

Low-paid fast-food workers get community, labor support.

employees are waging struggles to keep their jobs, despite the danger of being fired or harassed by management.

Since the first Burgerville unionized, a handful of other locations have joined the BWU or are in the process of voting to unionize. The restaurant chain has increased its pressure on the workers and has advanced anti-union strategies with each new vote.

The BWU says this is clear evidence of the power of workers taking collective action. Their statement reads, "When we fight, we win." □

Security workers win union at Amazon

By Jim McMahan
Seattle

Local 6 of the Service Employees Union (SEIU), after years of organizing at Amazon's security contractor, Security Industry Specialists, has forced the mammoth retailer to dump the anti-union company.

SEIU gained union representation and a contract under a new security contractor for around 1,000 security workers. SIS had kept anti-union, racist control over the workers since 2012.

The union has long persisted in organizing, helping the workers at Amazon carry out a number of demonstrations. SEIU protests were held on May 22 at Amazon's annual stockholders' meeting and again at the May Day March for Worker and Immigrant Rights, which also rallied at Amazon. These two actions contributed to forcing the world retail juggernaut to

cave and dump its partner, SIS. Amazon's wealth includes nearly 40 corporate towers in the area of downtown Seattle.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson has been among those calling for Amazon to switch to a union contractor. SIS has also come under fire for mistreating its Muslim workers, interfering with their right to hold prayer breaks.

SIS is preparing to lay off 1,066 workers as part of the process in which the workers will supposedly be rehired by the new contractor, Allied Universal. Another union contractor, Securitas, will handle Amazon security in other North American cities.

SEIU Director of External Organizing Eric Ramirez said both Allied Universal and Securitas are signatories to the union master agreement, which includes annual raises, health benefits with an employer contribution to premiums, scheduling protections, bereavement leave, vacation pay and a union grievance process. □

U.S. drags Mexican gov't into war on migrants

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Mexican firms voiced real fears around a loss of business as a result of the tariffs being imposed by their largest trading partner.

Faced with a scenario of economic devastation and mass unemployment, Mexico agreed to some of Trump's demands. As this newspaper explained: "Not every one of his actions has been progressive, as AMLO remains trapped in a capitalist system overshadowed by U.S. imperialism." ("Mexico: Rising worker militancy at the border," WW, April 4)

Why all the posturing?

What the president was not able to extort from Mexico at this time was a "safe third country" declaration. This would deny migrants the right to seek asylum in the U.S. once they set foot in Mexico. The situation for refugee families would be even more unbearable, and Mexico, not the U.S., would shoulder the cost of humanitarian assistance to them.

Almost immediately after Trump proclaimed success, reports surfaced that the Mexican government had actually agreed to the terms of the "new" agreement months ago. So why employ the club of economic warfare and draw the ire of one's own class peers? What was the purpose of all this bluster and bravado?

Is it a ploy — with the November 2020 election less than a year and a half away — to whip up racism and xenophobia and energize Trump's base of support?

Whatever the motive and whatever the form — economic threats, racist walls, deportation, detention, family separation, hate propaganda, repressing solidarity or caging children and families — scapegoating migrants and the countries they come from is never "beautiful." It is the ugly face of capitalist super-exploitation of oppressed nations and an insidious tool to divide the working class.

Building solidarity with migrants is the most pressing task of the workers' movement. □

On the picket line

By Sue Davis

Delta ground & cabin crew supported by U.S., global unions

Transport unions across the U.S. are joining forces with International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) affiliates in North America to back the Machinists' (IAM) campaign to organize the ground and cabin crew at Delta Air Lines. Following endorsements from the Transport Workers Union and Flight Attendants (APFA), the Air Line Pilots Association became the latest to join the campaign the week of May 20.

The campaign already received support from AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka and ITF General Secretary Stephen Cotton at IAM's recent transportation conference in Las Vegas. There APFA National President Lori Bassani announced her union's support.

ITF and its worldwide affiliates are showing solidarity by meeting Delta cabin crews during international layovers and sharing their experiences. (itfglobal.org, May 24)

Judge orders new union vote at Kumho Tire in Macon, Ga.

A National Labor Relations Board judge ruled May 14 that a new union vote must take place at Kumho Tire in Macon, Ga. The judge found the South-Korean-owned company violated workers' rights before and during the United Steelworkers balloting in October 2017.

The USW lost the election by only 28 votes, following a relentless campaign of intimidation, scaremongering and suppression of union organizing by seven full-time union busters at the plant. The judge ruled that Kumho's tactics were "pervasive," as it illegally interrogated employees and threatened to fire union supporters and close the plant if the union won. The judge ordered the "extraordinary" remedy of requiring company officials to read a notice to all employees outlining the specific ways in which workers' rights had been violated.

The USW is affiliated with IndustriALL Global Union, a global union federation which the Korean Metal Workers' Union (KMWU), representing over 3,500 workers at Kumho Tire in South Korea, is also affiliated with. IndustriALL and KMWU have been supporting the Macon workers in their battle for union representation.

"IndustriALL congratulates USW campaigners. We will stand alongside our USW sisters and brothers until Kumho Tire workers in Macon, Georgia, win their first collective agreement." (industriALL.org, May 28)

Fighting lockout at DowDuPont chemical plant in Texas

On 22 April members of United Steelworkers Local 13-1 were locked out of a plant that produces specialized acrylic-based chemicals at Rohm and Haas Texas Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Dow Chemical in Deer Park, near Houston. The 235 workers were locked out after attempts to negotiate a collective agreement with DowDuPont (merger of Dow and DuPont in August 2018) went nowhere. The company's "last, final and best" offer on May 20 offered no substantial changes from its previous hardline position.

The workers, concerned about understaffing and its consequences for safety, have made several proposals, which the company has ignored. The workers fear the local community is at risk because inexperienced managers are handling dangerous chemicals and using unfamiliar processes that are not part of their duties.

This struggle is supported by the DowDuPont North American Labor Council, led by the USW. The network includes DowDuPont unions around the world and IndustriALL Global Union, which is mobilizing international solidarity. (industriALL.org, May 22)

Stopping wage theft in Minnesota

Provisions in the Minnesota Jobs, Economic Development, and Energy omnibus budget bill passed May 24 make wage theft in excess of \$1,000 a felony and penalize employers who retaliate against employees who report it. The bill, one of the strongest such U.S. laws, also provides an increase of nearly \$4 million to expand prevention, inspection and investigative efforts.

Wage theft occurs when employers don't compensate workers by failing to pay overtime, misclassifying them as independent contractors or declining to pay them outright. The law increases the state's ability to prosecute employers to prevent the loss of an estimated \$12 million in unpaid wages annually from roughly 39,000 Minnesota workers.

Passage of this law is a huge victory for the Minnesota Coalition to End Wage Theft, which includes 21 unions and worker advocacy organizations. A coalition statement pointed out that institutional imbalances of power disproportionately impact women, people of color and immigrants.

Nely Bautista, a wage theft victim and member of Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en la Lucha, a group in the coalition, said, "It gives us hope because we're being taken seriously. This change comes from us, the workers. [It] is going to benefit a lot of people. We are going to be able to work more confidently with the knowledge that the law protects us." (Workday Minnesota, May 24) □

Disability community wins ruling in fight for subway access

By Workers World New York
City Disabilities Bureau

In the hallways of the court at 60 Centre St. on June 5, lawyers for disability rights activists declared an accessibility hearing “an unqualified success.”

Disability activists had brought an anti-discrimination lawsuit against the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to require it to install elevators in every New York City subway station. Currently, only about 20 percent of the city’s subway stations have at least one elevator. Even fewer if you consider that many subway stations have multiple subway lines, all of which are not accessible by elevator and a high percentage of MTA elevators are out of order at any one time.

The MTA had filed a motion to dismiss the lawsuit, which the judge denied, making it possible for the suit to go forward. One of the plaintiffs, Susan Dooha, executive director of the Center for Independence of the Disabled, declared: “We’re thrilled. We’re vindicated. We expect to proceed to trial, and we expect to win. The judge was well-founded in his legal decisions about why our case survives those efforts to dismiss it.”

‘Elevators now, remember Malaysia Goodson!’

Protesters carried signs reading “Elevators now” as well as “Remember Malaysia Goodson,” the African-American woman who died Jan. 28 in a fall down subway stairs while carrying her baby in a stroller. The station did not have an elevator.

“You carry a stroller down the stairs, you never think, ‘I might die,’” said Diana



Disability rights activists mobilize outside court.

WW PHOTO: TONY MURPHY

Limongi, host of the Parenting & Politics podcast. “My God, how many times have I done this?” (WPIX-TV, June 5)

Emily Seelenfreund, an attorney for the plaintiffs and a wheelchair user, said the ruling sent a strong message. “This issue is no different than saying it’s illegal to prohibit women or people of color from access to public transportation.” The judge’s ruling, she said, is “the same thing for people with disabilities.”

A rally prior to the court hearing included a speaker from each disability group present. Speeches were interspersed with chanting, creating a very vocal, determined atmosphere. Speakers included Monica Bartley, Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York; Jessica De La Rosa, Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled; Jessica Murray and Sasha Blair-Goldensohn,

Rise and Resist Elevator Action Group; Jean Ryan, Disabled in Action; Colin Wright, Transit Center; Mary Kaessinger People’s MTA; Terrea Mitchell, NYC People’s Power Assemblies; Edward Yood, Communications Workers of America, Local 1180 Committee on People with Disabilities; and Diana Limongi Gabriele, Up-Stand and Parenting and Politics. A video of the rally can be accessed at youtu.be/7F8qon8kOQY.

Opponents of gentrification in Chinatown and the Lower East Side were demonstrating outside the courthouse at the same time. The Coalition to Protect Chinatown and the LES packed a separate courtroom the same morning to fight the construction of four illegal megatowers in the downtown Two Bridges neighborhood between the Manhattan and Brooklyn Bridges (peoplefirstnyc.org).

People’s MTA organizer Tony Murphy invited them to join us, which they did for a time. We let them know we are against gentrification, too.

A historic connection exists between the struggle of Chinese Americans and disability rights. In the 1974 U.S. Supreme Court civil rights decision of *Lau v. Nichols*, Chinese-American students in San Francisco won the right to access education in their own language. This civil rights case broke new legal ground, and it also helped lay the basis for access and reasonable accommodation rights granted to people with disabilities, as codified in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. New York City’s Chinatown is also the only community that holds a block party every July to commemorate the birthday of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

‘Without struggle, there is no progress’

Rally participants, including many wheelchair users, then packed into the courtroom at 10 a.m. There was barely room to move.

Judge Shlomo Hagler identified four points of law that had to be addressed. The judge had clearly prepared for the hearing, citing at least three precedents on each point and indicating he had more at his fingertips if needed.

First was the statute of limitations. The MTA argued that the statute of limitations had passed, and that if disabled people wanted to bring a suit they should have done it back in the early 1900s when the subways were first built! Judge Hagler said that every time a person is discriminated against, the statute starts again.

Continued on page 8

With banner drops

NYC activists demand justice for Eric Garner

By Nathaniel Chase
New York

On the morning of June 4, as commuters filed out of Grand Central Station, activists from People’s Power Assemblies New York City dropped two large banners reading “Stop Killing Black People” and “Justice 4 Eric Garner, Abolition Now” over Pershing Square in front of the station.

The action was one of five banner drops organized with NYC Shut It Down, Decolonize This Place and other Black Lives Matter groups in early June to raise awareness of the New York Police Department “trial” of Daniel Panteleo, the New York cop who killed Eric Garner with a chokehold on Staten Island in July 2014.

Activists, along with a journalist taking photos of the banner drop, were detained by the police and released with summonses.

Video of Panteleo killing Eric Garner and his subsequent non-indictment in December 2014 brought international attention to the epidemic of police violence against Black people in the U.S. and were driving forces behind the growth of the Black Lives Matter Movement.

This departmental trial, which concluded June 6, was a process internal to the NYPD, overseen by an administrative judge. Criminal courts are infamously



Banner drop outside Grand Central Station.

WW PHOTO: HENRY LUNA

unwilling to convict or even indict killer cops, and an internal process such as this is even less legitimate. The proceedings could be best described as a “show trial” to exonerate Panteleo. For example, the judge overseeing the trial has no authority to make a decision; she can only make a recommendation to Police Commissioner James O’Neill, hardly an impartial figure, who will make the final decision about what, if any measures, will

be taken against Panteleo.

The Citizen Complaint Review Board argued that Panteleo should be fired and lose his pension. But again, its position is only a recommendation with no legal force. Police severely restricted community access to the trial, which took place in NYPD headquarters.

The cops and courts are parts of the capitalist state, which exists not to “protect and serve,” but to oppress and control

working and oppressed people on behalf of the capitalist ruling class, especially Black people and other people of color.

As such, one can never expect fair outcomes in the courts. The courts may be a site of struggle to help build a movement, to raise consciousness and occasionally achieve a partial victory, but they do not provide an avenue to end the centuries of state violence under the capitalist U.S. For that, what is needed is a revolution to smash the capitalist state and replace it with a workers’ state.

While the courts and the cops have conspired to protect Panteleo, they have convicted one person connected to Eric Garner’s death: Ramsey Orta, a Puerto Rican and Garner’s close friend, who shot the infamous video of Panteleo killing Garner.

For this heroic act, Orta was targeted by the NYPD and convicted on trumped-up charges. His commitment to speak up against the NYPD, even as they harassed and threatened him with imprisonment, makes him a people’s hero. Since testifying in Panteleo’s departmental trial, Orta has been placed in solitary confinement as retaliation. You can show support for Orta at wecopwatch.org/ramseyorta. You can also write to Orta directly at Ramsey Orta 16A4200, Collins Correctional Middle Rd., P.O. Box 340, Collins, NY 14034. □

From Ferguson to Philly

Cops and Klan go hand in hand

By Ted Kelly
Philadelphia

More than 300 Philadelphia police have been exposed as strident racists, based on social media posts revealed by Plain View Project, which examined thousands of posts across Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms. Across the U.S., the project identified problematic postings by about 2,900 current and 600 retired officers.

The Black community newspaper Philadelphia Tribune reported June 6: “In Philadelphia, law officers referred to minorities as animals, cheered vigilante justice and shared pictures that were anti-Islam. In other posts, officers appeared to joke about raping and beating women. Officers apparently frequently referred to Black people as ‘animals’ and said they ‘should be taken out back and put down’ or locked in cages. Officers appeared to advocate shooting suspects on sight and using cars to drive over protesters. Some officers also appeared to praise white supremacists.”

Police Commissioner Richard Ross alluded to the scandal in an address to Police Academy graduates earlier this month. He asked officers to try not to “embarrass” or “upset” the “brand” that the police force intends to foster. Notably, he did not decry racism, sexism, homo- and transphobia. In a June 1 interview with the Philadelphia Inquirer, Ross reiterated his “dismay” that the officers were not doing a good job of “representing” the department.

PVP founder Emily Baker-White said they found “posts that seemed to endorse violence by officers or members of the public, posts that appeared to show bias against minority groups, and dehumanizing language that referred to protesters or people of color as ‘animals’ or ‘savages.’” (Washington Post, June 4)

The president of the Fraternal Order of Police, John McNesby, cast suspicion on “who is watching or policing those who target law enforcement” and said he

stands by all officers on the Philadelphia Police force. While claiming he condemns racism and violence “in any form,” McNesby himself referred to Black activists as a “pack of rabid animals” at a public “Back the Blue” pro-police rally in 2017. (AtlantaBlackStar, Sept. 7, 2017)

The violent and bigoted social media posts from eight different jurisdictions, including Philadelphia, St. Louis and Dallas, can be found at plainviewproject.org. Many confirmed that Philadelphia police fantasize about murdering the people they arrest, some calling for suspects to be summarily executed by “firing squad,” others lamenting that they didn’t have a chance to kill suspects themselves.

“Too bad this MF didn’t resist and meet a very violent and painful demise. Would have saved the taxpayers a LOT of money,” a York, Pa., officer wrote. The Washington Post reported: “‘Hope one of these kids get shot in the face,’ said a Philadelphia cop.”

Another meme shared by officers depicted a police dog baring its teeth with the text: “I hope you run — he likes fast food.” PVP draws attention to the proliferation of Islamophobic content, including the image of a Grim Reaper that appears to be shouting, “Death to Islam.”

A Phoenix, Pa., officer posted: “It’s a good day for a chokehold,” a clear reference to the New York Police Department’s murder of Eric Garner. (BuzzFeed, June 1)

Long history of systemic brutality

As shocking as these posts are, they should come as no surprise. At least 139 of the 330 officers listed had previously been named in federal lawsuits involving police brutality. Several named in the study had been targets of multiple misconduct probes. (billypenn.com, June 7)

In August 1979 the Justice Department filed an unprecedented civil suit against the city of Philadelphia, then Mayor Frank Rizzo, and 18 top city and police officials for condoning systemic police brutality. The complaint stated that the use

of excessive force by Philadelphia police especially directed against Black and Latinx people “shocks the conscience.”

In 2011 the city settled a federal civil rights lawsuit from a group of Black officers that Domelights.com, a website geared to cops and run by a Philadelphia police sergeant, was “infested with racist, white supremacist and anti-African-American content.”

In September 2016, this reporter witnessed and photographed police sporting “Thin Blue Line” flags — the kind waved by white-supremacists later in Charlottesville, Va. Last year, a police officer posted a picture of himself in blackface on social media. A Philly cop named Ian Hans Lichterman sports a Nazi tattoo reading “Fatherland” on his forearm. All these officers are, at the time of this reporting, still on the force and have been cleared by the same internal review process that the new batch of racist cops now face.

Commissioner Ross has put 10 of the named officers on desk duty and promised to begin implementation of anti-racist/anti-bias training for all police personnel. On desk duty or still in the field, the officers named in the Plain View Project report continue to receive full pay and benefits. They continue to interact with the public. The PPD also has a history of promoting, not firing, police officers charged with bias.

Ross announced June 6 that the department would bring in an outside, unnamed law firm to assist with the department’s own investigation of the thousands of social media posts. This costly measure not only duplicates the work already done by the lawyers


working with the Plain View Project, it also provides a convenient cover for the department to delay any action in hopes that public concern will once again blow over.

The city of Philadelphia is always strapped for cash when it comes to funding public schools or keeping libraries open, but when it comes to settling lawsuits that result from police brutality, money is no problem. Between 2013 and 2017 Philadelphia paid over \$50 million to settle lawsuits filed against police officers, most of whom remain on the force.

Activists in Philadelphia are demanding the officers, who make up a sizeable portion of the 7,000-strong police force, be fired. District Attorney Larry Krasner suggested he would not call these officers as witnesses at criminal trials on account of their violently bigoted posts. Krasner maintains a “do not call” list of police personnel who should not be called to testify due to confirmed instances of misconduct, but so far has not called for any cop in the city to be dismissed.

It is impossible to imagine a police force in the U.S. that is not viciously racist, sexist, anti-immigrant, anti-LGBTQ-bigoted and transphobic. It is equally impossible to imagine any kind of white-supremacist or alt-right rally in this country being able to march through our streets without the protection of these police forces.

We must say it louder than ever: “The cops and the Klan go hand in hand!” □



**The Klan & Government:
Foes or Allies?**

by *Sam Marcy*

Examines the special relationship with the state that has allowed the Ku Klux Klan to exist for over a century despite its criminal history of lynchings, murders, and intimidation.

Available at workers.org/books

Philly protest calls for removal of

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

June 7—Black and Brown communities across this city are outraged over the news released by the Plain View Project that 328 Philadelphia police officers were among the more than 1,100 across the U.S. who have posted racist, sexist, homophobic, Islamophobic and otherwise offensive content on Facebook.

Over 150 people demonstrated today outside Philadelphia police headquarters. Their demands include removing all the officers from active duty, a thorough investigation, firings where appropriate and criminal charges where necessary.

A Facebook posting from WURD Radio calling for the protest noted: “These officers’ continued presence on Philadelphia streets endangers us all.” Columnist and WURD commentator Solomon Jones, an initiator of the event, wrote: “If the comprehensive list of Facebook posts collected by the Plain View Project is to be believed, these

officers engaged in hate speech, in clear violation of departmental social media policy.” (Philly.com, June 5)

To date, Philadelphia Police Commissioner Richard Ross has taken weapons from 10 officers identified in the study and put them on desk duty. However, speaker after speaker at the protest said this was far from enough. Temple University professor Dr. Aaron Smith called for all 328 officers to be taken off the streets. The crowd responded, “Off the streets now!” Others chimed in that desk duty amounts to “paid vacation,” and the officers should be “Off the payroll now!”

Recently exonerated because of police misconduct after nearly 13 years’ imprisonment, Hassan Bennett called for stronger measures. “The culture of racism inside the police department, the ‘code of blue silence,’ has got to end. Desk duty is not enough. Over 300 cops are involved. Do they have that many desks?” When Bennett called for freedom for all prisoners in jail because of



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Rally at police HQ demands end to decades of terror against communities of color.

police misconduct, some in the crowd called out, “Free Mumia! Free the MOVE 9!”

Long history of racist police brutality

Smith and other speakers cited continuing evidence of the long-standing climate of police brutality and abuse in

Philadelphia. The Rev. Gregory Holston with POWER (Philadelphians Organized to Witness, Empower and Rebuild), an endorser of the event, recounted some of the racist history of the Philadelphia Police Department.

In 1970, under Commissioner Frank Rizzo, police raided the headquarters of

Protest camp keeps going as Housing Authority evicts #OccupyPHA

By Joe Piette
Philadelphia

Over 60 cops and counterterrorism officers were mobilized at 6:30 a.m. on June 3 to allow Philadelphia Housing Authority officials to dismantle a 42-day occupation outside the agency's new \$45 million headquarters. But #OccupyPHA, using bullhorns, signs, banners and chants, quickly set up their protest camp right across the street from the new five-story North Philly building, where they continued to voice their criticisms of the corrupt housing agency.

The PHA used construction equipment to evict the camp and place large rectangular planters in the area it had occupied. "They are putting planters there just to prevent us from protesting. They will have to remove them when they begin construction in the storefronts," said Jennifer Bennetch, 34, a long-time critic of the Housing Authority in a June 3 press release by #OccupyPHA. "It's really crazy to think just how much money they're spending to keep us from holding them accountable, while there are over 40,000 people on the waiting list for PHA."

The eviction follows the May 30 arrest of two protesters who now face multiple charges, including aggravated assault and obstruction. They had only been inquiring about whether PHA workers had obtained a variance for the construction fencing being installed, which now encloses every green lot on the 2000 block of Ridge Avenue and is higher than allowed under city codes. "It was an excessive and unnecessary use of force," said Bennetch.

Resistance to eviction and displacement

The activists seek to bring attention to the Housing Authority's role in gentrification and its use of eminent domain for private development. Echoing the failed and widely condemned urban redevelopment schemes of the 1960s and 70s that decimated inner cities, the Philadelphia Housing Authority recently used the power of eminent domain in

North Philadelphia to transfer ownership of 1,330 parcels from private owners to the Housing Authority for its ambitious Sharswood/Blumberg mixed-income redevelopment plan.

Resistance to eviction and displacement continues to simmer among the remaining residents, some of whom are still fighting for their homes or resisting short notice evictions.

"We should have all gotten together and had the same lawyer," said John, a Sharswood resident. "Instead everyone got their own representation and made side deals. Now none of us are getting what our properties are really worth, and those of us who wanted to stay are being forced out."

Occupiers also point to the hundreds of unused and vacant PHA properties and the toxic exposure and lack of maintenance in existing housing facilities. They cite an absence of accountability and clear jurisdictional policy for a PHA police force beset by "cowboy cop" culture and a lack of uniforms. They also oppose the steady demolition of housing projects without the city building any replacement units.

In addition to the struggle in Sharswood, protesters point to upcoming demolitions of the Bartram's Garden and Fairhill public housing projects. "How can they keep demolishing units of public housing when they haven't replaced the ones they've already knocked down?" said Jeff, a member of the Philadelphia Tenants Union who was present during the eviction.

"People need to realize that what's going on with public housing and with vouchers affects the entire rental market. When hundreds of units get demolished and people are put on vouchers that drives up rents for the whole city, as families are forced to find housing in the



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Housing activists continue occupation across street from \$45 million PHA headquarters.

rental market. This is something everybody should be concerned with when we are in the middle of a housing crisis."

With a poverty rate of 26 percent, gentrification has only made conditions worse for Philadelphia's poorer neighborhoods. Northern Liberties, Fishtown, Brewerytown and other North Philadelphia communities of color — including Sharswood/Blumberg — have undergone shockingly rapid changes over the last decade that have displaced thousands of long-time Black and Brown families. Rents have gone up as the number of affordable units has fallen. Luxury apartments, fueled by a controversial 10-year tax abatement, have increased exponentially.

Housing investments are being set up to channel capital from the world's largest hedge funds into legalized speculation on vulnerable populations and that is linked to austerity, privatization of public services, outcome-based government contracts, and monitoring and predictively profiling residents accessing needed services.

Education activist Alison McDowell, a local researcher and one of those unfairly arrested on May 30, states: "North Philadelphia is being targeted as a test-bed for predatory forms of financial speculation that essentially gambles on the lives of the poor."

"Once you understand the bigger picture," McDowell said, "it is easier to make sense of the level of intense pushback we are seeing from the Philadelphia Housing Authority and police, and the silence of politicians and nonprofit organizations, all of which stand to benefit from these new systems of domination."

"We're just getting started," says Bennetch. "I didn't camp out here for 42 days just to leave now. The veil of secrecy is starting to lift on PHA and people are going to see just how corrupt the system is. The more they try to shut us up, the more support we get from the community and the activists. I'm just fighting against PHA's role in mass gentrification and displacement and to defend my neighborhood from this colonial-style takeover by developers and big institutions." □

racist police

the Black Panther Party, forcing members to strip naked and lie face down on the sidewalk. A few years earlier, in 1967, police had brutally beaten high school students, including a young Mumia Abu-Jamal, who were protesting racist and oppressive conditions in Philadelphia schools.

In 1985 Philadelphia police destroyed an entire neighborhood when they attacked the MOVE organization. Using a helicopter to drop two bombs, they burned down 62 houses and murdered 11 men, women and children.

Some of these same officers had directly participated in the frame-up of Mumia.

Holston, Smith and others called for the removal of a controversial statue of former Mayor Frank Rizzo that stands as an affront to the city's Black and oppressed communities.

One speaker, wearing a T-shirt reading "What would Malcolm X do?" reminded the crowd that Malcolm galvanized his community when he stood outside a police precinct to raise

people's consciousness. "Malcolm said 'the power of the people is greater than the people in power.'" Criticizing Philadelphia Mayor James Kenney, who ran on a plank to end "stop and frisk," but retains the repressive, racist program four years later, he concluded: "We need to ask Kenney, 'Which side are you on?'"

In response to the current scandal, Kenney demonstrated his disconnect from Philadelphia's oppressed communities when he chose to repeat Fraternal Order of Police claims that the officers involved are "just a few bad apples" and "just a handful of the over 7,000-member force." Kenney totally ignored the climate of racism and sexism in the PPD that even a Department of Justice investigation had unveiled shortly after he took office in 2015.

A Workers.org sign at today's protest countered this. It read: "No good cops in a racist, sexist system!" Another Workers.org sign called for the abolition of the police. □

Ramona Africa honored



Friends, family and political activists held a "Birthday Celebration of Life" for Ramona Africa in Philadelphia on June 8. Africa is the only adult survivor of the horrendous May 13, 1985, bombing of the communal MOVE home by city officials. The bomb killed six adults and five children and caused the destruction by fire of 62 homes in the neighborhood. No city officials were ever punished for the criminal assault, but Africa was imprisoned for seven years for the crime of surviving. Although still recovering from a recent illness, she continues to fight for justice for the MOVE 9, Mumia Abu-Jamal, Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin and all political prisoners. Pictured here, Africa (left) with her mother, Eleanor Johnson.

— Report and photo by Joe Piette

SUDAN

Generals order massacre of demonstrators

By John Catalinotto

Sudan’s Transitional Military Council ordered its special military arm June 3 to massacre demonstrators who had been occupying strategic sites in the capital, Khartoum, demanding a civilian government.

Special troops known as the Rapid Support Forces killed more than 108 people, according to demonstrators. Bodies were pulled from the Nile River, whose two tributaries, White and Blue, meet in Khartoum.

That the TMC ordered a massacre shows that the struggle over Sudan’s next government has entered a new and more dangerous phase. History has shown that nearly all such struggles are decided by force.

The 2011 experience in Egypt comes to mind. A massive protest brought down the exhausted regime of Gen. Hosni Mubarak, leaving a power struggle among the military, the Muslim Brotherhood and an amorphous but mass pro-democratic movement. The Egyptian military pulled off a coup in 2013 against the elected president, who was from the Brotherhood. It slaughtered more than 1,000 demonstrators and subsequently jailed tens of thousands.

Videos from Khartoum this April showed supportive interactions between regular army troops and the people in the streets. The troops’ friendly attitudes may explain why the TMC used special forces to fire on the people.

A June 6 Associated Press article reported that troops who killed and beat civilians were “Rapid Support Forces, which grew out of the Janjaweed militias used by the al-Bashir government to suppress the Darfur insurgency in the 2000s.” These RSF are the Sudanese equivalent of death squads, such as those the CIA has trained and used in Central America, Iraq and elsewhere.

South Sudan seceded from Sudan in 2011 under U.S. sponsorship. This secession aided imperialist oil companies and only worsened conditions for the new country’s people.

The Sudanese military ordered additional repressive measures throughout the week as civilian protesters continued a campaign of civil disobedience. Protest leaders continue to demand that the TMC turn over the government to civilians.

The two sides: TMC and SPA

Popular protests against Omar Hassan al-Bashir — who was president of Sudan from 1993 until April 11 — grew to nearly a million in Khartoum alone. As has happened elsewhere when a long-term ruler has outlasted his shelf life and become a focus of mass anger, Sudan’s military leaders decided to oust al-Bashir.

Changing as little as possible, the generals replaced him first with his closest associates. As the masses rejected these equally hated superior officers and stepped up their protests, the military took over directly through the TMC.

The nominal head of the Transitional Military Council is Lt. Gen. Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, who has offered since the massacre to resume negotiations with protest leaders. Protesters rejected holding negotiations while the repression continues.

The June 3 New York Times implied that the Rapid Support Force commander

has the real power: “Lt. Gen. Mohamed Hamdan, widely known as Hemeti and seen as one of the most powerful figures in Sudan, consolidated his power by meeting with Prince Mohammed of Saudi Arabia.”

Besides illustrating the growing importance of raw force, this quote from the Times underlines the role of the reactionary Saudi monarchy in regional conflicts. (For background on Hemeti and South Sudan, see tinyurl.com/y3urobwa/.)

The coalition of organizations speaking for the mass movement opposing the TMC’s rule is known as the Sudanese Professional Association. Its main spokespeople have been doctors and teachers. Other organizations, for example, the Communist Party of Sudan, are also a significant part of the coalition.

Throughout the spring SPA has mobilized mass protests and even general strikes, while negotiating on and off with the TMC. It demands a greater role for civilians in the transition to a civilian-elected government.

The SPA leadership reacted to the massacre by calling on the masses to continue the general strike. At the same time the SPA warned against the use of violence.

The June 6 AP article cited “Amal al-Zein, a leader of Sudan’s Communist Party, who said she believed that only a division within the military could end the standoff, for example, if young officers overthrew their superiors on the military council.

“All members of the military council belong to the old regime, and that is why we are betting now on lower-rank officers,” Ms. al-Zein said. ‘We are hoping patriotic policemen and military officers will act to protect the Sudanese people.’”

Under some historical situations, such a turn in the military has taken place. One example is the Portuguese army in 1974. Something like this also took place in Iran in 1978-79 after great sacrifice by the masses. It has been most likely to occur where the revolutionary forces make it clear that they are fighting for power, and will take steps to protect and defend any rebellious soldiers or units from their commanders.

Role of imperialism

Washington and London have disguised their roles in the Sudan struggle. The U.S. Embassy in Khartoum has criticized the massacre, as did the British ambassador. In words.

However, the main imperialist allies and clients in the region, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, have been all-out financial and diplomatic supporters of the TMC generals. The Saudis support the slaughter of the Sudanese masses just as they themselves slaughter the Yemenis. Just as they would slaughter their own population should the tiniest rebellion even hint at challenging them.

Compared to Saudi aid to the generals, the words of the U.S. and British representatives mean little. As usual, Washington attempts to keep connections with elements on all sides that allow it. What they and the Saudi rulers fear is a collapse of Sudan’s military, as brute force is their constant backup plan.

Anti-imperialists must support Sudan’s mass movement against the TMC and demand no U.S., British or Saudi/Gulf state intervention in Sudan. □



PHOTO: LUCKENSON JEAN/ LOOP HAITI

Students in Port-au-Prince condemn violence against women.

Haitians march against rape

By G. Dunkel

Mothers Day in Haiti was celebrated this year on May 26. In response to the rape of two students at Quisqueya University a few days earlier, students and feminists turned the celebration of Mothers Day into a march from the university to the center of Port-au-Prince. A few thousand people marched against “Rape, and all forms of violence against women and impunity.” Women and men in roughly equal numbers participated in the demonstration.

The fact that some local commentators had blamed the young women for the attacks drew a number of sharp responses from the activists and militants who marched.

"Absolutely nothing can justify rape. Girls are free to walk outside at any time they want, and they can dress as they want," said Wilkenson Saint-Fleur, a student who

joined the march. "The authorities must now uphold their responsibilities to the public they've sworn to protect; otherwise, people will take justice into their own hands, and we'll fall into chaos," he said. (AFP.com, May 26)

Many of the placards carried in the march made the point: “Rape is a crime,” meaning there can be no justification for it — legally, politically or morally. A number of marchers made the point that rape was being used more and more to repress the legitimate demands of women in Haitian society.

One of the victims was a Quisqueya University student. The rector of the university, Jacky Lumarque, took part in the march and encouraged students to do likewise. He told the press, “Violence tends to install itself as a natural phenomenon, and society begins to cultivate a culture of tolerance vis-a-vis aggressions against women. We must say no.” □

Disability community wins ruling in fight for subway access

Continued from page 5

Second was jurisdiction. Does the court have the authority to rule in the matter? Judge Hagler said it clearly does: It is an anti-discrimination suit, which the court can decide.

The third and fourth points involved “preemption” and the role of the city. The MTA argued that it is a state agency and that state law preempts New York City’s Human Rights Law. The judge ruled that the two laws are not in conflict.

James Kerwin, an attorney for the MTA, maintained that the Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association reached an agreement in 1983 with the MTA to make 100 stations accessible and that the New York State Legislature had concurred in legal agreements that these stations be made accessible by July 2020. The judge countered that this didn’t mean they couldn’t make many more than 100 accessible.

Judge Hagler rejected the MTA’s contention that state law had supremacy over city law: “There has never been a decision from any court that has preempted the New York City Human Rights Law in the area of discrimination,” Hagler said. “There can never be a situation where the state would license any agency to discriminate against any individual.”

He cited a court decision in which the so-called Patrolmen’s Benevolent Association unsuccessfully tried to stop the NYC Council and the City of New York from curtailing police racial profiling and stop-and-frisk harassment of Black and

Brown New Yorkers by claiming that New York state law sanctioned such profiling and harassment and precluded intervention by the city to prevent it.

Incidentally, many disability groups are currently suing the New York Police Department because many of the police precincts to which the public is “invited” to monthly meetings to discuss community concerns are not accessible for wheelchair users.

On the fourth point, lawyers for the city argued the city has no control over the MTA and while the city owns the subway system, it leases it to the state and therefore has no control over it.

Judge Hagler said it could be better clarified through the “discovery” process exactly how much control the city has or doesn’t have to make all the subways accessible. But, he reiterated, the city still had no license to discriminate by denying subway accessibility. He ruled that the MTA’s motion to dismiss was denied.

The case will resume Aug. 1. “Sometimes these cases can take years,” Susan Dooha said, speaking from experience. Her organization has fought and won disability cases in the past. She said she was convinced that they’ll prevail in this case, even if it takes a long time.

At a memorial meeting for Paula Wolff, a beloved and militant wheelchair user activist, recently deceased, Dooha warned that this fight is not over and recalled the advice of the great Frederick Douglass: “If there is no struggle, there is no progress.” □

Guatemalans to vote amid corruption scandals and migration

By Sam Ordóñez

Presidential and congressional elections will be held in Guatemala on June 16. They have the potential to be significant, due to the deep political crisis and continuing northward migration that shows no signs of ending.

Another factor that might influence the elections is that, for the first time, Guatemalans living in other countries will be allowed to vote. Currently very few of these voters are registered, but given the trend of migration and the economic weight of remittances, they could become an important group.

A noteworthy characteristic of the political crisis is the fact that several important, influential political parties have been disbanded by the courts. On the other hand, a number of new parties on both the left and the right have emerged.

The two biggest right-wing parties, given the number of congressional seats won in the last election, have been disbanded due to repeated violation of campaign financing laws. Others, including current President Jimmy Morales's party, are in open legal proceedings, which have been suspended until after the elections.

According to opinion polls, the frontrunner is Sandra Torres, candidate for the National Unity of Hope (UNE) party. UNE is a social-democratic party that has some proposals that would alleviate the masses' suffering without fundamentally changing economic structures. Like all the traditional Guatemalan parties, UNE has a long history of alleged corruption and investigations into campaign financing.

Another notable candidate, who has been gaining steam in the latest polls, is Thelma Cabrera, an Indigenous (Maya Mam) woman running in the Movement for the Liberation of the Peoples (MLP). MLP is an electoral vehicle recently formed by the Peasant Development Committee (Codeca) and other allied social movements.

This party was formed after a split between Codeca and the URNG, a party formed by the revolutionary guerrillas after the peace accords. Due to its origin as a social movement, MLP has a strong base among the peasantry and Indigenous communities in the South Coast and Plateau regions of the country.

As a party representing primarily the interests of the peasantry and Indigenous peoples, MLP has frequently referred to Bolivian President Evo Morales and the "economic miracle" that his country is experiencing as a major political inspiration. Its proposals include renationalizing the electrical company, revising the concessions granted to companies to exploit natural resources, and convening a Popular and Plurinational Constituent Assembly.

Although UNE leads the polls on voting intentions, these polls also indicate that about 66 percent of voters are not even expressing a voting preference. That is unsurprising, given that the political crisis has greatly

damaged the credibility of the traditional parties, and the fact that the political left is still recovering from its loss in Guatemala's civil war.

Disqualified candidates

Judicial intervention has played an important role in determining the balance of forces disputing the current elections. For example, Zury Ríos, daughter and ideological heir of genocidal dictator Efraín Ríos Montt, was briefly promoted as a candidate who would unify the right-wing factions, but was disqualified by the Supreme Electoral Court (TSE).

Thelma Aldana was the candidate for the Seed Movement, a party based in the urban professional classes, which emerged as a result of mass protests in 2015, ultimately forcing then President Otto Pérez Molina to resign. This party is relatively progressive, although it is focused mostly on combating corruption. When the government issued an order for her arrest, Aldana was forced into exile in neighboring El Salvador, and a few weeks later was disqualified for alleged corruption.

A prominent right-wing candidate from the Union of National Change party was disqualified after being arrested in Miami on drug trafficking charges. According to U.S. authorities, this candidate was working with the Sinaloa cartel and using the money from deals to both finance his campaign and order assassinations of political rivals, including Aldana. (tinyurl.com/y54aczox)

Economic misery due to corruption, underdevelopment, drought

When faced with large anti-corruption mobilizations, the political crisis began with the resignation of the president and his entire cabinet in 2015. In recent years it has been focused on the International Commission against Corruption and Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG). This U.N.-backed commission has been the source of many investigations targeting traditional politicians and has in turn been a target of the right wing.

For the progressive movement, ending corruption and impunity has become the highest priority, since these block any solution to the structural problems driving northward migration.

The right wing has held a virtual monopoly on power ever since the 1954 coup d'état overthrew the Guatemalan Revolution and led to a 36-year civil war. This monopoly was briefly interrupted by the social-democratic government of Alvaro Colom (ex-husband of Sandra Torres), but there was little or no lasting change.

The general policy of the Guatemalan ruling class has been to favor big business, powerful landlords and transnational corporations and to oppress the working class, peasantry and Indigenous peoples. At the height of the civil war, there was even open genocide against the Indigenous Ixil Maya people.



As a result of this monopoly on power, Guatemala is now a country where most essential services have been privatized, infrastructure is on the verge of collapse, and the economy depends entirely on a combination of foreign investment, remittances and export agriculture.

The oligarchy has no interest in developing the country's industrial capability, despite inviting transnational mining projects. Almost all the raw materials produced by the country, including the large agricultural sector, are exported. The business class is more than happy to continue sending raw materials out of the country and selling back finished products. As long as the oligarchs get their cut, profits leave the country without any of the barriers faced by migrants.

Conservative policies have also caused tremendous environmental destruction. The Indigenous peoples of the country, be they Maya, Xinka or Garifuna, are in a constant struggle with the state to protect their lands and rivers from extractive projects like mines. Most of the country's forests have been levelled to create the large plantations that grow coffee, palm oil and other crops destined for the world markets. What forests remain are under constant threat.

That environmental destruction, coupled with the appropriation of the most fertile land for large plantations, has created a desperate situation for many Guatemalans. Despite being an agricultural economy, the country doesn't produce enough food to feed itself. Malnutrition rates are incredibly high, and nothing has managed to make a dent in them.

In peasant communities where food is grown, several years of drought linked to climate change have caused repeated crop failures. A June 5 article in the New York Times quoted several families who pointed to the droughts as the reason their children left for the U.S.

What the Times is unwilling to admit is that subsistence agriculture communities have been forced off the most fertile lands, which have been able to withstand the recent droughts caused by centuries of colonialism and imperialism. If the land that is today used for coffee and other cash crops were repurposed to grow corn, beans and other staple foods, the country would not be on the brink of collapse. □

Cuba's response to new U.S. economic attack

Following is a statement by the Cuban government on June 5 answering the harsh new measures taken by the Trump administration against both the Cuban people and those in the U.S. wishing to travel to Cuba.

The Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Cuba repudiates, in the strongest terms, measures announced by the United States government on June 4, 2019, reinforcing the economic blockade imposed on Cuba for more than 60 years, at a cost to the Cuban economy that in 2018 exceeded \$134 billion at current prices, or \$933 billion, when considering the depreciation of the dollar as compared to the value of gold on the international market.

As is known, this new escalation, effective June 5, further strengthens the stringent restrictions U.S. citizens face in order to travel to Cuba, and adds full prohibitions on travel by sea from the United States, of all types, and prohibits cruise ship stops in our country immediately.

The objective continues to be pressuring the Cuban nation to make political concessions, by strangling the economy and causing damage at the population's level. In this particular case, the measures also seek to prevent the people of the United States from learning about

Cuba's reality, and thus undermining the slanderous propaganda campaigns against our country that are fabricated on a daily basis.

These actions are contrary to the majority opinion of U.S. citizens, whose interest in seeing Cuba, and exercising their right to travel, is made clear by the 650,000 who visited us in 2018, along with half a million Cubans resident in the United States.

This past April 17, National Security Adviser John Bolton, on the occasion of an anti-Cuban show that featured the presence of mercenaries defeated at Playa Girón and relatives of the Fulgencio Batista dictatorship's henchmen, announced that his government would restrict non-family trips to Cuba. It is clear that this individual has managed to take possession of U.S. foreign policy in the Western Hemisphere, which constitutes the main threat to peace and stability in the entire region.

The United States promotes the Monroe Doctrine without reservation, with which it seeks to deny sovereign equality and the right to self-determination of each and every one of the hemisphere's nations.

The recent attacks on Cuba are justified with new pretexts. The most notorious among them is the slanderous accusation that Cuba is intervening militarily in

Venezuela, a lie that has been publicly and consistently refuted by the Cuban government.

They go to the unscrupulous extreme of proposing that Cuba betray the convictions and principles that guide the Cuban Revolution's foreign policy, in exchange for promises of negotiations or easing of the draconian and criminal measures that make up the blockade.

Cuba's solidarity with constitutional President Nicolás Maduro Moros, the Bolivarian Chavista Revolution, and the civic-military union of its people is not negotiable. The more than 20,000 Cuban collaborators, who in a voluntary and disinterested manner offer their social services in the country, the majority in health care, will continue to do so, as long as the Venezuela people want, cooperating with this sister country.

For Cubans, betrayal is not an option. We are not naive: we have already struggled 150 years for our independence, obliged to confront the hegemonic ambitions of U.S. imperialism since the first day.

Cuba will not be intimidated, nor distracted from the essential, urgent tasks of developing our economy and the construction of socialism. Closely united, we will be able to face the most challenging adversities. They cannot asphyxiate us, nor can they stop us. □

WORKERS WORLD

editorial

The class war on migrant children

As years of the U.S. war on im/migrants stretch into decades, it becomes hard to imagine what additional horror could be inflicted by this white-supremacist capitalist government on people trying to find some small space of safety by crossing U.S. borders.

Yet this last week has brought news of another brutally cruel injustice.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, at the behest of the Trump administration, announced it would no longer provide money for education, recreation and legal aid for migrant children held in “government facilities” — that is, in the virtual concentration camps where migrants are locked up.

Right now over 13,000 migrant children are “housed” — incarcerated — in over 100 “shelters” — jails — across the U.S. These include children who crossed the border alone, as well as those forcibly separated from parents and relatives by the U.S. government.

These are children fleeing intolerable conditions in their home countries, mainly in Central America. There, poverty, violence and turmoil have been directly and indirectly fomented by the U.S. in its attempt to control and profit from transnational labor.

The hand of the U.S. ruling class in creating a crisis of im/migration was starkly evident in the recent general strike in Honduras. A mass people’s movement took to the streets to protest the country’s current, viciously violent right-wing government. These rulers had been covertly put in place by Washington in 2009 through a military coup against Manuel Zelaya, the elected, progressive president. People have been leaving Honduras ever since because of the horrific conditions resulting from that coup.



PHOTO: TELESUR

Unaccompanied minor children at a “shelter” — read jail — in south Texas.

The recent HHS directive refusing to provide education, recreation and legal aid for locked-up children violates the 1997 Flores agreement, which set standards for the treatment of migrant children in government custody.

But that flouting of legality should come as no surprise.

Capitalist bosses, and the U.S. politicians ruling in their interest, care only about extracting profit from the peoples of the world. Services being denied the jailed children are doubtless considered “unnecessary frills” — especially if they cut into the profit margin of the companies contracted to provide these “shelters.”

Many of these companies are military-related firms like MVM, which provided guards to the CIA in Iraq, and General Dynamics. (“Defense Contractors Cashing In on Immigrant Kids’ Detention,” The Daily Beast, June 14, 2018)

Even as the prison-military-industrial complex makes money on the children, they are also being held as pawns, along with other migrants, in a high-stakes political game played by the Trump administration.

The administration has doubled the time that children are incarcerated, making it harder and harder for parents and family to liberate them. At the same time it blames Mexico for the “crisis at the border” — which has been created by the U.S.

The HHS directive against the jailed children is as clear as any declaration of war. It strips away any pretense of providing “caring” services for them. It is a declaration of class war by U.S. transnational capitalists against im/migrant peoples, showing absolute willingness to continue the genocidal assault of jailing and killing children.

When the U.S. policy of “family separation” — wrenching children away from parents and loved ones at the border — was unmasked last year, a mass outcry and protest stopped that cruelty, at least in its worst form.

Another wave of protest must now be mounted against this use and abuse of incarcerated migrant children for the profit of corporate jailers.

The outcry must link liberation of migrant children to the suffering of children inside the U.S., whose needs are being sacrificed on the altar of the giant U.S. war budget.

The protest must link the liberation of all children to the struggle against mass racist incarceration and exploitation of prison labor throughout the U.S. — where so many people’s lives are being sacrificed to profit making.

Organizing must fight for the liberation of all children as part of unrelenting opposition to U.S. imperialist depredations throughout the globe, as their countries and their lives are ground down for profit. □

Personal and political

Two aspects of D-Day, 75 years later

By John Catalinotto

This year the European imperialist leaders, with U.S. president #45 as guest of honor, made a point of celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Allied landing at Normandy on June 6, 1944, D-Day. They allegedly were honoring the troops who died in that battle, which contributed — though much less than they’d like us to believe — to the defeat of Nazi Germany.

We’ll get to that later. Buzz about D-Day always reminds me of a good comrade in the class struggle, “Richie” to his friends, who in June 1944 was paratrooper PFC Fayette O. Richardson.

Richie was hardly out of his teens when he jumped into France on the night before the Allied landing at Normandy. He was in the 82nd Airborne Division, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment — pathfinders, who entered German-controlled air space under heavy anti-aircraft fire to light beacons for the invasion force.

Richardson survived, luckier than the many young men whose parachutes and bodies were shredded by German machine-gun fire. He also fought in the Battle of the Bulge, one of the biggest battles as German troops waged their last desperate offensive on the Western Front.

Richie spent a year recovering from his war experience, working his way around the country, picking fruit to earn enough to get by. When we first met in 1964, he was a schoolteacher and a committed fighter for the working class — worldwide.

Richie’s war record made him an ideal anti-war fighter. He was the keynote speaker at a mass rally in Union Square in February 1965 organized by

Youth Against War & Fascism to protest President Lyndon Johnson sending combat troops to Vietnam.

Reactionary pro-war groups called anti-war people “cowards.” Richie threw that right back in their face.

In January 1968 Richie took on an assignment that became a vital contribution to the class and anti-imperialist struggle. He assumed responsibility for editing *The Bond*, which over the next few years became the best-read newspaper of protest for the rapidly growing resistance movement of soldiers, sailors, marines, air troops and GIs of all types during the Vietnam War.

The Bond was the monthly newspaper of the American Servicemen’s Union. Under Richardson’s editorship, tens of thousands of copies each month were mailed out and passed hand-to-hand by GIs all over the world, bringing an anti-war and anti-racist message and mobilizing them against the dictatorial chain of command.

The Vietnamese finally liberated the south of their country in 1975. With his editorial and artistic skills, Richie made a concrete contribution any working-class activist could be proud of. He was one of those many heroes who helped defeat U.S. imperialism in Southeast Asia.

D-Day and World War II

The imperialist leaders in France who this June 6 tried to take credit for defeating Nazi Germany made a point of not inviting the president of Russia to the ceremony.

It’s easy to understand why. It would have been a reminder that the Soviet

Union’s contribution to the defeat of German imperialism was so much greater than what all the other Allied forces did together. Even though capitalist Russia is not the Soviet Union, the propaganda offensive this year to ignore history would have appeared ridiculous.

Consider this: In the 1944 invasion of Normandy, some 10,000 Allied troops died, including 6,000 U.S. troops. Bad enough. In battles on the Eastern Front, in Stalingrad, Moscow, Minsk, millions of troops faced each other and hundreds of thousands died on both sides in many big battles.

The USSR had appealed since 1942 to its U.S. and British allies to open a Second Front in the West. Instead, the imperialist leaders waited, hoping the German Wehrmacht and the Soviet Red Army would destroy each other. By the spring of 1944, however, the Red Army was marching westward as millions of German soldiers retreated.

Worried that the Red Army might occupy all of Germany and even liberate France, London and Washington finally opted for the Normandy invasion. The Red Army finally reached Berlin on May 8, 1945, and hung the Red Flag from the Reichstag’s ruins.

GI resistance

As the war ended, the U.S. had 11 million troops in Europe and the Pacific. The U.S. rulers possessed the atomic bomb and wanted to use those troops against the Soviet Union and the revolutionary movement in Asia. The troops, however, wanted to come home.

Richardson wrote in the 1967 pamphlet,



Paratrooper “Richie” Richardson, above, who survived D-Day, later became editor of anti-war GI newspaper *The Bond*.

“GI Handbook on Military Justice,” about that time: “Thousands of GIs marched through the streets of European cities after the war had ended. The Brass [officers] still wanted to hold them. The GIs demanded they be shipped home.

“These organized demonstrations also occurred in the Pacific area. The demands of the soldiers were supported by the mass sentiment at home.

“They were shipped home.”

*Catalinotto, who was circulation manager of *The Bond*, is author of the book “Turn the Guns Around: Mutinies, Soldier Revolts and Revolutions.”*

A historical perspective on China

Continued from page 2

openly and unabashedly on a capitalist basis. And it is going forward at a very rapid rate, even exceeding the objectives of China's economic planners.

Production under capitalism, except when it is interrupted by crisis, natural disasters or war, can and does rise to phenomenal heights, exceeding all previous modes of production. Raising production is not a huge, let alone formidable, problem under capitalism. The problem lies in the antagonism between private ownership and the social character of production.

Since the bourgeois counter-revolution, however, a rise in production has not been achieved in what was the USSR. Just the opposite. This is because the objective of the reformers there is not to increase production but to privatize the existing means of production, and there is tremendous opposition to that. The difference must be kept in mind.

Struggle over trade

During the [George H. W.] Bush administration, an opinion piece in the New York Times by Leslie Gelb communicated a threat to China that it was vulnerable to having its coastal provinces detached from the rest of the country. These are the areas where the free-market "special economic zones" are located. The threat was meant to force China to accommodate to the U.S. on matters regarding "human rights" — a code name for allowing counter-revolutionary activity.

However, Bush was opposed to tightening trade restrictions on China, notwithstanding the uproar by the Democratic Party faction in Congress. [Bill] Clinton, on the other hand, attacked Bush's stand on China during the election campaign and called for new restrictions on trade.

Now Clinton finds himself in the same position as Bush. He has changed his position and is opposed to giving so-called human rights pre-eminence over trade with China. Once again, economics determines politics and not vice versa.

Class character of China

The growing influence of the capitalist market in China has occasioned economists and political leaders on both sides of the Pacific to give consideration to a class definition of China's social structure and state. For instance, last year the Congress of the Communist Party characterized China as a "socialist market economy."

It is well known by all students of Marxist economics that the two terms are incompatible with each other. China has had a planned economy. How well or poorly it has been doing is not the issue. The fact is that it instituted a planned economy soon after the revolution's triumph in 1949. The kernel of a planned economy has persisted through all the struggles and turmoil since.

A capitalist market economy is not planned, but is spontaneous, unpredictable, chaotic. The capitalist class everywhere is lyrical about the freedom of the market, about how it sets free prices and production. But this should not be taken as literally true. Monopoly capitalism restricts capitalist trade and production....

A market economy by definition is generally understood to be the very opposite of a planned economy. The two terms are incompatible with each other. But that does not necessarily exclude the possibility of their coexistence within the framework of a national state for a period of time.

In fact, such a situation was created in the years closely following the Bolshevik Revolution. Under far different circumstances than exist today in China, the

capitalist market was reintroduced for a time, even as plans were laid for the building of a socialist economy.

GATT enters the debate

The question of the class character of China's state and of the reforms has undoubtedly caused a great deal of debate in China. Nor is it of theoretical or political significance in China alone. For instance, the organization known as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade is by no means an innocent bystander watching the debate in China. GATT is an organization set up by the imperialists that includes 105 countries. It says in so many words: If you want to trade with any one of us, you have to abide by certain rules that we set.

Under GATT's rules, devised some years ago, China, the USSR, Eastern Europe, Cuba, the DPRK, Vietnam and a few other countries could not become members unless they agreed to certain restrictions. Such as free trade.

China is undoubtedly trying very hard to meet those restrictions and get into GATT. An article in the Wall Street Journal of March 3, entitled "Chinese Entry into GATT Is Stalled by Thorny Socialist Market Economy," explains that the officials of GATT, servants of the seven imperialists, have asked China to describe precisely what it means by "socialist market economy." Part of the debate in China over this term is precisely over how to meet the restrictions of GATT. [Editor's note: GATT morphed into the World Trade Organization, which China joined in 2001.]

Thus the struggle over the class characterization of China's economy and state is not solely a debate among so-called doctrinaire communists, it reaches into the summits of the capitalist government as well.

Agriculture since the communes

If China is to be called a socialist country, what about the class character of the agricultural system? China has a vast population of peasants and a minority of workers. In the early 1960s, after collectivization, the commune was established as the unit of agricultural production. Farm work was elevated to collective labor, and private ownership of the land was abolished.

The dismantling of the communes in the 1980s signified that agriculture in the main returned to private ownership....

Either because of crop failures, natural disasters, or the inability to sustain themselves on the farm, peasants in China are now flooding into the cities in a manner similar to that in many Third World countries. This has made it possible to employ millions in industrial projects.

One may say that what is going on in China is a period of industrialization similar to that in England in the last century. The millions who were dispossessed from the land made cheap labor in industry possible and profitable. Marx described the horrors of early industrial development, including the employment of women and children for long hours, in his illuminating chapter in "Capital" on primitive accumulation.

A planned economy?

China's collectivized and nationalized property in industry has become weakened as a result of both the privatization of agriculture and the institution of capitalist reforms.

Is China today a planned economy in the sense that the basic elements of production and consumption are planned and that the operations are pursuant to a given plan?

The answer at the present time is no. The introduction of bourgeois reforms inhibits full-scale planning, so that to a large extent it is becoming a commodity producing economy. The larger the special

economic zones, the larger the capitalist reforms, the more China becomes a commodity-producing economy and not a planned socialist economy.

However, China's history since the beginning of the 19th century has been full of convulsions as it has attempted to free itself from imperialist domination. It has also fought to remain a centralized national state with a degree of autonomy for the provinces. Were each province to decide for itself how and what it would produce, a planned economy for the state as a whole would be impossible.

Immediately before and during the Tienanmen Square days, China appeared to be in danger of disintegrating into warlordism. This was overcome and the decentralizing process that threatened to emerge was eliminated. That was a victory of socialism.

The question of how far the Chinese government can go with the capitalist reforms will certainly be up for review, notwithstanding a constitutional provision meant to make the reforms a permanent feature in Chinese society.

One fact has certainly emerged: the millions who left the rural areas for the great cities of China and were absorbed into the proletariat have given the Chinese government and Communist Party the opportunity to strengthen the socialist character of the state. The growth of the proletariat is the objective factor most needed for the building of socialism.

It's important that the process of production be carried out in the spirit of socialist construction. The calculations of the bourgeoisie are that as a result of their widening influence in the special economic zones, they will ultimately overwhelm the socialist sector in China. They believe that the socialist sector, lacking the material conditions necessary for its growth, including skilled labor and specialists, will be still-born. The alternative, they say, is massive material assistance from the imperialists,

and this will undo socialist construction.


For the moment, the Party seems to be united on going forward with the reforms because they are bringing results deemed indispensable at the present time. Without a doubt, a generation of young people, a new breed of Tienanmen Square elements, is being accommodated politically to this situation. But the inevitability of a capitalist recession, especially if it stems from a worldwide capitalist crisis, is bound to create a classic confrontation between the socialized and the bourgeois sectors.

The question is how significant is the proletarian revolutionary element, what is their influence in the higher councils of the Party? Even if they are tiny and weak now, the objective basis for their revolutionary growth is assured.

As Frederick Engels explained in "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific" (part of his book "Anti-Duhring"), the great philosophers of the 18th-century Enlightenment — Voltaire, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Saint-Simon — reflected the disillusionment with the old order and tore to shreds feudal ideology with their brilliance and wit. On the other hand, socialism is the ideological offspring of the growth of the proletariat.

China had its own Enlightenment period that undermined feudal ideology. The period in which the proletariat comes forward with its own ideological approach has been more protracted, given the necessity to fight imperialism on all fronts and a more obdurate and stultified feudal system.

Nevertheless, with all its ups and downs, China is moving toward socialism. The efforts of the imperialists to stop it by force and violence have failed over the decades, and their efforts at economic strangulation will also surely fail. The road to socialism in China, like everywhere else in the world, may be difficult, but it is assured. □



YOU ARE INVITED TO A WORKERS WORLD PARTY FORUM ON

REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM

Currently, in the media and in Washington there is interestingly much talk about socialism. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Bernie Sanders ran for Congress and US president as democratic socialists. Trump was forced to say there would never be socialism in the US! It is clearly a new day in history when US politicians are made to talk about socialism.

More and more youth and workers in general have become anti-capitalist. This is a great opportunity for the left. **But what is meant by democratic socialism and what is the difference with revolutionary socialism?**

Join us as we answer this and other questions:

- +** How has the working class in Puerto Rico, a U.S. colony since 1898, fought back during the ongoing economic crisis?
- +** How is the struggle for socialism in Puerto Rico reflected in the fight back against, wage cuts and layoffs, pension cuts, privatization of the public schools and other public services?
- +** Can the struggle for socialism address the dire situation in Puerto Rico?
- +** Will democratic socialism be able to address the urgent crisis of climate change?
- +** What kind of unity is needed and between who at this critical moment in history for the global working class that is experiencing the worst economic and social crisis since the "Great Depression"?

SPEAKERS PANEL:
Larry Holmes, First Secretary of WWP
Taryn Fivek, Co-Coordinator International Action Center

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKERS:
Jocelyn Vasquez, Spokesperson, General Coordinator, Jornada: Se Acabaron Las Promesas
Rogelio Maldonado, Coordinator, Jornada: Se Acabaron Las Promesas

THURSDAY, JUNE 20
630PM DINNER 7PM FORUM
AT THE SOLIDARITY CENTER
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Bring your checkbooks! Special Donation to help pay for costs of the Sept 21 March for Puerto Rico

ALL OUT FOR SEPT. 21!

On September 21, the Puerto Rican movement will march on the United Nations to demand:

**NO TO
U.S. COLONIALISM!
AND
INDEPENDENCE FOR
PUERTO RICO!**

Join El Frente Independentista Boricua:
59th St., Columbus Circle
March to Dag Hammarskjold Plaza, UN
11am-5pm



GUATEMALA

Se celebrarán elecciones marcadas por la corrupción y la migración

Por Sam Ordóñez

El día 16 de junio se celebran elecciones presidenciales y congresionales en Guatemala. Estas podrían ser importantes debido a una profunda crisis política y la migración hacia el norte que no da señales de terminar.

Otro factor que podría influir en las elecciones es que por primera vez podrán votar los guatemaltecos que viven en el extranjero. Por ahora hay pocos votantes registrados de este grupo, pero con la migración que se está viendo y el peso económico de las remesas, podrían llegar a convertirse en un bloque importante.

Una de las características importantes de la crisis política es que varios partidos, que en un momento eran grandes e influyentes, han sido cancelados por los tribunales. Por otro lado, han emergido varios partidos nuevos, tanto de derecha como progresistas y de izquierda.

Los dos partidos de derecha que más escaños ganaron en 2015 fueron cancelados debido a repetidas violaciones de las leyes de financiamiento electoral. Otros, incluyendo el partido del actual presidente Jimmy Morales, tienen procesos legales abiertos en su contra que se han suspendido hasta que se concluyan las elecciones.

La candidata que según las encuestas tiene más apoyo es Sandra Torres, candidata del partido Unión Nacional de Esperanza (UNE). UNE es un partido socialdemócrata, con algunas propuestas que buscan aliviar el sufrimiento del pueblo sin cambiar la base económica. Como todos los partidos tradicionales de Guatemala, tiene una sombra larga de investigaciones y acusaciones de corrupción y financiamiento ilícito.

Otra candidata notable, que ha venido ganando apoyo en las últimas encuestas, es Thelma Cabrera, mujer Maya Mam y candidata del Movimiento para la Liberación de los Pueblos (MLP). MLP es un vehículo electoral recién formado por integrantes del Comité de Desarrollo Campesino (Codeca) y otros movimientos sociales aliados.

Este partido se formó después de que se separó Codeca de la URNG, el partido formado por los guerrilleros revolucionarios cuando se firmaron los acuerdos de paz. La base social del MLP, por sus orígenes como movimiento social, está compuesta principalmente por campesinos y comunidades originarias ubicados geográficamente en la Costa Sur y el Altiplano.

Como partido que representa intereses campesinas y de los pueblos originarios, MLP ha citado a las políticas de Evo Morales y el “milagro económico” que hoy se ve en Bolivia como uno de sus principales fuentes de inspiración. Entre sus propuestas están la renacionalización de la energía eléctrica, revisar las concesiones de los recursos naturales y la creación de una Asamblea Constituyente Popular y Plurinacional.

Aunque la UNE tiene mayor intención de voto, las encuestas señalan que aproximadamente 66 por ciento de los que responden no tienen preferencia ninguna. Estos números no sorprenden, debido a la gran falta de credibilidad que tienen los partidos tradicionales y el hecho de que las izquierda guatemalteca todavía no se ha recuperado completamente de la guerra civil.

Candidatos descalificados

La intervención de las cortes en el proceso electoral ha tenido una influencia enorme en determinar las fuerzas que ahora disputan la presidencia. Por ejemplo Zury Ríos, hija y heredera ideológica del dictador genocida Efraín Ríos Montt, parecía tener la capacidad de unir la derecha guatemalteca antes de que el Tribunal Supremo Electoral (TSE) la descalificó.

Otra candidata descalificada es Thelma Aldana, candidata del Movimiento Semilla que tuvo que huir a El Salvador después de que el gobierno emitiera una orden de captura en su contra. Unas semanas después fue acusada de corrupción y descalificada. Aldana y el Movimiento Semilla surgen de las clases profesionales urbanas que forzaron la salida del presidente Otto Pérez Molina en 2015, y su plataforma electoral está enfocado en combatir la corrupción.

Un tercer candidato, del partido de derecha Unión del Cambio Nacional fue detenido en Miami por cargos de narcotráfico vinculados al cartel Sinaloa. También fue acusado de intentar asesinar a rivales políticos, que incluían a Aldana. (tinyurl.com/y54aczox)

Corrupción, subdesarrollo, y sequía: los principales causas de la miseria

La crisis política del país origina de las movilizaciones anti-corrupción en 2015 que forzaron la salida del entonces presidente, y en los últimos años ha estado enfocado en la Comisión Internacional Contra la Impunidad en Guatemala (CICIG). Esta comisión establecida por la Organización de las Naciones Unidas (ONU) ha iniciado muchas de las investigaciones que han impactado a los políticos tradicionales.

Para el movimiento progresista, acabar con la corrupción y la impunidad es la más alta prioridad, porque sin eso será imposible enfrentarse a las graves problemas estructurales que están causando la gran migración hacia el norte.

Desde el golpe de Estado en 1954, que acabó con la llamada “Revolución Guatemalteca” y desencadenó la guerra civil de 36 años, la derecha ha mantenido un monopolio sobre el poder, con la breve interrupción del gobierno socialdemócrata de Álvaro Colom (esposo de Sandra Torres). En general su política ha sido favorecer a los empresarios, grandes terratenientes, y las transnacionales y oprimir a la clase obrera, los campesinos, y los pueblos originarios. Durante la guerra civil incluso llegaron al genocidio

contra el pueblo Maya Ixil.

El resultado de este monopolio conservador es un país con casi todos los servicios privatizados, con una infraestructura a punto de colapsar, y una economía completamente dependiente del extranjero, en forma de inversiones extranjeras, remesas, y exportaciones agrícolas.

La oligarquía tampoco está interesada en desarrollar la capacidad industrial del país. A pesar de invitar a las transnacionales a construir mineras, y un sector agropecuario enorme, todas estas materias primas se destinan al extranjero. Los empresarios están más que contentos enviando los recursos al extranjero, y vendiendo los productos que luego importan. Con que ellos mantengan su porcentaje, las ganancias se salen del país con menos dificultad que los migrantes.

Las políticas conservadoras también han causado una gran destrucción ambiental en el país. Los pueblos originarios del país, sean mayas, xinka, o garífuna, están en constante lucha con el Estado para proteger sus tierras y ríos de la contaminación de las minorías y otros proyectos extractivistas. Muchos de los bosques se tallaron para crear las fincas grandes que cultivan café, palmas, y otros productos orientados

a los mercados externos, y los que quedan están siempre amenazados.

La destrucción del ambiente, y la apropiación de las tierras más fértiles por parte de los grandes finqueros ha creado una situación desesperada para muchos guatemaltecos. El país, a pesar de tener una economía principalmente agrícola, no produce los alimentos que necesita para sostenerse. Los niveles de desnutrición son altísimos, y no hay mecanismo para bajarlos.

Donde se produce comida en las comunidades campesinas, varios años de sequía, que se pueden vincular al cambio climático, han causado que fallaran las últimas cosechas. Recientemente, el New York Times entrevistó a varias familias que citaron estas sequías como causa principal de la migración. (tinyurl.com/yytlv49a)

Lo que no quiere mencionar el NYT es que estas comunidades que viven de la agricultura de subsistencia, han sido desposeídos de las mejores tierras, que han podido aguantar las sequías, por siglos de colonialismo e imperialismo. Si las tierras que hoy producen café y otros cultivos comerciales se usarán para el cultivo de maíz, frijoles, y otras comidas básicas, el país no estaría al punto de quiebre. □



INVITACIÓN A UN FORO DEL PARTIDO MUNDO OBRERO SOBRE

SOCIALISMO REVOLUCIONARIO

Actualmente, en los medios de comunicación y en Washington se habla mucho sobre el socialismo. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez y Bernie Sanders corrieron para congresista y para presidente de los Estados Unidos como socialistas demócratas. ¡Trump se vio obligado a decir que nunca habría socialismo en los Estados Unidos! Es claramente un nuevo día en la historia cuando los políticos de los Estados Unidos están obligados a hablar sobre el socialismo

Cada vez más jóvenes y trabajadores en general se han vuelto anticapitalistas. Esta es una gran oportunidad para la izquierda. Pero, ¿qué se entiende por socialismo democrático y cuál es la diferencia con el socialismo revolucionario?

- ¿Cómo ha luchado la clase obrera en Puerto Rico, una colonia de los Estados Unidos desde 1898, durante la actual crisis económica?
- ¿Cómo se refleja la lucha por el socialismo en Puerto Rico en la lucha contra los cortes salariales y los despidos, las pensiones, la privatización de las escuelas públicas y otros servicios públicos?
- ¿Puede la lucha por el socialismo abordar la grave situación en Puerto Rico?
- ¿Podrá el socialismo democrático abordar la crisis urgente del cambio climático?
- ¿Qué tipo de unidad se necesita, y entre quienes, en este momento crítico de la historia para la clase obrera mundial que está experimentando la peor crisis económica y social desde la “Gran Depresión”?

ORADORES:

Larry Holmes, Primer Secretario de WWP
Taryn Fivek, Co-Coordinadora del Centro de Acción Internacional

ORADORES INVITADOS:

Jocelyn Vasquez, Portavoz, Coordinadora General, Jornada: Se Acabaron Las Promesas
Rogelio Maldonado, Coordinador, Jornada: Se Acabaron Las Promesas

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¡MARCHA!

Unete a marchar con nosotros desde la calle 59 y Columbus Circle hacia la Plaza Dag Hammarskjöld, en las Naciones Unidas.

¡COMBATIENDO LA INJUSTICIA EN PUERTO RICO!

LA FECHA
SABADO, EL 21 DE SEPTIEMBRE DEL 2019
11:00am - 5:00pm