Venezuelan masses build resistance to U.S. covert war

By Sam Ordóñez

March 17 — A massive anti-imperialist march filled the streets of Caracas this Saturday, March 16, celebrating another victory against the latest wave of U.S. aggression against Venezuela.

This mobilization is another example of the increasing organization and mobilization of the Venezuelan masses. The latest phase of imperialist aggression was designed to destroy the Bolivarian Revolution, but instead it has sparked a new wave of working-class, anti-imperialist organization.

Venezuela’s conflict with imperialism seems to be entering a period of prolonged siege, where the Venezuelan masses’ ability to organize and develop domestic production, along with the strength of the international solidarity movement fighting to end the blockade, will be the decisive factors.

Electricity restored

According to official sources, as of March 15 electricity has been restored in Venezuela after a power outage that began on March 7. The outage, which lasted a week in some parts of the country, was caused by failure in the hydroelectric plant known as “El Guri.”

The outages in Venezuela, Cuban and Russian governments have denounced various forms of attack against the electrical grid. The primary attack was digital, with various cyber attacks originating from Houston and Chicago, according to statements made by President Nicolás Maduro.

These attacks managed to take down the electrical grid’s central data capture and control system. Even Forbes magazine, which describes itself as a “capitalist tool,” published a report March 9 which detailed exactly how the U.S. could realistically carry out such an attack.

Journalist Max Blumenthal revealed that CANVAS, an organization that evolved out of destabilizing groups in the former Yugoslav Republic, had published a plan for regime change in Venezuela. This plan included a power outage as a “watershed event” for “galvanizing public unrest.” CANVAS, which receives funds from various U.S. state agencies, trained Juan Guaidó and several of his political allies inside Venezuela. (tinyurl.com/yld0hv)

There have also been reports of physical attacks, such as detonating explosives at substations and high-technology attacks using electromagnetic waves to disrupt distribution stations. TeleSUR has also reported explosions at the state oil company’s main facility. (tinyurl.com/ylgyx9)

Juan Guaidó, the self-proclaimed “interim president,” blames the government for failing to maintain the electrical grid. While it is true that the grid needs further investment, the U.S.-imposed financial blockade has cost Venezuela billions of dollars that could have been entering a period of prolonged siege, where it would be in utmost solidarity with oppressed peoples, and to be in defense of our own lives, we must focus on what is to be done.

There has been much outrage at the role of social media and Islamophobic, racist rhetoric motivating the killer’s action. Using a head-mounted camera, the white supremacist live-streamed his brutality in real time to the world, documenting his hate-filled language and action. Someone with advance knowledge of the attack announced it, before it happened, on the right-wing forum 8chan.

But the killer’s racist language has been trumpeted for years by white supremacist U.S. politicians. A March 15 Intercept article listed the comments continued on page 3
White House protest hits aggression against Venezuela

By Ted Kelly
Washington, D.C.

Over a thousand activists converged on Lafayette Park in front of the White House March 16 in a show of solidarity with the Bolivarian Revolution of Venezuela and the government of President Nicolás Maduro. Coming just days after the U.S. sabotage of Venezuela’s electrical grid, which left the country without power for over 48 hours, the protest, called by Answer, was a rebuke to the ongoing coup attempt orchestrated by the Trump administration.

Representing Workers World and the International Action Center, Loan T. and Taryn Fivek spoke from the stage to the rally. “We remember Vietnam, we remember Libya, we remember Syria, we remember Yemen. We know what is happening in Venezuela right now,” said Loan T., from Durham, N.C. “Democracy under capitalism is democracy for the rich, it is democracy for killer cops, it is democracy for Jeff Bezos and for Donald Trump. It is not democracy for working people.”

Leading the crowd in a chant of “No sanctions, no coup! Venezuela, we stand with you!” Fivek, from New York City, linked the struggle against U.S. militarism and occupation abroad to the successful fight waged against the plan to build the second Amazon headquarters in New York. Issuing a challenge to the crowd, Fivek asked, “What are people here willing to do to stop this war on Venezuela? What are people here willing to unite around in order to end U.S. imperialism?”

Undeterred by a hundred or so pro-coup Venezuelans who had gathered to disrupt the rally, the strong column of Venezuelan supporters marched past the White House and down Pennsylvania Avenue to the Trump International Hotel. Members of Workers World Party marched alongside activists from Veterans For Peace, Code Pink and the Party for Socialism and Liberation in a united front against the racism and aggression of the Trump administration.

An upcoming D.C. mobilization scheduled for March 30 will unite the struggle to defend Venezuela with the global fight against NATO, from Colombia to Ukraine, NATO will be meeting in D.C. to mark the 70th anniversary of this global capitalist military alliance. Go to no2nato2019.org ☞

Join 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 everwinding quest for ever-greater profits.

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attack on the immigrant/migrant, 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—a right that can be denied. 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 ganged 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, multigendered 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. ☞

Contact a Workers World Party branch near you:

No sanctions, no coup, Venezuela, we stand with you!
Workers World online editor John Steffin interviewed Sara Flounders, co-director of the International Action Center, on March 17. Flounders is in Caracas, Venezuela, as part of a solidarity delegation from the Workers World Party, which President Maduro met to discuss strengthening cooperation and terrorism. Suggestions were for sending more delegations to Venezuela and more social media exchanges. When Maduro heard from Sarah Martin that there was a delegation for Venezuela in Minneapolis happening that day, he immediately sent a Twitter message to them.

The Venezuelans are very supportive of the upcoming action on March 30 in support of the Bolivarian Revolution in Washington, D.C. They see it as a next step in solidarity with Venezuela against the crisis. We told Maduro that the Boston Bus Drivers Union (Teamsters Local 8751) were driving a bus to D.C. and Maduro said he was ready to join them!

WW: That’s great to hear. I’m sure they would be happy to have him. What is Maduro’s perspective on the current situation?

SF: Maduro said that for 200 years, since the time of Simon Bolivar and U.S. President James Monroe, there has been a struggle between sovereignty and colonialism. But in a larger way the battle of all humanity is a struggle between socialism and capitalism.

WW: They say they face right now the highest sanctions ever imposed! Even for essential medicines. All health accounts have been stolen. The situation is so severe that they are preparing for the U.S. to attack. Through Community Councils, the organizing units are being told to start storing food, water, batteries.

While we met, Maduro received a threatening tweet from Marco Rubio and one from Elliott Abrams. He read them to us with great laughter. He said his government always has to be ready to talk, of course. But Rubio’s tweet is determined by all the people, not by a government.

WW: And what is the determination of the Venezuelan people?

SF: After our meeting, we could see the level of determination first hand. We went to the People’s Encampment guarding the Presidential Palace. Thousands are rotating on security 24 hours a day in anticipation of an imperialist attack on the palace.

We saw people’s militias and mass outpourings of organized community groups, housing groups, student groups, etc. That day (March 15) the Oil Workers Union had a big rally. They said: We are armed and ready to defend what belongs to all of us.

Madeline Arias, head of the Ministry of Urban Agriculture, introduced us to the union that day, and the union let us each give a short revolutionary Marxist greeting to the demonstration. The petroleum union’s women’s caucus told us they want to meet with women from the United States.

Since we were unable to return home as expected, we also attended a massive demonstration in support of the Bolivarian Revolution on Saturday, March 16. There were tens of thousands of people out in the streets. Hundreds of buses brought people into the city from surrounding areas. These kinds of demonstrations have been taking place every Saturday since the coup.

WW: The corporate media in the U.S. blame the government of Maduro and not support Maduro. Based on what you’ve told us, that is another imperialist lie.

SF: Absolutely. These massive rallies really confirm that the people are mobilized, determined, very enthusiastic and combative. They come with their unions, housing or community groups, schools.

They know the right wing is mobilizing. So they are determined to far outnumber them. It is a political battle in every sense.

The U.S. Peace Council delegation consists of Bahman Azad, the organizational secretary of the U.S. Peace Council; Ajamu Baraka, national co-director of Black Alliance for Peace; progressive journalist Eva Bartlett; Gerry Condon, president of Veterans For Peace; Darien De Lu, president of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom-U.S.; Miguel Figueroa, president of the Canadian Peace Congress; Sara Flounders, co-coordinator of the International Action Center; Margaret Flowers of Popular Resistance; Joe Lombardo, co-coordinator of the United National Anticapitalist Coalition; Sarah Martin of Women Against Military Madness; Daniel Shea, board of directors, Veterans For Peace; and Kevin Zeese of Popular Resistance.

Mass mobilization answers attack on power grid

Continued from page 3

have been used to upgrade computer systems, buy spare parts or otherwise improve the system.

Media and imperialist hypocrisy

The U.S. corporate media have focused on Venezuela in the last few months, publishing story after story about the suffering of the Venezuelan people. This has nothing to do with genuine concern for the Venezuelan people. To even entertain the idea that the U.S. does not have something to do with genuine concern for the Venezuelan people? This has nothing to do with genuine concern for the Venezuelan people. They know the right wing is mobilizing. So they are determined to far outnumber them. It is a political battle in every sense.

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At UAW Bargaining Convention
Workers, retirees call for better contracts

By Martha Grevett
Detroit

From March 11 to 13 the United Auto Workers held a “Special Bargaining Convention” in this city. Thousands of delegates from locals all over the country came together to discuss issues pertaining to contract negotiations.

The union, with 430,000 active members, has contracts in the auto, aerospace, agricultural equipment and auto parts suppliers, has allowed companies to pay lower wages to workers hired after a certain date. They work side-by-side with higher-paid workers doing the same work. Often these “temporary” workers have inferior health benefits and pension plans as well.

The current contracts with GM, Ford and FCA have increased the exploitation of “temporary” workers, many of whom have been “temporary” for years. Not only are they paid less in wages and benefits, but they have no seniority and can be readily disciplined or fired. Some delegates correctly called this category “third tier” and insisted we fight for equal pay for equal work.

Pensions, which were not increased for current or future retirees in the 2018-19 automotive contracts, were another issue delegates spoke about. A large group of retirees, including three busloads from Local 12 in Toledo, Ohio, demonstrated outside and inside the convention. Sign told the leadership: “Retirees built FCA. Don’t let us erode.”

Lacking from the official convention was any real discussion on the fightback strategy needed to force the capitalists to restore pensions and use the strike weapon to challenge the auto bosses.

Martha Grevett was a delegate to the UAW Convention.

Amazon workers walk out after grievances pile up

By Harvey Markowitz
Minneapolis

Workers at the Amazon fulfillment center in Shakopee, Minn., a suburb of Minneapolis, escalated their campaign for workers’ rights on March 8 by carrying out their first strikes. The strike occurred during the night shift, when a group of about 30 workers, mostly Somali immigrants, walked off the job to protest the new corporation’s management.

A Facebook post went viral as the workers held up a handwritten sign reading: “We are humans, not robots” and listed their complaints on a legal pad. Previously, WW reported that workers’ frustrations were intensified by a panel of grievances with management: from lacking language translation services, to inhumane insomnia of work, to racist selection of workers for promotion, to pitiful health benefits, to hiring schemes that exploit temp workers, to the need for more bathroom visits and prayer breaks. Amazon workers are up against a corporation unwilling to part with profits. The workers organizers and held a rally last December — believed to be the first in the U.S. against Amazon — to demand respect and express their discontent over never having a voice in how work is handled.

Workers at a fulfillment center in Poland, describing themselves as “workers from Amazon from Germany, Poland, France, and supporters from Italy,” posted a video on the internet declaring “Solidarity!” with the immigrant and non-immigrant workers in Shakopee.

Amazon around the world
Amazon Inc. is infamous worldwide. Its CEO, Jeff Bezos, is currently the richest person in the world, with an estimated worth of $83 billion. The profits of Amazon surged, nearly doubling, between 2017 and 2018. Yet the corporation paid no federal income taxes.

Bezos also owns The Washington Post. Media watchdog organizations point out biases in its reporting. Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting asserts that the acquisition “instantly made him the most powerful media figure in the nation’s capital — a handy position to be in when your company is seeking multi-billion-dollar government contracts.”

Concurrently, Amazon has offered its cloud computing services to the U.S. government. To the tune of $600 billion, the National Security Agency relies on Amazon’s cloud network to collect metadata and even intimate conversations of U.S. residents, creating a spy apparatus unparalleled in history.

Against such a titanic force, it could appear that any organizing has an unfair advantage. However, these brave workers standing up for their rights and displaying collective determination will inspire the movements of tomorrow. Amazon’s burgeoning labor vanguard serves as an example to workers around the world.

ILWU shows solidarity with L.A. teachers’ strike

International Longshore and Warehouse Union members in the Southern California District Council contributed their organizing experience and solidarity to help 55,000 Los Angeles teachers win their six-day strike in January. (WW articles, Jan. 22 and 25.)

Because ILWU is dedicated to a strong public school system, once the strike was announced it began mobilizing members to attend community meetings and reach out to nearby unions. Its goal was to have experienced union members join the “adopt-a-school” program and help local schools during the strike.

A total of 63 schools were supported by hundreds of ILWU members, past and present, and their families as well as from the Marine Firemen, Steelworkers Union and numerous community groups. This meant picketing with teachers in the rain, bringing them food and ponchos, and showing “we have your back” with signs reading “The ILWU supports teachers.” ILWU members also collected and distributed food to help the 80 percent of low-income students who depend on school meals. Teachers expressed gratitude to ILWU on social media: “The ILWU kept us afloat,” wrote Michael Gearin. Cathy Famahleite, president of SCDC, who wrote a Dispatcher Newspaper article detailing the solidarity, wrote: “This is what we do — we help other unions and union members and ... support working families in our community. ... Defending our public schools is one of the most sacred and important things we can do as union members.” (ILWU.org, Feb. 8.)
Dynamic struggle for transit accessibility gains ground

By Tony Murphy
New York

A series of positive rulings have been won in court recently on the issue of pub-
lit transportation accessibility. They have come as the class forces demanding eleva-
tors in the subway have broadened, now
including parents with young children in
strollers together with disability rights
advocates.

On March 5, U.S. District Court Judge
Edgardo Ramos ruled that New York’s
Metropolitan Transit Authority must
install elevators in any New York subway
station that is being renovated.

This has been called a sweeping deci-
dion in terms of its impact. The ruling
was a response to a lawsuit filed because
the MTA had renovated the Bronx
Middleton subway station and replaced
its stairs in 2013—but left the station
inaccessible.

Then on March 13, New York State
Judge Shlomo Hagler ordered the MTA
to install elevators in all New York subway
stations. The Hagler's ruling was important
for a few reasons. It kept alive a case that
had seemed in danger of being dismissed.
Also, it was strongly influenced by the
Ramos ruling. A year ago, Hagler had responded to
the MTA’s motion to dismiss the case by
ordering the two sides to talk and come
to a settlement.

After almost a year, the MTA walked
away from the talks. This put the MTA’s
motion to dismiss the entire case back
into play. Hagler could simply have ruled
on that motion. If he had ruled in the
MTA’s favor, the case would have effec-
tively ended in defeat for the plaintiffs.

In explaining why he was keeping the
case alive, Hagler lectured the MTA that
it is “just plain right” that the New York
subway system be accessible. Its notorious
inaccessibility, he said, is “just not fair.”

He rejected the notion that installing
elevators is too expensive, saying not
spending money for accessibility “makes
no sense, with billions of dollars spent on
other things.”

“The time has come,” Hagler said, for
a serious plan. He told the authority that
he was giving them “one last opportunity
to get it right”—or he will make his own
ruling when the case convenes again on
May 7.

Hagler referred several times to the
bronx station ruling. Its impact was
clearly felt in his courtroom, having
reverberated throughout the legal world
the week before. Hagler referred specif-
cally to coverage in the New York Law
Journal.

Impact of mother’s death
There was also another presence in
that courtroom: Malaysia Goodson.

At a courthouse rally before Hagler’s
hearing, expectant mother Christine
Coleman spoke, supporting the case and
3-year-old daughter down the stairs—in
a station with no elevators and two esca-
lators that only go up—Goodson fell but
managed to protect her child, who mirac-
ulously survived.

In response to Goodson’s shocking
death, the MTA—located steps from Wall
Street, the home of the world’s richest
banks and investment firms—announced
it was cutting back its plan to install ele-
vators in subway stations because it didn’t
have enough money.

The response of the movement for
transit accessibility was different. Less
than 48 hours after Goodson’s death,
accessibility rights leaders held a protest
rally at the subway station where
Goodson had died, re-emphasizing the
demand for elevators and ramps while
laying flowers at the spot in a makeshift
memorial.

While the MTA made sure that the
media coverage of that protest included
the city medical examiner’s declaration
that Goodson died of a “pre-existing
medical condition,” the street mobiliza-
tions were an increased level of solidarity
between the forces calling for true subway
accessibility.

For months, MTA board meetings had
included delegations of wheelchair users
and other leaders of the accessibility
rights movement, making the argument
over and over that elevators in the subway
are a necessity.

On Feb. 25—the first MTA board
meeting after Goodson’s death—trans
women affected by her untimely death took
the microphone to make the same demand.

Holding her baby, who grabbed for the
mic as she spoke, Christine Yearwood
said, to applause, “Why is accessibility
something that [MTA] planners decide
is acceptable to cut? The fact that this
is predicted to happen after Malasia
Goodson just died on the subway stairs
is disgraceful.”

Christine Coleman also spoke at that
board meeting, referring to Goodson’s
death: “I see parents struggle with this
time, trying to get up and down the stairs.And it’s as important as the fact that we
don’t have a working elevator in every
station.”

The federal lawyers who joined the
Bronx subway case issued a statement
after it was decided, announcing trum-
phantly, “The Court’s decision marks
the end of the MTA treating people with
disabilities as second-class citizens.”

Whether that is true remains to be seen.
The MTA has a high-paid legal staff,
which can use to delay justice for years.
At the March 17 commemoration of
International Working Women’s Day, a
rally was held at New York’s Penn
Station. Protesters saluted women in
rebellion around the world—migrants,
trans women, Muslims and others who
are fighting oppression on all fronts.
Included was the demand for transit
accessibility, both for people who are
mobility-impaired and for parents with
strollers.

Mary Kaessing, with the People’s MTA
spoke at the street rally, followed by a
roundtable discussion, where a video of
women speaking at the MTA hearing
was shown.

As the demand for elevators makes
its way through the courts, the peo-
ple’s movement for transit accessibil-
ity is expanding—and pushing upward
on it.
Cuban women describe their ‘revolution within the Revolution’

By Teresa Gutierrez
New York

“The Cuban woman, in the dark and quiet corner of her home, works — hour after hour, in which a revolution breaks its yoke and spreads its wings. Everything was enslaving: origin, color, sex. [You must] destine yourself to fight by to fighting to the death. You have destroyed the slavery of color by emancipating the slave. The time has come to liberate the woman!”

The words were spoken in 1869 by Ana Betancourt, a revolutionary who played a leading role in Cuba’s war of independence from Spain. Betancourt, along with Mariana Grajales of Dominican and Jamaican origins, and referred to as the “Mother of Cuba,” are just two of many women whose roots of rebellion nurture Cuban soil.

Given this history, it is no surprise that every year when the Federation of Cuban Women rallies in New York City for U.N.-related events, the solidarity movement pours out to welcome them.

Their presence is enriched by the fact that these are people in the process of building a socialist society. How can activists miss this opportunity?

Gathering to celebrate revolutionary struggle

This year, the International Working Women’s Day event was also broadened to include other important and histori- cal leaders of the Cuban Revolution who came for U.N. events.

Miguel Barnet, founder of the National Federation of Cuban Women (UNEAC); Luís Morlote of the Union of Cuban Writers and Artists (Cenesex); and Yenisey Gonzalez, a Cuban diplomat assigned to the U.S. who accompanied the delegation stood at the back of the room.

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Continued on page 11

Working Women’s History Month

Ella May: Anti-racist strike martyr

By Martha Grevatt

Ella May, a textile union leader killed during a 1912 strike in North Carolina, was born in 1899 in Tennessee. Her family had been small farmers, but before she reached adulthood her father was a wage worker in the logging industry that had invaded rural Appalachia. Logging was dangerous work, killing May’s father and leaving her husband, John Wiggins, disabled. Her family then moved to the Piedmont region of North Carolina where she found work in the burgeoning textile industry.

By 1912 John Wiggins had left the family, while some labor historians have misidentified her as Ella May (or Mae) Wiggins, Ella May dropped her married name. When John Wiggins learned of Ella’s new work, it so angered him that he left the family.

The family’s suffering, and the issues of human trafficking and modern-day slavery were key to building a global movement to defend workers, women as well as men, in the face of exploitation.

Continued on page 11
More than a century ago, the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York City was a notoriously anti-union company and the focus of several job actions and union organizers. The building was a death trap. On March 25, 1911, a horrific fire broke out there.

Doors were blocked and fire escape exits were locked. The sole fire escape broke as workers fled. Firefighters’ ladders did not reach the top floors. The result of this senseless tragedy: 146 workers died, 129 of them women ages 16 to 23.

Company greed caused this avoidable disaster. The Triangle workers were acquitted in court for responsibility in the deaths of these precious young people. The value of each human life was assessed as $75, paid to the grieving families of the unaccounted for. Yet Triangle owners were acquitted in court for responsibility in the only disaster. Most schools and factories were closed as workers fled. Firefighters’ ladders did not reach the top floors. The result of this senseless tragedy: 146 workers died, 129 of them women ages 16 to 23.

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Georgia rules against DACA students

By Arielle Robinson  
Atlanta, Ga.

Undocumented students who are recipients of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy, or DACA, have been barred from attending Georgia’s top universities. An Atlanta Federal Appeals Court upheld this reactionary policy of the Board of Regents on March 6. (tinyurl.com/y5hnwydm)

Implemented under the administration of Georgia Governor Nathan Deal, the Board of Regents enacted a policy charging a $2,225 annual fee for out-of-state tuition to attend Georgia universities. An Atlanta Federal Appeals Court upheld this reactionary policy of the Board of Regents on March 6. (tinyurl.com/y5hnwydm)

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Policy 4.1.6 was enacted by the Board of Regents in 2010, months after Kennesaw State University police arrested student Jessica Colotl on a minor traffic violation. Colotl was brought from Mexico to Georgia after he bowed his head during the playing of the national anthem during the 1995 game. The white owner of the Jazz, Gail Miller, made a pre-game speech on March 14 claiming that Salt Lake City is not a racist community. She said in part: “We believe in treating people with courtesy and respect as human beings. From time to time, individual fans exhibit poor behavior and forget their manners. Some disrespect players on other teams. When that happens, I want to jump up and shout, ‘Stop!’” (deseretnews.com, March 14)

Inequity between fans and players    
    
What happened to Westbrook is a constant reminder that sports reflect U.S. culture, a culture riddled with white supremacist views. Consider the fact that Earl Lloyd, one of the first African-American players drafted in the NBA in 1950, was accused by a white fan of having a “tail.” While today close to 75 percent of the players on the Thunder are African-American, the fan base is overwhelmingly white. This reflects both the location of corporate-sponsored arenas in suburban areas and high ticket prices. The Black population in the U.S. still remains a little over 12 percent. (news.  

Protest calls for release of trans man    
    
By Jim Raynor  
Atlanta

A militant, colorful and loud protest was held outside Immigration and Customs Enforcement headquarters here March 11 in support of Chin — also known as Yuen Tsui. Chin is a young trans man who has been held in solitary confinement for 14 months. The demonstration was supported by the National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance and Southerners on New Ground (Song). Demonstrators demanded ICE release Chin, first, from solitary confinement and, then, from Irwin County detention, which serves as a private jail for ICE prisoners. ICE has claimed it holds Chin in solitary due to his gender identity. A hearing was held the next day about these demands, but no ruling has been issued yet. Chin’s father and sister spoke, as well as leaders of the two sponsoring organizations.

To demand that Chin’s request for parole be granted, sign the petition at tinyurl.com/yx7c7gt.  

Russell Westbrook    

Since the Westbrook incident, more and more NBA players are demanding better respect and treatment by the fans through their union, the National Basketball Players Association. One proposal, which may be implemented sooner than later, is to play a public service announcement in each NBA arena before each game outlining a code of standards for all fans. If they do not adhere to this code, they will face the consequences of being ejected immediately from games or eventually banned for life.

The president of the association, Michelle Roberts, who is African American, stated, “We should all insist that a zero tolerance policy needs to be implemented at arenas in the face of misconduct by fans. Players don’t have the luxury of being able to unilaterally ban unruly fans from the arenas, a [New York Knicks owner] James Dolan. The arenas, therefore, have to do a better job of insulating our players.”

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Russell Westbrook is a super-talented guard for the Oklahoma City Thunder and a former most valuable player. On March 11, a Board of National Basketball Association regular season game between the Oklahoma team and the Utah Jazz in Salt Lake City was halted when Westbrook, who is African American, was verbally assaulted by the stands by a white man, Shane Keisel, and his white spouse. Both fans were escorted to the lobby to “get down on your knees like you’re used to.”

Westbrook’s response was to tell the couple, “TI-fuck you up.” (The Undated, March 11) Westbrook called their remarks “racial” and “inappropriate.”

Westbrook has since apologized to the spouse of Shane Keisel, who all of a sudden deleted his twitter feed full of racist and xenophobic rants, with Westbrook the main target. Westbrook was suspended for one game for having an “exchange with the fan, which is in violation of National Basketball Association regulations.

Keisel and his spouse, whose name was made not public, were subsequently banned for life from attending Jazz home games. Utah later ruled that a 2017 playoff game between the Thunder and the Jazz resulted in another fan being banned from Jazz games after calling Westbrook “boy.”

The Utah team’s Black players immediately came to Westbrook’s defense, especially center Rudy Gobert, forward Thabo Sefolosha and guard Donovan Mitchell.

Mitchell stated, “As a Black man living in a community I love and playing on a team that gives me the opportunity to live out my dreams, this incident hits close to home. Racism and hate speech hurt us all, and this is not the first time something like this has happened in our arena. The Utah Jazz that I have come to love is welcoming and inclusive and [Monday’s] incident is not indicative to our fan base. We don’t want to create a negative environment for our athletes who potentially want to come to Utah.”

Sefolosha posted on Instagram: “I stand 100% with Russell Westbrook on what happened in yesterday’s game. I love our fans but there are limits that cannot be crossed! Support and cheer for your team and enjoy the action, but fans like Shane Keisel, who use that platform to spur their hateful and racist views, need to be held accountable.”

Sefolosha, who is of Black South African descent, had his leg broken two years ago by members of the New York Police Department when he resisted an illegal arrest.

Buck’s star guard, Giannis Antetokounmpo, said after the game with the Cleveland Cavaliers: “I love Milwaukee. This city is one of the most open-minded and welcoming cities in the world. We will continue to fight against racism and discrimination. I have a feeling our team will come out stronger, and we’ll finish the season the right way.”

Judge Gerald Tjoflat, who wrote the decision in the Colotl case, ruled. ‘lawfully present’ under the act,” Tjoflat wrote. The owners rake in even more money than later, is to play a public service announcement in each NBA arena before each game outlining a code of standards for all fans. If they do not adhere to this code, they will face the consequences of being ejected immediately from games or eventually banned for life.

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Judge Gerald Tjoflat, who wrote the decision for the three-judge panel, claimed these students are not in the U.S. legally, and therefore the Board of Regents may have created the policy because they see these students are not considered Georgia residents for the purpose of the Georgia Regents police the fans. The owners rake in even more money than later, is to play a public service announcement in each NBA arena before each game outlining a code of standards for all fans. If they do not adhere to this code, they will face the consequences of being ejected immediately from games or eventually banned for life.

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Russell Westbrook
Students, pupils skip classes to protest climate policies

The following article was published in the March 16-17 issue of junge Welt, a paper which serves as the youth section of the Socialist Unity party of Germany. Excerpts were translated by Workers World Managing Editor John Catalinotto. A reported million students marched, according to the French newspaper Le Monde.

Hundreds of thousands of young people around the world demonstrated on Friday (March 15) for a radical change of course toward more climate protection. Under the slogan “Fridays For Future,” rallies took place in such European cities as Rome, Prague, Vienna, Warsaw, London and dozens of German cities.

In Berlin, Cologne, Dresden and Stuttgart, among other cities, thousands of schoolchildren, students and supporters marched through the streets with placards. The organizers said there were 500,000 participants in Germany alone. Around the globe, more than 2,000 rallies and student strikes had been announced in more than 120 countries — in Germany alone about 200. The wave of protests began early in the morning in Asia and Oceania, where tens of thousands of young people also took to the streets. There were demonstrations in Sydney, Bangkok, New Delhi and Hong Kong.

Participants in these demonstrations carried posters like: “You are destroying our future” and “If you don’t act like adults, we will.” Posters in Germany said, among other things: “We can survive cut classes, not climate change” and “If the world were an auto company, you’d have saved it long ago.”

According to the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Earth has warmed by about 1 degree Centigrade compared to the pre-industrial era, and in Germany even more so. According to analyses by the World Weather Organization, the years 2015 to 2018 were the warmest since records began in the 19th century.

If conditions continue as they are now, the world will probably be a good 3 degrees Centigrade warmer by the end of this century. The consequences include more heat waves, longer droughts and more storms, heavy rain and floods. To stop the trend, greenhouse gas emissions must be greatly reduced.

For months now, young people in many countries around the world have been protesting once a week in protest against the lack of climate protection efforts. Older generations are supporting them.

Around 20,000 scientists from Germany, Austria and Switzerland have signed a statement to emphasise the importance of the climate movement. Parents are also supporting young people through their organization, “Parents for Future.” Among other things, they (PF) ask that school expulsions or other disciplinary measures be waived if pupils skip school because they are protesting. Teachers in Berlin said they would file a complaint if the school administration tried to punish them.

The 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist fire and garment workers today

Continued from page 7

in many industries. Peg Seminario, AFL-CIO director of occupational safety and health notes: “Wages, social benefits, worker protections and union rights, the administration and the president have been totally anti-worker.” (Politico, Sept. 3, 2018)

Capitalist production is aimed at maximizing profits; workers’ well-being is not the business. This is evident in the super-exploitation of workers in the global garment industry where safety and health are disregarded until a horrible disaster unleashes workers’ fury and worldwide outrage, sometimes bringing reforms.

Conditions in Bangladesh’s garment industry are not so different from those at the Triangle factory. Windows, doors and exits are blocked. Fires occur with regularity, including one on March 4 in Dhaka, which injured eight people. The company, Anzir Apparel Ltd., has been allowed to operate by so-called national inspection bodies, having repeatedly failed to address safety concerns, said the Clean Clothes Campaign on March 6.

About 80 percent of the 4 million workers in Bangladesh’s 5,000 garment factories are women. They are among the world’s lowest-paid workers, exploited by Western brands, who pay little for the products of their labor and care little for their health. The industry annually exports $30 billion worth of clothes to U.S. and European retailers.

The deadliest garment industry catastrophe in history occurred in Dhaka on March 24, 1911, when an eight-story manufacturing complex, collapsed, killing 1,138 people, mostly women. Injuries included 2,500, many permanently. Although some safety measures were implemented afterwards, they are continually endangered by pressure from profit-driven global brands and a pro-corporate government.
In Brexit, workers’ struggles have no borders

The process of Britain leaving the European Union — called Brexit — has turned the politics of that country into a shambling week. Many Brexit scenarios predict major economic damage to the British economy, the second largest in the world. What is not being trumpeted is that the worst economic blows of Brexit would fall on the workers. The major British political parties have split into “leavers” and “remain- ers.” There are subsections like “hard exit” — no treaty between the EU and Britain — and “soft exit” — preserving open borders between the Republic of Ireland and the six counties of Northern Ireland. Brexit was the result of a racist division embedded in the politics of that country.

In the UK, the “leave” option won with only 52 percent of the overall vote. “Leave” actually lost in the north of Ireland and in Scotland by a wide margin.

But Brexit was pushed by some sectors of the English ruling class that resented the power that German and French financial institutions had over their economic dealings. The British bourgeoisie don’t want to have to coordinate with Germany and France when the next crisis of over-production breaks and the economy of the world totters. The British rulers want unimpeded control of their own destiny — that is, their wealth — and no EU interference.

Now European workers, both in Britain and on the Continent, are facing the devastating fallout of some possible Brexit scenarios. If a hard Brexit with no agreement occurs, either on March 29 or later, the employers of the UK will force non-British workers currently employed in the country will be up in the air. One of the main “leaves” points of the Brexiteers in the referendum campaign was a racist pledge to control immigration, exclude non-British workers and “protect British jobs.”

So far, the fate of a million of so British citizens now working on the Continent would be placed in doubt. Unions in Britain, and more generally in Europe, should be taking a clear, firm, militant position that all workers have a right to their jobs, no matter where national borders are drawn.

In a large sector of the working class in England have already had their standards of living cut significantly before any declaration of Brexit. The British bourgeoisie have imposed austerity cuts in education, health care and housing without any interference from the unelected EU bureaucrats in Brussels.

An additional major impact Brexit would have on workers’ lives is the disruption of trade and transportation, the consequential rising price of goods, and the increased costs and difficulties of travel outside Britain, including trips related to health care.

For instance, of the 16,000 trucks a day, at maximum, that pass through Dover, England, on their way from Calais, France, less than 2 percent are inspected. All others pass with only an internet form. If Brexit happens without provision for a customs agreement, every truck would have to be checked. It’s estimated that workers driving trucks would be in a traffic jam more than 40 miles long.

In Ireland, workers driving the thousands of trucks that currently pass daily from the Republic to the six counties would face similar obstacles. And for women travelling to the Republic to seek reproductive health care, including abortion not available in the six counties, a border newly imposed by Brexit might represent an unsolvable obstacle to their future.

Brexit: yet another reminder that there should be no borders in the workers’ struggles.

Continued from page 1

Romney was elected U.S. officials who have used the exact vile phrases or sentiments of the shooter — Senators Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio, Lindsey Graham and Rep. Steve King, former Iowa Gov. Mike Huckabee and former U.S. President Bill Clinton.

In his 74-page “manifesto,” the shooter said explicitly he admired U.S. President Donald Trump’s “call for the destruction of renewed white identity and common purpose.” Trump, having described neo-Nazis and fascists who rampaged violently in Charlottesville, Va., in 2017 as “very fine people,” has not condemned the Christchurch massacre as racist or terrorist.

The killer in New Zealand did not act alone. He was part of a worldwide resurgence of fascist, neo-Nazi, white supremacist organizing, not just via social media but in the parlaments of Europe. Starting with the success of a Swiss anti-immigrant political party in 1999, right-wing parties have garnered 20 to 30 percent of votes in elections in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and more. (tinyurl.com/yt6gkj7y)

And in 2016 in the U.S., a white supremacist who boasted of his hatred for people of color and immigrants, who denounced women and LGBT+ people, was elected president.

A powerful, effective pushback against this surge of white supremacy requires more than answering “hate speech” with other words.

We must look unflinchingly at the fact that white supremacy is a tactic always employed by those who lose the battles of capitalism — and the politicians they elect — to divide the global multinational working class and turn us against each other.

In the U.S., laws enforcing discriminatory differences between white indentured servant workers and enslaved African workers were established by law as early as 1619. (tinyurl.com/ydy4v4nt)

This racist division embedded in the economic system, the Confederacy and the South by centuries of plantation, coal mine, steel and lumber mill, and now auto factory owners — and taken national as a political strategy in the 1890s. As different as these categories of people may have entered the U.S., they have also been target- ed by both racist laws and propaganda.

As for the Christchurch shooter, he was born in Australia. His family in 1978 was made up of poor and working-class white prisoners transported there for small crimes against property. The extreme right, with its open border, colonial racism, which went to war with the Indigenous people whose continent it was, killing them and seizing their land.

The Christchurch killer, who identified himself as “working class,” was so brainwashed by colonialism and the capitalist ideology that he actually called the Muslim people he murdered “invaders … who colo- nize other people’s lands.” (tinyurl.com/yt6gkj7y)

His crime and his annuasia about Australia — and New Zealand — are also the history of the U.S. The fact that this country and its economy were founded on the theft of Indigenous lands, and on the unpaid, unpaid labor of people of African descent, has been blotted from the memory, the understanding or the empathy of many white workers.

Capitalism is soaked blood-red in the atrocities and beliefs of white supremacy. We must fight this hatred — indiscrimi- nately, untringly — with every revolutionairy tool we have. We must renew our struggle against racism, anti-immigrant bigotry and white supremacy. This must happen far beyond informal one-to-one conversa- tions with friends, family or neighbors. In every one of our unions, workplaces, community groups, religious bodies, schools from primary to university, we must be strategically, systematically organizing not just around anti-racism but against white supremacist ideology.

The ruling-class capitalists who now dominate the U.S. are still setting up shop on holding together a death-dealing economic system that makes them multibillionaires. They have no compunction, and plenty of excuse, turning us against each other. We will outwit them, we will defy them, we will out-organize them. We will show our solidarity as the multinational, multigendered working class by sticking together and defending each other.
some 200 striker families were evicted with the company. After the union erected a tent encampment.

Anti-union vigilantes, with the support of local police, destroyed the camp as well as the union headquarters on April 14. A second camp was erected, protected by armed union guards.

On June 7, police attempted to enter the encampment, provoking a shootout that left five policemen wounded. When Police Chief Orville Aderhold died the following day — though it could not be determined who shot the chief — his death was used to justify violence and repression against the strike.

Vigilantes — organized as the Committee of 100, supposedly representing “loyal employees” but mainly consisting of supervisors — kidnapped and flogged union activist Ben Wells.

Strikers, including May and other women leaders, were being routinely jailed. Three women were among 15 union leaders arrested and charged with first-degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder in the death of Aderhold. There was no evidence that any of them had fired the fatal shot or that the killing was premeditated.

The defense appeared close to winning a “not guilty” verdict when the judge declared a mistrial on Sept. 9. Supposedly a juror “went insane” after seeing the prosecution’s exhibit, a plaster maimed cloth in Aderhold’s blood-stained uniform.

Anti-union forces were furious that no “guilty” verdict had been reached. Mobs comprising mill management and local businessmen destroyed union offices in Gastonia and Bessemer City and assaulted unionists in Charlotte.

A second trial was scheduled for Sept. 30. The state dropped the charges against the other seven who were reduced to second-degree murder, a conviction appeared likely.

Vigilante murder of Ella May

Over 20 Bessemer City strikers, including pregnant Ella May, pilled into the back of a pickup truck on Sept. 14 and headed to Gastonia to support the framed-up union leaders. Their vehicle was forced to turn around by 10 to 15 carloads of vigilantes, who followed them as they retreated.

The union truck had to brake suddenly when a car sped up and stopped in front of it. The occupants of that car, along with others, surrounded the strikers. A member of this armed group shot Ella May in the chest. She died instantly in the arms of her companion, Charlie Shope.

Hundreds of mill workers attended May’s funeral and burial, while others left the town stations to pay respects as the casket passed by. Neither the family nor the NTU had funds for a headstone. Her brother Wesley put a large rock in the ground to mark the plot.

Even in death she garnered the ire of the Gastonia Gazette, which claimed her murder “shades into insignificance when compared with the lawlessness of the communists at Loray.”

Vera Buch later opined that, more than anything, her friend was singled out because she “understood immediately the principle of racial equality.” (Kristina Horton, “Martyr of Loray Mill: Ella May and the 1929 Textile Workers’ Strike in Gastonia, North Carolina”)

Violence against strikers continued after the funeral with another kidnapping and flogging and more attacks on union offices. After enduring almost six months of anti-union terror, and with many strikers returning to work, the NTU officially called off the strike on Sept. 27.

Remembering resistance

Legal and extra-legal terror against workers was not limited to NTU strikes in Gastonia County. Textile strikes led by the moderate and segregationist United Textile Workers, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, were also brutally suppressed. Six strikers were killed in Marion, N.C., in 1929, immortalized by folk singer Woody Guthrie in “The Marion Massacre.”

Eventually seven men were charged with conspiracy to murder Ella May. Dozens of eyewitnesses, including everyone who was in the pickup truck, testified before investigators. Many saw Horace Wheeliti, a “loyal” Loray worker, fire the fatal shot. Nevertheless, on Oct. 23 a Gaston County grand jury concluded that there was not enough evidence to charge anyone with May’s murder.

By contrast, the seven charged with the murder of Chief Aderhold received sentences ranging from seven to 20 years. They skipped bail and fled to the Soviet Union.

The drama of the Gastonia strike has been the subject of six novels. Decades later, folk singers Malvina Reynolds and Gary Green recorded songs written about Ella May. In 1977 local unionists finally erected a headstone at her gravesite. Currently a memorial committee is raising funds for a life-size sculpture to be placed there.

Ella May — a woman warrior and a class-conscious anti-racist who gave her life for the betterment of her class — is not forgotten.

Se acerca una nueva generación de socialistas

Continúa de la página 12

Vivimos en un mundo cada vez más interconectado donde la conciencia de clase está aumentando. La unidad entre las masas es siempre una señal de que la clase dominante pronto perderá su control sobre el poder. La fuerza moral del socialismo no puede ser detenida, ni tampoco las masas que la han empujado hacia la vanguardia de la política estadounidense. Las huelgas de los trabajadores solo se intensificarán. A medida que estos movimientos de trabajadores continúen siendo más interseccionales y se unan a movimientos antirracistas, anticapitalistas y antiterroristas, se volverán incontenibles. Cualquier intento por parte de la clase dominante de suprimir estos movimientos solo acelerará su propia desaparición.

Los jóvenes de hoy han empezado de las ruinas del mayor desastre económico desde la Gran Depresión. Su experiencia les ha enseñado que el capitalismo no es un motor del crecimiento económico, sino de la canibalización y la catástrofe ambiental. En su lugar, anhelan un sistema basado en la equidad y la justicia económica. La clase dominante está atemorizada de que pronto lo lograrán.
Venezuela después del apagón

Movilización masiva responde al ataque imperialista

Por Sam Ordóñez

17 de marzo — Una nueva movilización masiva antiimperialista llenó las calles de Caracas el día 16 de marzo, celebrando una nueva victoria contra los ataques del imperialismo estadounidense. En otra prueba del aumento de la organización y movilización del pueblo venezolano.

La nueva fase de la agresión imperialista buscaba destruir una vez el proceso bolivariano pero falló, y ahora se encuentra estallado contra un pueblo venezolano que ha renovado su organización popular y antiimperialista.

Según fuentes oficiales la electricidad ha sido reactivada en la mayoría de las zonas de Caracas, luego de un apagón que empezó el día jueves 7 de marzo. El apagón, que duró una semana en algunas partes del país, fue resultado de un fallo en la planta hidroeléctrica conocida como “El Guri.”

Los gobiernos de Venezuela, Cuba y Rusia han denunciado varias formas de ataque contra el sistema eléctrico. La principal ha sido cibernética, con varios ataques dirigidos, según declaraciones del presidente Nicolás Maduro, desde Houston y Chicago.

Esta parece ser la principal causa del apagón, ya que logró desactivar el sistema de captura y control de datos de la red eléctrica. Incluso la publicación Forbes, que se autoproclama como una “herramienta capitalista”, publicó un reporte detallando que sería muy realista para la inteligencia estadounidense hacer un ataque cibernético contra Venezuela.

Por su parte, el gobierno puso en marcha un plan para modernizar los sistemas digitales y tomar partes de repuesto, entre otras necesidades.

La hipocresía imperialista

Los medios corruptos internacionales se han enfocado en Venezuela en los últimos meses, publicando historia tras historia del sufrimiento del pueblo venezolano. Es muy poco probable que esta decisión se haga por razones humanitarias, ya que con su reportaje han demostrado al gobierno legítimo y creado la narrativa que justifica la política injerencista de Trump.

Durante el apagón, CNN y el New York Times publicaban historias de agua negra, culpando siempre al gobierno “corrupto.” Pero en Flint, Michigan no ha habido agua potable durante años, y los medios corporativos parecen haberse olvidado.

Donald Trump, Mike Pence, Mike Pompeo, John Bolton, Elliott Abrams, y Marco Rubio han hablado de la “ayuda” que necesitan, como una preocupación por el pueblo venezolano. Todo la información que existe sobre ellos desmiente esta tesis no comunes”.

Brian and Abrams no han hecho más que destruir países y cometer crímenes de guerra en todo el tiempo que han trabajado en la política. Marco Rubio se ha pasado su vida como un perdedor en las elecciones de América Latina mediante amenazas en Twitter y el Senado.

Pompeo fue director de la CIA antes de asumir el cargo de Secretario de Estado, por lo que no podemos saber todos sus crímenes. Pero por ejemplo de su gran sentimiento humanitario, recientemente anunció que bloquearía la entrada de cualquiera que investiga los crímenes de EEUU en Argelia. (AP, March 15)

Mientras las oficiales amenazan la guerra contra Venezuela, Donald Trump ha declarado un estado de emergencia para construir un muro fronterizo, llegando a usar el veto presidencial para defenderlo. Esto se suma a la separación de familias migrantes, y la práctica de poner a los niños en campos de concentración.

Y aunque el más insólito de los artículos es la hipocresía del imperialismo es, como en muchas instancias, Puerto Rico. Desde el huracán María en el último año, estaba sin electricidad y agua durante meses, y algunas partes siguen así.

Mientras el gobierno estadounidense, mediante una junta fiscal, destruye lo que había sobrevivido el huracán, el gobierno de Nicolás Maduro envió combustible. Ahora, la policía y mercenarios reprimen con fuerza al pueblo boricua y la gente viaja horas para encontrar clínicas de diálisis para salvar vidas. Todas las peores mentiras de los imperialistas sobre Venezuela son realidades para Puerto Rico durante casi dos años.

Solidaridad y organización para derrotar al imperialismo

A pesar de lo que dicen los medios de comunicación internacionales, Venezuela ha superado ante el desafío del imperialismo. Y ahora es una nueva tendencia de moda, es una balsa salvavidas en un mar de indigenización capitalista.

Un sistema que pone a los trabajadores y a Jovenes en la política, hay que decir que el sistema la hipocresía de los gobiernos capitalistas, el capitalismo nunca puede ser y nunca será un sistema que pone a los trabajadores y a Jovenes en la política, hay que decir que el sistema la hipocresía de los gobiernos capitalistas, el capitalismo nunca puede ser y nunca será un sistema que pone a los trabajadores y a Jovenes en la política, hay que decir que el sistema la hipocresía de los gobiernos capitalistas, el capitalismo nunca puede ser y nunca será un sistema que pone a los trabajadores y a Jovenes en la política, hay que decir que el sistema la hipocresía de los gobiernos capitalistas, el capitalismo nunca puede ser y nunca será un sistema que pone a los trabajadores y a Jovenes en la política, hay que decir que el sistema la hipocresía de los gobiernos capitalistas, el capitalismo nunca puede ser y nunca será un sistema que pone a los trabajadores y a Jovenes en la política, hay que decir que el sistema la hipocresía de los gobiernos capitalistas, el capitalismo nunca puede ser y nunca será