



Strike ends Chicago teachers win gains

By Sue Davis

“Did we accomplish every single little thing?” said Jesse Sharkey, president of the Chicago Teachers Union, during an Oct. 31 victory press conference. “No. But I can say that we moved the needle on educational justice in the city.”

And that was the point of the 11-day strike (beginning Oct. 17 and ending Oct. 31) at the country’s third-largest public school system with nearly 400,000 students, the majority in poor Black and Brown families.

The 25,000 teachers represented by the Chicago Teachers Union, Local 1 of the American Federation of Teachers, and 7,500 education support staff in Service

Employees Union (SEIU) Local 73, neatly summed up their vision of “social justice unionism” by fighting for “smaller class sizes, fair pay and benefits, fully staffed supports, and justice for families.” (ctulocal1.org)

The hard-fought, five-year \$1.5 billion contract includes a 16 percent pay raise for teachers and a long-overdue 40 percent raise for teaching assistants, clerks and other lower-paid workers.

Over \$35 million will be devoted to shrinking oversized classrooms, prioritizing schools with the most at-risk students (read “segregated”), and hiring a full-time social worker and nurse in every school. The city agreed to pay education workers for five of the days they were out during

the strike.

However, the contract does not include a clause for “affordable housing,” which the teachers raised because about 17,000 Chicago Public School students are homeless — a problem linked to the city’s persistent poverty and racial segregation. Mayor Lori Lightfoot promised to take on the issue, though not in the CTU contract.

One very important community win was sanctuary protection for undocumented im/migrants on school property.

‘Bargaining for the common good’

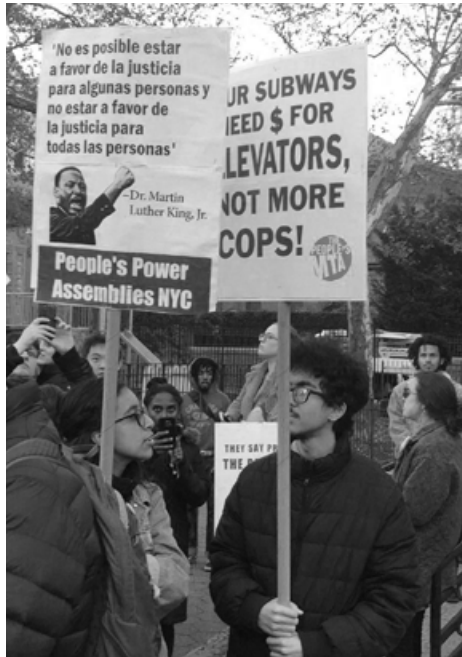
To be able to win such a progressive contract, the highly organized union put the slogan “bargaining for the common good” into practice. The CTU is led by

the left-leaning Caucus of Rank-and-File Educators, which grew out of CTU’s groundbreaking 2012 strike. Sharkey proudly told the Nov. 1 Chicago Sun Times that the teachers “showed the city what it means to care, to put yourself forward, sacrifice and achieve something.”

A vital part of the union’s winning strategy was putting participatory democracy into practice. The House of Delegates, with elected representatives from nearly 700 schools, met repeatedly to prepare before the strike. Delegates were given work plans to help them organize daily pickets at every school, which totally depended on rank-and-file participation. And delegates met often during the strike

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NYC: Subway protest vs. cop brutality



WW PHOTO: TONI ARENSTEIN

Over 1,000 militant activists streamed into main streets in downtown Brooklyn on Nov. 1 to protest recent police attacks on people of color and young people.

A few days before, a video went viral that exposed New York Police Department cops attacking a group of teenagers at a Brooklyn subway stop. The Metropolitan Transit Authority, which oversees the city’s subway system, and the NYPD have increasingly targeted young working people of color for minor offenses, arresting them as they attempt to get to school and work. New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo has announced he’ll increase cops patrolling the MTA by 20 percent, allegedly to deal with “homelessness” and “fare evasion.”

The four-hour march, called by Black Lives Matter, the Peoples’ Power Assemblies/NYC and others, was an outpouring of anger at police violence. Marchers chanted, “NYPD, how do you spell racism?” and “No justice, no peace!” Protesters flooded one subway station, some jumping the fare turnstiles to assert that free public transportation should be the people’s right.

In an on-the-scene interview with New York Pix 11, Nate Peters of the PPA said: “We are here to protest NYPD violence, both in the subways and on the streets. The NYPD are modern-day slave catchers. They go around the city beating and killing people. We came out here to say, “We’ve had

enough of that!” Many of the demonstrators posted “Evade” stickers from Chile in solidarity with youth there, who helped spark the current uprising by protesting fare hikes.



— Report by WW staff



PHOTO: ASH J



PHOTO: TWU LOCAL 100

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Atlanta

Killer cop gets 12 years in Anthony Hill case

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

Nov. 2 — The family and supporters of Anthony Hill filled a DeKalb County courtroom and an overflow room to hear the sentence for ex-cop Robert Olsen. Hill, a 26-year-old African-American veteran, was shot and killed by Olsen in the parking lot of his apartment complex March 9, 2015. Housing staff had called 911 seeking help for Hill, who was observed naked and wandering in an erratic manner.

An Air Force veteran of the U.S. war on Afghanistan, Hill had been diagnosed with PTSD, but had stopped taking his meds because of damaging side effects.

Cop Olsen had been told the call was possibly for a mentally disabled person in crisis. He knew that backup was on the way. But immediately upon stopping his patrol car, he drew his gun, and within seconds he had shot and killed Anthony Hill. Olsen claimed he was in fear for his life.

After six days of jury deliberation, Olsen was convicted of four of the six counts lodged against him by a grand jury.

While a divided jury failed to convict Olsen of two counts of felony murder, Black jurors successfully made the case for guilt on aggravated assault, making a false statement and two counts of violation of oath. The potential maximum length of prison time for these four felony convictions was 35 years.

Prior to Judge LaTisha Dear Jackson issuing the sentence, four hours of additional testimony concerning Olsen's record were heard. This included citizen complaints against Olsen, impact statements by Hill's mother, father and sister, and character statements by Olsen's family and friends. The 57-year-old Olsen was expected to make a statement, but he opted not to.

Hill's family described the trauma of learning the details of Anthony's death and the agony of years of delayed trials, as well as the spurious claim of self-defense by a policeman, who had many less-lethal choices than his gun.

Both parents, Caroline Baylor Giummo and Anthony



One of the many protests for justice for Anthony Hill.

Hill Sr., addressed the pain of not hearing Olsen express any remorse for killing their son.

Judge Dear Jackson then sentenced Olsen to 20 years, to serve 12 in prison and 8 on probation.

Olsen was also given five years each on violations of oath and making a false statement, to be served concurrently. He is barred from ever having another job in law enforcement, must relinquish his 13 guns, including an AR-15, and cannot profit in any way from his case.

While Hill's family had urged the maximum sentence of 35 years, his parents agreed that “some time was better than no time.” (acj.com, Nov. 2)

At a press conference following the sentencing, Baylor Giummo thanked the team of DeKalb prosecutors, who pursued the felony murder charges despite knowing there is almost never a win on that charge if a cop is the defendant. She also expressed the family's appreciation for those who had rallied and protested demanding justice for her son.

Besides the many who filled the courtrooms, there was a continuous presence outside the county building throughout the trial. Actions included a walkout of students from nearby Decatur High School on Friday, Nov. 2, who gathered on the court steps holding “Justice for Anthony Hill” signs. □



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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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New York City forum

Chile uprising, ‘Thanksgiving’ myth, U.S. strike surge

By Monica Moorehead
New York

The New York chapter of Workers World Party held a forum on Nov. 2 featuring three dynamic women speakers on important struggles at home and abroad. Stephanie Tromblay, Huron/Metis non-status and of mixed Southeast Indigenous heritage, officially opened the meeting by reminding everyone:

“We meet on stolen Lenni-Lenape homelands — the Lenapehoking. Workers World Party looks toward the day that all Indigenous nations’ land claims are paid in full, from the Wampanoag lands at the Cape [Massachusetts] to the Ohlone lands in the San Francisco Bay Area, from the Appalachians to the Rockies.”

She went on to speak about the significance of the 50th National Day of Mourning and the racist myth of “Thanksgiving.” Explaining the origins of NDOM, Tromblay said, “In 1970, an Aquinnah Wampanoag man, Wamsutta Frank James, who had been asked to speak at a fancy Commonwealth of Massachusetts banquet celebrating the 350th anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims, was told by a representative of the Department of Commerce and Development that he wouldn’t be allowed to give his speech.

“[Wamsutta] used one of their own



Siddika Degia (left); Nieves Ayress Moreno (right).



PHOTOS: PEOPLE'S VIDEO NETWORK

history books as a basis for his talk — a Pilgrim’s account of their first year on Turtle Island. The book told of their opening his ancestor’s graves, stealing the Wampanoag villages’ food supplies, selling his ancestors as slaves for 220 shillings each.

“Back in 1970, the organizers of the fancy state dinner told Wamsutta they would only let him speak if he agreed to deliver a speech that they would write. Instead, Wamsutta and hundreds of Indigenous people and supporters gathered in Plymouth and observed the first National Day of Mourning.

“Only Indigenous people spoke at Day of Mourning, and that is true to this day.” The demand for the freedom of Indigenous political prisoner Leonard Peltier is also raised at NDOM, along with a solidarity statement written by him.” (Hear the entire talk at youtu.be/syYPJrU2Xw/.)

‘Workers can fight back and win through people power’

Siddika Degia, a Peoples Power Assemblies/NYC organizer and student at CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies, spoke on the upsurge of U.S. strikes in 2019 — the highest since 1986. An estimated 85,000 workers participated in 13 different strikes the week of Oct. 21, Degia said. She explained about the nature of the strikes:

“All these 13 strikes across the country have not been about unions or about wages and health insurance. Strikes are never about the wages or health insurance no matter how much the ruling class would like you to believe.

“Strikes are about the rank and file fighting for all the working class. Workers demanding change because they are

feeling the burden of capitalism and want better lives.”

Degia stated, “These are workers fighting for things like unionizing or better work conditions or even things like getting ICE [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] out of Greyhound or cops out of the subway. Often undocumented workers and Black and Brown workers are the most vulnerable workers in the USA because they are criminalized in this country.

“When unionizing, or fighting for their rights, workers often call out ICE on its treatment of undocumented workers. Yet, demos like ICE off Greyhound — a migrant-led movement — or Peoples Power Assemblies/NYC organizing around the subway fare-evasion campaign lets workers know that they can fight back and win through people power.” (Hear Degia’s entire talk at youtu.be/ainM4T29R38/.)

Youth rebellion rocks Chile

Nieves Ayress Moreno, from the La Peña del Bronx movement and a former political prisoner of the civil-military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet in Chile during the early 1970s, a regime backed by U.S. imperialism, spoke about the current uprising in Chile.

Ayress Moreno began her summary by saying that the Nov. 1 protest against the racist policing of Black and Brown youth in the New York City subways was very similar to Chilean high school students rebelling against fare hikes. She stated that in Santiago alone, 7,000 people have been arrested and their whereabouts are unknown. More than 1,500 have been injured.

Part of her written statement reads: “The violent reaction by [President] Piñera toward the youth angered Chilean civil society. The young people reminded Chilean society that it is not merely about the increase of the fare but 30 years of economic policy to privatize the whole country. Chileans are sending a warning to the world about waking up to the nightmare of the neoliberal market.

“Neoliberal policy privatizes education, it privatizes water, it privatizes health, it privatizes social security, it privatizes transportation, it lowers the wages of the workers to subsidize the rich. The Chilean people say, ‘They took away so much that they even took away our fear.’” (To hear Ayress Moreno’s comments, go to youtu.be/-o72MDGrE-o/.) □

‘They took away so much, they even took away our fear’

Nieves Ayress Moreno, from the La Peña del Bronx movement and former political prisoner of the civil-military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, read the following statement in Spanish on the current uprising in Chile at a Nov. 2 Workers World Party forum in New York City.

The neoliberal economic model is crumbling under the nose of the Chilean elite. [President] Piñera is the continuation of the Pinochet dictatorship. Chile is in a state of emergency, where Piñera declared that he is at war with the protesters. The military has gone out in droves, and tanks can be heard rolling down the streets of Santiago once again as in the days of the military dictatorship.

On Friday, Oct. 18, high school students decided that enough was enough:

no more abuse from the privatization of Chile. Piñera increased the subway fare by one dollar during peak hours. High school students had enough and skipped the subway fare in massive numbers. In the days that followed, Piñera responded violently against students thinking that Chilean society was going to ignore the abuses.

The violent reaction by Piñera toward the youth angered Chilean civil society. The young people reminded Chilean society that it is not merely about the increase of the fare, but 30 years of economic policy to privatize the whole country. Chileans are sending a warning to the world about waking up to the nightmare of the neoliberal market. Neoliberal policy privatizes education, it privatizes water, it privatizes health, it privatizes social security, it privatizes

transportation, it lowers the wages of the workers to subsidize the rich. The Chilean people say, “They took away so much that they even took away our fear.”

The discontent in the country has woken to the false claims of the Chilean economic miracle. People had to face the ugly reality of vast inequality caused by the privatization and the weakening of trade unions, ecological pollution due to deregulation — a financial miracle for the 1 percent but mortal consequences for the vast majority of society and mother earth.

We demand Piñera send the military back to their barracks.

In a democracy, people have the right to protest without being shot.

For more information, contact chileresisteny@gmail.com.

Oakland teachers and parents condemn police brutality

By Judy Greenspan
Oakland, Calif.

Oct. 28 — At a vigil called by the Oakland Education Association, parents, teachers and community members denounced police brutality against demonstrators protesting school closures and consolidations.

During a loud but peaceful protest Oct. 23 at an Oakland School Board meeting, Oakland city police and some of the school district’s own police force charged into a group of parents, children and teachers, and several people were hurt.

Teachers and parents who were beaten by the combined police force spoke frankly and forcefully about the injuries they received. Those attacked included members of the OEA and the Oakland Not for Sale Coalition. That coalition has been actively opposing the Oakland Unified School District’s “blueprint for quality schools,” which will lead to the closure of



Oakland, Calif., Oct. 28.

WWW PHOTO: JUDY GREENSPAN

24 high-need, high-poverty schools.

The Not for Sale coalition calls for stopping all school closures, dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline, fighting back against the charter school takeover of public schools and involving the community in reforming OUSD’s financial management.

The coalition has protested at every board meeting since the beginning of the school year, sometimes taking over the meeting.

The Oct. 28 rally was opened by OEA President Keith Brown, who stood behind the banner, “Oakland for the people, not the billionaires.” He stated that school

closures only hurt teachers, parents and the community, and reiterated the union demand that all community schools be kept open.

Saru Jayaraman, a mother of two children at Kaiser Elementary school, described how she was tackled by four cops and suffered serious injuries to her knee and shoulder. Her two young daughters witnessed the violent police attack and were severely traumatized.

A large contingent from the Black Organizing Project showed up at the rally to support the Oakland community. BOP has an ongoing campaign to push cops out of the schools and fund counselors instead. Jessica Brown, BOP organizing director, called for an end to the school-to-prison pipeline.

The OEA and other groups announced future actions to stop the closures and privatization of Oakland schools. For more information, check out the Facebook pages of OEA and Oakland Not for Sale. □

‘Expanding Empire’

Foreign wars and foreign investments

By Vince Copeland

The following is the opening chapter of the book “Expanding Empire: The global war drive of big business and the forces that will stop it.” It was first published in 1969, during the Vietnam War, and its analysis is as relevant today as then. It can be read in full at workers.org/cm/empire.html.

The war in Vietnam, the longest the U.S. has ever waged, at first seems also to be the most illogical and inexplicable. Its supporters will not explain it. And its opponents—even some of its most serious opponents—often cannot.

The latter usually attribute the war to President Lyndon Johnson’s dictatorial nature, to the jingoism of the generals, or to a blindly chauvinist, anti-communist “crusade.”

All of these are powerful factors, of course. But the basic cause of the U.S. invasion of Vietnam lies deep within the social and economic system of the United States. The aggression was built in and the Asian war was predetermined before Lyndon Johnson was born. And although the U.S. is indisputably the most anti-communist country in the world, its present war drive was building up before communism was known as a theory in Vietnam or organized as a party anywhere in Asia.

War today is far more deadly, destructive and infinitely more expensive than it was in the early 19th century. But what [Prussian General Carl von] Clausewitz said then is still true today: “War is the continuation of politics by other means.”

And the high politics of war and peace, like the low politics of vulgar personal aggrandizement and corrupt machine rule, is “concentrated economics.”

The politics that produced the war in Vietnam was the

politics of advancing the interests of the “United States” on the world arena. The economics was — and still is — the interests of big business.

The reason for the quotation marks on the “United States” is that a tiny clique of men rule the United States and identify their own interests with the “national interest” and always mean their own interests when they use the phrase “national interest” in their newspapers or on TV, radio, etc. They virtually own the United States and certainly own the government of the United States. They are — big business.

Big business has been continually expanding within the United States — with many “contracting” panics and depressions, of course — eating up its competitors, getting bigger and bigger, some branches of it now making thousands of times the profit that their corporate progenitors made a century ago.

And it is also expanding outside the United States. Since approximately 1898, the giant North American continent has been too small an arena for the fullest expansion of big business. Its auto plants, billion-dollar banks, glorified hot dog stands and hotels now dot the globe.

Considering the tremendous open spaces still in the United States to this day, not to mention the under-population of Canada — where U.S.-owned industry predominates — and the underdevelopment of Mexico — where the U.S., like 16th century Spain, is the real overlord — this would seem to be illogical, at the very least.

And considering that millions are unemployed in the U.S. itself, that hundreds of cities are crying to have their slums torn down, that tens of millions of homes need to be constructed, and even the existing factories seldom operate at full capacity — considering all this, it would seem strange indeed to ordinary logic that big business

would have to put up so many plants, dig so many mines, drill so much oil and sell so many Fords and so much Coca-Cola abroad.

But it is not strange to the U.S. businessperson. And a moment’s reflection would turn up at least one good reason: namely, that it’s usually more profitable to exploit the European countries, the extremely low-paid colonial workers and plunder the underdeveloped countries’ resources, than it is to invest at home.

It isn’t just greed for this extra profit that causes the big money people to invest abroad. It’s also because the field for profitable investment at home periodically shrinks under this system, even though there is plenty of open space and human need.

The first real foreign war of the United States — the Spanish American War — took place almost simultaneously with the first real expansion in U.S. foreign investment. And that is the real secret of understanding that war, as it is of understanding all subsequent U.S. wars.

It was precisely in the 1890s that investment abroad — that is, the export of U.S. capital — took place on any substantial scale. And in 1897, just before the Spanish-American War, there were still “only” 700 million U.S. dollars invested abroad. By 1914, the foreign holdings had leaped to \$3.5 billion — five times as much. Without the war, this could not have happened.

The war with Spain was motivated by the desire to exploit Cuba, Puerto Rico, the rest of Latin America and the Philippines, etc., and to get complete control of the Caribbean so as to facilitate the U.S. control of the contemplated Panama Canal and open up easier access to business expansion in Asia. It was a question of economic expansion and pretty much understood and openly explained as such at the time.

The expansion into foreign countries resulted from a new stage in the expansion of business: the export of capital. Business had been exporting ordinary commodities of trade for centuries. The export of capital was something new — especially for the United States. And it couldn’t be done without foreign wars.

The reason for this isn’t so very complicated. The export of capital goods — that is, machinery, mining equipment, railroad engines, earth-moving tools, etc. — is intended not to make just a quick “small” profit, but a constantly repeating profit that can go on forever, if the exploiter can hold onto the “investment.”

What a foreign investment really is

The investment of capital in a foreign country should be regarded somewhat like sending a huge suction pump there, which pulls out the metals from the ground, the products from the soil and the fruits from the trees — with the help, of course, of the labor of the “native” people working on this suction pump.

It is as if the pump were connected to pipes that run back to the “home” country, via the banks and big corporations. All the rich products are showered from the pipes into the treasuries of these institutions, in the form of profits.

Whole nations are drained by these great suction pumps — or “investments.” And the profits are so great that rival groups of big business, led by small cliques of big banks, go to war with each other over the exploitation of these nations.

And when they go to war, they make sure the masses do the fighting for them — although in the name of “national defense” or “freedom” or “democracy” or some similar ideal. The Russo-Japanese War, the First World War and the German-Japanese-Italian war against the U.S.-Britain-France were such wars.

These wars were to settle the question of which set of bankers would have the privilege of setting up their suction pumps in “underdeveloped” and some not so underdeveloped countries.

It was a new thing for the United States. It was obviously aggressive and imperialistic. And there was tremendous opposition from one end of the country to the other.

A public outcry went up against the plunder of the Philippines, the taking over of Cuba and Puerto Rico, and even the quiet annexation of Hawaii in the same year.

And since the U.S. actually attached land in the “old-fashioned” colonialist way, rather than the modern, less visible way of simply “investing,” the outrage was all the greater. But Theodore Roosevelt and his fellow imperialists defended their course stoutly and virtuously — in about the same words as Lyndon Johnson did the Vietnam War. □

Since 1970, Indigenous people & allies have gathered at noon on Cole's Hill in Plymouth to commemorate a National Day of Mourning on the US thanksgiving holiday. Many Native people do not celebrate the arrival of the Pilgrims & other European settlers. Thanksgiving Day is a reminder of the genocide of millions of Native people, the theft of Native lands, and the relentless assault on Native cultures. Participants in National Day of Mourning honor Indigenous ancestors and the struggles of Native peoples to survive today. It is a day of remembrance and spiritual connection as well as a protest of the racism and oppression that Native people continue to experience.



50th NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING
Thursday, November 28, 2019
12 Noon - Cole's Hill (above Plymouth Rock)
Plymouth, Massachusetts

Unite with us in our struggle to create a true awareness of Native peoples and demonstrate the unity of Indigenous peoples internationally. Help shatter the untrue glass image of the Pilgrims and the unjust system based on racism, sexism, homophobia and the profit-driven destruction of the Earth.

Solidarity with Indigenous struggles throughout the world!
We welcome all our Indigenous relations who have been crossed by the US border and ICE. #closethecamp

Special message from Leonard Peltier *Respectful allies welcome*
For More Information/Orientation:
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Lessons of the victorious Harvard dining hall strike: Marxism-Leninism and unionism

By Ed Childs

The 750 striking Harvard University Dining Service workers — cooks, dishwashers, servers and cashiers — brought multibillion-dollar Harvard University to its knees on Oct. 25, 2016. After a three-week strike, the university bosses caved, giving the members of UNITE HERE Local 26 even more than they had initially demanded. Most importantly, all the health care take-aways the Harvard Corporation had demanded were off the table.

The strike victory holds valuable lessons for workers and oppressed in the age of global capitalism — particularly under the Trump administration and the rise of fascist, racist elements. Workers World’s Martha Grevatt interviewed Chief Steward Ed Childs, a cook and leader in Local 26 for more than 40 years. This is Part 4, webposted by Workers World on March 5, 2017, in which Childs explains how the workers won. The entire four-part series is available at workers.org.

We had no illusions that we could beat this country’s oldest corporation — Harvard Corporation, which follows the dictates of Wall Street — by just going through the motions of picketing each worksite. Our tactics were all militant, class-struggle tactics: constant pickets, marches and rallies with raucous chanting and constant drumming on plastic buckets. You could hear us all over campus and in classrooms.

Beating back the attack on health care — saving it from the 1% — is the beginning of something with national and international significance. People see Trump attacking even the limited Affordable Care Act and feel hopeless about the fight for health care. We showed we can win.

By the third week, Harvard’s position was crumbling. We pushed them over the edge when students occupied the building where we were negotiating. Seizing the means of production isn’t just about factories. When you are up against a for-profit university, where finance capital trains its own, a classroom building is the means of production.

Occupations are a left tactic communists perfected in the 1930s. As Sam Marcy explained in the book “High Tech, Low Pay,” “Seizure and occupation of the plants and other facilities have the effect of hastening a crisis in the relationship between the employers and the workers. ...

“It can change the form of the struggle, take it out of its narrow confines and impart to it a broader perspective. In truth, it brings to the surface a new working-class perspective on the struggle between the workers and the bosses. It says in so many words that we are not tied to a one-dimensional type of struggle with the bosses at a



PHOTO: CREDIT: HARVARD UNITE HERE LOCAL 26

The defiant and triumphant Harvard University dining hall workers of Unite Here Local 26.

time when they have the levers of political authority in their hands.”

That is as true in a restaurant, hospital or university as inside a plant.

In the middle of the occupation, the Boston Globe and the Boston Herald, which had not covered us since the first day, suddenly had an editorial saying to settle with the workers. TV news, which had been negative, said the same. Even Harvard’s own press people told the media to say it was time for Harvard to settle.

Now the UNITE HERE International has claimed the Harvard strike as its own. Because it was so successful and had so much support, they wanted to call for a general strike on Inauguration Day. The international president of the union could not convince anyone in the AFL-CIO, but he said that the Harvard strike proves it can be done.

The union also asked its employers to give workers the day off to protest immigrant-bashing. Would this be happening inside our union if we had not waged a successful strike against Harvard — and indirectly against Wall Street?

Employing communist tactics

With the strike victory behind us, we need to absorb its lessons. What is the role of communists in unions: What do they do? All our tactics have to be viewed as Leninist tactics as distinct from ultra-leftism. We need to revive a revolutionary Leninist union perspective and not let Lenin’s union work be lost.

What Lenin wrote in “Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder” describes revolutionary tactics to a T. Lenin was worried that his experience leading to the success of the Russian Revolution would be lost because Russia was a backward country and the bourgeoisie was organizing to crush it.

Union leaders like Samuel Gompers in the U.S. and others in Europe laughed at Lenin, but Lenin said to fight it out with the labor bureaucracy!

Look at the union leadership in the U.S. since the American Federation of Labor’s founding in 1886. There have only been six presidents: Gompers, Green, Meany, Kirkland, Sweeney, Trumka — the first three were for life. But Lenin said to stay in the unions.

There has been a debate in the labor movement about what won our strike, but it was classic Leninism: We won with a political struggle. I’ve learned from Sam Marcy, Milt Neidenberg and others how we struggle — “mild in manner, bold in matter” — by bringing the officials along but controlling our message and getting the politics across.

If we ignore the fact that this was led and nurtured by communists, we lose half the meaning of this strike.

All my work in the union has been about applying a classic Marxist-Leninist approach to a current situation. Workers World Party has been the guiding light of this union from the time when we first organized, through past strikes and last year’s battle. Workers World was the only news source anywhere to chronicle every event of the strike from the workers’ viewpoint.

What Marx wrote in “Trade Unions: Their Past, Present and Future” in 1866 applies totally today: “Apart from their original purposes, [unions] must now learn to act deliberately as organizing centers of the working class, in the broad interest of its complete emancipation. They must aid every social and political movement tending in that direction. Considering themselves and acting as the champion representatives of the whole working class, that cannot fail to enlist the non-society [workers] into their ranks.

“They must look carefully after the interests of the worst paid trades, such as the agricultural laborers [and today the service proletariat, including precarious workers], rendered powerless by exceptional circumstances. They must convince the world at large that their efforts, far from being narrow and selfish, aim at the emancipation of the downtrodden millions.”

Workers World Party First Secretary Larry Holmes, speaking to party labor cadre in September [2016], brought this up to date: “The organization of the working class must advance to encompass larger and larger numbers, whatever their circumstances — not based on an industry or a country, but on overthrowing capitalism.”

Phebe Eckfeldt, Steve Gillis, Martha Grevatt, Steve Kirschbaum, Milt Neidenberg and Minnie Bruce Pratt contributed to this series of articles.

Change is essential! Build Workers World!

As a newspaper that promotes revolutionary socialism, it’s essential to welcome change — especially long overdue change. Like throwing Christopher Columbus into the dustbin of world history with other false idols of colonialism and imperialism.

A movement has been afoot for several decades to eliminate Columbus Day, the second Monday in October, and rename it Indigenous Peoples’ Day. This country, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, was built on stolen lands. Indigenous Peoples’ Day calls attention to U.S. genocidal policies of warfare, massacres, smallpox blankets and forced assimilation.

Indigenous Peoples’ Day also commemorates and honors the great historical, cultural, social, economic and political contributions that Native nations and peoples have made across this country.

If you agree that it’s essential for Workers World to salute the importance of change this fall, then it’s time to join the Workers World Supporter Program, which since 1977 has helped put out the paper. Members receive a year’s subscription to WW, a monthly letter about timely issues and five free subscriptions to give to friends for a donation of a minimum of \$75 or \$100 or \$300 (only \$25 a month). There’s no limit on your



WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

generosity!

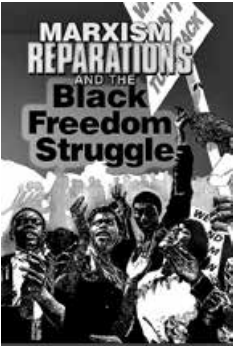
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Marxism, Reparations & the Black Freedom Struggle

Edited by
Monica Moorehead

An anthology of writings from
Workers World newspaper.

Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination • Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery • Black Youth: Repression & Resistance • The Struggle for Socialism Is Key • Domestic Workers United Demand Passage of a Bill of Rights • Black & Brown Unity: A Pillar of Struggle for Human Rights & Global Justice! • Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior • Racism & Poverty in the Delta • Haiti Needs Reparations, Not Sanctions • Alabama’s Black Belt: Legacy of Slavery, Sharecropping & Segregation • Are Conditions Ripe Again Today? Anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion



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Strike ends: Chicago teachers win gains

Continued from page 1

to learn about the day’s negotiations and to reinforce the fighting will and spirit of the bargaining team.

No wonder there was a massive turnout, despite drenching rain and snow, for the union’s march and rally on Oct. 25. As they marched tens of thousands strong, teachers, staff and union allies joined in chanting, “If we don’t get it, shut it down.”

“I solemnly swear that I will never stop fighting for my students” read a handmade picket sign carried that day. “[That] sums up what makes the teachers’ strike so important,” wrote Sarah Lazare in an Oct. 29 article from In These Times, “Chicago Teachers Are Carrying the Torch of Decades of Militant Workers Struggles.”

CTU’s winning strategy was firmly rooted in traditional “working-class organizing.” Contrast that with how the United Auto Workers conducted its concurrent 40-day strike. While UAW convened its House of Delegates for discussion of the tentative agreement, the union leadership did not involve the delegates on a day-to-day basis. In a WW article about the UAW struggle in this issue, Martha Grevatt points out how the UAW forgot its working-class roots, based in the strong Flint sit-down strike in 1936-37, after the 1950s’ anti-communist Red Scare that pushed progressives out of unions. (See more about the UAW strike in October WW articles by Grevatt.)



CTU and SEIU rally, Oct. 17.

PHOTO: FIGHTBACK! NEWS

Lazare traces some of the history of fighting for “workers power” to the Industrial Workers of the World, founded in Chicago in 1905, which called for one big union regardless of industry, trade or craft, gender or race. The first example she cites is the successful 1912 strike in Lawrence, Mass., textile factories, known as the Bread and Roses strike, led by mainly women workers from 51 countries.

A strong example of worker power also comes from the multinational International Longshore and Warehouse Union, founded during the 1930s, which spoke out against the internment of Japanese and Japanese-American people during World War II. The long history of the ILWU includes its Local 10 protest of apartheid when it refused to load or unload South African cargo in 1984; 10,000 ILWU members shutting down 29 West Coast ports in 2008 to

protest U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; and Local 10 closing the port of Oakland, Calif., in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement in 2015.

Rising tide of strikes

As the UAW strike was drawing to a close and the CTU strike was going full throttle, an article in the Oct. 28 In These Times estimated that at least 85,000 workers participated in 13 different U.S. strikes the week of Oct. 21. The article traces the march of education worker strikes in recent years, from West Virginia to Los Angeles, to the CTU victory in 2012.

A Nov. 1 Vox article linked the 2018 education workers struggle in Los Angeles, which won smaller class sizes and hiring more nurses and guidance counselors, to inspiring Chicago teachers to fight for these demands. “The final [CTU] deal shows that strikes work,” summed up Vox.

While the teachers’ victory, which serves the huge multinational working-class community of Chicago, deserves to be celebrated throughout the U.S. and the global working-class movement, right-wing naysayers have denounced the generous contract.

But as Stacey Davis Gates, CTU vice president, told the Nov. 1 Chicago Sun Times, “In comparison to the rest of the state, we still have less staff. ... [W]e’re at the minimum. So to hear discussion arise about ‘Oh, my God. It’s gonna cost too much money.’ No, quite frankly, it should be costing a lot more money.” □

TWU Local 100 rallies for fair contract

By Mary Kaessinger
New York

Over 10,000 transit workers, members of Transport Workers Local 100, rallied on Oct. 30 in front of Metropolitan Transportation Authority headquarters at 2 Broadway in New York City. Bus drivers, subway track workers and train cleaners stood shoulder to shoulder, filling three blocks. Members of District Council 37 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Workers and Communication Workers Local 1180 came to lend support.

Many transit workers carried flags that read, “We move New York.” Signs called for safe working conditions and job security. The workers sent MTA Chairperson Pat Foye a clear, strong message on signs with the slogan: “We want a contract with no givebacks!”

TWU Local 100 members have been

working without a contract for six months — and they are angry. There was talk of striking, and the chant, “If there’s no contract, shut it down!” resonated throughout the crowd.

A band was on the stage in the middle of the street. Workers banged on drums and shouted through bullhorns. The noise created a raucous, militant atmosphere.

TWU International President John Samuelson proclaimed, “This is the biggest rally Local 100 has ever had in my time here.” (New York Daily News, Oct. 30)

From the stage, TWU Local 100 President Tony Utano stressed that workers for the Long Island Railroad and Metro North are also working without a contract, as are TWU members. This writer heard Utano say, “We are one!” several times.

Utano said transit workers “move New Yorkers seven days a week, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.” He stressed: “We bailed the MTA out when the subway was

failing. We put it back together.” Yet, the MTA “never has any money during contract time.” (Daily News)

Public Advocate Jumaane Williams told the workers that the New York City Council supports them and that they are indispensable to the city.

Elias Maysonet, Local 100’s vice chair of Brooklyn’s Pitkin Yard and a subway car cleaner, stressed: “We’re in a billion-dollar city and all we want is a living wage. We could stop the city if we wanted to, and maybe we will!” (Daily News)

No givebacks to MTA!

The transit workers’ contract expired May 15. Since then, the MTA brass has called for a 2 percent raise — but with a 2.5 percent increase in health care costs for each member, which would result in a net giveback of 0.5 percent per worker.

MTA management also seeks to change overtime pay from being counted after

eight hours of work in one day to being calculated after 40 hours of work in a week [the federal labor law minimum standard] — a big giveback. Furthermore, the MTA wants the ability to change sections of the contract if supervisors decide that workers take too much time off.

TWU Local 100 has a history of militancy. As public sector workers, they are bound by the New York State Taylor Law, which makes it illegal for them to strike. But when they successfully struck in 2005 to protect their pensions, the strike chipped away at the Taylor law.

People’s MTA activists attended the rally. Their signs, which read, “We support TWU Local 100,” were met with raised thumbs and fist pumps. The organization’s members attend MTA monthly board meetings where they demand that funds be used to build more elevators in stations, not to put police in the subways. □

SF union says

Don’t mess with ‘little yellow school bus’

By Dave Welsh

School bus drivers turned out in force Oct. 29 at the San Francisco School District headquarters to oppose changes they believe will jeopardize the safety of children, whom they shepherd every day to and from their homes and schools.

“The wheels on the bus go ‘round and ‘round, but when it comes to safety we don’t mess around,” chanted the union bus drivers from SMART Local 1741. (SMART was formed in 2008 with the merger of the United Transportation Union and the Sheet Metal Workers.) They were joined by sheet metal workers and nearly 100 other supporters, who protested outside and packed the meeting of the San Francisco Board of Education.

The proposed changes threaten to replace the familiar, tightly regulated and safe “little yellow school bus” with small unregulated vans and Uber vehicles driven by any driver with a regular

Class C license. This contrasts with the stringent testing and background checks now required for certified union drivers who transport children. Many current drivers have 30 or 40 years experience and spotless safety records.

A bus driver told the board: “It’s all about sacrificing the children’s safety just to save a little money and hire ride-share drivers.” Long-time driver Shane Hoff said, “I’d hate to see a student hurt because you’re trying to save money short-term and cut corners on driver training.”

The San Francisco Labor Council recently approved a resolution mandating detailed requirements to ensure “safety for SF school children as they are transported home-to-school in safe vehicles by qualified, experienced, unionized school bus drivers.”

The board is set to vote on details of the school bus contract with First Student, a private company, before the end of the year. □



WW PHOTO: JUDY GREENSPAN

UAW in crisis

Contracts, corruption and the capitalist state

By Martha Grevatt

Between now and Nov. 15, Ford workers will vote on a tentative agreement reached by the United Auto Workers and the company. It basically mirrors the contract approved by a majority of General Motors workers on Oct. 25 after a 40-day strike. If Ford workers accept this contract, the union will seek a similar deal from Fiat Chrysler Automobiles.

The agreement includes plans to close an engine plant in Romeo, Mich., and leaves other plants without long-term product commitments. The basic flaw in the GM contract is embedded in the agreement with Ford — that union members doing the same jobs are paid widely varying wages, with some classified as “temporary employees” for years. Pensions are frozen for another four years. Past concessions have not been reversed.

Rank-and-file autoworkers had high expectations for this year’s negotiations as the auto companies are raking in billions of dollars in record profits and CEOs are collecting hundreds of times the pay of a union autoworker. Thousands of Ford workers will probably cast a “no” ballot. Others will be satisfied with the contract’s provisions for pay increases and a sizable up-front bonus. The vote could go either way.

If the contract is rejected, the UAW leadership might go back to Ford to get a slightly better deal or hold a second vote on the exact same agreement, but making a stronger sales pitch. Or there could be a strike at Ford. The workers’ uncertainty could tip the vote toward ratification.

Meanwhile, negotiations with FCA have a new, unexpected complication: the announced merger of FCA, an Italian company, with French auto company PSA, formerly Peugeot. The new entity will be the world’s fourth-largest auto company. While auto executives claim no plants will be closed, they will inevitably seek to shed “excess capacity” down the road. A key question is whether the UAW will accept a weaker contract at FCA in exchange for an empty pledge to keep jobs in the U.S.

Short-sighted strike strategy

General Motors workers waged a powerful strike — this country’s biggest in 12 years. In 40 days, these workers learned a lifetime’s worth of lessons about working-class solidarity — something they will not forget. That is the biggest win.

Unfortunately, the union leadership did not allow strike solidarity to reach its full potential. They began with weak demands, such as calling for “a clear path” for temporary workers to become permanent employees. Rank-and-filers brought signs with a better formulation: “Everyone tier one!” The leadership instructed local leaders to only allow official UAW signs.

Much more could have been done to



GM strikers, Warren, Mich., Sept. 22.

PHOTO: MARTHA GREVATT

expand solidarity. Why didn’t the UAW call a mass labor-community protest to shut down GM world headquarters in downtown Detroit? This could easily have drawn thousands of strikers and supporters from throughout Michigan, the state with the largest concentration of autoworkers. Such an action could have been truly massive if properly built.

While the UAW is part of the global labor federation IndustriALL, nothing was done to build global solidarity. South Korean GM workers — who were on strike about similar issues — sent the UAW a message of support. GM workers in Mexico were fired for refusing to increase production, knowing that it would offset the impact of the strike in the U.S. The Canadian auto union attacked GM for closing plants in Ontario and the U.S. But no reciprocity came out of UAW headquarters, ironically known as Solidarity House.

In response to GM’s plans to shift more of its production to electric vehicles — which have fewer component parts and thus require fewer workers to assemble — the union called on GM to keep building gas-powered cars and trucks. Why didn’t the UAW instead demand a shorter work week for all workers with no cuts in pay? By opposing the shift toward production of electric vehicles, the UAW leadership blocked a natural alliance with the mass movement for climate justice, which counts the auto industry among its foes.

The UAW leadership, which initiated the GM strike, contained the strike’s energy within safe channels that posed no threat to the ruling class.

Trust of rank and file broken by corruption

These negotiations took place in the midst of a multi-million-dollar corruption scandal involving top union officials in the misappropriation of dues funds, accepting bribes from FCA in exchange for contract concessions, and taking kickbacks from vendors. Federal investigators have

implicated UAW International President Gary Jones, who has taken an indefinite paid leave of absence from his position. Other current and former UAW leaders and staff have been convicted and are facing imprisonment.

Perhaps union bureaucrats thought their cozy relationship with management would protect them from the consequences of their unethical behavior. Why would the capitalist state go after a union committed to “partnership” with the bosses? Wouldn’t UAW officials’ corporate partners intervene on their behalf? That’s a naive view as the bosses are always anti-union.

In fact, just the opposite happened. A lack of class consciousness and the allure of a bourgeois lifestyle led the union officials to engage in corrupt practices. Virulently anti-union forces in Washington brought down the hammer.

Of course, the capitalist state applies a double standard. Consider the multi-million-dollar salaries of the CEOs of Ford, GM and FCA, the billions of dollars in profits made in the past four years, and the billions of dollars paid to Wall Street in the form of interest. Corporate bosses and bankers appropriate the funds created by millions of hours of workers’ labor power to reward themselves. Isn’t this a form of embezzlement? But it’s perfectly legal under capitalism.

No good will come for the autoworkers from federal oversight of the UAW, a possible outcome of the government’s investigation. The ultimate goal of the capitalist state is to weaken the union, not to help the workers.

Is there a way forward?

Now members on the plant floor are faced with a dilemma. Can they successfully clean up corruption at Solidarity House through a process independent of the capitalist state? Can the membership rebuild their union as the fighting force it once was — the union that occupied GM for 44 days in the famous Flint sit-down

strike of 1936-37?

Some rank-and-file activists are discussing how to utilize a clause in the UAW Constitution that allows the membership to call a “Special Convention” with a specified purpose. The purpose could be a rectification process to address the threats facing the UAW, including the crisis of leadership, which is a product of bureaucratic culture and privilege and decades of class collaboration. This goes back to the 1950s and UAW leadership’s purging the left — militant members of the Communist Party USA and the Socialist Workers Party.

The union movement faces a capitalist class hell-bent on keeping labor costs down. Plant closings, outsourcing and each new wave of modernization are intended to shrink the number of workers, who now have years to wait before they can make union-scale wages.

The boom in auto sales, driven in part by easy credit and long-range payment plans for consumers, will run its course. If the auto companies took a hard line at the bargaining table today — when sales and profits are at an all-time high — what demands will the union face when a crisis of capitalist overproduction hits?

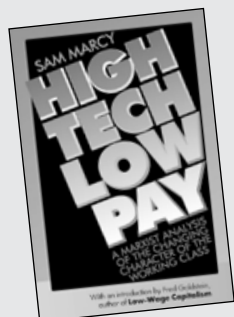
All of these concerns could be taken up in a Special Convention, with the stated purpose of breaking with business unionism and embracing a class-struggle-oriented labor movement. Even bringing the proposal to local unions would generate rich political discussion and could raise class consciousness. Holding a rank-and-file driven UAW convention would be a big step forward, not only for the autoworkers, but the broader working-class movement.

Grevatt is a FCA retiree and serves on the executive board of UAW Local 869.



PHOTO: MARTHA GREVATT

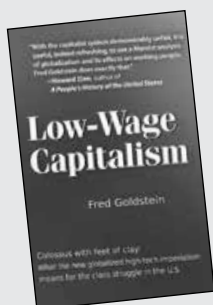
A determined GM striker in Parma, Ohio, Oct. 16.



High Tech, Low Pay

A Marxist Analysis of the Changing Character of the Working Class

By Sam Marcy with an updated introduction by Fred Goldstein, author of *Low Wage Capitalism*.



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Ecuadorians review lessons of mass uprising

By Michael Otto & Zoila Ramírez
Ibarra, Imbabura Province, Ecuador

Nov. 2 — The 12-day national strike in Ecuador forced the Lenín Moreno government to retreat on the one issue of Decree #883, which raised fuel prices and was a direct attack on the Indigenous community, more than doubling the fuel costs of farming. Despite Moreno’s retreat [on Oct 13], this was far from a clean victory despite the strength of the mass movement.

The broad movement that carried out the strike, the Paro Nacional, has no unified leadership at this time, and the government is carrying out severe repression, especially now against the Correistas — that is, the people who worked with the Citizens’ Revolution party led by former President Rafael Correa.

President Moreno vilified the uprising as an insurgency infiltrated by “violent sectors, criminals and the Correista destabilizers of democracy,” who were allegedly “part of a well-planned left-wing strategy directed from Venezuela and Cuba.” His rhetoric rationalized the persecution of Correistas, bringing legal charges against social leaders and the ‘criminalization of protest.’”

Rightist Guayaquil Mayor Cynthia Viteri, ex-mayor Jaime Nebot Saadi and the Ecuadorian oligarchy in general incited citizens to form fascistic vigilante squads. Although most Ecuadorians condemn anti-Indigenous racism, these home-grown terrorists tried to prevent the “Indios” they despise from invading the large farms they own, “their” city or its gated enclaves.

The prolonged strike in Ecuador and its outcome left all participants in the country and Marxist sympathizers around Latin America analyzing what happened, why, and if it would be possible to form the necessary united front to win.

Continent-wide explosion

Ecuadorian historian Juan Paz-y-Miño’s Oct. 28 article in the Mexican publication Nexos observed, “The events that occurred in Ecuador during the first 12 days of October 2019, have the same economic background that provoked the citizen explosion in Chile and that much earlier exploded in Haiti, the same root that has led people to support Alberto Fernández in Argentina or Evo Morales in Bolivia, as well as the gigantic citizen mobilizations in Uruguay and those that are beginning to appear in other countries. Latin America has grown tired of so much elitist privilege and of the economic model that has served as its basis.”

Paz-y-Miño also wrote: “Lenín Moreno’s government was defended and shielded by the business elites, the private media, the political and economic right-ists of the country, the right-wing governments of Latin America, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the OAS and the USA.”

The whole world witnessed the violence perpetrated by national police and armed forces against demonstrators as recorded on countless cell phones. The U.N. and human rights organizations are now investigating crimes against humanity.

Paz-y-Miño emphasized, “There was a gut reaction against the privileged economic policies [pursued for two years] by the government in favor of the country’s business elites.” Pressurized by the “shocking force amassed by the Indigenous and popular uprising ... combined with the widespread support that the protest achieved throughout the country,” Moreno was forced to negotiate

and to rescind the decree.

“The minister of defense (Oswaldo Jarrín) prioritized the military vision,” Paz-y-Miño noted. “He spoke of ‘threats’ and an ‘organized insurgency,’ using terms that, clearly, turn the protesting popular classes into enemies of the State and the universities that housed the Indigenous people for humanitarian reasons into suspects or collaborators for creating what the minister interpreted as ‘supply centers.’”

Paz-y-Miño concluded, “Ecuador has just gone through a dramatic moment, in which political confrontation clearly resulted in an acute ‘class struggle’ – to use the old and perfectly valid Marxist concept. But don’t assume that the conquest of ‘socialism’ is the ultimate aspiration of protest movements and social struggles.”

The goal instead is a rejection of IMF neoliberalism and a struggle to create a new world order “that respects social, labor, Indigenous, and environmental rights; and that forges other power relations to guarantee national sovereignty, self-determination, and [unity of the] Latin American region.”

‘Another strike inevitable’

Many who had participated in the upheavals of 20 years ago were hoping to see Moreno get on a helicopter and flee the country as then President Lucio Gutiérrez was forced to do in 2005. Rafael Correa and others were calling for the “cross of death,” which mandates the resignation of the president and the National Assembly followed by new elections.

Workers World spoke with Juan José Simbaña, the president of the October 28th Association of Indigenous Small Farmers of Chiriwasi. Simbaña risked his life confronting soldiers from the Yaguachi military base in Esperanza because he wanted to end the whole IMF paquetazo (austerity package) of which #883 was only one part. He said, “We didn’t get all we wanted, so another Paro Nacional is inevitable. It’s only a matter of time and I’m ready for it.”

Simbaña was in front of the Unidad Educativa Rumipampa building on the main street of Esperanza, a few blocks from where the confrontation with the military occurred. With profound concern he said, “My brother was one of two gravely wounded comuneros [community members]. A tear gas projectile struck him in the forehead on Oct. 4. I have to take him to Quito for medical treatments once a week, but he still can’t walk more than 100 meters.”

At least 20 other participants were hurt during the uprising when they closed the road between the cities of Ibarra and Cayambe for several days and detained four soldiers who were later freed in a negotiated prisoner exchange.

Simbaña said that he and other comuneros came from miles around to be part of the around-the-clock blockade of a bridge in the center of town. Their actions began six days before the CONAIE Indigenous movement officially convened the Paro Nacional on Oct. 9. The people accepted the risk of being martyred or maimed by the military or getting arrested on trumped-up charges.

Comuneros intended to bring down the whole government, especially the two ministers responsible for the repression.

Simbaña agrees with the comprehensive and detailed declaration of demands CONAIE originally declared. CONAIE leaders set these aside when they complied with Moreno’s request to limit negotiations to Decree #883. Simbaña

was critical of CONAIE leader Jaime Vargas and other CONAIE leadership for ending the strike: “They didn’t achieve enough to justify the sacrifices we made.”

Unions, student organizations, women’s groups and mestizo peasants were never considered as protagonists by the negotiating parties, although thousands joined the Indigenous people facing state repression during the strike.

While the televised dialogue was taking place, as many as 6,000 protesters were marching in Ibarra. “Out! Moreno, out!” was chanted in every city and community in Ecuador.

Anti-people strategist

To understand the government strategy, it helps to know what a historian and descendant of the Ibarra oligarchy, Enrique Ayala Mora, advised Moreno. He told him that he must attempt to divide the Indigenous nations from organized labor. A now infamous leaked conversation he had with government lackeys went viral on social media. Ayala Mora was warning Moreno to view Correismo as the main enemy of the neoliberal restoration and to blame everything on the Correistas.

The fearsome persecution of the leaders of the Citizens’ Revolution began with the jailing of Vice President Jorge Glas two years ago. Now it threatens anyone who dares to challenge the government.

Workers World also spoke with “Fidel,” who lives in Quito and is active in supporting Jorge Glas, currently a political prisoner. Fidel told us that for the past two weeks following the end of the uprising, he has stayed off the streets, expecting he may be arrested.

A Parliament of the People summoned by CONAIE combining 180 social organizations opened Oct. 26. During the opening plenary, Jaime Vargas, president of the organization, apologized for being misled by the government during the negotiation process. The resolution of the Parliament was presented on Oct. 31. The resolution stated in part:

“We are a plurinational society that generates opportunities every day: peasants, Indigenous people, workers, micro-entrepreneurs, businessmen, self-employed workers, students, women, professionals, young people, in short, the whole society creates daily a wealth that, unfortunately, is not distributed fairly. Our proposal for an alternative to the economic model presented below proposes that the wealth that is created by all Ecuadorians be distributed equitably and that allows us to build ourselves as a free, just, democratic, participatory society that resolves its conflicts through dialogue, social peace and the search for consensus.”

Correista friends attended as observers but said they did not feel welcome to participate.

People ask why the CONAIE was established as the only legitimate intermediary between the demonstrators and the government? Argentine Marxist Atilio Borón, writing in Cuba Debate, sharply criticized the CONAIE leadership to illustrate some of the difficulties that lie ahead. “Only the leadership of CONAIE were seated at the negotiating table. It is shameful that the main target of attack would have been



WW PHOTO: MIKE OTTO

Zoila Ramírez, left, and Juan José Simbaña.

Rafael Correa and not the assassin who was murdering Indigenous protesters in the streets of Quito.

“The conflict between the former president and CONAIE at this juncture served to prevent Correismo, as well as other political and social forces, from joining each other in mobilizing the revolt. Moreover, the government imprisoned several of the most important leaders of Correismo, beginning with none other than the Prefecta of Pichincha, Paola Pabón, without the least protest from the CONAIE leadership against such an attack.”

‘Lesson is clear: National majorities must unite’

The venerable Jaime Galarza Zavala, Ecuadorian poet, journalist and partisan in numerous battles for justice, held the first cabinet post as Minister of the Environment under Rafael Correa. The following are excerpts from his most recent blog in “La Cometa”:

“Of course, it was a revolution without a head, since neither the Indigenous leadership nor the brave collectives, neither political leaders nor any party acted in accordance with the historic demand, which cost numerous lives, countless wounded and disappeared, and nearly 2,000 detainees.

“In the midst of the gloom that our country is living in and is unfolding politically, a conclusion shines brighter than the sun of the Andes, and this is it: the governments of Ecuador in the near future will not emerge from the club “La Union” in Guayaquil, nor the aristocratic salons of Quito. Neither from the chambers of industry and commerce nor from the U.S. embassy.

“The new governments will descend from the mountains to settle in Carondelet [presidential palace], of course passing through Guayaquil collecting the embrace of the new generations of Guayaquil Indigenous, no matter how much [ex-mayor] Jaime Nebot Saadi wants to send them back.

“Now, to descend from the mountains to Carondelet passing through Guayaquil, the will of the Indigenous movement and the social organizations that support it won’t be enough. Neither will the collectives, parties or leaders of civil society be able to access Carondelet by themselves and on their own.

“The lesson of these days is very clear: Either the great national majorities, the citizens unite in a great front of the homeland, in a broad democratic stream, or the IMF, the chambers and the oligarchy will continue to prevail.” □

Bolivia tense as right wing aims for coup

By Marco Teruggi
La Paz, Bolivia

*Published by mundo.sputniknews.com
Nov. 2. Translation by John Catalinotto.*

The town hall meeting held by the Bolivian opposition in La Paz on Oct. 31 was well attended. It was the expression of a new correlation of forces where, for the first time since Evo Morales began his presidency in 2006, opposition sectors managed to summon a mobilization of this magnitude in the center of the country's political power.

The phenomenon is characterized as a "moment of emerging struggles" by Álvaro Zárata, an anthropologist and member of Columna Sur, a youth organization within the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS), the ruling party.

"There are several sectors that are joining together, under the themes of regional demands, racism, business demands, from universities, doctors or environmental groups," he explained.

The meeting in the La Paz town hall, as well as the mobilizations that the opposition has been carrying out day after day, are heterogeneous spaces with different demands and speeches that range from a rejection of Cuba and Venezuela to the need to protect the environment.

The complexity of the [right-wing] mobilization has, however, agreed on an objective that has been heightened from the day after the Oct. 20 elections until now: no longer asking for a second round but for the annulment of the elections and the resignation of Evo Morales.

But who decided there should no longer be a second round, but [rather] elections without Morales and Carlos Mesa [the former Bolivian president who was runner-up in the Oct. 20 presidential election]?

The opposition's leadership

Who leads the mobilized opposition to Morales? Zárata names several people who lead from the shadows, such as "Carlos Sánchez Berzain, the former government minister of Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, who is leading from Washington NGOs, and Branko Marinkovic, the president of the first Santa Cruz Civic Committee of 2008."

Other figures have emerged, the main one being Fernando Camacho, who "with a group of businessmen lead the Civic Committee of Santa Cruz and lead this attempted coup d'état."

That two people have been killed and several wounded increases the tension in this postelection conflict in Bolivia.

The [current] scenario leaves traditional political parties aside, a phenomenon that has been going on for several years. Zárata situated the decline of the parties after the referendum vote of Feb. 21, 2016, held to find out if Evo Morales could run again for president [which Morales won].

Zárata explained: "The parties lost legitimacy; the only formula for defeating President Morales was to unite behind a nonparty banner. In the case of Comunidad Ciudadana, it was a short-term alliance; they had to put up a candidate, who turned out to be Mesa.

"The figure of Mesa, or the mayor of La Paz, as well as the October election, has already passed to second place in importance," Zárata continued. "The real enemies are the [right-wing] radicals who do not come representing a political party and instead seek to carry out a coup d'état. Mesa did not attend the town hall meeting; he was booed several times, and



Bolivian President Evo Morales meets with miners from Potosi, Nov. 2.

PHOTO: TELESUR ENGLISH

he announced that on Sunday [Nov. 3] he will hold an 'extraordinary assembly of the Citizen Community.'"

Along with that [attempt] comes a new phenomenon: Camacho, the main emerging figure, gained strength not only in Santa Cruz but also in La Paz and Andean areas. "Never had the Andean sectors accepted leadership from the east,"

analyzed Columna Sur. [The eastern region is the center of political reaction.]

How to respond?

"The behavior of Evo Morales has been nonconfrontational, that is what he has told us, and we will always bet on peace and democracy," emphasized Zárata.

This has meant MAS mobilizes to

maintain a presence in the street without confrontation, in a scenario where, as the Bolivian government has condemned, the right seeks to generate violence, wound and kill.

Along with that, the [right-wing] gamble is on a binding audit in which 30 specialists from the Organization of American States participate. "If at any time the OAS recommends that we go for a second round, President Morales is willing; he is going to give everything possible to defuse this violence that comes from only one side, from a sector that wants to ignore the election," explained Zárata.

What will the mobilized opposition say if the audit validates the results of Oct. 20 and indicates that Morales won in the first round? And if, on the other hand, the audit indicates that a second round is necessary, will they then not participate? Have they reached the point of no return?

It is a complex scenario, where, within the diversity of those who are mobilized [on the right], there is a leadership that has made the decision to carry out a coup d'état. □

Miners and peasants march to defend Evo Morales' victory

By Marco Teruggi
La Paz, Bolivia

*Published by mundo.sputniknews.com
Oct. 31. Translation by John Catalinotto.*

The city of La Paz has turned into a street game board where two opposing political blocs occupy squares. This confrontation has been repeated daily since opposition candidate [and former President] Carlos Mesa refused to recognize Evo Morales' presidential victory last week. Protests began to take place, some of them violent, setting afire the headquarters of Morales' governing Movement to Socialism (MAS) party and the Supreme Electoral Tribunal.

[Morales has been president of Bolivia since 2006, and is the first Indigenous leader of that country.]

Since then, Bolivia's capital has become a city where from dawn onwards opponents begin to block the streets. They are usually small groups in central and wealthy areas.

The usual police response has been hands off, but this Tuesday, Oct. 29, to allow passage of vehicles, particularly trucks and buses, they stopped allowing blockades in downtown areas. The blockades have caused economic losses and transportation has been one of the affected sectors, generating confrontations between bus drivers and demonstrators.

To the noise of dynamite

That same Tuesday, social movements implemented the decision taken a day earlier at a rally held in El Alto with Evo Morales: to defend the victory in the streets and in particular to protect the seat of government, known as the Great House of the People. [El Alto is the Indigenous city of a million people nearby to, and at more than 13,000 feet, even higher than La Paz.]

During that day, delegations from different organizations arrived from various



Morales' supporters gather to defend his government, while his rightist enemies maneuver against him.

parts of the country. One was made up of mining cooperative members who toured different parts of the city in a mobilization marked by dynamite explosions.

Feliciano Mamani, president of the National Federation of Cooperatives of Bolivia, said: "We, the miners, are here to ensure respect for the democracy that has been won through struggle.

"We want to respectfully ask the opposition to accept that they lost the election and that Evo Morales won," he added.

The column of miners was found near the seat of government with members of the MAS, political leaders, workers and delegations of Indigenous movements from various parts of the country.

"We are supporting the president, our brother Evo Morales, because we have won at the polls and we are going to be supporting him until the end," said Beti Gutiérrez, La Paz city councilor.

The defense of the seat of government and the center of the city will continue until a solution is reached. What will it be? It's not clear yet.

Vice-President Álvaro García Linera offered to carry out a national audit [of the vote] with the presence of an "international arbitrator." At the same time the opposition claimed that the agreement would only be accepted if the audit was "binding."

Washington's message has been to demand a second round [in the election]. As Secretary of State Mike Pompeo tweeted Oct. 28: "We call on #Bolivia to restore electoral integrity by proceeding to a 2nd round of free, fair, transparent, & credible elections with the top two vote winners." (Washington Post, Oct. 29)

People who have mobilized have resolved to hold on [as long as it's] necessary. The opposition, for its part, has also repeated that it will maintain what they have called a strike, which has left several wounded, both in Santa Cruz and La Paz. From dawn to dusk, the capital is the epicenter of this dispute. Evo Morales describes opposition tactics as a planned coup d'état in full swing. □

Impeachment is not enough

There are so many reasons to get Donald Trump out of the White House that it is not surprising at all that a movement has begun in the House of Representatives to impeach him. At this point, it is a wholly partisan effort, with almost all the Democrats for impeachment and almost all the Republicans against it.

So many people have been deeply injured by this administration that they are cheered by the possibility that Trump might be forced out of office, even before the next presidential election. Most of them want to see the Democratic Party prevail.

Of course, impeachment would leave Mike Pence, not the Democrats, in charge of the government.

Impeachment of public officials in the U.S. has occurred rarely. It has generally succeeded only in such cases as getting rid of judges who were visibly drunk while presiding over trials.

While anyone who is halfway progressive would rejoice at getting Trump out of office one way or another, it is important

to take note of how and why he might be toppled. Is it because of all his super-reactionary moves that have done terrible damage to millions of people in this country, especially the most oppressed?

Trump has greenlighted racism and attacks on immigrants, emboldening the most violent far-right elements. This has led to the most painful and even lethal conditions on the U.S. border with Mexico — and in the hell-houses for migrants called “detention centers,” where children, even babies, have been separated from their parents.

Trump has undercut social programs aimed at alleviating poverty. He has ignored — and even ridiculed environmental pollution — while siding with multibillionaire energy companies responsible for the climate crisis.

But is this why Trump faces possible impeachment? Or is it because he has been deemed by the real rulers of this country and the government to be ineffective in protecting their interests — to the point of buffoonery? The issue they have chosen to attack him on is his attempt

to get help from politicians in Ukraine to discredit a possible political rival, Joe Biden. Surely, that is the least of Donald Trump’s crimes.

Is it just Trump’s erratic and grandiose personality that would be on trial? That would leave Pence, who low-keys it while pursuing his own right-wing agenda, sitting in the catbird seat. Even if Trump were forced out before the 2020 election — which is not too likely — right-wing politicians and the multibillionaire class he represents would still be running the show.

In other countries, in more revolutionary times, the people have come up with procedures to immediately oust officials who betrayed them. A prime example is the Paris Commune, which decreed that elected representatives were subject to recall at any time.

In 1871, a war was raging between France and Prussia (Germany). While Paris was under siege by Prussian troops, and the French army was both preoccupied and rebellious, the people of Paris rose up and established their own government — a people’s republican government that

became known as the Paris Commune. For a brief time the workers of Paris took charge of their own destiny.

Among the many steps taken by the Commune to shift political power to the working class was the direct election of those who would represent them in the Commune — and the ability to immediately recall from office anyone who didn’t carry out the will of the people.

There was no waiting for six years (a U.S. senator’s term), four years (a U.S. president’s term) or even two years (a U.S. representative’s term) to get rid of elected figures who betrayed their promises. Once the people of the Commune decided these “representatives” didn’t represent them, they were out.

The Paris Commune was one of the most democratic political bodies the world had yet seen. Now, 148 years later, in a country where both capitalist parties claim to champion democracy — but in fact serve the interests of the multibillionaire plutocrats — we need to fight for nothing less than the rule of the majority: workers’ power. □

Massive people’s protests continue in Algeria

By G. Dunkel

Ever since Feb. 22, Hirak — the protest coalition in Algeria — has held a nationwide protest on Fridays, the day the weekend starts there. Students and youth generally hold their nationwide demonstrations on Tuesdays.

This Nov. 1, Algeria marked the 65th anniversary of the start of its War of Independence against France. It was also the 37th consecutive Friday that the Hirak coalition has held protests this year.

On Nov. 1, the demonstration in Algiers was gigantic — so big that it started Thursday night, Oct. 31. The spur that provoked such a turnout was the current government’s plan to hold new elections for president Dec. 12.

Many protesters from outside the capital city of Algiers arrived in the city before Friday because they expected the cops and army to block transportation. They stayed overnight with family or friends.

Numbers are hard to estimate. Wide

avenues and big squares were filled with chanting, flag-waving protesters carrying both Algeria’s national flag and the Amazigh (Berber) cultural flag. Amazighs are a distinct national minority in Algeria making up roughly 30 percent of its population. Since June, over 20 protesters carrying the Amazigh flag have been arrested.

“Dump the generals in the garbage!” shouted some demonstrators. Other popular slogans included: “Civilian government, not a military,” “Power to the people, a constituent assembly, sovereign and revocable,” “Elections under a corrupt system are a wily trap” and “I am a member of Hirak, I am not voting.” (el Watan, Nov. 1)

Massive demonstrations also took place in Oran, Constantine, Annaba, Mostaganem, Blida, Tipaza, Dellys, Béjaïa, Tizi-Ouzou and Sidi Bel Abbès.

Timeline of Algeria’s protests

The Hirak protests began in February when the people of Algeria decided that then President Abdelaziz Bouteflika should not run for a fifth term. When he agreed in early April to retire, the protests shifted focus. The demands put forward by Hirak were that all elements of Bouteflika’s “gang” had to leave and that a fair, equitable system of governing Algeria had to be created.

The army under General Ahmed Gaïd Salah, which has effectively run the government since Bouteflika’s

departure, tried to hold elections in April, but couldn’t find candidates. A court canceled the elections the government scheduled for July.

The Algerian election authorities have now accepted five candidates for the scheduled Dec. 12 elections. Four were cabinet ministers under Bouteflika, and the fifth is the leader of a small party closely allied to Bouteflika’s.

The Hirak coalition’s massive Nov. 1 outpouring was in protest of these new presidential election plans.

When one of the candidates was discovered eating at a restaurant in west Algiers on Nov. 3, a demonstration quickly gathered and forced him out of the building and into his car, according to a report carried on French TV national news.

There are two major currents in Hirak. One will accept holding elections, if they are not obviously rigged. The other, which is supported by the left-wing parties, wants to hold a constituent assembly, which would make major changes in how Algeria is governed.

Roles of the U.S. and France

According to the U.S. State Department: “The United States is one of Algeria’s top trading partners, and Algeria is one of the top U.S. trading partners in the Middle East/North African region.” To unpack this diplomatic jargon, Algeria’s trade with the U.S. is far more important to Algeria than U.S. trade with Algeria is to the U.S.

After Algeria gained independence from France in a brutal war that cost Algeria a million martyrs, it became a leader in the Non-Aligned Movement of the 1960s. Its current orientation has shifted quite a bit, which some recent events have made clear.

In 2018, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman of Saudi Arabia was granted a two-day state visit in Algeria. That year, before his visit, the Algerian Navy took part in

the U.S. Africom maneuvers off the coast of Greece. More recently, Algerian forces participated in “Flintlock 2019” military maneuvers under U.S. Africom command in Burkina Faso and Mauritania.

France’s involvement in Algeria has far deeper roots, with colonial rule beginning in 1830 and not ending until 1962. Immigration of Algerians into France began in the early 20th century, ebbing and flowing since then, with a major influx as late as the 1980s. The Algerian community in France is now over a million people, including significant numbers who are first and second generation.

During Algeria’s War of Independence (1954–62), French police under the direction of Maurice Papon massacred pro-independence Algerian protesters in Paris in 1961 and threw over 200 bodies into the Seine River. Papon was later convicted for sending French Jews to German extermination camps during World War II.

After the massive Nov. 1 demonstrations, current French President Emmanuel Macron issued a tweet saluting the Algerian people’s “spirit of responsibility, in this period so crucial for its future.”

Though Macron extended “best wishes,” what his message actually conveyed was reluctance toward any direct, open involvement of France in the current struggles in Algeria. Given the history of the French colonization of Algeria, and the large number of people in the Algerian community in France, any neocolonial intervention would likely produce an immediate, significant backlash. □



Algiers, Oct. 31, nighttime demonstration.



Algiers, Nov. 1. 'Here the people rule' reads one sign.

Erdogan quiere armas nucleares

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algunas fuentes, Turquía ya podría haber adquirido, en el “mercado nuclear ilegal”, centrifugadoras para el enriquecimiento de uranio. El anuncio de Erdogan de que Turquía quiere convertirse en una potencia nuclear, interpretado por algunos como un farol para darle más peso a su régimen en la OTAN, no debe

subestimarse.

El anuncio de Erdogan revela lo que generalmente está oculto en el debate de los medios: es decir, que en la situación turbulenta causada por políticas de guerra agresivas, la posesión de armas nucleares juega un papel cada vez más importante. Impulsa a quienes aún no poseen armas nucleares a obtenerlas. □

Book review

What the Berlin Wall's collapse meant for workers worldwide

By John Catalinotto

A Socialist Defector: From Harvard to Karl-Marx-Allee by Victor Grossman/Stephen Wechsler, New York: Monthly Review Press, 2019, 352 pages.

This Nov. 9, the world's imperialists and big capitalists will be celebrating the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. They will fill the media, all too available to them, with lies claiming this event was a victory for democracy and freedom. They will be slandering the German Democratic Republic and all the good and progressive acts of the once-socialist part of Germany.

A partial antidote to these lies can be found in Victor Grossman's book, "A Socialist Defector: From Harvard to Karl-Marx-Allee," told by someone who lived in the GDR from the early 1950s until its fall, and still lives in the eastern part of Berlin. The book has only one author; Stephen Wechsler was Grossman's name before he left the U.S. military when he was stationed in Austria. He swam across a river to

escape what he feared would be a possible prison sentence—in reality a sentence for his pro-communist activities—common punishment in the McCarthyite 1950s.

Grossman's book tells the story of the GDR's 41-year existence through the eyes of someone committed to socialism, who was also an honest and careful observer of the everyday ups and downs of the fledgling socialist republic. He also describes with excruciating detail the annexation of eastern Germany by the victorious imperialist power in the West.

Even to focus on a little of what Grossman covers in his 352 pages may help explain why the fall of the GDR was a loss, both to the oppressed nations of what is today called the "global south" and to the East German working class and workers worldwide.

GDR aided liberation struggles

He writes, discussing so-called dissidents, "In contrast with the rulers in Bonn [capital of West Germany], the GDR generously aided the African National Congress in South Africa, SWAPO [South West African Peoples Organization] in Namibia, Ho Chi Minh's Vietnamese, the Sandinistas [in Nicaragua] and the anti-Pinochet forces [in Chile]."

"What would success of those dissidents, whose motivation was implacable anti-GDR hostility, mean to those struggles? 'Human rights' were demanded by people often totally uninterested in [Nelson] Mandela, Leonard Peltier or even the 'Berufsverbote' [exclusion from jobs like teaching] in West Germany, where some were jailed, many were fired and 1.4 million were investigated by the equivalent of the FBI because of their undesirable views."

This reviewer was in East Berlin in October 1989 interviewing Angolan

students, educated at the GDR's expense at Humboldt University in how to set up and run beer breweries in their recently liberated country. It seemed an intelligent division of labor that socialist Cuba would help win the big military battle with South African troops at Cuito Cuanavale in 1988 and that the socialist GDR would provide technical and industrial education to the Angolan people.

Imperialist Germany had conquered Namibia in the 19th century, but the socialist GDR gave medical treatment to the wounded liberation fighters of SWAPO.

Divided Germany became the front line of a global class war between two social systems during the period known as the Cold War. The socialist countries, or workers' states, were to the east; the imperialist countries with their capitalist system to the west. The line dividing east and west Germany could not avoid being a hot spot of the Cold War, which was not always so cold.

West Germany, one of the most prosperous of the imperialist countries, used its wealth to lure whatever defectors it could from the East. This was part of its war against socialism. In the opposite way, the Berlin Wall discouraged defections. In principle, it was not much different from union workers setting up a picket line to prevent discouraged workers from breaking a strike—only this was done by a pro-socialist state.

In the years after the Berlin Wall fell, those who lived in the East quickly discovered there was a lot that the GDR had accomplished. Unfortunately, they discovered it by losing their guaranteed jobs, universal child care—which especially harmed women—two-thirds of their public libraries, their low-rent apartments and



PHOTO: GABRIELE SENFT

Berlin, 2006. At an occupied building near the old border, is written, 'The border does not run between different peoples, it runs between those on top and those beneath.'

almost-free public transportation.

West German industries and banks moved into the East, bought up for next to nothing the industries that had employed 4 million workers— with a market mainly in the former socialist countries—and in no time created an army of unemployed and precarious workers. Many workers had to migrate to the West. Grossman details how this happened and draws a clear picture not of a "reunification," but of an annexation, much like an imperialist country seizing a colony.

While there was a GDR, the West German military stayed within its country's borders. After seizing the GDR in 1990 and dissolving the GDR's army, German imperialism intervened in Yugoslavia to tear that multinational country apart and gain economic hegemony in the mini-states that succeeded it. In Iraq and in Afghanistan, Germany joined the "coalition" led by U.S. imperialism.

Grossman's book provides a contrast to the lying propaganda of those imperialists still rejoicing over the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Today, the over-90-year-old Grossman continues his writing by describing, in his Berlin Bulletin, developments in German politics with an explanation understandable for U.S. readers, who might not be following the day-by-day developments there. (For more about the bulletin, see tinyurl.com/yy8mcyva/.)



PHOTO: GABRIELE SENFT

February 1986. At East Berlin's Schoenefeld Airport, author Victor Grossman, left, greets Pete Seeger, who is a guest at the Festival of Political Songs.

Journalist and Venezuela government defender Max Blumenthal arrested on bogus charges

By Martha Grevatt

On the morning of Oct. 25, in a SWAT-style operation, Washington, D.C., police arrested Max Blumenthal, editor of The Grayzone, an independent investigative news site. Unbeknownst to Blumenthal, the cops had an arrest warrant on false assault charges stemming from his participation in defense of the Venezuelan Embassy last spring.

"This charge is a 100 percent false, fabricated, bogus, untrue and malicious lie," Blumenthal stated. "It is clearly part of a campaign of political persecution designed to silence me and the The Grayzone for our factual journalism exposing the deceptions, corruption and violence of the far-right Venezuelan opposition." (Grayzone, Oct. 28)



Max Blumenthal

Initially, the arrest warrant, based on claims by a Venezuelan opposition supporter that Blumenthal had kicked her in the stomach, was denied. "If the government had at least told me I had a warrant, I could have voluntarily surrendered and appeared at my own arraignment. I have nothing to fear because I'm completely innocent of this bogus charge," Blumenthal added.

Instead D.C. police surrounded his home and threatened to break down the door. Blumenthal was put in a police van and taken to jail, where he was held incommunicado for two days; he was denied a request to make a phone call and unable to contact an attorney. He says he was moved from cell to cell, his wrists and ankles shackled.

Blumenthal is a best-selling author who has been published by the New York Times, The Nation, Salon and others. Nevertheless, his arrest, a blatant and brutal attempt at censoring progressive journalism, has up to now been ignored by the mainstream media. Also silent are the so-called "human rights" and "free speech" advocacy nongovernmental organizations, including Human Rights Watch and Reporters Without Borders.

The lack of coverage of this attack on Blumenthal contrasts with widespread and prominent coverage of any interference by the Venezuelan government of pro-imperialist U.S. journalists.

Blumenthal's writings have exposed the backers of self-proclaimed "president" Juan Guaidó, who have repeatedly engaged in violence, take funding from the U.S. government via the U.S. Agency for International Development and other entities and are opposed by massive numbers of Venezuelans.

On April 10 U.S. activists took residence inside and demonstrated outside the Venezuelan Embassy. Guaidó's allies converged and terrorized activists while Washington, D.C. police looked on. Police prevented

deliveries of food to those inside and arrested Venezuela's supporters. After a 36-day struggle, the embassy defenders were forced out and supporters of Guaidó—whom President Donald Trump recognized in January—took over the premises.

The four Embassy Protectors Collective members who were still inside—Kevin Zeese, Margaret Flowers, David Paul and Adrienne Pine—were arrested May 16. Each of them faces misdemeanor charges of "Interfering with certain protective functions" of the federal government, with a maximum sentence of one-year imprisonment and \$100,000 fine.

The bogus charges levied against Blumenthal and the four embassy protectors are designed to intimidate and silence anyone who would defend Venezuelan sovereignty, champion the accomplishments of the revolution and expose the phoniness of the "opposition." □



During the April 10–May 16 defense of the Venezuelan Embassy.



Santiago, Chile, 25 de octubre.

MUNDO OBRERO

editorial

No hay victorias fáciles

El líder marxista y liberador africano de Guinea-Bisáu, Amílcar Cabral, dijo una vez: “No digas mentiras. ... No reclames victorias fáciles”.

Los activistas revolucionarios de hoy que miran a América Latina y el Caribe deben tener en cuenta esa frase al revisar el mes de octubre de 2019. Las luchas populares masivas retrasaron los regímenes de derecha. Los avances electorales se convirtieron en lo que son al menos victorias parciales o temporales para la clase trabajadora y los pobres del hemisferio. Algunas luchas masivas enormes están llenas de potencial. Aún así, todas estas son solo las batallas iniciales en un largo período de lucha.

El panorama general es el siguiente: el sistema capitalista/imperialista domina el mundo. Este sistema ha estado en crisis, en recesión, al menos desde 2008. La recesión ha reducido la necesidad de materias primas, lo que reduce los precios de las exportaciones de muchos países latinoamericanos.

Esto a su vez reduce la capacidad de estos países de pagar intereses sobre sus préstamos de bancos imperialistas que necesitan para mantener funcionales los programas sociales.

Las entidades financieras imperialistas como el Fondo Monetario Internacional no quieren formar parte de los programas sociales. Exigen en cambio que los gobiernos impongan austeridad, privatizaciones, medidas antipopulares. Donde los gobiernos de centroizquierda resisten o retrasan la represión de las masas, los imperialistas y los oligarcas locales los han depuesto, usando elecciones, tribunales e incluso golpes de estado: en Paraguay, Honduras, más recientemente en Ecuador y Brasil y mediante elecciones en Chile y Argentina. Y siguen intentando derrocar a los gobiernos de Nicaragua y Venezuela.

En las últimas semanas, las masas trabajadoras han dicho: “¡No más!”. En Haití, un líder histórico en la lucha por la

emancipación en este hemisferio, el pueblo exige la renuncia del gobierno. En Ecuador, una huelga general nacional obligó a un presidente, que traicionó a su propio partido junto con el pueblo, a retirarse de un decreto antipopular. En Chile, manifestaciones masivas desafiaron el terror policial y del ejército y obligaron al presidente a retirarse. Todas estas luchas siguen vivas e indecisas. (Están cubiertos en otros artículos en este número de Workers World).

En Bolivia, el popular presidente Evo Morales fue reelegido el 20 de octubre, obteniendo solo el 10 por ciento de margen necesario para ganar la primera ronda del concurso. Morales enfrenta un posible golpe de estado en los próximos días por parte de los oligarcas del país y está movilizand

tratará de socavar a su gobierno.

Las elecciones del 27 de octubre en Argentina depusieron al actual enemigo neoliberal del pueblo, Mauricio Macri, en la primera vuelta, en un 48 por ciento a 40 por ciento. Esto pone de nuevo en el poder a las fuerzas políticas que continúan con el gobierno de centroizquierda que estaba antes de la victoria de Macri en 2015, incluida Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, esta vez como vicepresidenta.

La reacción de muchos en la izquierda comunista argentina ha sido más o menos así: “Genial, celebremos el domingo por la noche y comencemos a movilizar a las masas el lunes por la mañana para luchar contra el FMI y los capitalistas argentinos”. El torbellino de la lucha de masas de Chile es contagioso.

Hay una razón para la reticencia de los comunistas argentinos a “reclamar una victoria fácil”. Los pueblos de América Latina y el Caribe están hartos del

neoliberalismo sin trabas y de las escandalosas desigualdades que genera. El problema es que, en el marco del capitalismo, nadie puede resolver los problemas impuestos a estos países por el imperialismo mundial.

Debemos defender los derechos de los pueblos de este hemisferio para seleccionar sus propios gobiernos y ayudarlos en la medida de lo posible para que se liberen de las botas imperialistas que los ahorcan.

También debemos darnos cuenta de que mientras los capitalistas controlen los bancos, los medios de comunicación y, lo más importante, los aparatos estatales represivos en estos países, la crisis impuesta por el imperialismo mundial es ineludible. Ni los capitalistas locales, ni sus patrocinadores en Washington, Bruselas y Tokio, simplemente entregarán el poder. Este es solo el comienzo de una nueva fase en una larga guerra de clases. □

‘Nos quitaron tanto que nos quitaron el miedo’

En un foro del Workers World Party el 2 de noviembre en la ciudad de Nueva York, Nieves Ayress Moreno del movimiento La Peña del Bronx y ex prisionera política de la dictadura cívico-militar de Augusto Pinochet leyó la siguiente declaración sobre el actual levantamiento en Chile.

El modelo económico neoliberal se está derrumbando bajo la nariz de la élite chilena. Piñera es la continuación de la Dictadura Pinochetista. Chile se encuentra en estado de emergencia, donde Piñera declaró que está en guerra con los manifestantes. Los militares han salido en masa, y se puede escuchar a los tanques rodando por las calles de Santiago una vez más desde los días de la dictadura militar.

El viernes 18 de octubre, los jóvenes, en particular los estudiantes de secundaria decidieron que basta con privatizar todo en Chile. Piñera aumentó la tarifa del metro en un dólar en las horas pico. Los estudiantes de secundaria simplemente tuvieron suficiente y saltaron la tarifa del metro en masa. En los días que siguieron Piñera respondió con violencia contra estudiantes secundarios, pensando que la sociedad chilena iba ignorar los abusos.

Los jóvenes recordaron a la sociedad chilena que no es sobre el aumento de 300 pesos, pero 30 años de política económica de privatizar todo en el país. Lo que el pueblo le avisa al mundo es el despertar a la pesadilla del mercado; privatiza de la educación, privatiza el agua, privatiza la salud, privatiza el seguro social, privatiza

el transporte, baja los salarios del trabajador para subsidiar las utilidades del rico. El pueblo chileno dice “nos quitaron tanto que nos quitaron el miedo”.

El descontento en el país se ha manifestado en masa por falso milagro económico chileno que, mostrando su fea realidad de gran desigualdad causada por la privatización y el debilitamiento de los sindicatos, las contaminaciones ecológicas debido a la desregulación. Un milagro económico para los ricos, pero cáncer para la gran mayoría de la sociedad y la madre tierra.

Demandamos que Piñera ordene a los milicos a sus cuarteles, en una democracia debería existir el derecho de protestar sin ser disparado.

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Erdogan quiere armas nucleares

Por Manlio Dinucci

Publicado el 21 de octubre en el periódico italiano Il Manifesto.

“Algunos países tienen misiles nucleares, pero el Occidente insiste en que no podemos tenerlos. Esto es inaceptable”. Esta declaración del presidente Erdogan revela que la crisis actual va más allá de lo que comenzó con la ofensiva turca en Siria.

En Turquía, durante la Guerra Fría, Estados Unidos desplegó armas nucleares contra la Unión Soviética. En 1962, en acuerdos con la URSS para resolver la crisis de los misiles cubanos, el entonces presidente de los Estados Unidos, John Kennedy, prometió retirar estas armas de Turquía, pero esto no se hizo.

Después del final de la Guerra Fría, unas 50 bombas nucleares B61 de EE.UU., del mismo tipo que las desplegadas en el norte de Italia en Aviano y Ghedi, dirigidas principalmente contra Rusia,

permanecieron en Turquía, en la base aérea de Incirlik. Con ese despliegue, tanto Estados Unidos como Turquía violaron el Tratado de No Proliferación.

Los pilotos turcos, en el marco de la OTAN, están entrenados, como los pilotos italianos estacionados en la base de Ghedi, para atacar con bombas nucleares B61 bajo el mando de los EE.UU. El Pentágono planea reemplazar pronto los B61 también en Turquía, como en Italia y otros países europeos, con las nuevas bombas nucleares B61-12, también dirigidas principalmente contra Rusia.

Mientras tanto, sin embargo, después de la compra turca de misiles antiaéreos rusos S-400, Estados Unidos eliminó a Turquía de la lista de lugares donde desplegará F-35, que son los principales portadores de bombas B61-12. Se suponía que Turquía había comprado 100 aviones F-35, de los cuales era coproductor. “El F-35”, declaró un portavoz de la Casa Blanca, “no puede coexistir con

el sistema antiaéreo S-400, que puede usarse para conocer las capacidades del caza”. (Whitehouse.gov, 17 de julio)

Es decir, Rusia podría usar lo que aprende a través del sistema antiaéreo S-400 para fortalecer sus defensas contra el F-35. Al suministrar a Ankara misiles antiaéreos S-400, Moscú al menos por el momento ha logrado evitar que EE.UU. despliegue 100 F-35 en territorio turco, donde estarían listos para atacar [Rusia] con las nuevas bombas nucleares de Estados Unidos B61-12.

En este punto, parece probable que entre las opciones consideradas en Washington, esté la de transferir armas nucleares estadounidenses ahora en Turquía a otro país que se considere más confiable. Según el autoritario Boletín de Científicos Atómicos (EE.UU., 17 de octubre), “la base aérea de Aviano puede ser la mejor opción europea desde un punto de vista político, pero probablemente no tenga suficiente espacio para recibir

todas las armas nucleares de Incirlik.” Sin embargo, podría proporcionarse espacio, dado que los trabajos de renovación ya han comenzado en Aviano para acomodar las bombas nucleares B61-12.

En este contexto, existe la declaración de Erdogan de que, utilizando la presencia amenazante del arsenal nuclear israelí como excusa, Turquía tiene la intención de tener sus propias armas nucleares.

No es un proyecto fácil, pero factible. Turquía cuenta con tecnologías militares avanzadas, suministradas en particular por compañías italianas, especialmente Leonardo [aviones, helicópteros, industria militar]. Tiene depósitos de uranio. Tiene experiencia en el campo de los reactores de investigación, suministrados en particular por los Estados Unidos.

Turquía ha comenzado la construcción de su propia industria de electrónica nuclear, comprando algunos reactores de Rusia, Japón, Francia y China. Según

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