

General strike rocks Ecuador

By Michael Otto and Zoila Ramirez Ibarra, Imbabura, Ecuador

Oct. 7 — Support for a call for a general strike in Ecuador has grown quickly in the past few days, bringing the country to the brink of a change in government.

The latest upsurge in mass struggle began after the unpopular President Lenín Moreno issued a decree on Oct. 1 ending subsidies for diesel and extra gasoline with ethanol, fuels used for nearly all vehicles. Moreno did this following the International Monetary Fund’s requirements for granting Ecuador a loan. Since Oct. 2, many thousands of citizens from all social sectors have gone out into the streets in numerous Ecuadorian cities and villages every day.

The massive mobilization taking place now far exceeds the two-day nationwide

strike of truckers, bus and taxi drivers on Oct. 3-4. That strike by itself paralyzed the country in the transport unions’ unsuccessful attempt to save the more than four-decades-old subsidy.

The national government suspended school classes Oct. 3-4, which added weight to the protests. On Oct. 3, Moreno imposed a state of exception, which for the next 60 days nullified the freedoms of assembly and association (without mentioning the constitutional right of resistance). The state of exception also allowed Moreno to flee his presidential palace in Quito to the military base in Guayaquil.

The National Assembly is not in session, and people don’t know who is actually running the government. People all over the country continue to defy the president’s orders.

Resumen Latino American reported



A contingent of Indigenous peoples marches to Quito, with 20,000 expected to arrive Oct. 8.

Oct. 7: “47 members of the military were detained [by the people] after they used tear gas bombs to attack the inhabitants of the community of Tixan, in the canton of Clausí, in Chimborazo Province.”

The leaders of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) and the United Workers Front (FUT) announced a national strike of activities on Oct. 9. It is significant that both these groups supported the president 20 months ago in his successful attempt to push through a reactionary referendum and are now breaking with him.

The strike in Ibarra and Imbabura

Ibarra is a city of 300,000 people, about 100 miles north of Quito, the capital.

Christian Pabón, a leader of the youth wing of the Revolución Ciudadana (Citizen’s Revolution), spoke passionately at the Ibarra Obelisk on Oct. 4:

“This struggle is the response of the people to the declaration made by Lenín Moreno days ago, a declaration that goes according to specifications decreed by the IMF. We are responding because these economic measures presented by Lenín Moreno are totally diluting our rights, a historical conquest of human rights that was achieved [through struggle].

“This is really the expression of the people. We are here in a peaceful way with a passionate heart, with a fist in the air. We want the government to fall, yes. But we’ll go forward without violence. It’s hard; it’s always with the revolution. In the head and in the heart.

“We are protesting in peace and they throw the horses at us ... they are shooting pellets at us ... they are shooting gas canisters at our bodies ... the only thing we have is our voice, our screams, our

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Youth leader Christian Pabón by Ibarra’s obelisk on Oct. 4 says, ‘We are protesting in peace and they throw the horses at us.’

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Botham Jean’s family members next to his portrait.

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New York City

Gala celebrates women laundry workers

By Monica Moorehead
New York

The Laundry Workers Center held a fundraising gala at St. Peter’s Church in Manhattan on Oct. 4. The center’s political philosophy “is rooted in organizing workers and building their leadership skills and political power through a variety of worker-led tools and tactics, including taking direct action at the workplace, serving as their own voice to media outlets, speaking out as members of the community, and acting as their own advocates at the negotiation table.” (laundryworkerscenter.org/our-mission)

The theme of the gala was “Sin Fronteras! Without Borders — Celebrating the Victories of Women Laundry Workers.” The event raised awareness and funds for the important ongoing work of the LWC in organizing low-wage, predominantly im/migrant, workers.

These workers are forced to endure higher incidence of wage theft, intolerable working conditions and sexual abuse. The LWC has been in the forefront of organizing and defending the workers, many of whom — especially the women — come without a voice but with solidarity on the job and in the streets and soon become organizers themselves.

One such person is Ricarda, who was born in Guerrero, Mexico, and migrated to the U.S. at the age of 26. Ricarda has worked for 15 years at the Sunshine Shirt Laundry Center in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. She launched her first campaign as a LWC organizer in February. During the gala, a video was shown of Ricarda presenting grievances to her boss on the job, with other LWC members there to support her. Ricarda received a plaque of recognition from the LWC. Jeanne Mirer, a labor lawyer, received an Immigrant Rights Defender award from the LWC.

Rosanna Rodriguez, LWC co-executive director, reviewed the important work of the LWC over the past year. Advances included winning \$220,000 in back pay for workers; initiating an anti-wage theft bill; helping to raise the minimum wage in New Jersey; and working with

FIRE (Fight for Im/migrants and Refugees Everywhere) to get Greyhound to stop collaborating with ICE as it targets immigrants on its buses for arrest and deportation.

Cultural performances at the gala were provided by the Villalobos Brothers and Mimi Berkova.

For more information on the LWC and how you can support the organization, go to laundryworkerscenter.org and facebook.com/lwc.org. □



WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD
Juana (left) presents award to Ricarda, Oct. 4.

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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.

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Contradictions in the impeachment struggle

By Fred Goldstein

Posted on lowwagecapitalism.com,
Sept. 29, 2019.

The impeachment struggle against Trump poses many contradictions.

On the one hand, hundreds of millions of people around the world would like to see Trump brought down in the hope that this will alleviate his administration's oppressive, racist and corrupt rule.

On the other hand, the impeachment struggle is, at bottom, a struggle by various factions of the ruling class to keep Trump from undermining the strength of U.S. imperialism at home and abroad.

Tens of millions have suffered from Trump's various forms of reaction. From the gag rule against abortion counseling, to immigrant families separated from their children, to Muslims and immigrants suffering under sanctions, to Venezuelans and Cubans under threat from all sides, to Palestinians under Israeli occupation, to Zimbabweans under U.S. sanctions and environmentalists watching the administration allow the extreme pollution of the air, drinking water, land and oceans. Trump has cultivated the ultra right and fascist elements with his racist defense of killer cops as well as attacks on African and Caribbean countries.

On the other hand, Trump has antagonized sections of the ruling class as well. He has weakened the NATO alliance; pulled out of the U.S.-sponsored Transpacific Partnership; pulled out of the Paris Climate Agreement; abused the Mexican government, the Canadian government and the German government; sided with the Brexit forces in Britain; and done numerous things to offend the allies of U.S. imperialism and to damage the military and diplomatic structure built up by Washington over decades.

Three hundred so-called national security experts have supported the articles of impeachment. What are "national security" officials? They are the CIA, FBI, National Security Council and all the agents of sabotage, subversion, special operations and dirty tricks whose job it is to undermine, remove or destroy all obstacles to the advancement of U.S. capitalist and imperialist interests at home and abroad.

Trump's corruption

Of course, it would be foolhardy to ignore Trump's corruption. The Biden scandal would not have come out if he were not so contemptuous of capitalist norms and processes. It is hard to measure degrees of corruption in bourgeois politics, since it is so pervasive, but usually presidents wait until they leave office to enrich themselves. Trump did not wait.

He openly cashes in on the presidency to bolster his personal fortune right out in the open and in defiance of capitalist political decorum. He has spent 300 days of his presidency on Trump properties spending government money. He has refused to put his properties in a blind



New York City, Dec. 14, 2017.

trust and instead turned them over to his sons. He has had military flight crews stay at his hotels as paying customers. And the Saudi monarchy, among others, has rented entire floors in his D.C. hotel.

So openly trying to get a foreign government to put a hit on Biden, his political opponent, is just business as usual for Trump and the corrupt circle around him.

Democratic Party leadership and Ukraine scandal

The Democratic Party leadership has been given new life in the struggle against Trump by the Ukraine scandal. Trump tried to withhold \$400 million in military aid to the reactionary regime in Kiev—the regime fighting the independence forces in eastern Ukraine—until Kiev came up with dirt on Joe Biden, Trump's electoral opponent.

Trump did so openly in a telephone call that was partially recorded in notes taken by Trump officials. Some versions of those notes were made public, and in them Trump tells the Ukrainian prime minister, Volodymyr Zelensky, to "do me a favor" and "look into corruption" by Biden and his son Hunter. Trump had held up the military aid that Congress allocated to Ukraine well before the phone call, thus using the aid as leverage.

The Ukraine question is like Russiagate, on a smaller scale. But politically, it is, in essence, the same thing. The Democrats first opposed Trump by playing the Russia card over and over. Instead of pointing out the outrageous disenfranchisement of masses of voters, particularly people of color, and instead of attacking Trump's racism, misogyny, and anti-worker and anti-environmental policies, they focused endlessly on the cry of collusion with Russia.

First of all, these Democrats are allied with the military-industrial complex. But second of all, they assumed that this would be the easiest way to go about fighting Trump. If there is anything about the ruling class that is generally recognized, it is their hostility to Russia (and China). So the quickest and easiest way to attack Trump is to call him soft on Russia and a friend of Vladimir Putin.

This put the Democrats squarely in

the camp of the militarists. What the Democrats failed to see was Trump's complete domination of the Republican Party and his ability to intimidate both the House and Senate Republicans. So until they won the majority in the House, the Democrats were stymied.

Nancy Pelosi was stalling on opening up an impeachment struggle despite the numerous crimes of Trump—against immigrants, women, his open profiteering from the presidency, etc. Then, the revelation about the Ukraine issue fell into the Democrats' lap. Trump stumbled into a misstep, which then came to the surface and the Democrats have seized upon it.

Background to the Ukraine crisis

It is no accident that the Ukraine issue has become the focus of the impeachment struggle. It was the Obama administration, with Joe Biden as vice president and Hillary Clinton as secretary of state, that overthrew the elected government of Ukraine under Viktor Yanukovich in February 2014.

The Obama/Biden/Clinton administration collaborated with fascist elements to put a right-wing government in power in Kiev. It is important to go back to the tape-recorded phone conversation between Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland and Geoffrey Pyatt, the U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, in February 2014.

The European Union was planning a soft takeover of Ukraine, trying to undermine that country's economic ties with Russia. The U.S. intervened in its own interests by encouraging fascist mobs to call for the overthrow of the elected government. A right-wing faction in the Ukraine Parliament pulled the police off the streets, allowing the mobs to break up parliament. That is when Nuland made the infamous "F--k the EU" comment in which she openly expressed Washington's preference for the ultra right-wing Fatherland Party, rife with fascists, to take over the government. (Washington Post, Feb. 6, 2014) When the smoke cleared, the Fatherland Party was in office and President Yanukovich was forced to flee.

On Biden the 'victim'

Biden, who has been made the victim of Trump's maneuvers, is a thoroughly reactionary racist, sexist politician, in addition to being a foreign policy reactionary.

In 1991, Biden was head of the Senate panel that oversaw the persecution of Anita Hill by 10 white male senators who allowed her to be vilified by Clarence Thomas, who had been nominated for the Supreme Court. (Thomas went on to be one of the most reactionary members of the court.) Biden presided over the hearings and participated in her vilification. Among other things, as the head of the panel, he failed to investigate her allegations against Thomas, failed to bring her witnesses before the committee and acted as if he did not believe her. (Washington Post, April 26, 2019)

In 1994, Biden was a Senate leader. He wrote the largest crime bill in U.S. history and got it passed in the Senate. The bill added 60 new death penalty offenses; it eliminated Pell grants that had allowed prisoners to get an education; it made it extremely difficult for death row inmates to appeal; it provided for funding for 100,000 more cops on the streets; it appropriated \$9.7 billion for more prisons; and it included the notorious "three strikes" provision, which mandated life sentences for anyone convicted of crimes three separate times.

Under Biden's and Bill Clinton's leadership, mass incarceration, which had begun in the late 1970s, expanded especially in the federal prisons.

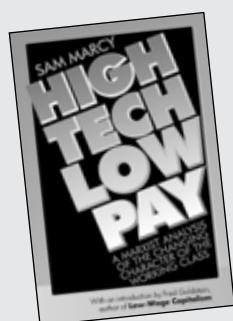
Impeachment leaves the masses out of the struggle

The impeachment process is strictly for ruling-class politicians and lawyers. They shape the charges and the arguments. They call and question the witnesses. The masses are totally shut out of the process and their grassroots interests do not see the light of day.

Trump should be tried for a whole host of crimes against the people. Witnesses should be called, like immigrant mothers who have been separated from their children. Black, Latinx, Native and Asian people who have been victims of racism should testify against Trump's casual remarks equating Nazis to those opposing Nazis and white supremacy.

LGBTQ2S people who have had friends murdered or beaten by Trump-loving bigots should testify. Black people whose relatives have been killed or beaten by racist cops should be allowed to tell their stories indicting Trump. The same should apply to people who have lost their health care, their pensions, their jobs, etc.

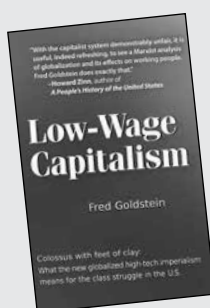
Furthermore, it would be one thing if Trump were impeached under pressure from the enraged masses in the streets, on the campuses and in the workplaces. But at present, the masses are relying on the ruling class to fight their battle against Trump. He and his whole administration and their enablers should be swept into jail for their crimes. That might bring some genuine relief to the working class and oppressed. □



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Biggest U.S. strike in over a decade

GM strikers battle on

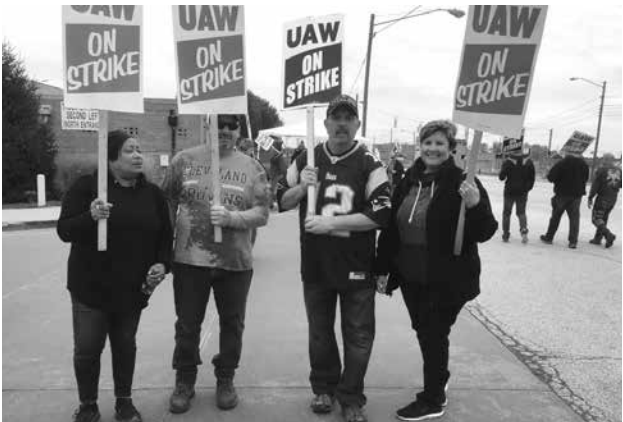
By Martha Grevatt
Parma, Ohio

As the biggest (numerically) U.S. strike in over a decade enters its fourth week, General Motors workers are showing no signs of giving in. While they would like to see some resolution and return to work, they don't want to go back in with a bad contract. The 49,000 United Auto Workers' members want to see "temporary" and lower-paid "in progression" workers brought up to top pay and given equal benefits. "Everyone Tier One!" has become a popular picket sign.

There are also demands to cancel plant closings, raise retiree pensions and give every worker a decent pay increase. Workers know that the company, which made \$35 billion in clear profit over the past four years, can well afford to address all their concerns.

The capitalist press has repeated on a near-daily basis GM's complaint that its U.S labor costs hover around \$62 an hour — higher than Ford, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) or the non-union plants of Asian and European auto companies. This misleads the public into believing that autoworkers make that figure in hourly wages. But the amount includes many other labor costs, such as pension contributions, vacation and holiday pay, and health insurance. In 2007, the year of the last GM strike, pay was closer to \$80 an hour.

What isn't often said is that labor costs are less than 5 percent of a vehicle's price tag, and that over-all labor costs per vehicle fall with each new generation of automation technology, which is designed to raise



Striking members of UAW Local 1005 outside the GM plant in Parma, Ohio. Oct. 7, day 22 of the strike.

productivity and get more work for the same or less pay. Moreover, GM, Ford and FCA have all cut costs via the outsourcing and subcontracting of work previously done by the Detroit Three UAW workers.

GM employs the biggest number of autoworkers in Mexico; it has more workers in China than in the U.S. Pay for these workers doesn't begin to approach \$62 an hour. South Korean GM workers are striking at the same time as their U.S. counterparts — also for higher wages and to make temporary workers permanent.

Hoping for the best, preparing for the worst

Strikers were on a bit of an emotional roller coaster the weekend of October 5-6. On Saturday, UAW Vice

President Terry Dittes gave workers an update, stating that "good progress" had been made, including a path to permanent status for temporary workers. The next day he informed strikers that negotiations had "taken a turn for the worse."

With all the publicity around corruption in the UAW International leadership, and the paucity of specific information from their negotiators, rank-and-file workers aren't sure how much to believe about the deal being negotiated. In the past, the International has pitched concessionary contracts that contained the current language allowing the deplorable treatment of temporary workers.

What strikers understand clearly is the sharp class conflict between GM's determination to shrink workers' pay and UAW members' equally fierce determination to win wage equity, job security and a bigger share of the value they produce. Their strong will is a factor in the negotiations, which are continuing.

Solidarity with the strike continues to build. The Michigan state chapter of the American Federation of Teachers has called on its members to join the picket lines. The NFL Players Association has just pledged its support. UAW Local 961, representing the FCA Marysville Axle Plant, delivered 30,000 pounds of food to Local 22 at the GM Detroit-Hamtramck assembly plant. Ford workers in Turkey are the latest to send an international solidarity message.

The list goes on of unions here and abroad that see the GM workers' fight as their fight.

Grevatt is a retired UAW FCA worker and serves on the Executive Board of UAW Local 869.

Fair Pay to Play Act

A step forward to empower student-athletes

By Monica Moorehead

The Fair Pay to Play Act was signed into law by California Gov. Gavin Newsome on Sept. 30. Newsome signed the SB206 on "The Uninterrupted," a multimedia platform show hosted and produced by LeBron James, the superstar forward with the National Basketball Association's storied franchise, the Los Angeles Lakers. This law will not go into effect until January 2023.

What is FPtoP? First of all, the name is a misnomer because the bill has nothing to do with schools paying student-athletes a fair wage like other workers for their labor.

Instead, according to espn.com, this bill "makes it illegal for schools to prevent an athlete from earning money by selling the rights to his or her name, image or likeness to outside bidders." (Sept. 30) The bill gives student-athletes the right, if they wish, to hire agents to represent them to be compensated if approached by big name corporations like Nike or smaller vendors.

Nine other state legislatures — Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Minnesota, Nevada, New York, Pennsylvania and South Carolina — are now debating similar bills.

All California athletes — identified as male, female and gender nonconforming — will be covered. But overwhelmingly those who have the most to gain will be athletes who play football and basketball. These two sports alone bring millions of dollars, along with prestige, into the coffers of athletic programs and school endowments on an annual basis.

Many universities have multibillion-dollar endowments, larger than the economies of developing countries, and can afford to pay their athletic coaches millions of dollars. Salaries of the top ten National Collegiate Athletic Association coaches in 2019 ranged from \$6.2 million to \$8.9 million a year, according to thebestschools.org website.

These colleges and universities, whether Division I, II or III, operate under the auspices of the NCAA, a non-profit organization of over 1,110 schools that connects sports to academics.

Though the NCAA may pay for a player's scholarship — tuition, room and board, and a stipend from semester to semester — this is far from being a paycheck.

The main opposition spokesperson against SB206 has been NCAA President Mark Emmert, whose own salary



Before Shabazz Napier, wearing number 13, played for and won the 2014 NCAA championship for the University of Connecticut, he said: "There's hungry nights where I'm not able to eat," because his limited food stipend did not give him enough money for food.

and compensation came close to \$4 million in 2017. He believes SB206 will blur the lines between amateur and professional sports on a wider scale. In other words, the NCAA hierarchy fears that athletes being compensated will make "amateur" sports and the NCAA obsolete if it leads to a similar federal law.

NCAA is a 'dictatorship'

Consider the fact that the NCAA brought in more than \$1 billion during the 2016-17 season. Three-fourths came from contracts with TV and livestreaming the annual March Madness men's national basketball tournament. Arenas that play host to regional games, the Final Four and the national championship game during the tournament become standing-room-only due to the players' skills and talent, and nothing else.

The NCAA also brings in tens of millions of dollars for end-of-the year college football games like the Rose Bowl, Orange Bowl and Sugar Bowl.

Draymond Green, a three-time champion with the Golden State Warriors and a former star player for the Michigan State Spartans, stated at a press conference that the NCAA is a "dictatorship." (nba.nbcsports.com, Oct. 4)

When asked to comment on the FPtoP bill, Green said, "As a former college athlete, that's exciting. You spend so much time in college broke, with no money, and yet everybody else was living very well.

"The university is making a ton of money off your likeness ... [but] the moment you decide to make some money off your likeness, you can't play there anymore. You're ineligible. You're suspended. It's backwards." (San Francisco Examiner, Sept. 30)

Green's comments expressed the sentiments of many other former college athletes whose universities profited off their popularity. Basketball icon LeBron James has stated that one reason he decided to forego college and go directly into the NBA from high school was fear of being super-exploited. This even though he was the most sought-after recruit in the U.S. when he was drafted at age 17.

It is no coincidence that the athletes most affected by this super-exploitation are African American, many of whom hope that college will be a bridge from a life of poverty to being drafted into either the NBA or the National Football League, where the potential of earning millions of dollars awaits. The truth is that only a very small percentage of athletes are lucky enough to make it to the pros, coming out of either high school or college.

That is why the long-term struggle of advancing from a bill like FPtoP to legal recognition of student-athletes as workers is inevitable. Back in 2014, Northwestern University football players filed a petition before the National Labor Relations Board asking for the right to unionize with the same rights as university employees, including the right to collectively bargain.

The players had the backing of the College Athletes Players Association, a United Steelworkers-supported organization that sought to represent them as workers. In essence, these players were allying themselves with low-wage university workers such as graduate student assistants and student janitors.

However, the NLRB struck down their petition in August 2015, siding with the NCAA and university administrations, which want to keep athletes powerless, with no living wage and no real protection in terms of their safety on the field or the court, where devastating injuries can and do occur. Instead, the NCAA tried to appease these players and others by providing a few more crumbs like increased funding for scholarships, food stipends and health care.

The FPtoP bill may have legal limitations, but it will be remembered for helping to launch a much larger struggle for student-athletes and their allies to fight for their rightful place as workers within the global working class. □

Subway struggle

‘We want accessibility, not more cops!’

By Tony Murphy
New York City

On Oct. 3, leaders in the disability rights movement led the latest in a growing movement of underground subway actions against the MTA’s racist police crack-down on “farebeaters.”

Activists with the People’s MTA joined the People’s Power Assembly NYC for a protest in Brooklyn’s Barclays Center station, a major transit hub connecting multiple subway lines.

The main demand was that money be spent making subways accessible with elevators and ramps — rather than on surveillance cameras and ever-increasing police presence, which all statistics show focus disproportionately on Black and Brown riders.

Carrying placards that read, “Our Subways Need \$ for Elevators, Not More Cops” and “End Broken Windows Policing in the Subway,” activists made it clear who the real farebeaters are: Wall Street firms draining billions from the MTA.

“The MTA spends billions in debt service to the banks,” said Mary Kaessinger, a disability rights leader and wheelchair user, as activists passed out leaflets to commuters, “and they don’t provide good train service to the people of this city.”

The MTA has recently cut service on at least eleven bus lines, including Brooklyn’s busiest line — NYC’s second busiest — and is planning to cut 2,700 transit worker jobs. It has also removed printed schedules from bus stops, requiring riders to use smartphones — which not everyone can afford or is able to use.

At the same time, the MTA announced it was flooding the subway with 1,000 more cops and outfitting stations with surveillance cameras.

Terrea Mitchell, an African-American leader with the PPA NYC who is sight-impaired, did not mince words when cops approached the Barclay’s Center protesters.

“We don’t need more cops; we need accessibility,” she told them.

Even before this year’s increase in police, the predatory and racist nature of subway policing gave rise to the Swipe It Forward campaign. It was started by groups like the Bronx’s Why Accountability to combat the oppressive

practice of cops targeting Black and Brown riders who can’t afford the fare.

This people’s campaign pushed back, getting the city’s district attorney to say in 2017 that arrests of fare evaders would be cut back. However, in Fall 2018 the MTA began a countercampaign, claiming it was losing \$260 million a year from turnstile jumpers.

‘The subway should be free’

But what about the MTA payment of at least \$3 billion a year to Wall Street banks for debt service? That’s tax-free money that rich firms rake in for doing literally nothing, while “fare evaders” are just poor and working people stretched to their financial limit.

Adopting a pleading tone, the MTA’s anti-fare-evasion campaign has included thousands of subway ads imploring the riding public not to jump turnstiles, but supporting the message with the threat of repression.

Repression breeds resistance. The ads have been widely mocked, many plastered over with stickers blasting the MTA for blaming the poor.

One sticker reads, “The MTA Hates Poor People #SwipeItForward.” Another mimicked the MTA ads, but read: “See someone evading the fare? Maybe they don’t have \$2.75. Maybe they were laid off. Maybe the ticket machines are broken.” Alluding to the Swipe It Forward campaign, the bottom of the faux ad reads, “Don’t snitch. Swipe.”

Members of the People’s Power Assembly NYC have been holding dynamic actions on the trains, going from car to car with placards — “Poverty Is Not A Crime, The Subway Should be Free” — and leaflets: “The MTA pays \$7 million A DAY to Wall Street for loans taken out 100 years ago, while people are struggling to pay rent, their medical bills, their student loans and the \$2.75 fare that is continuously rising.”

The Barclays Center action combined righteous anti-racist sentiment with the demand for accessibility. This demand has been part of a campaign targeting the MTA which includes protests, a constant presence by wheelchair users at MTA board meetings, and a slew of lawsuits the MTA is spending millions fighting in court.

The campaign has yielded results. Recently the MTA announced the creation of new elevators in 70 stations.



WW PHOTO: JAMIE MCLEAN

Disability rights leaders Mary Kaessinger and Terrea Mitchell at Brooklyn subway station protest on Oct. 3.

This was a significant concession and a huge advance in the fight for true transit accessibility. Yet it lacked what many in the disability rights movement have been demanding: the MTA signing a legally binding commitment to create accessible stations.

Without that, the MTA accessibility announcement could end up being another unfunded promise. The Oct. 7 cover of a free daily New York newspaper stated simply, “Experts concerned about how the MTA will pay its bills.”

Uniting the many sectors of our class who face oppression in the city’s public transportation system is the best chance of forcing the MTA to do the right thing. □

On the picket line

By Alex Bolchi and Sue Davis

11,500 teachers, staff win contracts at Oregon universities

Nearly 7,000 workers at Oregon Health and Science University won raises and other improvements when ratifying a new three-year contract by 98.9 percent on Sept. 9. Members of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 328 get a lump sum bonus payment of \$1,000 and a raise of 3.25 percent now, plus an additional 3 percent on July 1 in 2020 and 2021. Workers also get 50 cents more an hour for week-end work and \$1 more an hour for training co-workers. OHSU also agreed to a yearly contribution of \$100,000 to an employee hardship fund managed by Local 328 that will provide relief for needed food, transportation, housing and education.

Meanwhile, Local 328 has a legal case against OHSU: an unfair labor practice charge filed Aug. 8 with the Oregon Employment Relations Board. OHSU violated its duty to bargain in good faith when two members of its team used fake Twitter and Facebook accounts to pose as employees and undermine the union on social media. A hearing was scheduled for Oct. 1. (NW Labor Press, Sept. 18)

Two days before a strike was to begin Sept. 30 at all seven public universities in the Oregon University System, Service Employees Union (SEIU) Local 503 announced a tentative agreement that covers about 4,500 university support workers — food preparation, grounds and building maintenance, custodial services, student registration and financial aid assistance, and tech support.

The two-year contract includes a 3 percent raise retroactive to July 1 and a 2.1 percent raise on July 1, 2020. It gives an additional 2.5 percent increase on Nov. 1 to workers with at least five years seniority, who are at the top of the pay scale for their classification. Local 503 reported it’s the largest cost-of-living raise that university support workers have received in more than a decade.

Not only did the university system back off on a proposal to increase workers’ contributions to health care, but it also dropped a proposal to charge low-paid University of Oregon food service workers more for their shift meals. And it agreed to allow 48 hours of paid leave if campuses are shut down because of inclement weather. (NW Labor Press, Oct. 2)

California child care workers win union rights!

Nearly 40,000 California at-home child care workers won the right to bargain collectively on Sept. 30, thanks to worker advocacy that pushed for union rights for 16 years. As it stands now, California child care workers earn poverty wages and no benefits.

The “Building a Better Early Care and Education System Act” was co-sponsored by two unions: the Service Employees union (SEIU) California and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. Workers won the ability to unionize and bargain collectively with the state Department of Human Resources.

That gives child-care providers the ability to organize for improvements on the job, while setting the stage for the largest union election and organizing campaign in the country for better wages and benefits, retirement planning and training. The bill empowers the unions to contact workers around the state so they can attend worker orientation meetings. (Sacramento Bee, Sept. 30)

Assemblymember Monique Limon, who authored the bill, says the victory is “especially [for] women, who are the great majority of the child care workforce in our state.” (Asian Journal, Oct. 4) California becomes the 12th state where child care workers can unionize when the law takes effect Jan. 1, 2020!

Low-wage worker summit pushes to #OrganizeTheSouth

Over 120 low-wage workers converged in Durham, N.C., on Sept. 14 to organize and unite the working-class movement. The Worker Power Summit was hosted by NC Raise Up/Fight For \$15 as part of its seven-year organizing effort. It featured workshops on the connections among poverty wages, racism and the history of union suppression in the South. (WITN.com, Sept. 14) Writing in Facing South magazine, Rebekah Barber witnessed how attendees made it clear it’s “not by accident that the country’s poorest region is also where states have historically made it hard to organize and collectively bargain.” (Sept. 19)

Some attendees reported how bosses keep people of different races separated at work to discourage racial solidarity. Keynote speaker MaryBe McMillan of the N.C. AFL-CIO raised how systemic change in the U.S. won’t come from Trump or any person vying to be president. It will come through “uniting and building a bigger, bolder labor movement.” □

SMASH WHITE SUPREMACY! STOP C

‘This Shit Ain’t New!’ Philly cop corruption cover-ups

By **Betsey Piette**
Philadelphia

Over 50 demonstrators gathered in Center City on Oct. 4 to rally for an end to mass incarceration and cop corruption cover-ups under the slogan: “This Shit Ain’t New! Cop Corruption Cover-ups Continue.” The protest took place at the bitterly contested statue of Frank Rizzo, notoriously racist and fascist former police commissioner and later mayor of Philadelphia.

Speakers called for freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal, the remaining imprisoned MOVE 9 members, and all unjustly convicted prisoners. They were responding to the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police’s staged show of concern held earlier that day at FOP headquarters for “victims of crime.” The FOP highlighted Maureen Faulkner, widow of the cop whose death was used to send activist-journalist Abu-Jamal to death row.

Police from the “victims” event later rallied at the office of Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner, calling for his removal from participation in Abu-Jamal’s ongoing appeals process.

The counter-FOP protesters pointed out that the FOP and supporters are mobilizing against everyone who wants to end police misconduct. They emphasized that the FOP’s showcasing of Faulkner showed contempt for friends and relatives of thousands of Philly families whose loved ones have been unfairly imprisoned and murdered by cops. Many of those victims’ names were called out at the rally’s end.

On Sept. 3, Abu-Jamal’s attorneys

filed new appeal briefs as well as a request, based on their finding of new evidence in DA files, to have his case sent back to the Philadelphia Common Pleas Court for a new hearing. In a Sept. 17 filing, Krasner’s office said it did not oppose this motion by Abu-Jamal.

A press release from Mobilization4Mumia, which initiated the counter-FOP protest, stated: “Among the thousands of unfair convictions over the decades in Philadelphia is that of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Recent court decisions and newly discovered evidence in his case have confirmed what his supporters have been arguing since 1981 — that his arrest, trial and appeals were rife with police, prosecutorial and judicial violations of the constitution.

“Police terror and over-zealous prosecution have resulted in the conviction of countless innocent people and mass incarceration. Intimidation and manipulation of witnesses, hiding evidence, discrimination in jury selection, ineffective counsel, judicial bias — these and other unfair systemic failings in Abu-Jamal’s and other cases cause unjust imprisonment of our community members. At the same time the courts excuse police violence.”

The peoples’ rally was chaired by Megan Malachi, from Philly for REAL Justice, who said: “Those of us who were beat down in the streets by Philadelphia



Philadelphia, Oct. 4.

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

cops in 2014, 2015 and 2016 created the conditions [of organizing] that put Larry Krasner into office. Our consistent demand was that we were going to bring Mumia home.”

FOP: protecting the system, not people

Ted Kelly, speaking for Workers World Party, read from Abu-Jamal’s book, “Have Black Lives Ever Mattered?” describing the police as servants of capital, of those who run this system from the bank vaults and corporate offices. Kelly addressed the function of the FOP and how it came to be established, not as a real workers’ union, but as a structure used by police to exert political power. The FOP has a multimillion-dollar slush fund designed to buy politicians and judges.

Morgan Malachi, also with REAL Justice, stated: “Rizzo was the grandfather of racist Facebook posts. Instead of a computer, he used the media. He had years of stacking his influence in this city.

We know that the fix was in for Mumia, for the MOVE family and for every Black Philadelphian. But we know that resistance will outlive racists like Rizzo. Resistance will bring Mumia home!”

Several speakers denounced the FOP’s intervention on behalf of cops either fired or convicted of serious crimes, only to have them returned to policing city streets. One police commander accused of sexual harassment of at least four female cops was promoted to supervise the Special Victims Unit.

Following the rally, demonstrators took to the streets, curb-to-curb, blocking traffic as they marched around City Hall and down South Broad Street where they held a mini-rally outside the historically racist and sexist Union League. The march finally ended at 13th and Locust streets, site of the 1981 shooting for which Abu-Jamal was falsely convicted. A moment of silence was held for all victims of police brutality, including two MOVE 9 members, Merle Africa and Phil Africa, who died during incarceration.

Organizations that participated in the rally included Mobilization4Mumia, International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia, Food Not Bombs Solidarity, Philly for REAL Justice, Campaign to Bring Mumia Home, Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, Occupy PHA, Revolutionary Abolitionist Movement, International Action Center, Occupy ICE, Workers’ Solidarity Network, Free Mumia Coalition (NYC), ACT-UP, Black Lives Matter Philly, Black Alliance for Peace, Philadelphia Tenants Union, MOVE and Workers World Party. □

Targeted by the FBI

Free H. Rap Brown/ Imam Jamil Al-Amin!

By **Dianne Mathiowetz**
Atlanta

A two-day conference, “Re-Learning H. Rap Brown,” was held in Atlanta Oct. 4 and 5. Those dates mark the globally known Black freedom fighter’s 76th birthday and the 50th anniversary of publication of his ground-shaking book, “Die Nigger Die,” a searing account of white supremacy and racist violence.

Multiple panels composed of movement veterans, scholars, family members and former political prisoners provided historical information, personal stories and insights into H. Rap Brown’s leadership, first as a SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) chairperson and then as the esteemed Muslim cleric, Imam Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin.

The program highlighted the decades of U.S. government surveillance and efforts to undermine, distort and derail Brown’s organizing Black resistance to Jim Crow segregation in the South and racist oppression everywhere.

The illegal acts committed against Brown, others like the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and organizations as varied as the Southern Christian Leadership Council and Students for a Democratic Society were part of the FBI’s COINTELPRO plan to “neutralize” dissent. Every measure—from infiltration

and disinformation to assassination and framed-up charges—was employed under this secret program instituted by FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover.

H. Rap Brown was considered so dangerous to the status quo that in 1968 the U.S. Congress passed the “Rap Brown” Federal Anti-Riot Act, making it illegal to travel from one state to another, write a letter, make a phone call or speak on radio or television with the “intent” to encourage a person to riot.

Following his conversion to Islam while in New York state prison from 1971 to 1976, Imam Jamil Al-Amin moved to Atlanta, established a mosque in the city’s historically Black West End neighborhood and began creating programs to serve youth, women and senior residents being harmed by the presence of drug dealers.

An illegal traffic stop in suburban Cobb County in May 1999 provided the pretext for the repressive state apparatus to try to curtail and destroy Al-Amin’s influence.

Two Fulton County sheriff’s deputies showed up at Al-Amin’s neighborhood store on March 16, 2000, with a warrant related to the traffic stop. A firefight ensued with an unknown person who, according to the surviving deputy, was 5-feet, 10-inches tall with “cold grey eyes” and wounded by the deputies.

Despite Jamil Al-Amin being 6-feet, 5-inches tall with brown eyes, a national

manhunt was called for the former H. Rap Brown—who when captured had no evidence of wounds.

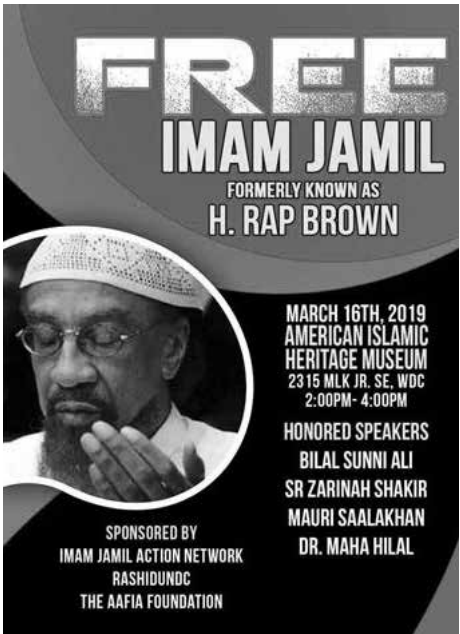
Imam Jamil was charged with 13 criminal counts, including the murder of one deputy and the wounding of the other. Much evidence was not allowed at his trial, including a confession by Otis Jackson that he was the shooter.

Imam Jamil Al-Amin was convicted and sentenced to life without parole. A judicial gag order forbidding any media interviews exists to this day.

Until August 2007, Al-Amin was held in 23-hour involuntary lockdown at Reidsville State Prison. Then Georgia Corrections officials, fearful of his influence among Muslim prisoners, requested the Federal Bureau of Prisons take him into custody. For the next seven years, he was held in solitary confinement in the underground cells of a Colorado super-max prison where his health suffered. After several other moves, he is currently incarcerated in Tucson, Ariz.

Current political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal and Sekou Odinga, a recently released Black Liberation Army member, have urged the building of a mass movement to demand Al-Amin’s freedom from the vengeful hands of the government.

The conference, organized by the Imam Jamil Action Network, the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, Workers World



CREDIT: IJA NETWORK

Party and others, successfully brought the work of H. Rap Brown in the 1960s and 70s and its continuation now by Imam Jamil Al-Amin to a new generation of students and activists.

For more information and to become involved, go to whathappened2rap.com or imamjamilactionnetwork.weebly.com. To send a message of solidarity, write Imam Jamil Al-Amin, #99974-555, USP Tucson, U.S. Penitentiary, PO Box 24550, Tucson, AZ 85734. □

COP KILLING! END PRISON SLAVERY!

WW COMMENTARY

The conviction of Amber Guyger and fear of a ‘racial powder keg’

By Makasi Motema

Five years after the murder of Michael Brown, the people have achieved an apparent victory: the indictment, conviction and impending imprisonment of a white police officer for the murder of an unarmed Black man.

Botham Jean, 26 years old, was gunned down in his own apartment in Dallas, Texas, by Dallas Police Officer Amber Guyger on Sept. 6, 2018. Guyger, who lived directly beneath Botham, claimed she went to the wrong floor at the end of a 13-hour shift, entered Botham’s apartment believing it was her own and shot Botham believing he was an intruder.

Locally and nationally, Black Lives Matter organizers demanded that Guyger be punished, whether or not her improbable story was true. It’s exceedingly rare that a police officer is punished for murder, especially when the victim is Black. Given the incredibly lenient standards police officers face in the aftermath of a shooting, it’s surprising that Guyger was indicted at all, and even given a 10-year sentence.

It’s true that it is particularly hard to justify the quick resort to deadly force shown by Guyger or the absurdity of killing him in his own home. But Guyger is not unique among police officers in showing a willingness to shoot first and ask questions later.

On Nov. 22, 2014, 12-year-old African American Tamir Rice was gunned down by a white Cleveland police officer, while playing with a toy gun in a public park. The police officer didn’t even wait until he was out of his car to open fire. Nor is Guyger the first off-duty officer to murder

an innocent person. Such occurrences are disturbingly common and seldom result in criminal prosecution.

A common failing of liberal commentators is the attempt to explain police killings, and the reaction to them by the justice system in legalistic terms. But laws exist to serve those who write them and will be twisted against the oppressed at a moment’s notice. An oppressor cannot be adequately described with their own propaganda. This conviction should be understood in the wider context of the Black struggle against police violence.

It is about the relations of power between the ruling class and the working class — particularly the nationally oppressed. The current iteration of the Black Liberation struggle, in the form of Black Lives Matter, has been raging off and on for over five years. It erupted into the national consciousness during the uprising in Ferguson, Mo., following Michael Brown’s death. Since then, there have been dramatic high points and quiet lows, but the movement refuses to abate.

Chinks in the armor of the state

Through it all, the repressive state has remained firm. The capitalist ruling class, with its political legitimacy waning, desperately needs to hold on to its monopoly of force. Police officers must be permitted to kill without fear of consequence. Without that power imbalance between the state and the working class, the ruling class’s hold on power would quickly erode. This is the reason why so many egregious cases of police violence have gone unpunished.

Nevertheless, individual agents of the

state are not immune from public pressure. The insistence of Black activists to continue to struggle, and even to escalate their tactics, must weigh on the minds of prosecutors, police and politicians everywhere. Any police shooting has the potential to trigger a mass uprising.

As Malcolm X said, the U.S. is a “racial powder keg” of tension. No mayor of any city wants to preside over the collapse of civil order. These agents of the state, therefore, must be hyper-aware of rising tensions across the U.S. They no doubt followed the protests on the recent anniversary of Eric Garner’s killing — a struggle that has persisted for five years — and the decision of local activists to march to the home of his murderer, Daniel Pantaleo, who was eventually fired.

Likewise, in Dallas the Botham Jean case threatened to raise tensions to a fever pitch. Just days after the killing, nine activists were arrested for obstructing traffic during a Dallas Cowboys football game. And when those activists remained in jail for several days — more time behind bars than Guyger has yet seen — further protests broke out to demand their release.

Dallas is also where five police officers were killed in July 2016, and nine others wounded, by Micah Johnson — seemingly in reaction to the surge of police killings at that time. This is what Malcolm’s powder keg looks like when the fuse gets too short.

In order to maintain power, the capitalist ruling class and their state agents are



Members of Botham Jean’s family stand with a memorial portrait of the murdered man in Dallas.

motivated to remain firm in the face of liberal demands for reform. And yet, they must weigh that policy against sporadic but determined unrest — and the threat of full-blown uprisings — by the most militant forces in the Black struggle. The conviction of Amber Guyger is a result of that contradiction giving way in favor of the people.

While this conviction cannot be viewed as the start of a major sea change, it shows the power of nationally oppressed peoples within the U.S. working class. There will no doubt be further outrages from the police and attacks by white supremacists. But this event should serve as a signal that the ruling class has weaknesses — gaps in its armor. Increased pressure from a united working class can exploit those gaps and secure greater victories. The lesson of the conviction of Amber Guyger then is to struggle, to unite, to persist. □

People’s victory

Killer cop fired!

By Devin Cole
Pensacola, Fla.

Nearly three months after the murder of Tymar Crawford, a young African-American man killed in his front yard by Daniel Siemen, an officer of Pensacola Police Department, the PPD announced on Oct. 3 that Siemen had been fired from his position as detective for “violating the department’s use of deadly force policy.”

This victory comes after three solid months of militant organizing by Tymar Crawford’s partner, Kimberly Henderson, children and friends, and a coalition led by the Pensacola chapter of the Dream Defenders, a socialist feminist, Black liberation, prison abolition group based in Florida. The coalition also included Answer/Party for Socialism and Liberation, Workers World Party-Pensacola and Strive (Social Trans Initiative).



Tymar Crawford.

Protests included two marches through downtown Pensacola up to the front doors of the police department, two disruptions of City Council meetings, a confrontation with Pensacola Mayor Grover Robinson and a People’s Assembly that launched its own march.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement conducted its own investigation and has now turned the case over to a grand jury which will determine

if any criminal acts were committed by police and if the PPD has “adequate policies and training” in place related to use of deadly force.

The news of Siemen’s termination appears to indicate what the verdict of the grand jury might be. But militant organizers and the people of Pensacola are not letting their guard down. Their vigilance against police brutality, anti-Black violence and capitalism as a whole continues.

All power to the people! Tymar Crawford, presente! □

Dangerous health conditions in prison

Inmates fight back

By Ted Kelly

For weeks, prisoners at Pennsylvania’s SCI Frackville have been protesting the deteriorating conditions that have led to an outbreak of health problems among inmates. Water from the taps runs a deep “chocolatey brown,” according to prison activist Bryant Arroyo. In the showers in his wing of the prison, black mold climbed the tiles from the floor up the walls; Arroyo and many of his fellow inmates are now being treated for fungal infections.

Arroyo is serving a life sentence for a crime he did not commit. He’s dedicated himself to organizing from the inside and mobilizing prisoners to fight back against the dangerous conditions authorities impose on these oppressed workers. His activism, which included a successful campaign to scuttle plans for a proposed coal gasification plant that was to be built near the prison complex, has led political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal to dub him “the world’s first jailhouse environmentalist.”

In 25 years in the Pennsylvania prison system, Arroyo has experienced multiple health problems inflicted on him by the prison system. This year he was finally allowed to have surgery to treat throat polyps, which likely arose from drinking toxic water. And while he reports a team



Bryant Arroyo, with WWP members Joe Piette (left) and Ted Kelly (right) in Frackville.

finally came in to clean the showers, Bryant is still taking an oral anti-fungal treatment and a topical solution for a skin condition on his feet and ankles caused by prolonged mold exposure.

Even after dozens of grievances were filed by inmates, prison authorities failed to address the shower conditions. Then last month an outside inspection team happened to be on the premises to evaluate the facilities at SCI Frackville. Inmates banged on doors and called out to the inspectors, demanding they investigate the showers on their wing. Afterwards, one inspector was overheard saying, “This place needs to be shut down.”

Prisoners denied family, other visitors

Ironically, last year Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf and Corrections Secretary

Continued on page 8

General strike rocks Ecuador

Continued from page 1

thoughts ... when the aggression is too much we pick up stones ... stones versus bullets is not fair.”

Pame Aguirre, elected member of the Parliament of the Andes, tweeted: “#MovilizacionNacional In Imbabura [province north of Quito, the capital], more than 10,000 people protest for their rights. The government will say that they are bums, but in reality they are fathers, mothers, students, teachers, merchants, Indigenous people, ordinary citizens beaten down by the #paquetazo” [the “special offer” from the IMF].

Workers World spoke with José Jácome, a leader of self-employed vendors who are organized into 22 associations in Ibarra’s Amazonas Market. Jácome led an Oct. 5 protest march of about 100 vendors who are part of the precarious, informal working class.

Jácome told Workers World that the increase in fuel prices “affects not only transport workers, but all of the people of Ecuador, because when the cost of fuel rises, everything goes up — the cost of food, merchandise and the cost of transportation for students.”

As of Oct. 7, WhatsApp was being used to coordinate actions in Ibarra and the province.

Today’s spontaneous uprising is inevitably compared to the mobilizations that

toppled seven presidents in the turbulent years of crisis prior to the Citizens Revolution of Rafael Correa (2007-17). Nevertheless, people in the streets of Ibarra say they have never seen anything like this.

'Paro Nacional' — a national strike of the people

Aury Cotocachi reported this morning on Radio Pichincha Universal that every Indigenous community in Imbabura Province (of which Ibarra is the capital) has mobilized to join what is becoming a great national strike of the people: a true “Paro Nacional.”

It is hard to tell from Ibarra if people in all of Ecuador’s 23 provinces are in motion. The government itself acknowledges that roads are blocked in five provinces, including Tungurahua, Chimborazo and Azuay. Radio Pichincha reported this morning that a large Indigenous group is on the march in Cotopaxi Province, as police are mobilizing to prevent them from closing a major section of the Pan American highway south of Quito.

The transport strike is officially over, with public transportation returning to normal in Guayaquil and Quito, but Ibarra and other cities remain totally shut down. Classes are suspended here in Ibarra for the third day. Teachers say they are going into the streets on Oct 7.

Military police were detained by Indigenous people in Cotopaxi province

and in Ibarra’s neighboring city of Otavalo. In effect, Indigenous communities have declared their own states as exceptions.

The role of Moreno

Moreno was elected in 2017 promising a continuation of the Citizens’ Revolution led by Rafael Correa. He betrayed those promises, and for the past 28 months has imposed neoliberal rulings reversing almost all the progressive gains of the prior 10 years. The pro-capitalist media endlessly promote the Big Lie that Correa’s government was corrupt and bureaucratic, wasting oil revenues and plunging Ecuador into a debt crisis. Using this false argument, Moreno went begging to the IMF to obtain billions in loans to compensate for the billions in taxes that he exempted the rich from paying.

More and more people denounce Moreno for following IMF prescriptions in imposing austerity, removing workers’ rights to a steady full-time job and his ultimate goal of privatizing the nation’s resources. The IMF is hated in Latin America for promoting poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment.

Poverty has made a comeback after a long decline during the years of Correa. Now you see elderly women begging in the streets and homeless families and couples sleeping in the parks in Ibarra. Retired people without benefits, who were receiving a monthly sum called

a “bono,” have been cut off from pensions in the Indigenous communities near Ibarra. A teacher says they pay out of pocket to keep the breakfast program going for poor children.

A chant often expressed in militant protests can be translated as “Lenín Moreno, hypocrite-traitor, the people reject you in all of Ecuador.” Telesur and the international media are statistically correct in saying that less than 30 percent of the people support Moreno, but the polls say only 12 percent of the people trust him.

All the people have finally risen up — after two long years of smaller protests in various parts of the country have added up (the most recent in Carchi Province) — to demand Moreno’s ouster and the end of his reactionary regime.

The future is unknown. Differences among the people, both political and regional, have to be faced if fractured social movements are going to unite to forge a new progressive party free of the sectarianism that plagued the country even as it was making advances while Correa was president.

People here have to follow developments in Ecuador on a day-to-day basis as the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador calls for a Paro Nacional Oct. 9, which will probably be answered by all the social sectors, despite their differences. □

Inmates fight back

Continued from page 7

John Wetzel manufactured a “health crisis” among prison staff to provide a pretext to lock down prisoners who went on strike. But when a genuine outbreak occurred among the prison population, the authorities moved to silence and punish prisoners. Indeed, during this health crisis, lifers at Frackville were systematically denied visits from family members and friends.

Claudio Manzanet is one of many inmates who have been callously denied visitation rights. It’s been over a year since he’s been able to see family members, who have twice been denied access to the prison when they showed up during normal visiting hours. Derrick Broadnax looked forward to seeing his mother, brother-in-law and older sister recently, only to learn that all three were denied entry at the gates by Frackville staff. The brother of Dominic Williams was likewise prevented from visitation during this time.

This reporter was barred entry to the Frackville visiting room to see Arroyo last month, despite a gate clearance and official visitor status with the Pennsylvania Prison Society. Arroyo said later in a phone call that it is “no coincidence that it’s all lifers who got our visits denied.”

After a sustained pressure campaign from inside and outside the prison, it appears that Frackville staff have relented and loosened up their capricious denial of visitation rights. Signage in the waiting room lobby has been updated with clearer and more accurate explanations of state prison policy, and the visitors room is reportedly full again during normal hours.

Mental health support withheld

Meanwhile, the scant services that prison staff are supposed to provide are under attack. The Correctional Peer Support Specialists (CPS) are inmates who have been given some training on how to talk with fellow prisoners who are

experiencing mental health crises or suicidal ideations. Such struggles are common, considering isolation from family and community and being trapped in dangerous and unhealthy conditions. The CPS are supposed to have unlimited access to fellow prisoners who are having difficulty coping. However, CPS like John Ludovici report that the program has come under serious attack.

A Frackville sergeant named Reed has been arbitrarily denying CPS sessions between prisoners for months now. The meetings, which are supposed to be of unlimited duration, are now being restricted to no more than 10 minutes. For prisoners suffering from bad health and feeling trapped in these miserable conditions? Ten minutes. For suicidal prisoners or those considering harming themselves? Ten minutes. For an inmate who just needs some time to talk about his feelings in a safe and confidential environment? Ten minutes.

Multiple complaints have been filed against Sergeant Reed, and the Director of Supervisors Lynne Patron has been alerted to this illegal denial of services that amounts to de facto cancellation of the CPS program. But she has taken no action, nor has Sergeant Reed been reprimanded.

Shut it down!

Consider the leadership and tireless work of organizers like Bryant Arroyo. Consider the bravery of men like Manzanet, Broadnax, Williams and Ludovici to stand up to this white supremacist, mass-incarceration machine. We on the outside must heed their words and join the struggle to dismantle the system that forces them to live under these brutal conditions. That inspector was right—Frackville should be shut down. So should every high-tech dungeon in this prison nation, and so should every prisoner be freed.

Free Bryant Arroyo and all prison lifers! Free ‘Em All! □

Boston hotel strike

Electrifying solidarity on the picket line

By Phebe Eckfeldt Boston

Oct. 4 — Today, on the one-month anniversary of the Battery Wharf Hotel strike, hundreds of supporters joined the picket line. Even before the rally start time of 4:30 p.m., 100 people were there. The spirit of solidarity was electrifying as students, unions and community organizations soon began arriving to swell the line by four to five times.

The Battery Wharf strikers, mostly migrants, are represented by UNITE HERE Local 26. They are fighting for affordable health care, job security, a pension and a yearly wage increase. They are also fighting against racism in the hotel industry, demanding steps be taken to diversify the workforce and hire more African-American workers. The hotel owners, Westmont Hospitality Group, have refused to negotiate.

The 75 strikers want what their comrades at Marriott hotels won in 2018 when they struck nationwide. In Boston seven hotels were virtually shut down for 46 days. The Marriott victory set a precedent for workers’ rights with contract language guaranteeing paid parental leave, accommodations for pregnant workers and an alert system for housekeepers in case of sexual assault. Workers also won a crucial guarantee that immigrants who lose their protected status will have their jobs waiting for them if they regain the right to work within five years.

The majority of hotels in the Boston area



WW PHOTO: STEVAN KIRSCHBAUM

Hundreds take to the streets of Boston Oct. 4 in solidarity with hotel strikers. Labor/community contingents and singer Billy Bragg join the rank and file.

were forced to match the benefits won as a result of the historic Marriott victory. But Battery Wharf owners have refused.

After a month on strike, the Battery Wharf workers are still determined to fight on. Union supporters showing up in solidarity included the building and construction trades, Teamsters Local 25; United Steelworkers Local 8751, Boston School Bus Drivers; Service Employees union (SEIU) 32 BJ; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 3650, Massachusetts Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, Pride at Work, and other groups like the Harvard TPS Coalition, International Workers’ Solidarity Network, and students from Harvard University and Tufts University.

At today’s rally, as a busload of chanting nurses represented by the Massachusetts Nurses Association pulled up, they were greeted with cheers. Later, the boisterous picket line took to the narrow streets of the North End, marching to a final rally where Billy Bragg, English musician and labor activist, sang union songs. □

Part 1

Cuba, reforestation and the climate crisis

The following is Part 1 of a slightly edited talk given at a Workers World Party forum on Oct. 3 in New York City. Hedgecoke participated in the 50th Venceremos Brigade this summer.

Part 2 will be published in the Oct. 17 issue of Workers World newspaper.

By Stephanie Hedgecoke

We meet on stolen land. This is Lenapehoking, Lenape homeland. We look forward to the day that all Indigenous nations' land claims are paid in full.

As we are meeting on environmental issues tonight, I wonder how many of you may have read part of the new U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report on the status of the oceans? The report covers the impacts of carbon pollution on ocean, coastal, polar and mountain ecosystems and the human communities that depend on them. Part of that extra carbon in the atmosphere goes into the ocean waters and makes the water more acidic. The acid directly impacts shellfish growing their shells — and coral reefs.

The acidity and the extra heated temperatures, which are much worse in the oceans, and massive amounts of plastic trash made from petroleum, are killing life in the oceans. But life on an ocean planet depends upon the life in the oceans!

How many of you may have read part of the August IPCC climate and land-use report, the first one with a majority of its authors from developing countries, the first one to rely on interviews with Indigenous populations as a key source?

That report covered destruction of lands and habitats by agriculture, logging, mining and drilling — and it covered the point of view of people first impacted by global warming. It said, “Based on Indigenous and local knowledge, climate change is affecting food security in drylands, particularly those in Africa, and high mountain regions of Asia and South America.”

Many young people are reading these reports. For those of you who have not been keeping up with the news about global heating, the youth have left you behind. It's time to catch up.

Settlers' war with nature

Deforestation and environmental devastation started in North and South America and in Africa with colonialism, and the arrogant thieving mentality that came with it of “man over nature.” The settlers started a war with nature in these lands. In fact, Europe's massive ship-building phase, [which enabled settlers] to go forth and steal, leveled swaths of Europe's forests.

Modern scholars now estimate Indigenous populations pre-invasion at 50 million to 100 million people [in North America]. But by 1800, less than 1 million Native people remained within what are the current U.S. borders, threatened by 15 million European settlers.

And the Native peoples' population collapse led to immediate imbalances with other species such as game animals. Why? Because Indigenous cultures centered on living in balance with the natural world, centered stewardship of the forests and lands.

Before 1492, what is today the U.S. had about 1 billion acres of forests. Since 1600, some 286 million acres were destroyed (and that might be a low estimate). In a 1763 letter, Benjamin Franklin wrote, “Cleared land absorbs more heat and melts snow quicker.” That he and [Thomas] Jefferson and the settlers were focused on rapidly taking down the forests is well-documented in their writings.

By the early 1800s, settlers had cleared a 100-mile-wide swath from what is now Maine to Georgia, with one-half to three-quarters of the forests cleared. Settlers regarded these lands and resources as plunder for them to abuse. It was not long before soil fertility was damaged — lands were abandoned, and more lands stolen from Native nations.

Eighty percent of Earth's land animals and plants live in forests. Even taking out part of a forest's insulating canopy damages habitats and causes temperature swings harmful to plants and animals. And rainforests are key to water supplies and clean air. Between 1990 and 2016, we lost another 502,000 square miles of Earth's forests.

Colonialism fueled capitalism's growth. Colonialism and the growth of capitalism have deforested the world. This is a big part of the crisis of global warming; in addition to the massive ongoing increases of carbon in the

atmosphere, the forests that draw carbon back out of the atmosphere have been destroyed. The world needs reforestation.

Cuban reforestation: role model for the world

As someone who has suffered eco-grief for years, [this writer brings] a message of hope. As a member of the 50th Venceremos Brigade, I witnessed Cuba doing what the world needs to do.

After the 1959 Revolution, Cuba implemented its first Agrarian Reform. Cuban reforestation began in 1968 in the [mountainous region of] Sierra del Rosario, with support from the revolutionary government, when local villagers decided on a plan.

The area had been totally denuded during Spanish colonization. The original forest was cut down for livestock and plantations. The indigenous trees — Mahogany, Majagua, Cedar, Ebony and others — were entirely wiped out. By the mid-1800s, the soil was degraded, and deforestation continued into the early 1900s. The impoverished rural people worked for ranchers, or they burned trees to make charcoal to sell. By the time of the Cuban Revolution, there was nothing left but isolated palm trees in those mountains.

Socialist Cuba saw a need to implement social and economic projects in the rural areas. This reforestation plan, launched along with the establishment of community services and livelihoods, targeted improving soil quality and providing essential work for the area's people. They used a terrace-planting system on the mountain slopes. The plan began with an initial 12,355 acres (5,000 hectares) in the eastern part of the mountain range.

Cuban scientists assisted [the project] to determine which indigenous trees to plant, and the villagers planted 3,000 Mahogany, Hibiscus and Teak trees. Within eight years, the rural people in the valley had planted 6 million trees. In 1971, they founded the village of Las Terrazas [the terraces].

The revolutionary Cuban government stated that fruit trees should also be planted among the other trees in order to feed the people. Over 80 percent of the food eaten in the biosphere is locally grown, all of it organic, including bananas, pumpkins, grapefruit, avocados, oranges, mandarins and mamey — all grown between the forest trees.

Indigenous ecosystems restored

When the Cuban people restored the forests, the indigenous mammals, plants, birds and insects, many of which had become endangered during centuries of colonialist and capitalist exploitation of the environment, began to come back. The indigenous ecosystems began to be restored.

Today Cuba has 131 species of birds, 26 [of them] indigenous, the rest pass through on migratory routes to their nesting areas in Cuba. There are 33 reptilian species, including 17 species of snakes and 11 species of lizards. Some of the world's smallest mammal species are from Cuba — the jutía conga and jutía carabalí, rodents which live in the trees, returned to the forest, and, it is believed, the tiny endangered Cuban solenodon as well.



WW PHOTO: STEPHANIE HEDGECOKE

On the Rio San Juan in the Sierra del Rosario biosphere in Cuba.

In 1985, the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recognized this reforestation project — and, in conjunction with the Cuban government, added 61,776 acres (25,000 hectares) of the Sierra del Rosario — as the first Biosphere Reserve in Cuba.

During the Special Period, after the loss of the Soviet Union and Cuba's other former socialist trading partners, there was revolutionary support to promote ecological and cultural tourism with a doubled focus on sustainability. Also beginning with the Special Period, it became mandatory to grow organic food.

Local villagers restored a coffee plantation from the ruins of one of the colonial plantations. They planted coffee trees and began to harvest shade-grown, arabica coffee. Honey is also locally produced, and beekeeping is widely practiced.

Cuba's socialist planning centers on sustainability and enables the Cuban people to do all this. Revolutionary Cuba, despite the economic aggressions of imperialism, is a model for fighting global warming.

Source: “Our Nation's Forests Need America's First Stewards.” Gary S. Morishima and Larry Mason. *Journal of Forestry*, volume 115, issue 5, September 2017, pp. 354-61. (tinyurl.com/y4jzowbp)

The entire article is posted at workers.org.



Unnatural Disasters

Workers World articles on the climate crisis, 2001–12
Available at tinyurl.com/y5y6nhwh/

WORKERS WORLD

editorial

What major country in the world can claim greater progress than People’s China in raising the standard of living and the educational level of its people over the last 70 years?

In 1949, the leader of the Chinese socialist revolution, Mao Zedong, declared victory over the landlords, corporations, banks and imperialists who had ruled China. His famous words were, “China has stood up,” delivered to an immense crowd in Tiananmen Square.

China was then a terribly poor and underdeveloped country of 541 million people. The vast majority were peasants who had lived on the edge of starvation for generations, suffering monstrous abuse from the landlords. A small, but equally impoverished, working class had long been in rebellion against foreign and domestic exploiters. Women were on the bottom of the heap, their feet bound and their labor discounted.

Today, China is a country of 1.4 billion people. Its advanced economy has made it the world’s largest exporter of manufactured goods. Life expectancy has more than doubled since the revolution — from only 36 years in 1949 to 76 years today. The adult literacy rate has risen from an estimated 15-20 percent in 1949 to 97 percent today.

Yet, when People’s China celebrated its 70th anniversary this Oct. 1, the bourgeois media mentioned none of this tremendous progress achieved by the Chinese people. Everything was focused on accusing China’s Communist Party leaders of being dictatorial and

China's revolution at 70

Behind its amazing progress



Millions gathering in Tiananmen Square to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, in Beijing, Oct. 1.

autocratic.

What the capitalists around the world dare not admit is that China’s centrally planned economy is superior to the dog-eat-dog system of capitalism, in which privately owned corporations and banks hold a monopoly over production and must turn a profit for their obscenely rich owners.

China’s incredible advances have come despite its leaders deciding they had to compromise with world capitalism and let in foreign exploiters to get the capital to build up the country’s infrastructure. That has been a two-edged sword, resulting in a class of millionaires now

in China, but it has not brought about a counterrevolution. State ownership and planning continue to hold the upper hand.

The increasingly hostile attitude of the U.S. rulers toward China comes from the fact that these capitalists had engaged in commerce with China and set up factories there not only to make money, but also with the intention of undermining the socialist underpinnings of the Chinese economy. And that hasn’t happened.

Nor have Trump’s tariffs on Chinese goods, and China’s responding tariffs on U.S. goods, broken down the will of the 90-million-member Communist Party to defend its socialist system. It is Wall Street and the stock market here, not China, that is trembling over the effects of the trade war.

Workers World newspaper’s very first issue in 1959 was headlined “Hail the Communes!” Those communes started People’s China on its trajectory toward a socialist future.

China’s massive celebrations on its 70th anniversary showed the enthusiasm of the people for their great achievements. They are looking not to the capitalist “West,” but to themselves and their own system to blaze new trails forward in a world shaken by the emergence of a global climate crisis.

All the more reason for progressive people to reject China bashing and focus on how to make system change a reality everywhere. □

WW Commentary

Office hours with Professor Abu-Jamal

By Ted Kelly
Frackville, Pa.

“If you haven't noticed,” Mumia said to me as he leaned over and flashed me his wry grin, “I’m a frustrated professor.” His expression was warm, but his tone was earnest. “A professor without a chair.”

Mumia Abu-Jamal holds office hours in the visitors’ room of SCI Mahanoy, not in some university faculty building. There are no alabaster busts adorning the walls. Despite the fact that we were in rural, white Pennsylvania, most of the faces around us were Black and Brown. Mumia did not have a big mahogany desk in front of him, but he did have a plastic tray on his lap with lunch — a ham sandwich and a slice of cheesecake from the vending machines where MOVE Minister of Confrontation Pam Africa bought them.

Lucky for his students, Mumia does not need a sturdy bookshelf close at hand full of weathered tomes to reference the history, law and quotations he means to impart. They're in his head. From the time we shook hands to the time we sat down and started eating lunch, Mumia had already taken me on a tour of 19th century Haiti, mobbed-up Prohibition-era Philadelphia, and Florence, Italy, when it was under the domain of the Casa de Medici. Mahanoy staff don't let visitors bring in pad and pen to take notes, so one has to train their memory to be as good as the Professor's.

Of course, that Mumia Abu-Jamal is brilliant should come as a surprise to no one because this former Black Panther, former president of the Philadelphia chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists, and prison activist is one of the most important political theorists of our era. His two most recent books are part of a series co-written with Stephen Vittoria called “Murder, Incorporated,” a sharp, plainspoken history of the ongoing atrocity that is U.S. imperialism. It's some of the best history written from a Marxist, anti-imperialist perspective. (And I have it on good authority, by the way, that part three of “Murder, Incorporated” is in the works.)

But as I was sitting there with Mumia, I did think it was remarkable how easy he is to talk to. He's warm and funny and wants to listen as much as he wants to share things with you — despite being one of the most important revolutionaries in the world! Then I realized — he is all of these things precisely because he is



Ted Kelly and Mumia Abu-Jamal at SCI Mahanoy, Oct. 3.

a true revolutionary. Because the role of a revolutionary is to know history and to be able to communicate it in a way that makes sense to the person sitting next to you while you eat lunch. To be hard enough to survive 38 years in prison for a crime you did not commit and strong enough to still keep your beautiful smile.

There are a great number of things that I discussed with the Professor during office hours, and I hope to be able to write about them in the columns of this newspaper in the coming weeks. But especially because the Professor is a constant reader — and that includes being a reader of Workers World — I wanted to make sure I used this opportunity to say directly: Thank you, Mumia, for being so generous with your time and for such a pleasant and educational meeting. The movement needs you more than ever, and we will stop at nothing to get you free.

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! And then let's get this man his damn department chair! □

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Haiti

Mass protests demand president resign, U.S. butt out

By G. Dunkel

Angry Haitians flooded the streets of Port-au-Prince Oct. 4, coming from many of its neighborhoods, such as Nazon, Solino, Bel-Air, Fort National and Delmas, to converge at the U.N. logistics base in Clercine near the airport. According to reports in the Haitian press, the action included people in wheelchairs.

What angered the crowd in particular was the support that the Core Group—ambassadors of the U.S., France, Germany, Canada, Spain, the EU and some big international organizations—was giving to President Jovenel Moïse and his gang, known as the Party of Bald Headed Haitians (PTKH). The Core Group wants at least a truce or a dialogue between the PTKH and the militants in the streets—some period of calm.

The militants are hostile to the Core Group’s call for a truce. One of them told AlterPresse, an online Haitian news source, “Today we are waging a battle for the liberation and well-being of the Haitian people.” Another demonstrator explained the U.S., France and Canada are acting like “gangsters by condoning the corruption and violence that this government carries out.” (Oct. 4)

In the past 10 years, the government of Haiti has brought in about \$4 billion by selling Venezuelan oil, which it purchased at a substantial discount through a program called PetroCaribe. This money was supposed to be spent for the economic development of Haiti, but it wasn’t. The

question “Kot Kòb Petwo Karibe a?” (“Where is the Petrocaribe money?”) is one of the major issues the protests raise.

What makes the issue of “corruption” in Haiti so explosively compelling is that its people are so poor. Forty percent of Haitians depend on agriculture for their livelihood, but farming is vulnerable to natural disasters like droughts, floods and hurricanes. Three-quarters of the population lives on \$2 a day or less. Some 2.6 million Haitians, according to a U.N. estimate, are “food insecure”—they regularly go hungry. Recent food shortages in Haiti have caused acute malnutrition among more than 5,000 children under the age of five.

Currently there is a scarcity of fuel, as Venezuela can no longer export oil to Haiti at low prices. Besides, the U.S. boycott imposed on Venezuela makes it impossible for Haiti to pay Venezuela. Since the Haitian government can no longer pay its bills, food distribution by the U.N. and other relief groups is more difficult. It has also significantly increased the inflation raging in Haiti.

The huge turnout on Oct. 4, which shut down much of Port-au-Prince, was the third Friday when massive, country-wide demonstrations “locked” down the country. Most businesses and factories in Port-au-Prince closed. Major demonstrations took place in most of the large Haitian cities: Cap-Haïtien in the north, Gonaïves and Saint-Marc on the central Haitian coast, Mirebalais in the central plateau, Miragoane, Jacmel and Jeremie



Protesters in Haiti demanding ouster of U.S.-backed government hold their flag in defiance of armed repression.

in southern Haiti.

In Cap-Haïtien, where demonstrations have been massive, the cops fired directly at people, and a 65-year-old woman was killed. According to some civil rights groups in Haiti, at least 17 people have been killed and 187 injured by police actions, since protests intensified in the middle of September. (Miami Herald, Oct. 3)

Speaker Pelosi’s visit to Miami

Before the protests in Haiti heated up, U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi was invited to speak at the Father Gerard Jean-Juste Community Center in North Miami-Dade on the many issues that affect the Haitian community in south Florida.

But the Miami Herald also reported that the anger of the Haitians at the meeting

gave her a different message to take back to the Democratic Party in Washington: The U.S. must stop meddling in Haiti’s internal affairs and Moïse must go.

Gepsie Metellus, the executive director of Sant La Haitian Neighborhood Center, put it this way: The U.S. ambassador in Haiti, Michele Sison, was acting like a commander in chief in Haiti and a “cheerleader” for Moïse. She was ignoring the massive protests.

Marleine Bastien, executive director of Fanm Ayisyen Nan Miyami (Haitian Women in Miami), said, “Why is the world so silent about what’s going on in Haiti? Why is the world silent about the massacres? The Haitian people are suffering. The Haitian people are asking for our support. The Haitian people are dying.” □

Stop the U.S.-backed massacres in Haiti!

By Workers World
Bay Area, Calif., bureau

A week of solidarity actions for the people’s struggle in Haiti reached hundreds of people from Oakland to San Jose beginning Sept. 30. The public meetings and demonstrations were organized by the Haiti Action Committee to protest police terror and massacre of the Haitian people who are resisting with their lives the current U.S.-financed and -armed corrupt government of President Jovenel Moïse.

The week began with a well-attended public meeting, “The Lasalin Massacre and the Human Rights Crisis in Haiti” at the Eastside Arts Alliance in Oakland. Videos documenting police shooting unarmed Haitian demonstrators in Lasalin were shown. Pierre Labossiere, a leader of the Haiti Action Committee, gave a political update about the situation in Haiti. Seth Donnelly, of HAC, and Judith Mirkinson, of the San Francisco Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild, announced the release of a joint report condemning human rights violations in Haiti.

September 30 was chosen for the meeting date to mark the anniversary of the first coup against democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 1991, orchestrated by the U.S.

People rallied again the next day in front of the Phillip Burton Federal Building in San Francisco to demand an end to U.S. support and financing of the current Haitian government. Labossiere spoke on the inhumanity of the U.S.-backed Haitian regime, saying: “The people of Haiti — what they want is to have access to a decent job, to have access to education, to have access to health care,



San Jose, Calif., Oct. 3. WWW PHOTO: JUDY GREENSPAN

to have access to clean water — everything that human beings are entitled to.” He pointed out that, throughout the country’s history, the people of Haiti have suffered countless bloody military coups

and massacres while fighting for these basic rights.

Many organizations, including the Task Force on the Americas, Arab Resource and Organizing Center, and Workers World Party, delivered solidarity messages to the struggle of the Haitian people at the rally.

On Oct. 3, students led a rally and march in the South Bay. Chanting “Stop the occupation of the Haitian nation,” people gathered in San Jose in front of the Robert Peckham U.S. Federal Building to demand “U.S. out now!”

The event featured many local activists and leaders, including Akubundu Amazu, of the All-African People’s Revolutionary

Party, who has been on two delegations to Haiti. Amazu expressed his organization’s admiration for the Haitian people, for their “resilience” and their continued resistance to U.S. colonialism.

Following the rally, a small group of students and other Haiti activists marched and blocked the entrance of the federal building to demand an end to the U.S.-backed massacres. Labossiere and the Haiti Action Committee affirmed its continuing fight for justice for the people of Haiti.

For more information about the struggle in Haiti and to get involved in the Haiti Action Committee, check out facebook.com/HaitiActionCommittee/. □

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



Stephanie Hedgecock, a WWP member of Huron/French Canadian and mixed southeastern Native heritage.

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 month, 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). Workers World appreciates your generosity.

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Quito, Ecuador, cinco de octubre.

FOTO: TELESUR

Los verdaderos crímenes del racista Trump

MUNDO OBRERO editorial

Contemos los crímenes que el actual presidente de los Estados Unidos ha cometido contra la clase trabajadora y todas las masas oprimidas.

Su campaña vilipendió a los mexicanos y otros migrantes y refugiados centroamericanos, llamándolos mafiosos y violadores. En el cargo, cerró el asilo legal, encarceló a inmigrantes y separó a los padres de los niños, y restringe la entrada a los musulmanes.

Toda su vida, Trump lució abiertamente su misoginia, alardeando de abusar de las mujeres. En el cargo nombró jueces misóginos a los tribunales federales e incluso al Tribunal Supremo.

Mucho antes de postularse para un

cargo, Donald Trump emprendió una campaña racista contra Central Park 5, jóvenes negros y latinos encarcelados en la cárcel por falsas acusaciones de violar a una corredora, quienes finalmente fueron exonerados. En el cargo, despótico a varios países, llamándoles “basura” todos los cuales eran países de África o habitadas por personas de ascendencia africana.

Entre otras cosas, este presidente ha insultado a las personas con discapacidad por su discapacidad, ha tratado de prohibir su participación a las personas transgenerxs en el ejército y con todo lo anterior escrito ha cometido delitos graves contra las masas trabajadoras y oprimidas.

Sin embargo, los cargos que el Partido Demócrata y varios sectores de la clase dominante han intentado usar contra este presidente han sido los más aislados de la clase trabajadora y las personas que

enfrentan la opresión.

Primero, investigaron las relaciones de Trump con el presidente ruso, intentando vincularlo con ayudar a las elecciones de este. Eso falló.

Ahora los cargos de destitución involucran el intento de Trump de utilizar un régimen ucraniano instalado por Estados Unidos contra Joe Biden, uno de los candidatos demócratas más probables para presidente el próximo año.

El primer año de la administración Trump trajo sonrisas a los rostros de la clase dominante cuando redujo los impuestos para los ricos y las corporaciones y abrió nuevas áreas de la Tierra para la explotación desenfrenada de los recursos naturales. Ahora están sonriendo menos. El negocio es inestable, y la jactancia de “hacer que Estados Unidos vuelva a ser grandioso” le ha costado a Estados Unidos estratégica y económicamente.

La acusación parece posible, quizás también para Trump, quien explotó contra los demócratas que lo atacaron. En su habitual estilo descaradamente racista, llamó a esos demócratas que encabezan la investigación de la Cámara contra él “salvajes”, señalando a Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez y al resto de “The Squad”, además de Adam Schiff y Jerrold Nadler, cuatro mujeres de color y dos hombres judíos. El presidente también insinuó que su juicio político podría provocar una guerra civil.

Estos crímenes verbales son dignos de una movilización masiva para deshacerse del presidente. Pero lo que realmente se necesita no es una maniobra legal que reemplace a Trump con el subordinado Mike Pence, sino un movimiento de masa que arrase con toda la pandilla racista y prejuiciosos. □

Huelgas climáticas mundiales

La crisis de la Tierra despierta millones

Por Minnie Bruce Pratt

En Montreal, provincia de Quebec, Canadá, más de 500.000 personas marcharon el 27 de septiembre en un esfuerzo por detener la crisis climática, en la huelga más grande en la historia de la ciudad, según los organizadores.

Este y otros eventos de Global Climate Strike terminaron una semana después, cuando 7,5 millones de personas participaron en 6.135 acciones en 185 países, junto con más de 70 sindicatos nacionales e internacionales, y más de 800 organizaciones que respaldaron y marcharon. La movilización global del 20 al 27 de septiembre fue la mayor participación de personas decididas a defender el planeta contra la explotación y la destrucción. (globalclimatestrike.net)

Muchos manifestantes acusaron enfáticamente a la economía capitalista, las empresas con fines de lucro y los políticos comprados y vendidos como responsables. En los EE.UU., algunos letrados declararon “El capitalismo creó la crisis climática” y “Tontos fósiles” [Fossil fools]. Los lemas en Inglaterra señalaron “Capitalismo de desastre = apocalipsis climático” y pidieron “Cambio del sistema, no cambio climático”. En Escocia, los signos airados proclamaban: “Los ricos se hacen más ricos, el planeta se empobrece” y “¡Salva a las abejas o te romperé las rodillas!”

El liderazgo de los pueblos indígenas en la protección de la Tierra y sus seres se

destacó en Montreal, donde los jóvenes indígenas lideraron la marcha. Rosalie LaBillois (Mi'kmaw), copresidenta del Consejo Nacional de la Juventud de la Asamblea de las Primeras Naciones, dijo: “Debemos asegurarnos de que nuestras tierras, aguas, seres no humanos, medicinas y sitios sagrados estén protegidos ahora y durante las siete generaciones por venir” (turtleislandnews.com)

El jefe nacional de AFN, Perry Bellegarde, el jefe regional de AFN Yukon, Kluane Adamek, y otros líderes, incluida la activista ambiental sueca Greta Thunberg, marcharon con los jóvenes indígenas. Autumn Peltier (Wikwemikong), quien cumplió 15 años en la marcha, fue nominada recientemente para el Premio Internacional de la Paz de los Niños por su trabajo como Comisionada Jefe del Agua de la Nación Anishinabek.

Los pueblos indígenas en estrecha relación con la Tierra han liderado la protección del medio ambiente durante milenios antes de los “movimientos verdes” del siglo XX. La explotación intensificada del planeta en el siglo pasado ha visto medidas intensificadas dirigidas por los pueblos indígenas.

El campamento de la Piedra Sagrada, creado en 2016 para bloquear el camino del oleoducto Dakota Access, se convirtió en un sitio de reunión internacional para activistas ambientales.

Activistas ambientales indígenas en América Central y del Sur han estado luchando contra la incautación y explotación de sus tierras por parte de colonos y empresas durante siglos, mucho antes de que el Amazonas comenzara a arder.

Muchos activistas han perdido la vida en esa lucha, incluida Berta Cáceres de Honduras, ganadora del prestigioso Premio Ambiental Goldman en 2015. Su muerte estuvo

vinculada a las fuerzas especiales hondureñas entrenadas en Estados Unidos. Cáceres se oponía a una presa hidroeléctrica financiada internacionalmente. (Ver “Detrás del asesinato de Berta Cáceres”, WW/MO, 19 de marzo de 2017).

Las acciones de la huelga mundial del 27 de septiembre se extendieron de Suecia a Marruecos a Canadá, de Nueva Zelanda a India e Italia. En Argentina, la gente marchó en Buenos Aires a la Plaza de Mayo, lugar de resistencia histórica a la opresión en ese país. Alrededor del borde de la Amazonía en peligro, la gente de la selva tropical se manifestó en Brasil, Bolivia, Ecuador y Paraguay.

Estados Unidos parte de acciones globales

En los Estados Unidos, hubo muchas manifestaciones determinadas en todo el país, tipificadas por dos acciones que tuvieron lugar en la costa este y la costa oeste.

En Atlanta, más de 200 personas marcharon el 27 de septiembre en una manifestación militante pidiendo soluciones inmediatas a la crisis climática. El grupo Extinction Rebellion cantó y se apoderó de las calles, concentrándose primero en el Distrito Comercial de Buckhead, la parte más lujosa de la ciudad. Después de bloquear el tráfico y tomar arrestos allí, se trasladaron al distrito comercial de Midtown. Una vez más bloquearon una intersección importante, llevando 19 arrestos en total. El joven grupo multinacional mantuvo su acción enérgica en un día con un nivel de calor récord en los altos 90.

El 25 de septiembre, activistas de la huelga climática cerraron las calles principales del distrito financiero de San Francisco y bloquearon las entradas a los principales bancos. Llevando carteles y pancartas y cantando: “¡Gente, sí! Ganancias, no! ¡Big Oil tiene que irse!” Cerraron Wells Fargo, Chase Manhattan, Citibank y Bank of America durante varias horas. Siete personas fueron arrestadas por bloquear todas las puertas y entradas de Wells Fargo, uno de los mayores



FOTO: NACIONES UNIDAS

Autumn Peltier (Wikwemikong) se dirigió a la Asamblea General de la ONU en el Día Mundial del Agua, 22 de marzo de 2018.

partidarios financieros de Big Oil.

Workers World Party/Partido Mundo Obrero participó y ayudó a organizar una marcha desde una de las intersecciones de calles bloqueadas a una sede local de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas. Dirigido por QUIT (Queers socavando el terrorismo israelí) El grupo bloqueó el camino utilizado por los autobuses de ICE e hizo una fuerte conexión entre la crisis climática y la intensificación de los ataques contra migrantes/inmigrantes.

El 27 de septiembre, cientos de jóvenes y sus simpatizantes se manifestaron en las puertas de la sede corporativa de Chevron en San Ramón, California, en el área de la Bahía de San Francisco. Los jóvenes manifestantes no solo pidieron a Chevron que dejara de usar combustible fósil, sino que los jóvenes exigieron que Chevron dejara de envenenar el aire y poner en peligro la vida de las comunidades pobres de color que rodean sus plantas. Muchas pancartas responsabilizaron a Chevron de financiar y beneficiarse de las guerras por el petróleo en todo el mundo.

Una delegación de Juventud vs. El Apocalipsis, el principal organizador del evento, fue invitado detrás de las puertas para reunirse con los funcionarios de Chevron. La delegación informó que, como era de esperar, Chevron no se comprometería a dejar de producir combustible fósil o de contaminar el aire en las comunidades pobres alrededor de la bahía.

También contribuyeron a este artículo Kathy Durkin, Judy Greenspan y Jimmy Raynor.



FOTO: TURTLE ISLAND NEWS

Jóvenes indígenas encabezaron la masiva huelga climática de Montreal, el 27 de septiembre.