Defying cops and army

People of Chile rise up

By John Catalinotto

Oct. 28 — Indigenous Mapuche people, students, workers, retired workers, women, people from all but the most privileged sectors of Chilean society defied the state of emergency and curfew to come out in massive protest Oct. 25, after more than a week of violent confrontations with the authorities.

In retreat, the government ended the state of emergency starting Oct. 28, sending Army troops back to their barracks. On the other side, some 100 popular organizations called a general strike (paro nacional) for Oct. 30.

Estimates are that 1 million to 3 million of Chile’s 19 million people filled the main squares of Santiago, the capital, and other cities of the long, narrow South American country on Oct. 25. The demonstrators knew that police and/or military had fired not only tear gas—which was everywhere in Santiago—but live ammunition at the young people demonstrating throughout the week. They knew that hundreds were injured, hundreds of others arrested and some were tortured.

They knew that President Sebastián Piñera had called the protesters “bandits” and said that Chile was “at war” with them. They knew Chile’s army officers had been trained in brutality at the U.S. School of the Americas and had set up a military dictatorship in 1973 that lasted for nearly 20 years. If the people came out into the streets, it was with no illusions.

And still huge numbers came out, bringing not only a combative spirit—you can see it in the photographs and videos—but also their sense of humor while going into battle, knowing they were “the people united” and they “couldn’t be defeated.”

Behind the crisis

Before the crisis blew up, Piñera had boasted of Chile’s stability and prosperity, which obscured rampant inequality and growing poverty. He unleashed the crisis by announcing a 3.75 percent increase in the Santiago subway fares, a tiny amount of 30 Chilean pesos (less than 5 U.S. cents). (tinyurl.com/y5t8ltm3)

Young people, many of them high school students, stormed the subways and boarded trains without paying the fare. To the surprise of the authorities, the students fought back, and when they fought, they got the support of the Chilean working class.

Some subway stations were damaged, some buildings and vehicles burned. The president declared a curfew and a state of emergency, and police attacked the youths with water hoses, tear gas and bullets. Piñera and the pro-capitalist media demonized the demonstrators.

His Minister of Economy Juan Andrés Catalinotto

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New York City protest against Greyhound and ICE, Oct. 25. Read more on pages 6-7.

Workers & community united

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Coal miners victory 4

Chicago, October 2019.

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End sanctions—act of war—on Zimbabwe

Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a multinational, multigenerational and multigender organization that not only aims to abolish capitalism, but to build a socialist society because it’s the only way forward! Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the never-ending quest for ever-greater profits. Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on immigrants, misogyny, LGBTQ oppression and the entrenchment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and impoverishment and lack of hope for the future. No social problems can be solved under capitalism.

The U.S. is the richest country in the world, yet no one has a guaranteed right to shelter, food, water, health care, education or anything else—unless they can pay for it. Wages are lower than ever, and youth are saddled with seemingly insurmountable student debt, if they even make it to college. Black, Brown and Indigenous youth and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis. The ruthless ruling class today seeks to wipe out decades of gains and benefits won by hard-fought struggles by people’s movements. The super-rich and their political representatives have intensified their attacks on the multinational, multigender and multigenerational working class. It is time to point the blame at—and challenge—the capitalist system.

WWP fights for socialism because the working class produces all wealth in society, and this wealth should remain in their hands, not be stolen in the form of capitalist profits. The wealth workers create should be socially owned and its distribution planned to satisfy and guarantee basic human needs. Since 1959, Workers World Party has been out in the streets defending the workers and oppressed here and worldwide. If you’re interested in Marxism, socialism and fighting for a socialist future, please contact a WWP branch near you. 

Join us in the fight for socialism!

End sanctions—act of war—on Zimbabwe

October 25 was declared “A Day of Action” by the South African Development Community to end imperial economic sanctions on Zimbabwe. SADC is comprised of 16 countries in the Southern African region. These sanctions—an act of war imposed by the U.S. and other Western imperialist countries 20 years ago—have caused great suffering and hardships on the Zimbabwean people and their economy. The December 12th Movement organized a support action on Oct. 25 with a march and rally starting at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations and ending at the Zimbabwe Mission. Giving a 10-minute speech and rally was Stephanie Hedgecoke, an Indigenous member of Workers World Party. Below are her edited remarks.

We stand together on stolen land, the Lenape homelands on which this country built on stolen nations, to say: Stop the illegal, murderous sanctions on Zimbabwe and on the Indigenous peoples of Zimbabwe.

Today even the health of our Mother Earth is under threat by the same forces that stole the lands from the Indigenous peoples in Zimbabwe. Indigenous nations around the world share this history of genocidal assault and capitalist larceny that has built the wealth of the banks. All the riches the imperialists possess—it’s all stolen.

But the Indigenous peoples of Zimbabwe took their lands back, and only they have the sole and absolute right to determine any and all issues of development on their own lands—not the banks, not the corporations, not the International Monetary Fund, not any settlers!

Workers World Party recognizes the sanctions on Zimbabwe as an illegal war on the people to wreck harm on the people and their lands and erase the right of self-determination. Zimbabwe is owed reparations by the banks and the settlers, who have profited from this past assault and seek to, again, gain control of what is not, and never was, theirs through economic warfare.

These forces see our Earth only for what they can ran- 
sack and pillage, and then they use our air and water, the atmosphere and oceans, as dumping grounds. We stand in solidarity with the youth of the world to say: This has to STOP.

In solidarity with the December 12th movement, we are with Zimbabwe to demand the sanctions, the economic warfare, be ended.

Hands off Zimbabwe! □
Teachers Association immediately released statements clearly showing the unjustified brutality suffered by com-

united to oppose OUSD's "blueprint." “Oakland is not for sale!” parents and teachers have

unions to the heart of this struggle. Under the coalition name, quality public schools for Black and Latinx students is

plans to close and consolidate 24 public schools. So far, the board has only targeted public schools in high-pov-

condemning this attack. The OEA demanded that OUSD "issue a public apology to our students, parents and edu-

Oakland teachers strike and student support in 2018 focused politically on stopping the growth of

Harrisburg, Pa. Hundreds converge to demand end to ‘Death by Incarceration’

Educator worker actions heat up — Chicago to Massachusetts

messages of solidarity to the Dedham teachers from striking educators in Chicago and from educators who

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fully funded schools.” Community and union support for the Chicago teach-

Educator worker actions heat up — Chicago to Massachusetts

was on the high-pressure platform on Oct. 26 to rally national support for the striking teachers in his hometown, say-

Since 2012, the CTU has prioritized rank-and-file activism, advocating for their students and going on the

messages of solidarity to the Dedham teachers from striking educators in Chicago and from educators who

and Bret Grote, 65 percent of people serving DBI are Black, even though Black people are only 11 percent of

A sentence of life without parole condemns those who receive it to die in prison. Pennsylvania has more

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GM strike ends, concessions continue
Solidarity the biggest win

By Martha Grevatt

The 40-day strike of almost 50,000 General Motors workers came to an end on the afternoon of Friday, Oct. 25. The majority of striking United Auto Workers members voted to accept the contract agreed to by GM and union negotiators. The vote was 57 percent in favor, 43 percent opposed.

Under the previous four-year contract, the company had made about $93 billion in profit. At the strike’s onset, workers made it clear they wanted to win back what had been given up by the workers two years into the company’s 2009 bankruptcy.

At that time a long list of concessions, given up by the workers two years into their existing contract with GM, were mandated by the U.S. Treasury to secure federal bailout money and keep the company afloat.

What, of all that was lost in 2009, did workers gain back in this contract? The gains are limited.

Basic nothing. The raises/bonus formula is close to that of the contract that just expired. The cost of living allowance was not restored. Before 2009, the company had to pay time and a half after eight hours worked in one day and on Saturday — not any more. Three plants and one warehouse will be permanently closed. One that was slated to be closed, the Detroit-Hamtramck assembly plant (DHAM), will stay open and build a new electric truck. However, fewer workers are required to assemble electric vehicles than gas-powered vehicles. So while GM claims DHAM will retain 2,250 workers, the number could be smaller depending on sales; electric vehicles come with a high price tag.

Workers hired in October 2009 — second tier “in progression employees” — will make the same wages as higher-seniority workers by the end of the contract, but many of them will just be completing the ridiculously long eight-year wage progression from the previous contract. Workers hired after Oct. 2009 will still work the eight-year path to top pay — longer if they are laid off part of that time.

Some workers classified as “temporary employees” will be made permanent, but others could be locked in precarious status for an unknown period of time. The company can still hire new temporaries at a lower pay rate and with minimal benefits.

Four parts plants will continue to pay almost $10 an hour less than the rest of the company; parts warehouses have their own pay formula. In other words, divisive multi-tier pay structures are an integral part of the union contract for another four years. This violates basic principles that unions fought for in the past — equal pay for equal work.

Why did workers vote ‘yes’?

Under a different set of circumstances, workers might have turned the contract down and sent the negotiators back to the table to come up with a better deal. However, as the strike entered its sixth week, savings were being depleted, and the lowest-paid workers had none to begin with. For some, it was hard to turn up their nose at an $11,000 work bonus to be paid right off the bat.

Early reports from the negotiations stated that GM was pushing to hold raises down, raise health care costs substantially and do nothing whatsoever to improve the lot of temporary workers. If so, the strike pushed back these concessions.

The company utilized every means at its disposal, including the news media, to get workers to see its offer as a good deal. Detroit’s two daily newspapers ran stories every day, leading up to the final vote tally, extolling the virtues of the tentative agreement. UAW leaders could sell through a contract “summary” rather than encouraging every member to read some 350 pages of actual language.

There was no clear indication of what the consequences would be if the tentative agreement was rejected. Would workers stay on strike and for how long? What better deal, if any, would GM accomplish to? Could the international leaders of the UAW be trusted to fight hard for workers, given the evidence of corruption and bribe-taking on the part of top leaders?

Fighting to make the union fight

Given these multiple factors, it is very significant that 43 percent of the strikers — a little shy of 20,700 voters — voted against the contract and were willing to extend the strike. A majority rejected the contract in at least 15 plants and warehouses, where lower pay scales or plants slated to close.

The biggest achievement of the strike was the solidarity that grew out of the strike experience. Many rank-and-file militants emerged as leaders. Their main task now is to promote that same sort of solidarity inside the plants and hold management — along with corrupt or weak union leaders — accountable for any abuse, retaliation or disrespect the company tries to get away with.

The biggest strike in 12 years — the longest corporatewide auto strike since 1970 — has ended. But as teachers and education workers, hotel and fast food workers are demonstrating, the strike Upsurge is not going away.

Harlan County, Kentucky, coal miners win $5 million

By Johnnie Lewis

Coal miners in Harlan County, Ky., have won a historic victory for more than 1,000 workers fired in July by the bankrupt Blackjewel coal company. In an unusual bankruptcy settlement, the Harlan County miners, as well as others in Kentucky, West Virginia and Virginia, were awarded $5.47 million in wages the company owed them. Usually workers fired by bankrupt companies get little or nothing.

The miners are still owed millions in vacation pay, retirement and health insurance claims.

This victory was not at all based on the generosity or good will of a federal judge, but solely on the willingness of the Harlan County miners to fight back against Blackjewel. These miners had no union to back them — in fact, there are no union miners left in Kentucky. What the workers did have was the backing of family, friends and communities surrounding the shutdown mines. And because of social media, their struggle was broadcast around the U.S. and the globe.

A few days after the July 29 filings, Blackjewel, along with CSX railroad, tried to move a $1 million coal train off mine property. Miners heard about this brazen act, and five of them, connecting through social media, went to and stood on the tracks as the train bore down on them. Warned by company security guards that if they didn’t allow the train through, guards would call the cops and force them to move. The miners held their ground on the tracks. When the Harlan County Sheriff’s Department came, followed by the Kentucky State Police, the miners kept saying they would leave, but not farther down the tracks.

The miners took photos, texted and called fellow miners, family and friends. As supporters by the carload arrived, the miners kept saying they would leave, but only moved farther down the tracks. Finally, a crowd of people stood on the tracks. The cops pulled back.

By nightfall, supporters brought food and water. Then camp chairs appeared and tents were pitched right on the tracks. Campers built fires, barbecue grills were fired up, local musicians came and played. Cots and bedrolls were set up, and the first night a more than 60-day occupation began. A few days later, the miners allowed CSX to move its empty locomotives out of the area, leaving 100 overflowering coal gondolas stranded. Like hundreds and thousands of fed-up non-union workers, such as those at Amazon, Whole Foods, Uber, Lyft, and fast food workers striking for a living wage, these coal miners showed that a militant, determined fightback, along with global community support, can win victories — “F’ll every battle that’s won,” as the old labor song, “Which Side Are You On?” goes.

Lucas (she/her) is a retired member of Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 400.

Change is essential! Build Workers World!

As a newspaper that promotes revolucionary socialist ideas, it’s essential to welcome change — especially long overdue change. Like throwing Christopher Columbus into the bath, removing Columbus 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, spotlight blanket and forced assimilation.

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

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

Write checks to Workers World and mail them, with your name and address, to 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. Or donate online at workers.org/donate; it’s easy to set up monthly deductions. Know we’re grateful for your help in building Workers World — for today and for the future! ☐
The real enemies of the planet

By Deirdre Griswold

A map of the world, recently circulated online, claims to identify the world’s worst offenders responsible for the climate crisis. It named energy ministers in 57 countries—rich and poor, imperialist and oppressed—as equally the culprits for the biggest challenge facing humanity.

This was no doubt a sincere attempt. But it has a basic flaw. It is not energy ministers who have been pushing fossil fuels over more sustainable forms of energy. It is the powerful oil, gas and coal industry.

This is why today the U.S., with only 5 percent of the world’s population, consumes 20 percent of the world’s energy supply.

It is why the U.S. produces, per person, four times the greenhouse gas emissions of China, even though China has the world’s largest population and has become the world’s largest manufacturer.

Rockefeller, Getty — fossil fuel dynasties

For well over a century, families like the Rockefellers and Gettys built enormous fortunes on the backs of miners and oil workers who dug up or pumped out the fossil fuels that have powered capitalism’s ongoing industrial — later the high-tech — revolution.

The Rockefellers became governor of New York state from 1939 to 1973 and was vice president from 1974 to 1977 under President Gerald Ford. But every administration, whether Democrat or Republican, has had to follow an agenda approved by the super-wealthy families of the fossil fuel industry.

Oil wars and counterrevolutions

U.S. foreign policy in particular has reflected the dominance of the oil billionaires. There is no question that this is what has driven the horribly destructive U.S. wars in the Middle East and Northern Africa, where so much of the world’s oil is extracted. And it didn’t start with the current wars.

Back in 1953, the CIA mounted an operation that overthrew the elected government of Iran, headed by Mohammed Mosaddegh, who had nationalized the country’s oil industry. The CIA operation was led by Kermit Roosevelt, a grandson of Theodore Roosevelt.

Once the U.S. had installed the Shah to run Iran, and it seemed this oil-rich country was safely back under the thumb of U.S. corporations, Kermit Roosevelt became an executive of Gulf Oil.

But the triumph of the oil billionaires was not permanent. By 1979, the Shah was overthrown in a revolution that once again nationalized Iran’s oil and toppled the monarchy. That’s why today the U.S. is threatening another war against Iran.

‘System change, not climate change!’

The oil billionaires who have toppled governments abroad while dominating U.S. politics at home are not ready to allow a little thing like global warming and climate change interfere with their profits. They are driven by the insatiable need of capitalism to produce profits now, not some time down the road.

That is why the fervent plea of the climate movement get only a murmured “What a shame” response while business goes on as usual. Even when water rises around their ocean-front estates and their ski chalets have to manufacture snow, the super-rich ruling class have bigger worries: What is going to happen to their investments?

To really fight for and win a sustainable future, we have to understand who the real enemies are. And many, many people in the environmental movement do understand. The growing popularity of the slogan “System change, not climate change” is a testament to this awareness.

The enemies of our movement are the class of billionaires who have profited off our labor while powering their economy with the fossil fuels they have appropri- ated. Liberating the working class is a precondition to liberating the planet.

As oil companies destroy Houston

Community challenges Valero

By Mirinda Crissman

In Houston, a city choked by oil refineries and pollution, people are fighting back against one of the largest contributors to the climate crisis. Regulatory capture is when a regulatory agency is too cozy with the companies it is supposed to regulate and advance the public interest, instead promotes the commercial or political aims of the industry it is supposed to regulate.

This struggle has many obstacles. Oil corporations have stacked the bureaucratic deck in regulatory bodies like the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. When companies violate laws, putting the public at risk, the bureaucratic deck in regulatory bodies like the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

On Oct. 8, the TCEQ held a public hearing about Valero’s operating permit renewal number 1381, which would allow the continued release of highly toxic hydrogen cyanide at Valero Refining-Texas, L.P. in Houston’s Manchester community. The hearing was at the community center across the street from the plant.

One of the first to speak during the question and answer session, Manchester resident Armando Cameron of U.S. corporations, Kermit Roosevelt became an executive of Gulf Oil.

But the triumph of the oil billionaires was not permanent. By 1979, the Shah was overthrown in a revolution that once again nationalized Iran’s oil and toppled the monarchy. That’s why today the U.S. is threatening another war against Iran. better means of rapidly communicating with the majority Latinx community in case of emission events.

Cubera listed the harmful and fatal effects of multiple chemicals Valero’s plant releases regularly and warned that this was just the beginning of her and her people in the environmental movement do understand. The growing popularity of the slogan “System change, not climate change” is a testament to this awareness.

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Children and women lost, people dead in ICE custody

According to a report by the American Civil Liberties Union released Oct. 24, over 5,400 children have been separated from their families by U.S. immigration authorities at the Mexican border since July 2017. While a federal judge in San Diego on June 26, 2018, ordered that the children be reunited with their families, the ACLU report cites the difficulty of locating children due to the government’s inadequate tracking system. Calling the Trump administration policies “shocking...inhumane and illegal,” ACLU attorney Lee Gelernt said: “Families have suffered tremendously, and some may never recover.” (aclu.org, Oct. 24)

Earlier in October, lawyers from the Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services, reported that Immigration and Customs Enforcement moved 700 women from migrant detention camps. According to a report by the American Immigration Council, at least seven immigrants have died in ICE custody since July 2017. RAICES director Andrea Meza stated, “I’m really fearful that their conditions could worsen. I don’t want them to be another ICE press release about death in detention.” (msn.com, Oct. 9)

At least seven immigrants have died in ICE detention centers in 2019, and six minor children died in Border Patrol centers because they did not receive proper medical care.

— Report by Betsy Piette
Beyond the Brexit circus

By Manuel Raposo

Raposo is a Portuguese Marxist and analyst. This article was published Oct. 23 on the website jomsanmudarvida.info. Translation by John Catalinotto.

Party politics in Britain, power struggles between Britain and the European Union, and U.S. pressure from the outside aiming to break up and weaken the EU have all contributed to turning Brexit into a circus. But to stop the analysis there would restrict it to looking at the surface of the matter and render it short-sighted.

There is a real difficulty in divorcing Britain from the EU without great losses to both sides. Why? Because European capital has merged to such an extent over the last 50-60 years that separating the British economy from the rest of the EU economy leaves a huge hole in the net-work interconnecting all European capital. Globalization has actually taken place in Europe, and to reverse it is an impossible task. That is the cost of the problem that has blocked Brexit.

British big business does not want Brexit, nor does any other big international capitalist enterprise operating in Britain—many of them are already trying to withdraw from the island when faced with the prospect of a break. For obvious reasons the majority of the big bourgeoisie in Britain, therefore, do not want Brexit. This ruling-class attitude is what drives the resistance within the House of Commons, which is called upon to approve the exit agreements. And considering the statements made immediately after the 2016 referendum in the House of Lords, where the cream of the dominant aristocracy-bourgeoisie sits, the bourgeois opposition is even clearer. Brexit, in fact, expresses the illusion, the utopia, of the petty bourgeoisie and of many impoverished British workers. These sectors think they can rid themselves of the stranglehold of international capital—in order to live in peace with “their” national capital—holding the illusion that they can domesticate it, in both the literac and security office.

It is therefore not Germany or France’s evil machinations, nor the British Parliament’s stubbornness, that compli-cate the Brexit agreement. No, it is the very logic of self-defense for Europeanized capital, merged, without borders, that demands wide room for maneuver and common supranational rules—on top of and at the expense of definitely outdated national interests. Finally, it is the logic of European imperialism which, more unified it is, the stronger it will feel to compete with the other imperialist powers.

Challenges to revolutionaries

This reality poses new challenges to the revolutionary left and the socialist revolution in Europe, challenges that Brexit’s separationism only fogs. European workers must now face capital and a bourgeoisie with a European dimension, with European means of action, with a commonality of interests. Consequently, the class struggle, with all its special national characteristics, must take place today on a European scale, if it is to surmount the obstacles that are crucial: the overthrow of capitalism.

The delay in establishing international links between the mass of workers living in different countries (European and global) is preventing it from meeting the challenge. And this delay is also responsi-ble for the nationalist and fascist devi-sions that many proletarians get pulled into—because they see no other way, because they do not believe in their own strength to confront a unified capital that builds a common wall against them.

The sympathy that some left-wing forces show for Brexit (in Portugal the Communist Workers Party and Communists in the Americas, Jewish Voice for Peace, Workers World Party, and Communist Workers League/Bay Area. Some retired unionists participated, as did an East Bay Latino poet and activist from Xochipilli, Latino Men’s Circle. Greyhound sent security guards to make sure demonstrators were not blocking entrances. They weren’t. The action received a great response from people about to catch a Greyhound bus. Everyone was outraged about what Greyhound is doing. One Oakland res-ident said he had recently been in El Paso, Texas, where Border Patrol agents stopped the bus he was on and harassed people about their papers. The localLatinx station Telemundo and Fox chan- nel KTVU covered the protest.

Workers World Party staged a demon-stration at Pioneer Courthouse Square in Portland, Ore., calling attention to the collaboration between ICE and Greyhound. Participants denounced the racist war on im/migrants and the impe-rialist-created im/migrant crisis. The pro-test built on previous actions, including a demonstration at the Portland Greyhound terminal several weeks ago. Activists vow to continue agitating on this issue for as long as needed to combat the ongoing war on migrants. The demonstration was part of the national day of action.

Nathaniel Chase, Siddhika Degia, Ellie Dorrith, Judy Greenpan, Aashah Hooks, Dianne Mathueswitz, Betsey Pieter, Gloria Rubac and Dante Strobino contributed to this article.
The Venceremos Brigade

50 years of solidarity with Cuba

By Jean Bowdish

The Venceremos Brigade has been sending volunteers annually to socialist Cuba since 1969. Brigadistas and working-class militant organizations have sent workers to Cuba to learn about the struggle for socialism and to engage in sister-organization campaigns. Longstanding ties to the International Brigade and the Spanish Civil War have bolstered international solidarity campaigns. The Cuban Revolution has been a benchmark for anti-imperialist solidarity for nearly 60 years.

This year, the Venceremos Brigade members are commemorating the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Venceremos Brigade. This event is an opportunity to reflect on the history of Cuba and the broader anti-imperialist movement.

Efforts for alternative sources of energy, such as solar and wind power, have been developed in Cuba. The country has increased the intrinsic need for the accumulation of big capital, forcing more and more of the population to seek alternative sources of energy. The Venceremos Brigade continues to support Cuba’s struggle for self-determination through any legal means.

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Pentagon's plans to stay in Syria and Iraq are in disarray

By Sara Flounders

The U.S. Department of "Defense" plans to keep its troops in Syria. This may come as a surprise to those who assumed that dumping support for the Kurdish militias meant the Pentagon finally intended to withdraw.

The sudden convenient execution of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi by U.S. forces on Oct. 27 rests apart the justification that U.S. troops are needed to combat reactionary Islamic State group (IS) forces. Despite years of bombing Syria, the U.S. never attacked the thousands of tankers stealing Syria's oil while its northern oil fields were under IS control.

The Pentagon is "convinced how we might reposition forces in the area in order to make sure we secure the oil fields," U.S. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper told a meeting of NATO defense ministers on Oct. 25. (defenseone.com, Oct. 25) This serious escalation involves "half of an Army armored combat team battalion that includes as many as 1,000 personnel," along with roughly 500 U.S. troops, and "would include some mechanized units." Mechanized forces, including tanks that are not presently in Syria, will require hundreds of U.S. troops to deploy, supply and protect the projected tanks and armored units.

While cynically claiming to withdraw from endless U.S. wars, President Trump tweeted: "We’ve secured the oil and, therefore, a small number of U.S. troops will remain in the area. Where they have the oil. And we're going to be protecting it, and we'll decide what we're going to do with it in the future." (time.com, Oct. 26)

That arrogant statement shows that the flagrant piracy of Syria's resources is more open than ever before.

So what is actually on the drawing boards of military strategists is how and where to reposition troops and prepare for another escalation.

All U.S. efforts failed

However, U.S. efforts to dismember Syria are increasingly in disarray. Attempts to overturn the elected Assad government have failed. The brutal tactics included 10 years of sanctions, eight years of financing hundreds of thousands of mercenaries forces, and finally five years of bombing and direct military intervention.

Every tactic was used to inflame national, ethnic and religious division. U.S. bombers targeted schools, hospitals, bridges and industrial centers.

But Syria was able to maintain military resistance and national unity while gaining international assistance. U.S. forces are no longer able to hold the one-third of Syria in the oil-rich north, nor the corridor that included a substantial U.S. military presence in Iraqi Kurdistan, allied to Kurdish militia units.

The former head of the U.S. Central Command, retired Gen. Joseph Votel, admitted that framing the issue as defending the oil fields from IS is "largely unfounded."

"We looked at the oil fields in the context of their strategic value," he said, adding they would be a "good negotiating leverage point" for eventual discussions between the government in Damascus and the Kurdish militia. (New York Times, Oct. 25)

Iraq refuses more U.S. troops

The Iraq military publicly contradicted Defense Secretary Mark Esper, who had said all U.S. troops leaving Syria would go to western Iraq and would continue to conduct operations from there. The Iraqis issued a statement that U.S. troops did not have permission to stay in Iraq. Withdrawing U.S. troops were publicly pelted with rocks and potatoes in both Qamishli, Syria, and Kirkuk, Iraq. (CBS News, Oct. 22)

The Pentagon had been forced to pull out of Iraq in 2011 after overwhelming popular resistance to the more than 150,000 U.S. occupation forces. Even the Iraqi Parliament, whose members had been vetted and approved by U.S. occupation forces, refused to grant a Status of Forces agreement to the U.S. military. In 2014, supposedly to protect Iraq from the sudden emergence of IS, U.S. troops had gone back into the Russian region of northeastern Iraq. Now calls are increasing for their withdrawal.

Trump's tweets back in February indicated that U.S. troops would stay in Iraq as a base for operating in Syria and for monitoring Iran, created a furor among all Iraqi political currents.

U.S. imperialism has been in Iraq for more than three decades, since the Iran-Iraq War. It has tried in every way to envenom antagonisms between Arab and Kurdish national groups and Sunni and Shia religious groups.

The Pentagon presently has more than 5,000 military personnel and thousands of contractors in Iraq. In addition, there are hundreds of projects run by nongovernmental and civil society organizations funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development programs, the National Endowment for Democracy and other U.S. government and corporate entities, along with U.N. agencies. All these programs supposedly provide humanitarian relief from years of U.S. occupation. But they really keep Iraq divided and dependent.

In past years U.S. officials declared they were involved in Syria and Iraq to defend democracy, or to defend one national grouping against another, or to combat the threat of IS terror.

U.S. strategists pulled into their imperialist coalitions members of the European Union, Britain, the Gulf monarchies, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Jordan and Turkey. All that has collapsed.

Whether this latest scheme will succeed more than the past 16 years of destructive wars remains to be seen. But it will be characterized by the forces that are politically sophisticated and wise to U.S. imperialist plans. It is essential to stay focused on the demand "U.S. out of Syria and Iraq!"

Erdogan wants nuclear weapons

By Manlio Dinucci

Published Oct. 31 in the Italian newspaper, Il Manifesto. Translation by John Catalinotto.

"Some countries have nuclear missiles, but the West insists that we cannot have them. This is unacceptable." This statement by President Erdogan reveals that the current crisis goes beyond that which began with the Turkish offensive in Syria.

In Turkey, during the Cold War, the United States deployed nuclear weapons to protect its NATO allies. In 1962, in agreements with the USSR to resolve the Cuban missile crisis, U.S. President John Kennedy promised to remove these weapons from Turkey. This was not done.

After the end of the Cold War, about 50 U.S. B61 nuclear bombs—the same kind as those deployed in northern Italy at Aviano and Ghedi—directed mainly against Russia, remained in Turkey, at the Incirlik air base. With that deployment, both the United States and Turkey violated the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Turkish pilots, within the framework of NATO, are trained — like the Italian pilots stationed at the Ghedi base—to attack with B61 nuclear bombs under U.S. command. The Pentagon plans to soon replace the B61s also in Turkey—as in Italy and other European countries—with the new B61-12 nuclear bombs, also directed mainly against Russia.

In the meantime, however, following the Turkish purchase of Russian anti-aircraft missiles S-400, the United States removed Turkey from the list of places where it will deploy F-35s, which are the main carriers of B61-12 bombs. Turkey was supposed to have purchased 100 F-35 aircraft, of which it was a co-producer. "The F-35," declared a White House spokesperson, "cannot coexist with the anti-aircraft system S-400, which can be used to learn the capabilities of the fighter." (whitehouse.gov, July 17)

That is, Russia could use what it learns through the S-400 anti-aircraft system to strengthen its defenses against the F-35. By supplying Ankara with S-400 anti-aircraft missiles, Moscow has at least for the meantime managed to prevent the U.S. from deploying 100 F-35s on Turkish territory, where they would be ready to attack [Russia] with new U.S. B61-12 nuclear bombs.

At this point, it seems probable that, among the options considered in Washington, there is that of transferring U.S. nuclear weapons now in Turkey to another country deemed more reliable. According to the authoritative Bulletin of Atomic Scientists (USA, Oct. 17), "the Aviano air base may be the best European option from a political point of view, but it probably does not have enough space to receive all of Incirlik's nuclear weapons." Space could, however, be provided, given that renovation work has already begun in Aviano to accommodate B61-12 nuclear bombs.

Against this background there is Erdogan's declaration that, using the threatening presence of the Israeli nuclear arsenal as his excuse, Turkey intends to have its own nuclear weapons. It's no easy project, but doable. Turkey has advanced military technologies, supplied in particular by Italian companies, especially Leonardo [aircraft, helicopper, military industry]. It has uranium deposits. It has experience in the field of research reactors, supplied in particular by the United States.

Turkey has started the construction of its own nuclear electronics industry, purchasing some reactors from Russia, Japan, France and China. According to some sources, Turkey could have already procured, on the "illegal nuclear market," centrifuges for uranium enrichment. Erdogan’s announcement that Turkey has obtained a nuclear weapon, interpreted by some as a bluff to give his regime more weight in NATO, should not be underestimated.

Erdogan’s announcement uncovers what is generally hidden in the media debate: that is, that in the turbulent situation caused by aggressive war policies, the possession of nuclear weapons plays an increasingly important role. It prompts those who do not already possess nuclear weapons to obtain them.
The African Marxist and liberation leader of Guinea-Bissau, Amilcar Cabral, once said, most famously, “Tell no lies. ... Claim no easy victories.”

Today’s revolutionary activists looking at Latin America and the Caribbean should keep that phrase in mind as they review the results of popular social struggles set back rightist regimes. Electoral advances turn into what are at least partial or temporary wins for the working class and poor of the hemisphere. Some enormous mass struggles are filled with potential. Still, all these are just the opening battles in a long period of struggle.

The overall picture is this: The capitalist/imperialist system dominates the world. This system has been in crisis, in recession, at least since 2008. The recession has reduced the need for raw materials, which reduces the prices of exports from many Latin American countries. This in turn reduces these countries’ ability to pay interest on their loans from imperialist banks that they need to keep social programs functional.

Imperialist financial entities like the International Monetary Fund want no part of social programs. They demand instead that governments impose austerity, privatizations, anti-popular measures. Where center-left governments resist or delay squeezing the masses, the imperialists and local oligarchs have deposed them, using elections, the courts and even coups: in Paraguay, Honduras, most recently in Ecuador and Brazil and by elections in Chile and Argentina. And they keep trying to overthrow the governments in Nicaragua and Venezuela.

In the past few weeks the laboring masses have said: “No more!” In Haiti, a historic leader in the struggle for emancipation in this hemisphere, the people are demanding the government resign. In Ecuador, a national general strike forced a president who betrayed his own people to pull back an anti-popular decree. In Chile, massive demonstrations defied police and army terror and forced the president to retreat. All these struggles are still alive and undecided. (They are covered in other articles in this issue of Workers World.)

In Bolivia, the popular President Evo Morales was reelected on Oct. 20, getting just the 10 percent margin necessary to win the first round of the contest. Morales faces a possible coup in the coming days by the country’s oligarchs and is mobilizing the masses who support him to stop the coup. Just as with President Nicolás Maduro in Venezuela, U.S. imperialism sees Morales as an enemy, and will try to undermine his government.

Argentina’s Oct. 27 election deposited the incumbent neoliberal enemy of the people, Mauricio Macri, in the first round, by 48 percent to 40 percent. This puts back into office the political forces continuing the center-left government that was in power before Macri’s 2015 win, including Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, this time as vice president. The reaction of many in Argentina’s communist left has been more or less like this: ‘Great, let’s celebrate Sunday night and start mobilizing the masses on Monday morning to battle the IMF and the Argentine capitalists.” The whirlwind of mass struggle from Chile is contagious.

There is a reason for the reluctance of the Argentine communists to “claim an easy victory.” The people of Latin America and the Caribbean are fed up with unfettered neoliberalism and the outrageous inequalities it generates. The problem is that within the framework of capitalism, no one can resolve the problems imposed on these countries by world imperialism. We must defend the rights of the people of this hemisphere to select their own governments, and help them to the extent that we can to get the imperialist boot off their necks.

We must also realize that as long as capitalists control the banks, the media and, most importantly, the repressive state apparatuses in these countries, the crisis imposed by world imperialism is inescapable. We need to work with the local capitalists, not their backers in Washington, Brussels and Tokyo, will just hand over the power. This is just the beginning of a long class war.

No easy victories

Algiers

Masses in streets still demand justice

By G. Dunkel

On a cold and rainy Oct. 25 in much of Algeria, tens of thousands of people came out for the 36th successive Friday demonstration. They demanded the government free all the protests who have been incarcerated in previous demonstrations, plus free and fair elections, and that intermin President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, has his prime minister and all other corrupt holdovers from the previous regime leave office.

The protests, which are peaceful and free of violence, have been happening since the general strike, called by the CGT on Oct. 21.

Many protesters told the press that they foresee a massive demonstration in Algiers on Nov. 1, which is the 65th anniversary of the start of Algeria’s War of Independence from French colonialism.

The Oct. 26 issue of El Watan newspaper quotes a marcher in Constantine: “We will have hundreds of thousands in Algiers on Nov. 1 to worthily celebrate the 65th anniversary of our Revolution and to demand once again the departure of the system, of Bensalah, of Gaïd Salah [the head of the army], of Bedoui and all their ilk. We will say we have had enough of the authority of the government. It is time for Algerians to have a civil state, to live in a free and democratic republic.”

The army plans elections on Dec. 12. No one from the Hirak, as the opposition movement calls itself, has filed as a candidate. The Friday protests started when then President Abdelaziz Bouteflika’s term ended on April 2. The interim president canceled elections that were set for July when nobody signed up to run.

This time the army, which is running the government, scared up enough candidates, but they were all officials or retirees of the thoroughly corrupt and despised former regime. Rigged elections were the hallmark of Bouteflika and his predecessors.

Along with Algiers, major demonstrations were also held in Oran, Constantine, Annaba, Tlemcen, Mostaganem, Skikda, El Oued and Sétif—those are almost all the major cities in Algeria—and even Bouira, Tizi Ouzou, Bejaia, Biskra, Mascara, Sidi Bel Abbes, Mila, Tipaza, Oum El Bouaghi, El Tarf, Guelma, Skikda, El Oued and Sétif—which are almost all the main cities in Algeria.

Haitian masses say

No dialogue, no delay, President Moïse must leave

By G. Dunkel

Since the middle of September, the Haitian masses have made one point over and over again: President Jovenel Moïse must leave—and take all the hangovers-on and all the crimes in the Parti Haitien Tét Kale (Haitian Party of Baldheads) with him.

The masses in Port-au-Prince, and the other major cities in Haiti like Gonaïves, Cap-Haïtien and Jeremie, are living on the edge of famine, as the protests have disrupted all kinds of deliveries, including food. Many people aren’t working. Water and health care are scarce. Most schools have either never opened after the summertime, or have been shot dead—have not driven people from the streets.

On Oct. 13, and again on Oct. 20, huge marches were called by musicians and artists to demand Moïse’s departure. Protestant churches also called their followers out on Oct. 20 in Petionville, a big suburb of Port-au-Prince, was overthrown with protesters. On Oct. 21, with the support of protesters, their parents and teachers to march, demanding that Moïse resign and schools reopen. On Oct. 22 the Catholic hierarchy, which traditionally has tried to remain apolitical, called its followers out in another massive protest.

There are more national protests scheduled for the week beginning Oct. 28. A number of coordinating committees have sprung up, with different constituencies and different scenarios for the coming transition.

But one thing is clear. The people have seized on one demand with precise clarity: Moïse must leave.
Ecuador’s uprising, visible and invisible

By Michael Bento
Quito, Ecuador

The writer is of African descent from the United States, currently living in Quito.

For more than 10 days at the beginning of October, Ecuadorians across the nation revolted against President Lenin Moreno’s austerity Decree 883 announcing the end of a copious fuel subsidy, proving to be the last straw for the Ecuadorians. The latest round of austerity with Decree 883, which included elimination of the fuel subsidy, proved to be the last straw for the Ecuadorians.

The Indigenous groups returned the ceasefire to the government with the next steps. As to the next steps. The Indigenous groups returned the ceasefire to the government with the next steps.
No solo una guerra comercial

**Mundo Obrero editorial**

_¿Qué hay realmente detrás de las difíciles negociaciones comerciales entre los Estados Unidos y la China Popular?_ 

_{Es, como ha afirmado la administración, que China no estaba comprando suficientes productos agrícolas estadounidenses? China se ha convertido en un gran mercado para los agricultores de EE.UU., que están fuertemente hipotecados y confían en que Washington coloca la presencia de las tropas estadounidenses, ni de la dominación política del imperialismo estadounidense. Nadie debería creer que el presidente russo, misófito y xenófobo de EE.UU., se haya convertido de alguna manera en un pacificador. Aparentemente como estrategia electoral, ha ordenado la eliminación de un puñado de tropas estadounidenses del norte de Siria. Simultáneamente, el Pentágono está enviando 1.800 soldados a la monarquía de Arabia Saudita para defender los campos petroleros y continuar la guerra genocida en Yemen._

**Crímenes de guerra de Turquía**

En segundo lugar, al enviar tropas y armas a Siria, el régimen reaccionario del presidente Recep Erdogan en Ankara, Turquía, está cometiendo un crimen de guerra. Esta invasión es una agresión desunida contra el vecino de Turquía, Siria, el último de los muchísimos crímenes cometidos contra Siria en los últimos ocho años. Esta agresión causaría sufrimiento adicional a las personas del noreste de Siria, que son principalmente kurdas, pero cuya composición refleja los numerosos grupos étnicos y religiosos que habitan en toda Siria. Erdogan persigue a la propia población kurda de Turquía, que se estima que son de 14 a 20 millones de los 80 millones de habitantes de Turquía. El régimen de Ankara ha estado utilizando su ejército, especialmente en las regiones kurdas, en un intento por aplastar el movimiento del pueblo kurdo. El gobierno de Erdogan persigue a los partidos políticos de oposición y periodistas en toda Turquía, ya que son una amenaza para el régimen de Erdogan. El hecho de que Erdogan haya tomado algunas medidas en el pasado reciente para lo que se preocupó en desacertar el capitalismo de EE.UU. o la Unión Europea (comprar armas de Rusia, participar en conferencias con Rusia e Irán para resolver la guerra en Siria) no debe inducir a error a nadie a pensar que el presidente turco representa cualquier tendencia progresista en todo el mundo. Los ladrones, incluso aquellos en la misma parte del mundo que apoyan a los Trumpistas, en este momento no conocemos los detalles del acuerdo entre los combatientes con base kurda en el norte de Siria y el gobierno sirio legítimo, ni podemos prever cómo se desarrollará. Sin embargo, aplaudimos cualquier alianza que contribuya a un potencial hegemonía local en Turquía y, lo que es más importante, excluya a los regímenes imperialistas de Europa y Estados Unidos, que son los principales opresores de la humanidad en todo el mundo.

Washington luego presionó a Beijing al aumentar los aranceles a las importaciones chinas. Esto ha afectado a millones de personas aquí, elevando los precios de una multitud de bienes de consumo importados en lo que confirman. Por lo tanto, la clase trabajadora de los Estados Unidos se ha visto obligada a pagar la guerra comercial y los esfuerzos de la administración Trump para llevar el cambio de régimen a China. Al momento de escribir esto el 14 de octubre, el secretario del Tesoro de los Estados Unidos, Steven Mnuchin, dice que se está haciendo un acuerdo. Pero nada ha sido firmado. Y los medios de valores son cautelosos, dado el historial pasado de faltas de cumplimiento de acuerdos. Esto podría ser simplemente otro finta de “humo y espejos” por la bruta tal pandilla que perjudica al capitalismo de EE.UU. En este momento se puede decir que el capitalismo de EE.UU. se está desencadenando una caída del mercado. Parece que hace mucho tiempo que el capitalismo de EE.UU. se ha perdido su valor, buscando en cualquier parte, excepto en este sistema de multimillonarios salvajemente polari zados en el mundo, cada vez más prezarios.