The Global Climate Strike of Sept. 20-27 calls for an unflinching examination of the roots of the climate-crisis. Despite climate-denier claims, massive scientific evidence shows that the release of greenhouse gas emissions, mainly the burning of fossil fuels, has so destabilized the earth’s self-regulating system that humanity is now undergoing a cascade of unnatural catastrophes.

In the past few years, we’ve seen historic levels of destruction and death in the Western Hemisphere – recently in the Bahamas, Puerto Rico and the eastern coast of the U.S. Every day we hear of some new climate tragedy elsewhere on the globe – from fires devouring the rainforests in the Amazon and Central Africa, to more intense storms and flooding, to glaciers rapidly melting, to 41 percent of global insect species declining over the past decade, which threatens “catastrophic consequences for both the planet’s ecosystems and for the survival of (humanity),” according to the journal Biological Conservation. ([tinyurl.com/yxkhbbqc](https://tinyurl.com/yxkhbbqc)) But while this is a global crisis, it does not have to become an irreversible global catastrophe. There is evidence that headway can be made against this dire situation, which is caused not by “human beings” in general, but by an unsustainable global economic system: capitalism, the private ownership and production of anything that can be sold for private profit, where the bottom line beats out all other considerations.

Cuba and China lead the way; capitalist U.S. holds back progress

In 2016, socialist Cuba, with its steadfast commitment to environmental health, including years of effort in reforesting, was recognized by the World Wildlife Fund as the only country in the world to achieve sustainable development. ([tinyurl.com/yyh6nqxs](https://tinyurl.com/yyh6nqxs)) In addition, even Forbes business magazine this year had to admit: “China is set to become the world’s renewable energy superpower.” People’s China has demonstrated commitment, affirmed in 2014, to stopping the climate crisis. One example of many is that within four years it cut coal-plant air pollution on average by 32 percent in affected cities. (Workers World, April 23)

Meanwhile, the U.S. has withdrawn from the Paris Climate Agreement.

Continued on page 8
Buffalo shows solidarity with El Paso

Im/migrant rights supporters held a rally and march in Buffalo, N.Y., on Sept. 7 in solidarity with El Paso Firme, taking place in El Paso, Texas, on the same day. The National Action Against White Supremacy was called by the Border Network for Human Rights, RAICES Texas, the National Day Laborer Organizing Network and allies.

Activists from Buffalo Anti-War, Erie County Green Party, International Action Center Buffalo and Workers World Party came out to join hands with victims of the racist massacre in El Paso and all who are targeted by Trump’s white supremacist, anti-migrant and anti-people-of-color, fascist rhetoric. The demonstrators included not only activists from Western New York, but also those from Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, New York City and Philadelphia who were in Buffalo to attend the Workers World Party Marxism School.

As the march took off chanting, “El Paso to Buffalo, white supremacy’s got to go,” “1-C-E, you can’t hide, we charge you with genocide,” and “never again is now, close the camps down,” bystanders joined in and drivers in cars, trucks and buses honked their agreement.

— Report by WW Buffalo bureau; photo: Ellie Dorritlee

70 arrested demanding ‘close the camps!’

Hundreds of people demanding the closing of detention camps on the U.S.-Mexico border joined in an energetic protest that began at the New York Public Library in Manhattan on Sept. 14. Protesters marched to Microsoft’s Fifth Avenue store where they sat in the entrance demanding that the company stop doing business with the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency. When the activists moved onto Fifth Avenue, police arrested more than 70 people. A coalition of organizations called the “Close the Camps” action.

— Report and photo by Brenda Ryan

Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a multinational, multigenerational and multigendered organization that not only aims to abolish capitalism, but to build a socialist society because it’s the only way forward! Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the never-ending quest for ever-greater profits.

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

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

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

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

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

If you are interested in joining Workers World Party contact: 212.627.2994

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Supreme Court decision hits migrants

By Martha Grevatt

Again and again, the federal government continues to deny immigrants the most elementary human rights. On Sept. 11, seven of the nine unelected, appointee for life justices on the U.S. Supreme Court, led by Chief Justice John Roberts, with the Trump administration, took down asylum seekers. This included Elena Kagan and Stephen Breyer, two of the justices who voted to “manage” the “illegal” part of the “illegal” migrant problem.

The court provisionally upheld a July 16 ruling in a case brought by Philadelphia, and many other cities, against the Trump administration’s decision to allow New York City’s (and other) federal funding to be diverted to building Trump’s border wall. This is why the Supreme Court’s decision allows the Trump administration to continue to operate the wall.

In August, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco and the California Supreme Court both validated Judge Tigar’s injunction to those states in the Western District of Texas. The Tigar decision stayed Judge Tigar’s decision to allow ICE to remain in Texas.

Tigar’s creation in 1789, the Supreme Court has been a bastion of the marginalized, the oppressed, the poor and the disenfranchised. It has been a sanctuary for marginalized communities. It has been a place of refuge for those seeking justice. It has been a beacon of hope for those seeking freedom.

However, it is not unprecedented for SCOTUS to make a racially motivated decision concerning immigration. In 1889, the Supreme Court upheld the Chinese Exclusion Act barring legal Chinese residents from reentering the U.S. SCOTUS to make a blatantly racist decision concerning the Chinese Exclusion Act is not unprecedented. In 1889, the Supreme Court upheld the Chinese Exclusion Act barring legal Chinese residents from reentering the U.S.

On the one hand, this decision has implications for the future of the Supreme Court. On the other hand, it shows that the Supreme Court is not immune to the pressures of the political system. The Supreme Court is not immune to the pressures of the political system. The Supreme Court is not immune to the pressures of the political system.

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Battery Wharf Hotel workers strike

By Phebe Eckfeldt

Boston

Sept. 15 — All 75 union workers walked off the job Sept. 5 at the luxury, 150-room Battery Wharf Hotel located on Boston Harbor. Migrants make up a majority of the workers, who are represented by UNITE HERE Local 26.

Westmorland Hospitality Group, the hotel owners, refused to negotiate since March 2018. The workers are fed up with the threats of wage and benefit cuts and the racism, sexism, and lack of dignity and respect for workers on the job.

The owners are trying to take away job security, affordable family health care and yearly wage increases. They propose eliminating retirement and pension contributions, doing away with the right to a fair schedule and freezing wages for five years. They threaten to increase the workload for housekeepers and do away with workers’ protections regarding sub-contracting should the hotel be sold.

Particularly insulting to the striking workers is Battery Wharf’s refusal to agree to language fighting discrimination and offering job security for im/migrants. This language has been in citywide hotel contracts for years.

The hotel industry has a long history of workplace discrimination hiring African Americans.

Battery Wharf owners stopped participating in a citywide diversity task force after hotels in the Boston area had to bargain and work with their own diversity task force that includes activists. Teamsters Local 25 pledged to keep the picket line, including Ironworkers Local 7; Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 3650; National Grid workers, Service Employees union (SEIU) 32BJ; Boston Teachers Union, UAW; Harvard and Tufts University union; International Workers’ Solidarity Network; and student activists.

The strikers told this writer they would stay with the hotel workers into the night Boston, marched to the hotel 50 yards away “Straight Pride” parade in downtown Boston, Sept. 15 combines with the legal to show solidarity with the strikers and to show solidarity with the strikers and immediately agreed to open the program they were planning to the call to march to the line after the rally. A huge, spirit-based group of Black, Latinx, LGBTQ+ youth and union members joined the line and stayed with the hotel workers into the night.

Workers World spoke with Ed Childs, a retired chief shop steward for UNITE HERE Local 26 and organizer of this contingent, said, “Anti-fascist organizers were delighted with the solidarity with the strikers and immediately agreed to open the program they were planning to the call to march to the line after the rally. A huge, spirit-based group of Black, Latinx, LGBTQ+ youth and union members joined the line and stayed with the hotel workers into the night.

UNIONS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS have joined the workers’ picket line, including Ironworkers Local 7; Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 3650; National Grid workers, Service Employees union (SEIU) 32BJ; Boston Teachers Union, UAW; Harvard and Tufts University union; International Workers’ Solidarity Network; and student activists. Teamsters Local 25 pledged to honor the picket line.

On Sept. 7, anti-fascist protesters, who were confronting the reactionary “Straight Pride” parade in downtown Boston, marched to the hotel 50 yard and joined the cheering strikers.

A white supremacist rally that occupied one side of the town square in Dahlonega, Ga., was attended by about two dozen people waving U.S. flags and chanting “USA” in response to Nazi and alt-right speakers.

Some 200 anti-racists, mostly youths, drowned out the fascist rhetoric with their own chants of resistance and unity yelled across the town square. Metal barricades and some 600 police officers from multiple state, county and local agencies, including scores of riot-gear police and a few overhead drones and a tank close by, protected the hating-rowers. But they failed to deter the multinational protesters from delivering their message of class solidarity.

— Report by Dianne Mathiowetz

GM strikers ‘shut it down!’

By Martha Grevatt

Parma, Ohio

On Sept. 15, one minute before midnight EDT, production ground to a halt at all General Motors facilities across the U.S.

Workers inside the plants walked out, and midnight shift workers joined the picket line. Loud chants of “Shut it down” or “United we stand, divided we fall” filled the night air outside some plants.

Earlier in the day, thousands of Auto Workers local presidents and bargaining chairs voted unanimously to stop work if no agreement was reached. A UAW press release stated, “The GM strike is going on strike at midnight Sunday to secure: fair wages, affordable health care, our share of profits, job security, a defined path to permanent seniority for temps.”

Spirits on the line were strong outside the GM stamping plant in Parma, a suburb of Cleveland. The plant bargaining chair explained that a key issue was the company demanding workers pay thousands more per year for health care: “If a robot breaks, they pay to fix it. They work like robots. They break us, they should pay for us.”

Hoping to win the strike in the field of public opinion, GM issued a statement saying they “presented a strong offer that improves wages, benefits and grows U.S. jobs in substantive ways.” (clickondeal.com, Sept. 15) However, the small pay increases the company was willing to grant would be more than gobbled up by the dramatic increase in worker health care costs.

Another sticking point is GM’s plans for two assembly plants and two transmission plants; last year workers learned those plants would be closed. In the company’s offer, the Warren, Mich., and the Baltimore, Md., transmission plants would remain closed while only a small number of jobs would open up in the plants in Lordstown, Ohio, and Detroit-Hamtramck. Mich. Lordstown Assembly is currently idled.

A third major issue, which is also big for Ford and Fiat Chrysler UAW members, is the large number of workers classified as temporary employees. They are paid substantially less, have fewer benefits, work unpredictable schedules, cannot build seniority, and are subject to arbitrary discipline and firings without recourse through the grievance procedure. There is currently no proposed contract language giving temps a path to permanent, full-time status. GM is not giving any ground on this critical issue. Striking UAW members are fighting to eliminate what is essentially a third tier of workers. They want “no more tiers” and are pushing for second tier “in progression” workers — hired after October 2007 — to have parity with “traditional” workers. GM is threatening to make them worse if they would be “out as long as it takes.”

Grevatt is a UAW retiree who worked at Fiat Chrysler 32 years.
Indicting the Pentagon as climate criminal

By Sara Flounders

Why is the vast global movement that focuses on the imminent crisis facing the planet—the climate crisis—so consistently steered away from any attention to the largest and most dangerous polluter in the world? Even if today every single person stopped driving all of the more than 128 million vehicles on U.S. roads in this country, it would take two years to withhold 1.2 billion metric tons of greenhouse gases emitted by the U.S. military since the beginning of the 2001 global War on Terror. This is according to a detailed study by the Watson Institute, “Pentagon Fuel Use, Climate Change and the Costs of War.” (tinyurl.com/yavvjaq2)

In response to the climate crisis, there is a great deal of attention, publicity and lecturing about small steps that individual people and entire communities can take to recycle waste, drive less, use solar panels, switch to less polluting products and change one’s diet. All of this is good education. But all too often these individual solutions blame and shame people who may not have access to newer or more expensive technologies. The main emphasis is also an intentional distraction away from attention to the military system, the main enforcer of capitalist property relations—the entire U.S. military apparatus represented by the Pentagon.

The U.S. military is the world’s largest institutional user of petroleum. Each year it produces over 3.5 million barrels of oil, the single largest producer of greenhouse gases in the world. The Pentagon’s deadly emissions are greater than the emissions of entire industrialized nations.

In an effort to gain U.S. compliance, all U.S. military operations worldwide and within the U.S. have been exempt from national and international agreements on reduction of emissions since the Kyoto Climate Accords negotiations in 1998. To hammer in place this evasion of responsibility, that year the U.S. Congress authorized a provision explicitly guaranteeing U.S. military exemption from any international agreements that might come into being.

This complete U.S. military exemption includes 800 U.S. bases in more than 130 countries around the world, 6,000 facilities in the U.S., aircraft carriers, jet aircraft and the U.S. armed forces totaling 2 million personnel. Also excluded are thousands of vehicles and small aircraft in the U.S. military apparatus, such as the giant U.S.-commanded NATO military alliance and Africa, the U.S. military alliance now blanketing Africa. The provision also exempts U.S./U.N.-sanctioned activities of “peacekeeping” and “humanitarian relief.”

The Pentagon Department of Defense’s use of all types of fuel comes to 350,000 barrels a day or 100 million barrels a year. The fuel is consumed by more than 28,000 armored vehicles, 60,000 Humvees, almost 2,000 attack helicopters, more than 3,000 jet fighters and bombers, and vast fleets of Navy vessels, according to the detailed version of the Watson Institute report. (tinyurl.com/y4why8u)

The real cost of U.S. wars

Why was it so important to the Pentagon and the U.S. ruling class to get its military omitted from all climate calculation?

If the U.S. global military footprint were included, that would focus world attention with even starker numbers on the main cause of world pollution, U.S. military strategists, claiming secrecy and security, sought to block this discussion completely in all international forums.

Even within a Pentagon now reorganized and redistributed, a healthy environment could not possibly be part of this military apparatus.

The Pentagon routinely dumps its waste around the world, as it did here in Greenland.

The Pentagon is the main culprit of world pollution. U.S. military alliance now blanketing the entire planet— the climate crisis—so consistently steered away from any attention to the largest and most dangerous polluter in the world.

But in 2017 the Trump administration announced U.S. withdrawal from the limited, nonbinding Paris Agreement, declaring that it put U.S. corporations at a disadvantage. The U.S. is the only country to withdraw at this point.

Outside these summits, tens of thousands who understand the impending crisis gather in large climate protests. But the role of the U.S. military as the greatest polluter and climate criminal is seldom raised, and the U.S. role in frustrating climate agreements or concrete goals is hardly a focus.

These demonstrations have been limited by the role of corporate-funded non-governmental organizations such as 350.org and Avaaz. The result is that only vague generalities, utopian hopes and toothless accords are raised as goals. The demonstrations become mega-media events that quickly fade from memory.

Corporate-funded organizations were prominent in the 2014 People’s Climate March in New York City. Hundreds of thousands gathered before the U.N. Climate Change meeting in what was described as the largest climate march in history. The march had 1,500 endorsing organizations, while countless politicians and celebrities endorsed or spoke at and there were parallel actions across the U.S.

But this historic march raised no demands. Described as “not a protest,” it was “an invitation to change everything.” Instead, this outpouring quickly ebbed away and changed nothing.

Now, a decade later, the climate movement is radicalizing, especially among young people, who feel the greatest urgency for their future and are the most willing to break with past decisions. There is a search for deeper answers as never-ending U.S. war combines with the desperate, unresolved environmental crisis. The movement has grown sharply anti-capitalist at its base, while the leadership finds it harder and harder to paper over deep economic and social contradictions with vague slogans.

More radical demands

At the 2014 Climate March, there was a determined contingent of Indigenous activists and people from countries targeted or colonized by U.S. imperialism, along with antiwar activists. This contingent did raise the Pentagon’s endless wars as the most dangerous form of global devastation.

This year it is a step forward that the mass actions planned for Sept. 20-27 are called as “Climate Strikes,” evoking the power of workers’ strikes to shut down the machinery of oppression, profit and pollution.

Reinforcing this step forward is also the People’s Mobilization to Stop the U.S. War Machine (PeoplesMobe.org) holding a Sept. 22 demonstration at Herald Square in New York City. Though without the vast social media reach of the well-funded 350.org, the People’s Mobilization is raising the real danger of U.S. war for the entire planet in a far more focused manner.

At this time of climate crisis it is urgent that revolutionary organizations put forth demands that focus on the chaotic failure of capitalism and corporate domination. Demands must include the need to address environmental racism and the need for reparations paid by Big Oil and the very corporations that have reaped billions in profits from uprooting millions of people and making their lives miserable.

And it is time to indict and target the greatest climate criminal—the greatest war criminal—the U.S. Pentagon.
Climate crisis poses life-and-death threat to people with disabilities

By Workers World New York City Disabilities bureau

“’It’s time to recognize climate change as a disability rights issue’” was the headline for an article by Tiffany Yu, founder of DiversABILITY. (Rooted in Rights, Dec. 11, 2017) DiversABILITY is a movement and organization dedicated to raising disability awareness and reshaping conceptions of ability.

When Yu was nine years old, a car accident filled her fatigued body with brachial plexus palsy—a loss of movement or weakness in the arm due to damage to the nerves that send signals from the spine to the arm. After the bones in her leg healed, she had to relearn how to write (she was originally right-handed).

“We—the disability community—are the ones who need to be at the forefront of this movement,” Yu wrote. “When it comes down to it, climate justice is about people and climate change is a human rights issue. Climate change impacts vulnerable communities like mine the most. Opportunity and justice cannot be an afterthought.”

“Global temperatures have been increasing. Sixteen of the 17 hottest years on record have occurred since 2001. The National Council on Disability estimated that 155,000 people with disabilities were living in three of the Gulf Coast cities hardest hit by Katrina. Almost half of the disabled population is a child—a climate—will be in the trash bin of history after the Sept. 20 Global Climate Strike. U.S. labor is coming forward to support climate protection policies in their unions representing a wide range of industries from coast to coast.

The Blue-Green Alliance is a joint project of eight of the largest national unions—including the United Steelworkers, the Communication Workers, the Service Employees, the American Federation of Teachers and three craft unions—and six activist environmental organizations—including the Sierra Club, Natural Resources Defense Council, Union of Concerned Scientists, Environmental Defense Action Fund and the League of Conservation Voters.

This strategic alliance, which issued a statement June 24 titled “Solidarity for Climate Action,” will turn out thousands upon thousands of their members all across the country.

The Labor Network for Sustainability is devoted to seeing “a transition to a society that is ecologically sustainable and economically just.” Its purpose is to “advance a climate action program that will help the labor movement be a leading force for a just transition to a climate-safe and equitable economy.” LNS, which strongly supports the Green New Deal, aims to be labor’s voice at the table in order to shape it in the interests of the working class. (labor.sustainability.org)

Meanwhile, a new Data for Progress poll shows that 62 percent of workers support a Green New Deal, with only 22 percent opposed. A study based on data from national surveys showed that “union members are on average more likely than the general population to display pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors.” To further this, Data for Progress has created a tool for unions to help identify and promote pro-union climate policies. (The Guardian, Sept. 10)

The following excerpts are from a statement the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network prepared for its summit meeting in Wilmington, N.C., on Oct. 16-17, 2019. To read the entire statement, visit tinyurl.com/153qegnpf.

Humans are responsible for the greenhouse gases that come from fossil fuels used in transportation, agriculture, industry, and power generation, as well as coal, oil, and methane from deforestation, livestock production and solid waste disposal.

Underdeveloped communities exposed to racism and class exploitation will be more impacted by climate change than wealthy communities. This makes climate change an environmental justice issue. The injustice of disproportionate impact is magnified by the fact that people with fewer material resources are less responsible for greenhouse gases than wealthy people.

The climate change movement is complex in ways privileged people who didn’t object to fossil fuels burning as they were not directly impacted. They didn’t step in to protect people living next to refineries, pipelines and chemical plants; they didn’t fight for workers exposed daily to injuries, disabling dusts, carcinogens, and periodically catastrophic and fatal accidents, refinery explosions, coal mine collapses. Now that fossil fuels threaten everybody,
Reforestation: Cuba leads the way

By Stephanie Hedgecoke

Before 1492, what is today the United States had about 1 billion acres of forests. From 1492 on, at least 286 million acres were destroyed. In a 1763 letter, Benjamin Franklin wrote, “Cleared land absorbs more heat and melts snow quicker.”

The 1975-1985 period of rapid growth of capitalist extractive corporations, for forests that formerly drew carbon back down were decimated. This deforestation is a part of the global capitalization of natural resources in addition to the massive increase of carbon in the atmosphere. The world needs reforestation.

Cuba is doing it!

Cuban reforestation began in the Sierra del Rosario region in 1968; with support from the revolutionary government, local villagers decided on a plan. The area had been denuded during Spanish colonization, over 400 years from 1492 to 1898. The invaders cut down the original forest to raise livestock and crops. The native trees—cedar, ebony, mahogany, majagua and others—no longer grew there. By the mid-1800s, the soil was degraded; deforestation continued into the early 1900s for cattle grazing and hog raising. Impoverished rural people worked for ranchers or burned trees to make charcoal. The time of the Havana coffee plantations in 1955, nothing was left except isolated palm trees.

Socialist Cuba saw the need to implement social and economic projects in rural areas. The Sierra del Rosario Plan was one of those projects. The reforestation plan, launched along with establishment of community services, would improve soil quality and provide important wildlife habitats.

Founded in 1971, Las Terrazas was named for the terrace planting system. It included an initial 5,000 hectares (12,295 acres) in the eastern part of the mountain range. Scientists assisted in determining which Indigenous trees to plant, and the villagers initially planted 3,000 mahogany and teak trees. Within eight years, people in the valley had planted 6 million trees. The Cuban government stated that Indigenous ecosystems restored

At Rio San Juan in Las Terrazas biosphere, Cuba.

Indigenous mammals, plants, birds and insects, many of which had become endangered under centuries of environmental exploitation during colonialism, began to return—and Indigenous ecosystems began to be restored. The forest has 131 species of birds, 26 of which are indigenous to Cuba; the rest pass through on migratory routes to their nesting areas. There are 33 reptilian species, including 17 snakes and 11 lizards. Some of the world’s smallest mammal species live in Cuba—the endangered Cuban solenodon, the tropical kegongo and julia carabau—have returned to the forest.

In 1985, UNESCO recognized the reforestation project as a Biosphere Reserve, and added 25,000 hectares (61,776 acres) of Sierra del Rosario to the original 5,000. Since then, UNESCO has recognized five major areas of Cuba. During the Special Period, after the loss of trade with the USSR and Cuba’s other former socialist trading partners, combined with the U.S. tightening its blockade, the revolutionary government supported ecological and cultural tourism and doubled the focus on sustainability. Tourism projects in Las Terrazas were used to build a library. Also in the Special Period, growing organic became mandatory. The Buenavista Coffee Plantation was restored from the ruins of one of the colonial coffee plantations. Locals planted coffee trees and began to harvest shade-grown Arabica Las Terrazas coffee. Honey is also locally produced. Las Terrazas was the first model for reforestation in Cuba; it has inspired another 11 reforestation projects. The other 11 communities meet periodically at Las Terrazas to exchange Indigenous seeds to promote biodiversiﬁcation and trade food produce. UNESCO has recognized Cuba’s reforestation programs for their principles of incorporating scientiﬁc knowledge and traditional practices to strengthen community involvement in strategic planning. To date more than 7 million Indigenous trees have been planted, and a great amount of biodiversity has been recovered.

U.S. Solidarity delegation visits Las Terrazas

The 50th Venceremos Brigade visited Las Terrazas July 28. We met Ida, our local guide, at the village, and then she took us to the Rio San Juan. The biosphere is a popular vacation site for workers in Havana. The river San Juan is fed by sulfur springs and is regarded as a mineral treatment. We joined many Cubans swimming in the river and enjoying the forests on their national holidays.

The three green gardens of Las Terrazas support the schools and community as the primary food source. Villagers grow fruits, flowers and plants with medicinal uses in herbal infusions and vitamin supplements. Kindergarten children have their own garden where they learn to grow food, which they eat at lunch and snack times. The children even learn to make herbal infusions with various flowers, such as chamomile, and guava.

The Ecological Research Center belongs to Cuba’s Academy of Science. Specialists search for species of flora and fauna in the forest; twice a week they also work with local students to teach them to recognize the plants as part of the scientific work. Even small children know how to recognize six or seven of the local Indigenous plants.

Ida told the Brigadistas, “When I tell you it was mandatory to grow everything we needed, it was because someone came and told us to do it. We need to do it.” And, she added, “We grow organic all the time.”

Las Terrazas uses some solar power and plans to acquire more when possible. The biosphere has regulations for conservation; the local Committee for the Defense of the Revolution makes all decisions regarding sustainability, such as how much housing is sustainable for the project.

Our guide spoke of the impact of global warming on growing seasons and local flora. Some varieties of plants have now disappeared from the forest due to the heat; others, such as mangos, are in season earlier and longer. This July was the warmest ever recorded in the world. Ida told us the past average year-round temperature in Cuba was 24° to 25° Celsius (75° to 77°F); this year they had a new high of 39.8°C (103.6°F).

Ida said when she was a child, the rains were so intense that children were forced to stay home from school sometimes for a week or two. Now there are seasonal rains that might last only three days. She stressed that from the beginning, the reforestation plan was focused on the environment.

In the last couple of years, the villagers began to organize work to clean plastic and trash out of the river where tourists and Cubans have littered. Children are invited to join the cleanup; in this way, their environmental consciousness is developed from a young age. The community is currently discussing the need to limit the number of tourists in order to protect the environment.

Stopping global warming requires a rapid transition away from the use of fossil fuels. It also requires reforestation. Socialist Cuba—revolutionary Cuba—is a model for fighting global warming.

Hedgecoke was a member of the 50th Venceremos Brigade to Cuba.
Justice for Brandon Lee

Protect human rights defenders!

This is a slightly edited version of a statement issued by BAYAN-USA, an alliance of 26 progressive Filipino organizations in the U.S. representing students, scholars, women, workers, artists and youth.

BAYAN condemn[s] the government to forge peace with the CPP-NPA as terrorist, the next step to quelling the growing resistance, mounted by the people within the purview of their civil and political rights, was facilitated. ... Peace Talks with the National Democratic Front despite earlier identifying peace as his preferred presidential legacy. The peace process was widely welcomed by the people that Brandon's support, and appreciation of the role of peasants in mass movement.

Brandon's rigorous in social investigation and community immersion makes him one of the most reliable journalists of Northern Dispatch. His activist journalism encourages a deep and broad understanding of the lives of the most productive yet oppressed people in the Cordillera. His reporting and appreciation of the role of peasants in forging a better society led him to learn and actually take on paralegal work with the Ifugao Peasant Movement (IPM).

On August 6, Brandon was shot in front of his house. In his years as an activist, Brandon and his family have lived with the people of the community as they play an active role in the struggle for people's rights.

The current spat of political [shootings and killings] in the Philippines follows a methodological approach: Duterte unilaterally cancelled the Peace Talks with the National Democratic Front despite earlier identifying peace as his preferred presidential legacy. The Philippine bureaucracy is on as usual. The second step the Duterte regime took was to consolidate dependence on U.S. imperialism and the Philippine military, [Duterte] did this by suddenly declaring an anti-communist state of emergency — a declaration that he once recognized as a rival government to forge peace with as “a ter-

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Repatriations must go to whole countries devastated by U.S. war and sanctions for oil and profit—against Iran, North Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, Libya, Syria and Venezuela—to and compensate for the economic sabotage and efforts by the people within the purview of their civil and political rights, was facilitated. ... Peace Talks with the National Democratic Front despite earlier identifying peace as his preferred presidential legacy. The peace process was widely welcomed by the people that Brandon's support, and appreciation of the role of peasants in mass movement.

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Continued from page 1

Make the corporations, banks and Pentagon pay climate reparations!

Although this agreement is only a weak first step toward making the corporations, banks and Pentagon pay for the life of the globe — from Standing Rock in the U.S. to Brazil, India and Honduras.

Reparations must address environmental racism aimed at people of color in the Global South, as well as in the U.S.—from the Black and Brown people inducted by corporate log farm waste during hurricanes in North Carolina, to African-American communities, like Uniontown, Ala., used as dumping grounds for the debris of coal-fired plants.

We must demand climate reparations—to build a global future on the road to socialism!

Fight the power! Build Workers World!

Workers World newspaper has a point of view. Unlike the corporate press, we report events from the perspective of the workers and the oppressed. But you already know that.

But you may not be aware that our purpose goes beyond passive advocacy in workplaces, communities and streets for drastic change.

That's why the newspaper has solidarity with labor marches all over the country on Labor Day, the first Monday in September. That's the federal holiday the ruling class “gave” U.S. workers in 1894 to distract us from learning from the triumphs of Cuba and China.

This special issue of WW will be there, discussing strategies to help working people, young and old, wrest the reins of power away from the imperialist ruling class and implement changes that defend the environment and save lives.

It's essential for Workers World not to be a bystander, but to take action in defense of our Marxist-Leninist principles and beliefs. If you agree, then it's time to join the Workers World Supporter Program, which since 1977 has been helping to get 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, all for a donation of a minimum of $75 or $100 or $300 (only $83 per quarter) or more.

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 that we’re grateful for your help in building Workers World — for today and for the future!
Venezuela’s President Nicolás Maduro ended his address to the National Defense Council on Sept. 9, which exposed the existence of a military threat and escalation against his country. He said, “We have the evidence of how they intend to create a false positive to provoke an armed conflict between Colombia and Venezuela.”

The Monday night meeting followed a day of growing diplomatic tension. First, Venezuelan Minister of Communication Minister Jorge Rodríguez presented evidence of how the Colombian press, particularly Semana magazine, falsified and disseminated documents in an attempt to accuse the Venezuelan government of collaboration with the National Liberation Army (ELN) in Colombia and the sector of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) that resumed armed struggle against that country’s government.

After that presentation, a press conference took place in the afternoon with Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza and Rodríguez. The diplomatic corps, which is accredited in Venezuela, was summoned to hear “precise information on the terrorist acts planned to be launched from the Republic of Colombia under the protection of the government in Bogotá.”

Toward nighttime President Maduro met with the National Defense Council. Represented for all levels of the Bolivarian National Armed Forces, public officials and the national cabinet participated in the meeting.

In his speech, President Rodríguez, following Article 232 of the Constitution, said: “As head of state, I have passed over authority to the National Defense Council for the collective management of armed forces and to a mechanism that contemplates the deployment of our country’s military capacity, to fine-tune land defense, anti-aircraft— the coordinated defense of the nation’s territory.”

President Maduro also referred to the orange alert decreed days ago and the beginning of border operations called “Sovereignty and Peace in Venezuela” that will be carried out from Sept. 10 to 28. These are taking place “to fine-tune the entire national defense system, to fine-tune all the mechanisms of the deployment of our country’s military capacity, to fine-tune land defense, anti-aircraft — the coordinated defense of the national territory itself.”

The United States and 11 Latin American countries spoke out in favor of a possible military intervention against the Venezuelan government. They did so through an assembly of the Organization of American States which activated the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (TIAR), a 1947 agreement that commits to mutual defense among nations in the Western Hemisphere — that is, the possibility of establishing an armed coalition.

“This decision acknowledges the fact that the depth of the Venezuelan crisis obliges us to appeal to all mechanisms,” said the chief of staff of the secretary general of the OAS, Luis Almagro, who has defended the possibility of military intervention in Venezuela for the past year.

Most of the countries that opposed the activation of TIAR, published a communiqué in which it affirmed that it “categorically rejects the invocation of the TIAR mechanism in the internal affairs of states because it considers it unacceptable to use a mechanism that contemplates the use of military force.” It also noted that this step “brings us dangerously close to a point of no return.”

The Venezuelan government condemned those within the OAS who took the step to activate TIAR, including the governments of Argentina, Colombia and Brazil. In a communiqué, the Foreign Ministry stated: “It is necessary to remember that TIAR was imposed on our region by the United States in the framework of the Cold War, and its purpose was to legitimize military interventions in Latin America for ideological reasons. This was the case in Guatemala in 1954, in Cuba in 1961, in the Dominican Republic in 1965, in Panama in 1985 and in Panama in 1989.”

“The threat of the use of TIAR — of the use of implicit force in the TIAR mechanism — is completely absurd, it contradicts all the principles of coexistence and peaceful solution of controversy and self-determination of the peoples,” said Odelo Amorin, former foreign minister of Brazil.

Part of the agreement reached between the 12 countries is to convene during the United Nations General Assembly, which will take place at the end of September, to decide what measures to take. They also agreed to report the decision to the United Nations Security Council.

The activation of this mechanism had been requested for several months by sectors of the Venezuelan opposition that insist the only way to obtain political power is through a foreign military intervention, an invasion of a mercenary army from outside or an internal coup by a sector of the Bolivarian National Armed Forces (FANB). The opposition includes, for example, María Corina Machado, Antonio Ledezma, and the right-wing gang gathered in Miami. Juan Guaidó, for his part, had attempted to maintain a position of balance between the parties, proposing that all options were open, from dialogue to TIAR, as long as he achieves his objectives, conditioned in the following formula: cessation of usurpation [meaning President Nicolás Maduro has to resign], transitional government, free elections.

Guaidó’s problem was that he never decided on what steps to take: the leadership always came from the United States and, to a lesser extent, from his Popular Will party, which he was not a leader of when he proclaimed himself president.
Reparations for Bahamian climate refugees

The callous, white-supremacist response of Trump to the plight of tens of thousands of Bahamians was recently recognized by one of today’s most high-profile athletes.

Klay Thompson is considered one of the greatest shooters in the history of the National Basketball Association and is a three-time NBA champion with the Golden State Warriors.

Thompson’s father, Mychal, a two-time NBA champion with the Los Angeles Lakers, migrated from his native Bahamas to the U.S. in the late 1970s.

Thompson wrote the following on his Instagram thread Sept. 13 regarding Trump’s racist response to the total devastation that Hurricane Dorian caused in the islands: “[S]hame on our current administration for not welcoming our Bahamian neighbors in their greatest time of need. I’ve been so lucky to visit my family’s home since childhood, and in those times I’ve seen countless Americans use the Bahamian islands as their playground for vacationing and vacating.

And now turn our back on the people who welcomed us with open arms, when they’ve lost everything?! There’s no excuse for this ... and if you have one you’re a real piece of shit.”

Thompson is referring to Trump’s public labeling of Bahamians as criminals and his declaration that no U.S. borders will be opened to these islanders who have lost their homes, loved ones and livelihoods.

Even before the hurricane, the vast majority of Bahamians, a large number of them Haitian migrants, lived below the poverty line. Out of a total population of about 403,000 people, 70,000 Bahamians have lost everything due to the 54° storm, another of an increasing number of climate catastrophes.

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The cost of damage to tourist-industry-dominated Bahamas is an estimated $7 billion.

The people of the Bahamas deserve reparations not only for what they are going through now, but for decades of super-exploitation of their labor and resources.

Over the past year alone, the Bahamian tourism industry raked in revenues of $5.7 billion, half of the gross domestic product of the Bahamas.

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Workers World editorial

The crime against Afghanistan

It’s the longest U.S. war ever. And no one in the ruling U.S. imperialist establishment can explain why it continues.

Before Trump recently claimed he was for withdrawing at least some of the tens of thousands of U.S. troops from Afghanistan, similar promises were made by previous U.S. presidents, Democrats and Republicans. But the U.S. occupation never ended.

Nearly 4,500 U.S. youth have died and thousands have been grievously wounded there. Some survivors are starting to ask questions about why they were sent to Afghanistan in the first place.

Many, many more Afghans have suffered even worse fates in this unequal war, including babies, small children, wedding parties and farmers working in their fields. Land mines everywhere. Drones overhead in Afghanistan — unable to tell the difference between a wedding party and a gathering of fighters — are called in for murderous air strikes from bases from the U.S. West to Afghanistan itself.

The war has cost U.S. taxpayers over a trillion dollars. Its cost to the Afghan people is incalculable.

Why did it start? Because the U.S. ruling class couldn’t stand the fact that in 1978 — more than 40 years ago! — a revolution succeeded in Afghanistan, led by a progressive party that was friendly with the Soviet Union.

The revolution was precipitated by the fact that Nur Mohammad Taraki, leader of the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan, had been thrown in jail by a reactionary government backed by the U.S. In response to Taraki’s arrest, rank-and-file soldiers and workers broke down the jail doors and freed him — which began the end of the government favored by Washington.

Then a revolutionary government headed by the PDPA lasted a little over a decade. But in that short time, it abolished the debt of peasants to rich landlords, distributed land to the peasants and set up collective farms, established schools for both girls and boys, eliminated the “bride price” and declared equal rights for women, among other reforms.

With the time of Cold War, with the Soviet Union was the priority for Washington. So within a year of the progressive Afghan revolution, the U.S. was scheming for its overthrow. The CIA secretly armed and financed an attempted counterrevolution led by dispossessed landlords. This drew the USSR, an ally of the Taraki government, into the conflict.

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been replaced by real estate capital, which many big cities, industrial capital has York State Legislature’s doors to demand tion for tenants after blocking the New across the country, with noteworthy percent of a household’s income, while apartment. Rent burdens in African- afford rent for an average two-bedroom cities across the U.S., the multinational ing people, both housed and unhoused. - estate industry has caused poor and work Trump dispatched top federal officials Seattle, Calif., Sept. 15. ILWU Local 10 group performs at community meeting in Oakland, Calif., told the church gathering: “We’ve seen too much. We know too much. There was a time when Oakland was 90 percent Black. Now people are living in tent PHOTOS: PHIL MEYER

Black community fights diabolical scheme to push them out

By Dave Welsh Oakland, Calif.

Led by the dockworkers union, International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10, Oakland’s Black community is organizing to stop a baseball sta- dium project from further gentrifying the city and push- ing longtime Black residents out.

“The Black community is under siege,” ILWU Local 10 organizer Derrick Muhammad told a recent meeting of the East Oakland Stadium Alliance, “by forces that would like to relocate the Oakland Athletics from the existing Coliseum park in East Oakland to Howard Terminal in rapidly gentrifying West Oakland — and drive us out. This is emanating from City Hall, from real estate developers, from the Fisher family, that owns the Gap, clothing chain … and from a police department that’s working in tandem to drive Black people out.”

Speaking at the meeting Full Gospel Church, Muhammad asked, “Why are they building a light rail down East 14th Street in East Oakland? Did any of you ask for that? It reminds me of 50 years ago when they moved West Oakland’s Black community — pushing us out so they could build BART stations, railroad tracks and a huge postal facility smack dab in the middle of our neighborhood — fol- lowed by the loss of factory jobs, the intro- duction of crack cocaine and a wrecking ball for our homes and mom-and-pop stores. “Now they are promising 6,000 permanent jobs at a new ballpark, hoping to convince a marginalized, oppressed community to support their project,” said Muhammad. “Ask yourself, ‘How does 8,000 home games produce 6,000 jobs?’ This is a land grab by the rich. This is the de-industrialization of another major urban center, like they did to Detroit. They even want to grab Howard Terminal, which is part of the working port of Oakland.”

Danny Glover, actor and activist, whose postal family also experienced being pushed out of housing by greedy developers in the San Francisco Bay Area, told the church gathering: “We’ve seen too much. We know too much. There was a time when Oakland was 50 percent Black. Now people are living in tent cities. Renters are being forced out. “The carpetbaggers are coming in, and schools are being privatized. We don’t need more playgrounds for the rich, treating Black people as expendable. We’ve got to fight. We have to take our stand and defeat this new scheme by the rich to steal the people’s land.”

Real estate barons’ attack on tenants spurs firefight

By Jim McHahan Seattle

Landlord-in-chief President Donald Trump dispatched top federal officials to Los Angeles on Sept. 10 to organize a crackdown on homelessness, which has been caused by gentrification. His admin- istration cruelly aims to use unilateral federal force against homeless people in Los Angeles and throughout the state of California.

This plan highlights the harm the real estate industry has caused poor and work- ing people, both housed and unhoused. In New York, Los Angeles, Seattle and cities across the U.S., the multinational working class is under siege. Workers are being displaced by skyrocketing rents imposed by big real estate.

Rent checks have shot up 155 percent since 1998 to an average monthly cost of $2,000. Seattle’s character has been altered due to the escalating rents and evictions. There has been an exodus of working-class and oppressed people. African Americans, who comprised 12.3 percent of the population, now make up only 7 percent of the city’s residents.

Meanwhile, due to outrageously high rents and low wages, homelessness has increased. There are over 11,000 people living in tent camps, with a disproportionate number African Americans, who comprise one-third to one-half of them. In this war against the homeless, they live under constant threat from city bulldozer- ers and excavation equipment.

But the firefight is growing. Community and tenant organizations are organizing for rent control in Seattle and in Washington state. African-American churches are working to get more afford- able housing built in their communities without big real estate’s involvement. City Councilperson Kshama Sawant is campaigning against Amazon and other corporate realtors.

Workplace organizing by labor unions has the potential to reach even further into apartment buildings and hous- ing complexes to push this demand. It is becoming clearer that capitalism is unworkable for the majority of work- ing and oppressed people and must be abolished.
Miles obligados a huir de Bahamas

Más víctimas del cambio climático

Por G. Dunkel

9 de septiembre − Cuando el huracán Dorian se detuvo en Gran Bahama y las Islas Abacos en las Bahamas durante casi 40 horas el 1 y 2 de septiembre, con velocidades de viento sostenidas de 185 millas por hora, dejó montones de casas y edificios reducidos a leña y escombros, junto con una cifra de incalculable de muertes.

Dorian no dejó tiendas de comestibles, ni estaciones de servicio, ni electricidad, ni agua, ni alimentos, ni saneamiento, ni servicios de teléfono o internet para miles de personas. Después de una semana, solo se han restaurado servicios muy limitados. Los equipos de rescate no habían llegado a algunas de las comunidades más remotas de las Islas Abacos hasta el domingo 8 de septiembre.

El carácter extremo de Dorian indica que la crisis del cambio climático ha hecho que los huracanes sean más cálidos, más húmedos y leñosos, causando aún más destrucción. Los países pequeños como las Bahamas, incluso si pueden hacer que su huella de carbono sea negativa, tienen poca influencia sobre el clima del mundo.

Los países pequeños no pueden cambiar las condiciones que el sistema capitalista ha creado en todo el mundo. Ciertamente tienen derecho a exigir refugio de la destrucción. Los países pequeños como las Bahamas tienen derecho a exigir refugio de la destrucción. Los países imperialistas con colonias huyeron por su libertad a las Bahamas británicas, a solo 40 millas de distancia. Este fue especialmente el caso después de 1834, cuando Inglaterra abolió la esclavitud. Muchos bahameños emigraron más tarde al sur de Florida en los años treinta y cuarenta del siglo XX, cuando desarrollaban sus industrias de turismo y cítricos.

Sin embargo, cientos de bahameños que esperan llegar a Florida después del huracán se vieron obligados a abandonar las islas de Gran Bahama y las Abacos.

La Cuba socialista tiene mucho experiencia en minimizar el peligro para su pueblo de tormentas intensas. Es reconocido internacionalmente por su capacidad de reubicar a todos los bahameños, especialmente a los que esperan llegar a Florida después del huracán.

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En respuesta, muchos toman decisiones individuales, como hacerse vegano o compartir el viaje para reducir sus propias emisiones de dióxido de carbono. La magnitud de esta crisis del cambio climático ha asustado a la clase capitalista. Este mundo pronto será nuestro, y todos los blancos ricos tendrán los medios para escapar de ella. Esto no es una conjuncture: proviene de la boca de los científicos del clima y sus informes.

Greta Thunberg, una joven de Suecia se ha convertido en una figura promíneramente últimamente, después de haber inspirado un movimiento de estudiantes que pro- mueva huelgas todos los viernes en todo el mundo para enfrentar la crisis climática. Thunberg asistirá a las huelgas climáticas que comenzarán el 20 de septiembre en la ciudad de Nueva York, así como a la Cumbre Climática de la ONU de 2019. Ella ha pedido desobediencia civil y que los políticos “tomen la ciencia en serio”.

Su movimiento constituye un punto de partida fantástico, ya que las huelgas son una de las herramientas más efectivas de las personas. Lo que haría su movi- miento aún más fuerte sería abrazar el derrocado del capitalismo.


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