250 million Indian workers

Biggest strike in world history!

By Martha Grevatt

India is the world’s second-most populated country, with about 1.37 billion people. Over 928 million are “working age” (15 to 64 years old; statistics from worldometers.info). On Jan. 8, one in four people in this age group — 250 million — stayed off the job in the biggest strike to date in world history.

The 24-hour strike shut down banking, transport, retail, public services, construction and industry in many parts of the country. Workers blocked highways and railroad tracks, with their bodies, barricades and burning tires. Police cars and government buildings were attacked in some places.

The strike was three months in the making. “We have been campaigning from September,” said Amarjeet Kaur, General Secretary of the All Indian Trade Union Congress, two days before the strike: “Anger of the nation will culminate on January 8.” AITUC is one of the 10 Indian labor federations that jointly called the “bandh” (shutdown). Kaur predicted a “complete bandh” in 10 to 15 cities and massive participation across India. (NewsClick, Jan. 6)

The strike was initially called around a 12-point program protesting Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s anti-worker legislation and massive privatization plans, affecting such national assets as airlines, railways and petroleum refineries. Other points addressed high unemployment and inflation in the world’s third-largest economy and called for raising the minimum wage and pensions. Two-thirds of the population live on less than $2 a day, nearly half of them are “extremely poor,” subsisting on $1.25 a day or less.

India. (NewsClick, Jan. 6)

Kaur reported that in some economic points addressed high unemployment and inflation in the world’s third-largest economy and called for raising the minimum wage and pensions. Two-thirds of the population live on less than $2 a day, nearly half of them are “extremely poor,” subsisting on $1.25 a day or less.

As Subhashini Ali, a Delhi Communist party leader explained, “When this strike was originally called, it was to register anger against anti-labour laws and the selling-off of the country’s assets. But now it’s broader because there are no jobs. The future of young people is being destroyed by Modi.” (The Guardian, Jan. 8)

Red hammer-and-sickle flags were prominent in many strike photos. Strikers also displayed, in signs and chants, widespread opposition to Prime Minister Modi’s Citizenship Amendment Act to deny citizenship to Muslims.

Kaur reported that in some economic Continued on page 10
If you hate the racist terror and economic injustice this system imposes upon people of color;
• If you’re sick and tired of the bankers and bosses making billions off workers’ labor while the masses around the world are mired in poverty;
• If you’re disgusted by entrenched patriarchal bigotry that oppresses women and LGBTQ+ people;
• If you’re convinced from reading WW that capitalism is at a dead end;
• If you want to fight for a far superior way of life based on economic planning and equity, just distribution of wealth for all people.

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Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a multinational, multigenerational and multigendered organization that not only aims to abolish capitalism, but to build a socialist society because it’s the only way forward!

Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the never-ending quest for ever-greater profits. Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on im/migrants, misogyny, LGBTQ+ oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and impoverishment and lack of hope for the future.

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

Black, Brown and Indigenous youth and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis. The ruthless ruling class today seeks to wipe out decades of gains and benefits won by hard-fought struggles by people’s movements. The super-rich and their political representatives have intensified their attacks on the multinational, multigender and multigenerational working class. It is time to point the blame at — and challenge — the capitalist system.

WWP fights for socialism because the working class is the only way forward to build a socialist society.

Join us in the fight for socialism!

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**By Dianne Mathiowetz**

**Atlanta**

Jan. 13 — For more than 100 years, Parchman Prison in Sunflower County, in Mississippi’s Delta region, has been the location of brutal racism, wrought conditions and unremitting cruelty.

Established in 1901, Parchman, now named the Mississippi State Penitentiary, is a sprawling complex of 53 buildings on 18,000 acres where almost 5,000 prisoners can be held. Once only a prison for Black people during the era of legal segregation, the majority of those incarcerated there continue to be African Americans. Overrun by armed guards on horseback until 1971, prisoners still labor in vast fields of cotton and soybeans.

Parchman is also the site of Mississippi’s death row execution chamber.

The deaths of five inmates in Mississippi prisons during the first week of January 2020—three of those at Parchman—has brought much needed attention to the inhumane conditions endured by the state’s prisoner population. The official response to the deaths was a statewide lockdown that stopped visitation and phone calls—and locked all inmates in their cells for days without food, medical care, legal visits or exercise.

At a Jan. 9 rally at the Georgia State Capitol building in support of the Mississippi prisoners, two Black women with relatives in Parchman’s Unit 39 held a phone press conference for days waiting, not knowing if a brother or fiancé were dead or alive, injured or safe.

Parchman’s legacy of slavery

Mississippi Corrections officials released next to no information despite numerous phone calls. The spate of violent death only became public knowledge because of cell phone videos and text messages from those held in Unit 29, the largest housing unit at Parchman.

Both women provided virtually the same descriptions of conditions their loved ones were enduring—roaches everywhere, mold on the walls, no running water, broken toilets, no lights, exposed wiring, infestable food, calls and intimidating guards, collapsing ceilings, rain pouring in from holes in the roof with stifling heat in the summer, damp cold in the winter.

Porshia Evans said her brother was stabbed multiple times in Wilkinson County Jail prior to being sent to Parchman in November—.conditions that vary from pris-

ons exist throughout the system. Her brother, her only sibling, sent word that he was starving for months and had been in solitary confinement. When Vol. 61 No. 48 of Workers World newspaper, over 100 inmates at SCI Frackville and their families, ex-offenders and supporters. HRC was calling to let her know what prison officials tell you. Jerome Coffey is a co-founder of the Human Rights Coalition.

Co-founder Keith James said, “We are critical of Department of Corrections officials, including those behind bars. Prison authorities have been told to provide little information to the fami-

ly of the men who were killed. In a Jan. 12 Atlanta Journal Constitution article, Rotonia Gates, the mother of Walter "Keon" Gates who was killed Dec. 31; Jeffrie Hoffman, whose son Roosevelt Hoffman was killed and stabbed to death Jan. 2; and other relatives provided details about their loved ones’ fate.

Dennis Howell’s blood-covered body was found Jan. 3 in Unit 29. He had spou-

ten to his mother just hours before his murder, pleading for help, fearful he was going to die. Relatives of the five men who were killed question the role of the guards, are critical of Department of Corrections officials, and wonder about the inaction of elected state officials related to the deaths of their loved ones.

Mississippi has the third highest incarceration rate in the U.S.—the country that leads the world in incarceration. Parchman Prison has been a death trap since its earliest days. In addition, Parchman is part of the Southern prison-industrial complex, with its roots in slavery, which made money off convict leasing to big plantations and compa-

nies through the 1920s and profitied from notorious chain gangs during Jim Crow segregation. Now, prisons sign lucrative contracts with private companies for commissary or phone services, while mass incarceration laws continue to tar-

get people of color communities.

Mass incarceration needs a mass activ-

ist response. Justice for the Mississippi Five!!

Due to mass pressure

Prison activist-writer removed from solitary

By Joe Piette

Bulletin: After receiving hundreds of phone calls, SCI Albion prison officials took Coffey out of solitary confine-

ments and moved him to another unit on Jan. 15. He was removed from Unit 39, where he had spent 18 months in solitary confinement. Coffey, a writer, critic of prison conditions and a Workers World contributor named Jerome Coffey has been told he’s in the hole while prison officials refused to answer her questions concerning her brother’s death. Justice for the Mississippi Five!!

Coffey has been told he’s in the hole while prison officials conduct a phony investigation for a disturbance last week he had nothing to do with. Prisoners have reported guards harassing Coffey ever since he wrote a Dec. 3 article. At Knoxville, Tennessee, a fellow prisoner at Parchman was put in the hole for mailing an article he wrote for the newspaper on the 30th anniversary of the Camp Hill prison uprising to a SCI if a prisoner exercising his, her or their right to free speech. The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution forbids “the abridgment of the freedom of the press” to all the people, including those behind bars. Prison authorities have no legal basis to punish prisoner-reporter Coffey for sharing his article—titled “50 years after the Camp Hill Uprising:” —even if he is not a prisoner. The DOC officials disagree with its contents. (Read article at tinyurl.com/tvztok/) Coffey was the callous indifference to the death of longtime inmate Cleveland Butler. At Butler’s memorial service in Pennsylvania's prison system—“even if PA Prisoners’ response to oppression and censorship by their captors is historic. After the censorship of Workers World newspaper, over 100 inmates at SCI Frackville and nearby SCI Mahanoy requested subscriptions to the paper. Workers World is proud to help elevate the voices of all workers and oppressed people, particularly our brothers, sisters and siblings who are prisoners in these 21st century concentration camps. We welcome these new subscribers and salute their refusal to be silenced.

Coffey was the callous indifference to the death of longtime inmate Cleveland Butler. At Butler’s memorial service at Parchman, Keith Brown, one of the DOC’s most prominent guards, said, “If I was standing near one of those who was killed, I would have told him mind killing—”——enough to warrant a year in solitary confinement. BTW: Another inmate Cleveland Butler. At Butler’s memorial service in Pennsylvania's prison system—“even if PA Prisoners’ response to oppression and censorship by their captors is historic. After the censorship of Workers World newspaper, over 100 inmates at SCI Frackville and nearby SCI Mahanoy requested subscriptions to the paper. Workers World is proud to help elevate the voices of all workers and oppressed people, particularly our brothers, sisters and siblings who are prisoners in these 21st century concentration camps. We welcome these new subscribers and salute their refusal to be silenced.
Salt Lake City

Police assault solidarity camp with unsheltered people

By J.M. Straughn

Salt Lake City

The Take Shelter Coalition set up an encampment area of about 30 people on Jan. 2 to enforce demands to end the brutal treatment of unsheltered members of the working class. The camp was located in front of the Salt Lake County Government Building in Washington Square.

The Salt Lake City Police Department in full riot gear assaulted protesters Jan. 5 with tear gas, rubber bullets and hand batons, arresting 17 and issuing citations to 13. This is the second brutal attack by cops suffered by protesters in the city in recent months.

The largest shelter in the city for unsheltered people, The Road Home, was closed Nov. 22 as temperature dropped and months of subfreezing temperatures and storms lay ahead. While continuous protests have been underway since the shelter’s closure was announced, the encampment protest was the first to create an on-going physical presence of activists at the government building.

Officials cite the opening of new resource centers as compensation for the closure of the large, centrally located shelter. But critics say the new centers offer only a total of 400 beds, while the Road Home offered 1,100 beds.

A 2018 study indicated there are an estimated 2,876 unsheltered residents in Utah, showing the continuing failure of the capitalist state to address human needs.

The new shelters are located far from jobs, a free clinic and other important resources; transit money is needed to reach them.

Unsheltered people without income are placed in a double bind — either break panhandling laws and risk fines of over $100 or ride transit without paying and risk fines of over $300 and imprisonment in Utah county jails that have a high death rate.

Cops, laws, developments target unsheltered people

Anti-camping laws permit police to break up encampments independently constructed by unsheltered people, while beating and arresting occupiers and destroying or confiscating their belongings, including cash, identification, food and warm clothing.

At a recent vigil to commemorate unsheltered occupants and destroying or confiscating their belongings, including cash, identification, food and warm clothing, a at a recent vigil to commemorate unsheltered people, while beating and arresting occupiers and destroying or confiscating their belongings, including cash, identification, food and warm clothing.

According to a statement issued by the Take Shelter Coalition, “The minimum, made readily available and accessible; a change in existing legislation to allow for new shelters to have more beds; no arrests, tickets or harassment of campers; and free public transit for all people who stay in shelters.”

While some media outlets accused protesters of being “outside agitators,” the facts are otherwise. Among the protesters are currently and formerly unhoused activists who have joined or who have gotten to know over several years the work of groups like Rose Park Brown Berets, Justice for Cody, Union for Street Solidarity and Utah Against Police Brutality. The efforts of these groups have been persistent, consistent and deeply engaged in community conditions for several years. Newer organizations have reached out to ones of longer standing, shared knowledge and skills, and brought renewed energy and militancy to the struggle.

According to a statement issued by the Take Shelter Coalition, “The coalition is made up of a wide range of local community organizers including Civil Riot, Democratic Socialists of Salt Lake, The People, Freedom Road Socialist Organization, Justice for Cody, Just Media, Party for Socialism and Liberation and Rose Park Brown Berets. Justice for Cody, Union for Street Solidarity and Utah Against Police Brutality.”

Activists are not accepting the actions of the police forces. A follow-up protest demanding “Money for Housing, Not for War” brought attention to people being forced to sleep outside and campaigned against Chief of Police Mike Brown who authorized abuses.

The deeper concern of the protesters is that the law enforcement agencies criminalize the victims of the conditions that have been created by capitalism. While landlords raise rents as high as they can, business owners keep wages as low as they can. No power in the capitalist system ensures that workers have the conditions they need to survive.

Reduced to living on the street, people become the targets and victims of state forces trying to beat them into invisibility — unsheltered people are evidence of the crime of capitalism.

Only socialism can create a society in which workers’ needs come first. Socialism is the only system that can defeat capitalism in the struggle on behalf of workers’ needs.

Jersey City, N.J.

Hundreds rally to defend public park

By Michael Kramer

Jersey City, N.J.

Jan. 11 — Over 700 people rallied in Liberty State Park today to oppose the transfer of 22 acres of parkland to the adjacent private Liberty National Golf Course. Liberty National, owned by billionaire tycoon Ron Burkle, has an initiation fee of $300,000.

The 22 acres, known as Caven Point, is a migratory bird habitat teeming with bird life year round. Those who came to the rally, reflecting the broad diversity of Jersey City and the surrounding area, included high school students, environmental activists, bird watchers, trade unionists, military veterans, scientists and local politicians. Support to stop this theft of precious land is wide and deep, and the 1% were a target of every speaker at the rally, which was called by over 50 organizations. (NY Times, Jan. 9)

Liberty National has been maneuvering behind the scenes in Trenton, the state capital, with devise tactics ranging from getting friendly politicians to undertake parliamentary maneuvers to setting up a “coalition” of construction unions desperate for jobs and trying to convince local communities of color that saving the Caven Point wildlife refuge is not in their interests! Liberty State Park covers 1,000 acres along the Hudson River — a former abandoned industrial site restored with Land and Water Conservation funds.

While some media outlets accused protesters of being “outside agitators,” the facts are otherwise. Among the protesters are currently and formerly unhoused activists who have joined or who have gotten to know over several years the work of groups like Rose Park Brown Berets, Justice for Cody, Union for Street Solidarity and Utah Against Police Brutality.

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Cleveland

Fight continues to keep homeless shelter open

By Martha Grevatt

Over 100 supporters of the Metanoia Project, which provides trauma-sensitive respite to homeless people in Cleveland, packed into City Council chambers on Jan. 6. They were there to support efforts of Denison United Church of Christ to continue the work of Metanoia, which lost bed space at its original location in November. Pastor Nounoi Ikuta describes the partnership as “protected and essential expression of our faith.”

City Councilwoman Donna Brady, who represents Ward 14 when Denison UCC is located, is trying to use claims of housing and fire code violations to keep the church from housing the homeless. She has even tried to make its designation as a church.

“We’re here to say: Keep Metanoia open, support Denison UCC, build a cold-weather plan, and take a stand against NIMBYism [not in my back yard] and racism in our community,” said Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless Executive Director Charlie Remaud, director of NY/NJ Baykeeper.

Advocates at the meeting interacted with protest signs that read “Ward 11 supports Denison UCC” and “Keep Metanoia at Denison UCC.” After the meeting ended, the crowd burst into loud chanting of “Keep the shelter open,” holding up signs that had escaped detection by the police.

Hours after the council meeting protest, the church was hit with a surprise visit by two inspectors from the Cleveland Fire Department, escorted by police. Acting at the behest of pro-privatization Councilwoman Brady, the inspectors affixed a “Cease Use” notice on the church door on Christmas Eve. Denison UCC appealed the order.

The church passed the inspection, which was a victory. So far, because of militant community support and Pastor Ikuta’s determination, this homeless shelter is staying open.

Protest to keep homeless shelter open inside Cleveland City Council chambers, Jan. 6.
The coming decade of revolution

By Vincent Tacetta and Makaki Motema

In the last decade the working class — spurred into action by a destroyed econo-
my, state violence, and national and gender oppression — rose up in a series of
mass mobilizations, the scope of which has not been seen in two generations. From
George Floyd to Black Lives Matter to the Women’s Marches, the oppressed and
struggling sectors of the working class vented their anger and challenged the
system order.

These mobilizations were uneven in
development. Many were spontaneous and unplanned. The state often
used untrained violent police as an instrument
of repression. But the contradictions that produced the tumult of the last 10 years have not gone
away. Rather, conditions have worsened.

This can only lead to greater conflict.

If the most politically advanced seg-
ments of the working class are up to the
task, we are likely to see a tremen-
dous push to organize the proletariat.

If the last decade was the decade of
mass mobilization, of the enraged masses
glancing against the bourgeoisie.

The coming decade of revolution will be the decade of
awakening and struggling to find their
development of revolutionary class strug-
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The coming decade of revolution

Continued from page 5

and West Asia. Even pilots who bomb civilians via remote-controlled planes are experiencing high levels of burnout.

With declining troop numbers but an increasing number of battlefields, how can the empire hope to go on? At this writing, the U.S military is preparing to break itself against the impenetrable terrain and hardened soldiers of Iran. It seems that nothing can divert the state’s strength and setbacks.

Youth, the workers and the struggle against war

By Makasi Motema

Excerpted from a talk given at the Jan. 9 Workers World Party forum in New York City titled “The growing U.S. war threats against Iran and Iraq: resistance & international protest plans.”

As the U.S. continues its attacks on Iran, we must ask: How do today’s youth feel about the anti-war movement? The truth is that there is cause both for concern and for hope.

Today’s youth witnessed the anti-war movement of 2003: the massive, beautiful outpouring of humanity, banded together in resistance to imperial war. And they also saw that war continued unabated. They saw the unresponsiveness of the bourgeoisie. How does one react when they see millions making their voices heard, only to see those in power tune them out?

And yet, today’s youth are moving further to the left every day. They are more critical of war. More critical of the lies of the imperialist state. Less willing to cheerlead the march to war.

This is not a paradox. Nor have young people slid into the abyss of apathy, as many fear. The youth are critical of imperialism, and they are thinking critically about what it means to be anti-war. The youth are asking the question that needs to be asked: If holding a protest won’t stop the war, then what will?

Young people today are not turning against anti-war protests, nor are they turning against anti-war protesters. Instead they are searching. They are searching for a long-term vision, for a path forward. With the audacity and arrogance of youth, young people are demanding not an opposition to war, but an end to war.

Today’s youth believe that we stand now at an inflection point in history. That tomorrow will not be like yesterday. That the future and the past are in a fight to the death — and that the future will win. The youth do not want to march. The youth do not want to hold signs. The youth do not want to take a single step outside their homes unless that step is a first step on the road to revolution.

But how? Do we abandon the methods of the past? No. Political agitation through protest is vital for raising consciousness. It also serves a second purpose — if we are willing to rise to the challenge, that challenge is to turn from a mere critique of state power and to embrace the power of the working class.

The state is weak politically, economically and militarily. The people are getting stronger. Class consciousness is growing. A recent poll found that 70 percent of millennials planned on voting socialist, 36 percent viewed communism favorably, and 22 percent wanted to see the abolition of all private property! (tinyurl.com/yypdshkj) This portends a great deal of change in the coming years.

The U.S. has experienced revolutionary upsurges before. But this can only be seen as a cause for apprehension rather than optimism if one incorrectly sees the struggles of the past as distinct events. In truth, all revolutionary movements are part of a continuum of struggle.

The actions of previous generations of revolutionaries created material changes in the governance and culture of the U.S. Those changes in turn have a material effect on successive generations.

The repressive state apparatus reacts to the periodic rise of social movements, and it will take sustained struggle to create change. Capitalism, in its imperial core, will not be slain in one night. To put it succinctly, a tree cannot be chopped down with the blow of one ax.

What then is our task today? It can only be one thing: to organize for working-class power. To unite the multinational working class in opposition to the bourgeoisie. To build durable, long-term organizations that are capable of withstanding the fearsome rigors of revolutionary struggle.

The last decade showed the sparkling brilliance of spontaneous mobilization, as well as its flaws. A bright flame cannot light the way if it burns out too quickly. Only deep organizing — the creation of long-term political structures in the working class — can carry us through the challenges of the next 10 years. It is only through close ties to the masses that organs of dual power can be built to truly challenge and defeat the ruling class. If not, reactionary forces will dominate.

The contradictions our society faces are mounting. Events, reactions and counter-reactions are unpredictable. We may have less time to prepare than we think. The time to organize for the decade of revolution is NOW!
Iran-Iraq solidarity grows amid U.S. threats

By Sara Flounders

United States policy toward both Iran and Iraq is based not on “bad advice” or howling blunders by President Donald Trump, as Democratic Party pundits claim. It is not just a “mismanaged” foreign policy. Washington’s miscalculations of the past two weeks have been driven by extreme frustration at all levels of U.S. ruling circles, military strategists and think tanks. They reflect developments U.S. imperialists have been unable to push aside. In fact, their desperate efforts have had the opposite effect.

The U.S. imperialists are losing their overarching dominant influence in the region. Their ability to control events on several fronts — political, economic and even military — is slipping. Their weakened position is likely to drive them toward deeper rogue actions, even more reckless threats and new war crimes.

But these criminal actions can also foster deeper anti-imperialist unity in the region. Recent massive demonstrations in Iran and Iraq reflect this. So does the willingness of Iraqi security forces guarding Baghdad’s Green Zone, home to the U.S. Embassy, to literally open the door on New Year’s Eve to thousands of angry people protesting U.S. military attacks.

Then, on Jan. 3, Iran attacked two vast U.S. bases on Iraqi territory. This open challenge to the U.S. empire was a carefully calibrated response to the Pentagon’s assassination four days earlier of Iran’s highly respected military leader, Gen. Qassem Soleimani.

The implications of this successful strike by Iranian missiles launched from hundreds of miles away will resonate throughout the region. The U.S. has always boasted that its equipment is much more advanced and technically sophisticated.

U.S. collaborators among the corrupt Gulf State monarchies may be having second thoughts about the hundreds of billions of dollars they have spent on U.S. weapons. They will be reevaluating the ability of U.S. weapons to protect them, even from the wrath of their own populations. They might also be interested in re-evaluating their hostile relations with Iran.

This was the second time U.S. weapons didn’t achieve what Washington wanted. In September, after a massive Iranian missile attack, Houthis rebel in Yemen temporarily took out half of Saudi Arabia’s oil and gas production. The attack was a humiliation. Billions of dollars of Patriot missile systems purchased from the Pentagon offered no protection.

According to many U.S. and Israeli claims, the same missiles and drones are shared with the highly organized Hezbollah forces in Lebanon.

General Soleimani’s Jan. 2 state visit to Iraq, to discuss Saudi peace overtures after 40 years of aggressive hostility, may have been due in part to the successful Houthis’ attack from Yemen.

NATO pulling out

On Jan. 10, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo refused to even discuss with the Iraqi prime minister a vote in the Iraqi Parliament telling U.S. troops to leave Iraq. But Pompeo and NATO officials wanted and got the message.

As Trump called for NATO to step up its military involvement in Iraq, NATO allies instead announced their departures. Canada stated it was withdrawing some 500 troops. Germany was next, announc- ing a withdrawal of 1,500 troops. Then Sweden, Denmark, Hungary, Romania and Latvia all suspended their training missions with Iraqi forces. Many other countries — including Britain, France, Italy, Spain, Australia, Denmark, Norway, Portugal and Bulgaria — have already withdrawn their troops from Iraq.

That leaves U.S. positions more exposed. Despite the vote in the Iraqi Parliament for the U.S. to leave, the Pentagon has yet to announce its decision.

Threat of sanctions on Iraq backfires

Trump responded to the Iraqi vote with new threats. Beginning in 1990, and continuing in part even today, the U.S. has imposed sanctions on Iraq. The U.N. estimated that, in the first four years of these sanctions, 800,000 Iraqis, mostly children under the age of five died of malnutrition and preventable diseases.

Trump has now threatened that if U.S. troops are told to leave, he will reimpose the sanctions on Iraq “like they have never seen before” — so harsh they would “make Iranian sanctions look somewhat tame” by comparison.

Rather than help Iraq in its desperately needed reconstruction of essential civilian water and electric infrastructure destroyed in the U.S. war, Trump now threatens that Iraq must pay the U.S. back for the “billions of dollars” it spent building air bases for its military operations.

U.S. sanctions on Iran

It was Trump’s decision in 2018 to withdraw from an agreement with Iran, signed by five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council and Germany in 2015, and instead impose harsh new unilateral sanctions. This led to the regional crisis.

The new U.S. sanctions created enormous hardship in Iran. But they did not, as had been predicted, lead to Iran’s collapse. However, they did have far-reaching, unintended consequences throughout the region, forcing all political forces to actively turn, for their survival, away from U.S. domination and toward regional cooperation.

Iraq-Iran trade expands

A growing number of joint Iraqi-Iranian projects now include setting up industrial parks along the south, central and northern borders and increasing commercial links to $20 billion a year in trade.

The most interesting joint project, signed in May 2019, involves the dredging of a common waterway, known in Arabic as the Shatt al Arab and in Iran as the River Arvand, to facilitate shipping, commerce and tourism. Iran and Iraq had waged war throughout the 1980s over control of this river, which forms a natural border between the two countries. Due to hostilities, the waterway has not been cleared since the mid 1970s. Iran and Iraq are also planning on developing the Naft Shahar and Khorrnamshahr natural gas fields. Plans to link the Iraqi and Iranian railway networks together are also moving forward. This will enable U.S.-sanctioned Iran to transport goods, through Iraq, to U.S.-sanctioned Syria, which has seaports on the Mediterranean coast.

These cooperation developments have been covered by both Arab and Iranian news services.

After high-level meetings in May, Iraq is increasingly using Iran’s refined petroleum products for needed gas and electricity, helping the disrupted economies in both countries.

Trump’s bellicose threats of harsh sanctions on Iraq will only strengthen these regional decisions and trade agreements.

Chinese projects in Iraq

Threats of U.S. sanctions are also reinforcing the drive for wider relations. China is already Iraq’s largest trading partner, while Iraq is now China’s second-largest oil supplier. The relationship exceeds $30 billion a year.

Prime Minister Abdul Mahdi headed a large delegation to China this past October to discuss mega projects in infrastructure, education and health. The meetings were described as “a quantum leap” in bilateral relations.

Trump’s reaction? He demanded that Mahdi cancel the contracts. Meanwhile, extensive signed agreements for railway projects and building new international roads, bridges, schools and health clinics came out of the meetings. China’s Hilong Oil Service & Engineering Co. and the Iraqi Drilling Co. agreed to a joint venture to exploit numerous oilfields throughout the country, including the Majnoon field — one of the world’s largest.

Chinese projects with Iran

China’s economic relations with Iran are more advanced than those with Iraq. China and Iran in 2016 signed a $600 billion, 25-year trade agreement based on the international agreement to end sanctions on Iran.

The U.S. illegally abrogated this agreement and has demanded that every other country also cancel its trade. But China has not complied with U.S. demands. Under its Belt and Road Initiative, some called the New Silk Road, trade with Iran continues.

Extensive new rail lines through Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan connect China and Iran, cutting delivery time by half of that of ocean trade. Future rail lines from Urumqi in Xinjiang province to Tehran will further shorten trade time and expand economic ties.

These two formerly colonized and oppressed countries, Iran and China, are increasingly targeted by U.S. imperialism. In response, they are expanding exchanges in defensive military technology and advanced technical support.

In 2010 the U.S. ordered Canada to arrest and detain Meng Wanzhou, the chief financial officer of the Chinese tech company Huawei. The charge was “illegally dealing with” Iran, allegedly violating U.S.-imposed sanctions. China has continued to ignore U.S.-imposed sanctions on Iran.

Attacks breed resistance

On the same day that U.S. drones assassinated Iranian Gen. Soleimani in Iraq, the first joint naval exercises of Iran, China and Russia were underway in the Gulf of Oman, off the Iranian coast.

Wall Street’s ruthless and expanding efforts to starve every country into compliance need to be met with such class-conscious, anti-imperialist solidarity.

The struggle is far from over and the growing desperation of capitalist exploiters and Pentagon war planners means many crises lie ahead. However, there are a new, determined mass mood and new means to confront a decaying system built on piracy, looting and occupation.

The leader of Lebanon’s highly organized Hezbollah militias said the U.S. killing of Gen. Soleimani will impel the entire region into a “completely new phase.”

Speaking before thousands of supporters at a rally in southern Beirut, Hezbollah leader, Hassan Nasrallah called the U.S. killing of Soleimani a “clear, blatant crime that will transform the region.”
ANOTHER KIND OF WAR

Unilateral economic sanctions damage Syria

By Karin Leuekfeld

First published in the German daily newspaper Junge Welt on Dec. 16. Translation by John Catalinotto.

At the beginning of December, the Conference of Germany’s State Interior Ministers extended the ban on deportations to Syria without restrictions until at least June 2020. Originally, the inte-

rior ministers at their autumn meeting in Liège planned to relax the ban and allow deportations of serious crimi-

nals. During the conference, however, a gloomy picture of Syria was painted. The country “is anything but safe,” declared a church aid organization.

There were “hardly any education or training opportunities and few prospects of finding work and earning an income.” The health system was “at rock bottom”; there was not “enough intact housing.”

A November report by the Foreign Office addressed to the conference stated that there were “no safe areas for returnees.” It stated that attacks by “the regime” were possible anywhere and at any time, with the exception of areas currently under Turkish or Kurdish control or controlled by the U.S.

Contrary to what politicians and the media have described, however, the war has largely come to a standstill, except in Idlib and other areas in the north of the country. A different kind of war is now raging, however, due to the unilat-

eral punitive economic measures of the European Union and an oil embargo by the U.S.—an economic war.

Willing to return

Nevertheless, tens of thousands of people are still determined to return to Syria. They are coming from Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan, and Syrians now living in Europe also plan to return to their homeland. A report by the U.N. Refugee Agency (UNHCR) in October 2019 states that 75,501 refugees “sponta-

neously” returned between January and September of this year. It is likely this is a minimum estimate.

For 2019, an “increase in self-orga-

nized returns” is expected, although this presents a challenge, the report says. The UNHCR is trying to help by repairing shelters and providing legal assistance, subsistence and education. “The growing demands for support for returnees,” however, required more commitment from all the involved parties.

But the rich U.N. member states from Europe, the U.S. and the Gulf States are providing no support. The government in Damascus gets more and more isolated, and after all the war damage, now unilat-

eral EU economic sanctions are destroy-

ing the Syrian economy. These sanctions were first imposed on Syria’s oil sector in 2011. Since then the sanctions have been repeatedly tightened and extended, most recently in May 2019 until June 1, 2020.

Currently, 266 people and 69 instit-
tions and companies are on the san-
cctions list. They are subject to a ban upon entering the European Union, and their personal assets in European banks have been frozen. The pretext for the sanctions is that these entities are responsible for violence and repression against the civil-

ian population in Syria and benefit from “support for the regime and/or being associated with persons or institutions of the regime.

In addition to these entities on the sanctions list, they are subject to a ban upon personal assets in European banks have been frozen. The pretext for the sanctions is that these entities are responsible for violence and repression against the civilian population in Syria and benefit from “support for the regime and/or being associated with persons or institutions of the regime.

Sixteen draft resolutions were submitted and two were adopted. Among them was one calling on the “international community” to condemn unilateral economic, financial or trade sanctions because they prevent countries’ development. Punishments that are not authorized by U.N. bodies must be sus-

pended. Such measures are incompatible with international law and contradict the basic principle of the multilateral eco-

nomic system.

The resolution was approved by 116 U.N. member states, while two states—the U.S. and Israel—voted against it. Fifty-two states, among them all EU states, including Germany, abstained.

Sanctions harm reconstruction in Syria’s Homs province

By Karin Leuekfeld

Published in Junge Welt, Dec. 16. Translation by John Catalinotto.

According to Gov. Talal Barasi, about half a million people fled from Homs province, the largest in Syria, during the war. Some 2.3 million people had lived in Homs before the war, Barasi explained in an interview with Junge Welt. Of these, about 500,000 people, or 100,000 families, had left the province.

About 40 percent had returned, both internally displaced people and people who had sought protection in Lebanon. The responsibility of the provincial and central government is to create the con-

ditions for their return and to reestablish public services. The government is repair-

ing water reservoirs, roads and schools, but sanctions are preventing Syria from obtaining necessary building materials.

The engineers in Homs planned the reconstruction according to the latest standards, said Barasi. They drew up a master plan for the years 2025-35. “The unfair sanctions against the Syrian peo-

ple have a negative impact on the recon-

struction process,” he said.

Machines and tools that are needed cannot be imported. Barasi particu-

larly emphasized the oil embargo: “We need oil for industry, transport, heating, reconstruction, hospitals, and also to produce electricity. This is an economic war being waged against Syria.”

Whoever is from Homs and wants to return is welcome, said the Homs govern-

or. Fourteen buses, about 700 people, returned from Jarabulus on the border with Turkey. It was difficult for the people arriving from the north because Ankara (seat of the Turkish government) refused to cooperate with Damascus.

Barasi said: “But from Lebanon, people are returning across the border with official permission and papers. This is regul-

ated by a Syrian-Lebanese commit-

te. We have the names and lists of peo-

ple who want to return.” The Syrian and Jordanian governments have also worked together for returns from Jordan.

Nevertheless, there were still many reasons why people did not come back. They lacked money and transport facili-

ties. Some of the terrorist groups would not allow people to leave, while other people were stopped by the international troops in the region.

“We strongly believe that all Syrians should return home,” said Barasi. “And I repeat that we will provide the returnees with all the services that are needed. We will ourselves send buses to pick them up from the border.”
Earthquake hits Puerto Rico

The people organize against ‘natural,’ capitalist-made disaster

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

A 6.4 magnitude earthquake hit the Caribbean on Jan. 7, with the southern coast taking the worst hit. A 5.9 quake devastated the same area of the island on Jan. 11. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, in addition to these quakes, since Dec. 8, Puerto Rico has suffered over 1,200 smaller quakes and aftershocks, with more than 70 at 3.5 magnitude. (AP, Jan. 11)

Thousands of people are in shelters; hundreds of homes and schools are destroyed, with at least one person dead. Over 300,000 people have been without water and millions are left without electricity. Governor Wanda Vázquez emphasized that “Puerto Rico is a 7 earthquake alone at $110 million.”

People of the island are still struggling to recover from the 2016 devastation of hurricanes Maria and Irma. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has continued to withhold money needed to repair hurricane damage. The New York Daily News reported Jan. 9: “The Trump administration is refusing to release hurricane aid to Puerto Rico despite this week’s earthquake, citing concerns about ‘corruption’ and ‘financial mismanagement’ on the island.”

The only “corruption” is, in fact, the financial exploitation of the island by U.S. colonization for over a century, exacerbated most recently by the PROMESA Act (Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act). In the U.S. Congress in 2016, PROMESA was designed by capitalist power-players “to reform” the economy but taken on by the Puerto Rican government so they could reap more profit through drastic austerity cuts to human services.

Puerto Rican people rising up

Starting in 2016, the people of Puerto Rico rebel to protest this exploitation. Teachers and students began striking, joined by other workers, with mass May Day mobilizations. In 2019, an island-wide general strike included the call for demanding economic and social justice, kicked out the existing governor and his staff. (Makasi strike: 12 days rattle the empire, WW, July 30, 2019)

The dynamic self-organization of the Puerto Rican people in the face of “natural” and “human-made” disasters,震 avoir la vie, is the only hope for the island.

Throughout 2019, Guaidó served as the designated puppet of U.S. imperialism in Venezuela. He made attempts with a reactionary, pro-U.S. government to overthrow and replace the Bolivarian government led by President Nicolás Maduro. Guaidó had no more than a veneer of legality to mask his own assembly district and little credibility even among the opposition.

His main support came from the worst imperialist operators allied with the Trump administration: Mike Pence, Mike Pompeo, John Bolton, Marco Rubio, Elliott Abrams, from Trump himself —who had collaborated with the U.S. government in the Organization of American States; the Iván Duque regime in Colombia; Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil; and the likes of the Peruvian government.

Guaidó’s complete lack of popular support helped defeat all five of his attempts to call elections on Dec. 5 when the protests had demand for an end to the austerity and corruption by the Maduro government, were disgusted with Guaidó’s role.

On Jan. 5, some 81 of 150 voting members elected Luis Parra president, replacing Guaidó, who didn’t attend the meeting. Guaidó claimed he wasn’t allowed in, staging a fence-climbing photo-op. Maduro recognized Parra as the new AN president, saying Parra “received the National Assembly has voted and there is a new leadership board. It was in the air that Guaidó was going to be removed by the very opposition.” Maduro criticized Guaidó for “not showing up.”

Parra said he would “pursue a path toward reconciliation” with the government. (quotes from venezuelanalysis.com, Jan. 5)

On Jan. 8, Guaidó declared the Jan. 5 vote invalid and established his own version of the national assembly, with himself as its leader.

That means Guaidó is the self-appointed leader of a self-appointed assembly, which he claims gives him the right to be the self-appointed president. Pence congratulated him.

While his obvious lack of popular support may make him a ridiculous figure, U.S. imperialism’s backing for Guaidó continues the threat against Venezuela’s revolution and its sovereignty. The progressive movement in the United States must still resist U.S. interference in Venezuela and demand an end to U.S. sanctions that have imposed suffering on millions of Venezuelans. (1)

Venezuela

Guaidó humiliated by assembly defeat

By John Catalinotto

French President Emmanuel Macron’s government bet that the unions would grow tired, their members pinched by their loss of pay, and that public support would dwindle as travel to and from work became easier, as their electricity flickered. But the government lost.

In response to massive protests Jan. 9 the government announced a sweeping 30% concession. But the struggle continues, as does public support for the workers.

Workers at France’s Central Bank have decided to hold a key strike Jan. 15. Workers are supplying ATMs with money at least once of France’s eight refineries has stopped producing fuel. Generals offered a majority of assemblies of workers at the other eight refineries are considering keeping their products from being distributed.

Many political analysts in France say that government intransigence over pension reform has led “reformist” unions like the CFDT (French Democratic Confederation of Labor) and Unsa (National Union of Autonomous Trade Unions)—which had collaborated with Macron—to withhold support from Macron’s government. Militant unions like those in the CGT (General Confederation of Labor) and FO (Workers’ Force) have become more confrontational.

According to the CGT website, workers demonstrated in 216 cities and towns throughout France on Jan. 9, drawing nearly a million people. They poured in from all directions. The protests protected the government’s plan to modify France’s retirement system. The existing system has given France a 10% unemployment rate, one of the lowest poverty rate of European retirees.

The turnout on Jan. 9 was larger than that of Dec. 5 when the protests started. According to an official report published Jan. 6, the public strike fund for the CGT has received the equivalent of $2.4 million in contributions from 29,214 people all over France. Other unions have also set up similar funds for online donations and local collection drives, have passed the board on demonstrations and marches and on the street.

French unions typically don’t have strike funds, but rely on public donations to sustain long strikes.

Gov’t withdraws threat

After the huge Jan. 9 demonstrations, Prime Minister Édouard Philippe announced that he would drop reform to increase the retirement age to 64 in the bill he will present to parliament this week. This concession was due to the huge public pressure of workers’ protests and the possibility “to support from the reformist unions—a red line they were not willing to cross.”

Prime Minister Philippe has already made similar concessions to the government, “warming up” the unions. His promise of a concession, remarked that it was clearly jerry-rigged and said other issues must still be negotiated.

The CGT and FO made clear that they are not interested in negotiating terms of a bill that they want withdrawn. The current system certainly could be improved, with more attention given to the needs of women and low-wage workers, but the government proposal leads nowhere. Much of the financial pressure on the retirement system could be resolved by putting the wealth tax back into effect.

Class solidarity is behind the strong public support of the unions’ determination to defend France’s current retirement system, which consists of 42 distinct plans reflecting the needs of workers in each plan. An interview with a communist on the government-owned television channel France 2 illustrated this solidarity.

This communist, a woman in her thirties, was spending 90 minutes longer to reach her job and 60 minutes longer getting home. Her trip home was in a car jam-packed, like “sardines”—the camera showed the sweat on passengers’ faces. She arrived at her station, dark because of a power outage, “I was able to go out walking in the community, but something my people are experts at, but remember, power outages can be fatal something my people are experts at, but that means Guaidó is the self-appointed leader of a self-appointed assembly, which he claims gives him the right to be the self-appointed president. Pence congratulated him.

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Putting the truth behind bars

Workers World editorial

Did you know that one of the most protected rights in this country is the right of the government to lie to the people? That is the essence of the persecutions being carried out right now against Chelsea Manning and Julian Assange.

Manning was a U.S. Army intelligence analyst based in Iraq when, in February 2010, she leaked classified documents about the war there to WikiLeaks, headed by Assange. She had earlier contacted the Washington Post and the New York Times, but they weren’t interested.

The information included 750,000 secret, high-level documents on U.S. wars in both Iraq and Afghanistan. It included graphic photos and videos of U.S. torture and systemic abuse. It included a video showing a U.S. airstrike in Afghanistan that killed scores of civilians.

All this punctured the sanitized myth the military and the U.S. government had created to justify their imperialist war crimes in the Middle East.

For opening the damaging documents to public scrutiny, Manning was jailed by the Army on May 27, 2010. She was sentenced to 35 years in prison and remained behind bars for almost seven years—where she was kept in a men’s prison and subjected to anti-trans abuse—until pardoned by President Barack Obama.

The war furies were furious about her release, and on May 16 of last year, with a huge protest in front of the White House, she was released for 재구성 to testify against Assange before a grand jury.

The U.N. Special Rapporteur on torture, Nils Melzer, has now charged the U.S. government with using “severe measures of coercion” on Manning that amount to torture. (Guardian, Dec. 31, 2019)

Julian Assange, an Australian who founded WikiLeaks in 2006, has also been persecuted and threatened with arrest since 2010, when he made public the online materials liberated by Manning and others that showed the true character of the brutal U.S. war in Iraq.

For six years he had been on the run, first in Ecuador’s Embassy in London. But the Ecuadorian government has since moved to the right. Last April, under U.S. pressure, Assange was forced to leave the embassy. He was immediately arrested and since then has been held in solitary confinement in Belmarsh, a maximum security prison in London. Now in seriously deteriorating health, Assange is fighting extradition to the U.S., where he could be sentenced to 175 years in prison or even given the death penalty.

The documents released by both Manning and Assange were not “fake news.” Even the most right-wing U.S. government hasn’t been able to accuse them of that. Their courageous release provided the public with the real news about what was going on in the world—coming right from the horse’s mouth in government documents that had been marked “Eyes Only” or “No Distribution.” These documents refute the sanitized version of past and current wars, which are prettified in both government statements and corporate media news reports.

The “crime” of Manning and Assange was to reveal the brutal and predatory nature of the U.S. empire. It will be a rich get their politicians and generals to commit any crime against humanity if that helps push up their super-profits.

Free Chelsea Manning and Julian Assange! Defend the right of the people to know the truth! ☐

Chicago workers protest sexual abuse at McDonald’s. (Oct. 22, 2019)

Together in solidarity— and towards socialism

Continued from page 1

undermines their legal and human rights. Already, fatal attacks have led to many near-daily executions.

Washington’s horrific war on immigrants, especially those from Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East and Africa— with detentions, deportations, family separations and caging of children—cries out for solidarity and action. So does the occupation of oppressed communities by racist police, which endangers women, gender-oppressed people and their loved ones. So do hate crimes, including murder, being committed against trans women of color.

All the bigoted vitriol, plus the Trump administration’s anti-worker, anti-poor stance, translates into reactionary measures that weaken people’s legal rights and cut vital, even life-saving government programs. These attacks are particularly aimed at low-income and oppressed people, mainly women and children, seniors and people with disabilities.

However, it’s not just Trump and his cronies who push reactionary, racist ideas and policies. Underlying their venom is the ideology promoted by the richest individuals—the capitalist class—who seek to whip up hostility and divisions among workers and communities to prevent them from uniting to fight for their rights.

The richest 26 billionaires—most of them in the U.S.—own as much wealth as the poorest half of the world’s population.

In their mad rush for super-profits, capitalists impoverish people around the globe, paying exploitation wages while fighting unionization and workplace safety. In their global search for oil, gas and minerals, they steal land and resources from Indigenous peoples and destroy ecosystems. They disregard ethical responsibility for human beings and the planet’s health.

For worldwide solidarity!

A look at the impact of globalized capitalism (imperialism) shows that women are disproportionately affected; they comprise 70 percent of the world’s poorest people. Moreover, millions of women and gender nonconforming people must emigrate each year, leaving their families and homelands, to find jobs.

Imperialism causes endless war, as capitalists seek to grab countries’ resources and destroy ecosystems, and military domination of whole regions to exploit and control them. Washington has militarily occupied countries in the Middle East for years, as it seeks to oust noncompliant governments, install puppet leaders and beat out competing countries for the spoils. This is true in Latin America, Africa and elsewhere in Asia, too.

Today there is a serious threat of U.S. war against Iran. And the Pentagon refuses to remove its troops from Iraq, despite the population’s insistence that U.S. troops leave their country. Flouting the wishes of people in the region, Washington just sent another 5,500 soldiers to the Middle East.

Women and children are the hardest hit victims of war and occupation. Solidarity with our sisters in Iran and the rest of the Middle East is crucial. We must loudly insist: “No war on Iran! U.S. out of Iraq!”

WW calls for solidarity with our Palestinian sisters against the U.S.-backed militaristic, apartheid state of Israel. To express solidarity with oppressed women, who are living under the gun in their own homeland, with no legal or human rights, is not anti-Semitic, but a moral imperative.

We also express solidarity with women and their families— one-third of human- kind—who live in the 39 countries under U.S.-imposed sanctions. A new campaign entitled “Sanctions Kill” opposes this form of economic warfare and calls for global actions March 13-15. (See sanctionskill.org.)

While supporting the fight against women’s and gender oppression at home and abroad, let us also work together to take the movement to the next level—to strike at globalized capitalism—the root cause of bigotry, the oppression of people of all genders and nationalities, inequality, poverty and war.

WW asserts there is a system that would prohibit all forms of discrimination and inequality. It would outlaw millionaires and billionaires, ban the enrichment of a few to exploit the labor of the majority, and use the wealth created to provide everyone with jobs, housing, education, medicine and nutritious food—and protect the environment. That system is socialism. ☐

India

Continued from page 1

sectors strike participation ran at 90-100 percent. “The working class is on the streets today,” she said. The strike engaged the whole population, including large numbers of informal sector workers and farmers. Economic hardship has led to publicized suicides of several farmers.

Worldwide solidarity

Student organizations in India and abroad were solidly behind the strike. A National Education Strike of students was signed by 21 groups, including a dozen U.S. graduate student unions. Economic pressure was solidly behind the strike.

Other statements came from worldwide federations of construction and education workers and the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers in Britain.

Capitalists support Modi

The poverty of the Indian masses is directly related to the huge profits being made by U.S. companies that invest in India. They include General Motors, Ford, Toyota, Honda, Apple, H&M, Nike, IBM, Amazon, Pfizer, Coca-Cola and many others which pay slave wages. U.S. Foreign Direct Investment last year was $90 billion, and this country is India’s fourth-largest trading partner. (business.mapsofindia.com)

A U.S. National Union of President Trump shared the stage in a “Howdy, Modi” event in Houston Sept. 22. Modi praised Trump’s “concern for every American, a belief in America’s future and a strong resolve to make America great again.” Trump used the podium to make anti-Muslim remarks and to commend Modi for doing “a truly exceptional job.” (World News Post, Sept. 22)

One thing should be clear to workers and oppressed people here in the belly of the beast: In India, like here, there is a battle between two anti-imperialist class forces. Our fight is alongside the quarter-billion workers, peasants and students who shut their country down on Jan. 8.

To read Martha Grevatt’s 2016 interview with Ameen Ali (Kate, go to tinyurl.com/goafshv and tinyurl.com/ s2zhbgq).

Biggest strike in world history!
Raging fires in Australia ignite mass protests

By Miranda Crisman

While devastating fires, ignited by a record-breaking heat wave in Australia, have grown in strength and number since September 2019, the sources of these fires go back to when the British began colonizing the continent some 200 years earlier. It is estimated that over 1 billion animals have perished in the flames and 27 people have been killed. This immense catastrophe—along with the climate crisis—has displaced many Indigenous people from the land and disregard for warning signs, including drought, fires and floods, have also contributed to this catastrophe—along with the climate catastrophe.

Vanessa Cavanaugh, an Aboriginal woman from the Bundjalung Wonnarua (original custodians of lands on the eastern coast of Australia), co-wrote an article titled, “Strength from perpetual grief: how Aboriginal people experience the bushfire crisis.” She states, “Colonial legacies of eradiation, dispossession, assimilation and racism continue to impact the lived realities of Aboriginal peoples. Added to this is the widespread exclusion of our peoples from accessing and managing traditional homelands. These factors compound the trauma of these unprecedented fires.” (theconversation.com, Jan. 9)

Cavanaugh explains that with intergenerational trauma comes intergenerational wisdom. The few areas that are still managed by Indigenous people practicing cultural burning have resisted annihilation from fire, while other areas have not. These protected areas will be quicker to recover from the devastation and will provide an example of how to move forward to prevent something this disastrous from occurring again.

She wrote on her Jan. 6 Twitter feed regarding the land: “I hope that Indigenous knowledge & experiences take precedence in the forward management of natural environments. This requires Indigenous people & systems leading the process, not being tacked on, or our knowledge excoriated & cropped into failing models.”

For thousands of years, Aboriginal custodians of the land have practiced cultural burning. Also known as fire-stick burning, it is the intentional practice of setting small, controlled flames to prevent fire risks and produce new life. These cultural practices were passed down in order to make land more fire-resistant, as well as to rejuvenate local floras, provide native animal habitats and engage in reciprocal kinship with the land.

Oliver Costello, from Firesticks Alliance Indigenous Corporation, has been trying to implement these practices on a large scale. He states, “Since colonisation, many Indigenous people have been removed from their land, and their cultural fire management practices have been constrained by authorities, informed by Western views of fire and land management.” (theconversation.com, Jan. 9)

Australia’s Bolsonaro

Australia’s Prime Minister Scott Morrison has been deemed “the Australian Bolsonaro.” Brazil’s President Jair Bolsonaro is a climate change denier who has actively allowed the Amazon to burn in order to further the interests of businesses and to detract of Indigenous people as well as the rest of the planet. The scale is comparable. According to NASA’s Fire Information for Resource Management System, the 2019 fires in the Amazon torched 11 million acres of land, while fires in Australia have burned 14.5 million acres.

Since September Australia’s bushfires have released 350 million tons of carbon dioxide equal to two-thirds of the country’s annual emissions from human-made sources based on data from NASA satellites, according to Pep Canadell, director of the Global Carbon Project. (Reuters, Jan. 7) Despite all the available data, Prime Minister Morrison and Emissions Reduction Minister Angus Taylor have ignored all sound science and warnings that the crisis will only grow worse if the current lack of response is maintained. Morrison and Taylor say that Australia does not need to cut carbon dioxide emissions more aggressively to limit global warming, even after a three-year drought and unprecedented fires. Instead, they say Australia, which contributes 1.3 percent of the world’s carbon dioxide emissions, but is the second-largest emitter of CO2, should be rewarded for beating its emissions reduction targets for 2030.

As the world leader in coal exports at $76 billion annually, Morrison and Taylor say it has to have the technological means to have to have large capacity to have the restructure the world the way the business and life if it is going to survive this catastrophic threat.

Mass protests across Australia on Jan. 10.

EEUU amenaza con una guerra más amplia

Continúa la página 12

En Afganistán, 18 años de ocupación estadounidense no solo han traído restos y división sectaria. Casi todas las corrientes políticas en Iraq, Siria y Afganistán han sido objeto de lucha por el poder, y algunos de los más poderosos países occidentales eventualmente han llegado a odiar la duplicidad y la arrogancia racista de la dominación estadounidense.

La única solución del Pentágono a la creciente resistencia en todos los frentes es más guerra e incluso sanciones más severas.

Según el Washington Post del 4 de enero, Estados Unidos retomó el control de 6.000 soldados en Irak con una brigada de 3.500 tropas aerotransportadas que llegan. Hay más de 14.000 tropas estadounidenses / de la OTAN en Afganistán. En el sur de Arabia, desde Afganistán hasta el Medio Oriente, hay un total de 70.000 fuerzas estadounidenses. También hay decenas de miles de contratistas y mercenarios en Irak y Afganistán.

Enviar miles de tropas adicionales no cambiará la incertidumbre de Estados Unidos para ocupar y controlar un país, pero aumentará tanto la resistencia como la resistencia.

Culpando a Irán por los fracasos estadounidenses

Es política de Estados Unidos culpar a Irán por cada revés y forma de resistencia en toda la región. Irán, aunque en el pasado dictatorial y rodeno, es el único país que ha escapado de la ocupación directa de Estados Unidos y la destrucción masiva.

La medida de la administración Trump para cancelar unilateralmente un acuerdo legalmente vinculante, firmado por los cinco miembros permanentes del Consejo de Seguridad de la ONU más Alemania, para poner fin a las sanciones contra Irán, ha aumentado las tensiones en la región. Las nuevas sanciones estadounidenses impuestas a Irán son un esfuerzo desestabilizador del país con hiperinflación y escasez.

Irán, China y Rusia inician simulacros navales conjuntos

Pero Irán envió su propio mensaje a medida que las amenazas estadounidenses se intensificaron con la crisis en Irak. Fue un mensaje que el mundo entero tomó nota.

Una quinta parte del petróleo del mundo pasa por el Estrecho de Ormuz, que se conecta con el Golfo de Omán. El 27 de diciembre, Irán, China y Rusia comen- zaron cuatro días de simulacros navales conjuntos en el Océano Índico y el Golfo de Omán. El ejercicio naval conjunto mostró la determinación de Irán de ofrecer cierta protección a una región que ha sido abier- tamente saqueada por los piratas imperialistas moder- nos. Los nuevos acuerdos comerciales y fondos para la reconstrucción de economías devastadas por la guerra de sanciones están en los tableros de dibujo en Irán, China y Rusia. Ya no es un mundo unipolar.

Costosas armas estadounidenses de poco uso

El 14 de septiembre de 2019, los ataques contra el gigante energético de Arabia Saudita Aramco en su vital planta de procesamiento principal y planta de gas de Abqaiq, cerca del campo petrolero Khurais, redirigieron los focos de atención a la mitad temporalmente la producción de crudo de Arabia Saudita. Los rebeldes hutíes de Yemen se atribuyeron la responsabilidad, pero Washington y Arabia Saudita acusaron a Teherán de los ataques, que un expresado "¡Reesar las tropas estadounidenses a su país! ¡Final a las guerras! ¡Reestar las tropas estadounidenses a su país!"
Apuntando a Irán, Irán
EE.UU. amenaza con una guerra más amplia

Por Sara Flounders

7 de enero – Manifestaciones enormes en Irán, Iraq y en toda la región están expresando ira anti-imperialista y señalamiento un nuevo día, un renacimiento de los movimientos de masas que expulsarán a los Estados Unidos de la región.

Un acto criminal de los Estados Unidos ha encendido esta tormenta de fuego. El 2 de enero, el imperialismo estadounidense llevó su agresiva guerra contra Irán a un nuevo nivel. Un avión no tripulado estadounidense realizó un ataque furtivo que asesinó al principal general iraní Qassem Soleimani, jefe de la Fuerza de la Guardia Revolucionaria iraní Corps-Quds Force.

Soleimani estaba en una visita oficial a Irak, realmente en una misión para negociar por la paz. Fue recibido por Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, el líder de las Fuerzas de Movilización Popular (PMF) de Iraq, quien también fue asesinado en el ataque con aviones no tripulados. Las PMF son conocidas por su defensa de seguridad iraquíes.

El Departamento de Defensa de los Estados Unidos admitió que llevó a cabo el ataque siguiendo las órdenes del presidente Donald Trump. En los días posteriores a esta provocación de guerra, ocurrió lo siguiente:

En Irak, decenas de miles se unieron a una marcha fúnebre por los dos líderes militares asesinados por el Pentágono. El Parlamento iraquí votó para expulsar a las 6,000 tropas estadounidenses que han estado estacionadas en Iraq desde que sus miembros escucharon evidencia de un asesinato político estadounidense que viola la soberanía de Irak.

El primer ministro iraquí, Adil al-Abad-Mahdi, le había dicho al parlamento que el gobierno de los EE.UU. sabía que el general Soleimani viajaba a Iraq como emisario oficial de paz para reunirse con él como parte de las negociaciones con Arabia Saudita para reducir las tensiones en la región. Iraq actúa como mediador. Adil-Mahdi incluso se quejó de que Trump también le había pedido a Irak que desempeñara un papel mediador con Irán.

En Irán, los líderes del gobierno han prometido que atacarán a los EE.UU. Y que será un ataque militar. Cientos de miles, tal vez millones, de personas han marchado en las calles en luto por Soleimani y su homólogo iraquí. Un canto favorito era “¡Muerte a América!”, lo que es un serio golpe a los EE.UU.

Desde EE.UU., Trump envió un tweet que amenaza con destruir 62 sitios culturales iraníes. Tal ataque sería un crimen de guerra.

El Departamento de Estado de los EE.UU. ha acusado a Irak de someter a la resistencia. Desde EE.UU., Trump envió un tweet que amenaza con destruir 62 sitios culturales iraníes. Tal ataque sería un crimen de guerra.

El papel del imperialismo estadounidense es desestabilizar a los líderes del imperio estadounidense en toda la región. Irak actúa como mediador. El primer ministro iraquí, Adil al-Abad-Mahdi, le había dicho al parlamento que el gobierno de los EE.UU. sabía que el general Soleimani viajaba a Iraq como emisario oficial de paz para reunirse con él como parte de las negociaciones con Arabia Saudita para reducir las tensiones en la región. Iraq actúa como mediador. Adil-Mahdi incluso se quejó de que Trump también le había pedido a Irak que desempeñara un papel mediador con Irán.

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