As former top cop fires strikers

Calif. grad student wildcat grows

By Martha Grevatt

There has been a surge of strikes in the U.S. recently, many of them fueled by demands for a decent income that keeps up with the cost of living.

Right now, graduate student workers at the University of California Santa Cruz are on the front lines. They are on a wildcat strike to win a cost-of-living allowance—once common in union contracts, but now something few workers have and most workers need.

The movement began with a “grading strike” in December with 2,033 grad student workers refusing to submit grades. On Feb. 17, they escalated the withhold- ing of their labor into a full teaching strike. Because the current master contract between the whole UC system and United Auto Workers Local 2865, has a no-strike clause (and no COLA language), they had to take the brave step of going on what’s known as a “wildcat strike.”

But what was the alternative to striking? It was to continue juggling impossible bills—paying exorbitant rents in Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.

The grad workers are up against formidable foes, including the Santa Cruz Police Department, which arrested 17 strikers for blocking traffic on the first day of the escalation.

Also positioned against the strikers is UC President Janet Napolitano, who has issued termination letters to some of the grad students involved. In Santa Cruz, as well as groceries, child care, health care and other obligations.
Solidarity with Wet’suwet’en Nation

By Jim McHahan

About a hundred people marched through central Seattle in solidarity with the Wet’suwet’en Nation of Canada on Feb. 29. This was a prayer walk on occupied Duwamish land, organized by the Protectors of the Salish Sea, led by Indigenous people with allies. A week earlier on Feb. 23, Seattle cops brutally attacked the Protectors’ peaceful pro-Wet’suwet’en prayer walk, which was made up of Native singers and drummers. Six were arrested, and many were pepper sprayed.

Facing a heavy, outlandish police presence, the Protectors resumed their prayer walk on Feb. 29 with more people and supporting organizations. They then marched to the waterfront where a water blessing ceremony with singing was held.

The Protectors have organized a number of actions in support of Wet’suwet’en in recent years, along with their demand that Washington State Gov. Jay Inslee declare a climate emergency for the Salish Sea (Puget Sound and the Straights of Georgia) due to the increasing existential threat to salmon and orca and their habitats.

“We’re here to stand with the Wet’suwet’en, who have literally been invaded by the government of British Columbia,” said Paul Wagner, a founder of Protectors of the Salish Sea. He was referring to the recent brutal occupation of Wet’suwet’en land by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the government of British Columbia — an assault on behalf of Coastal GasLink, which aims to build a multibillion-dollar gas pipeline across sovereign and unceded Wet’suwet’en land.

Solidarity with Wet’suwet’en continues to grow all across the continent! 😊

Solidarity with Wet’suwet’en, Seattle, Feb. 29.

WWW PHOTO: JIM MCMahan

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 immigrants, 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 ginned 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.

WWF 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

Workers World
147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl.
New York, NY 10011
Phone: 212.627.2994
E-mail: ww@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org
Vol. 62, No. 10 • March 5, 2020
Closing date: March 4, 2020
Editor: Deirdre Griswold
Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, Martha Grevatt, Monica Moorehead, Betsey Piette, Minnie Bruce Pratt
Web Editors: Althea, Harvey Markowitz, Janet Mayes
Production & Design Editors: Gery Armsby, Sasha Mazumder, Scott Williams
Copyediting and Proofreading: Paddy Colligan, Sue Davis, S. Hedgecock
Contributing Writers: LeiLani Dowell, G. Dunkel, K. Durkin, Teresa Gutierrez, Gloria Rubac
Mundo Obrero: Albertó García, Teresa Gutierrez, Carlos Vargas
Supporter Program: Coordinator Sue Davis
Copyright © 2020 Workers World. Verbatim copying and distribution of articles is permitted in any medium without royalty provided this notice is preserved.
Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the last week of December by WW Publishers, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Phone: 212.627.2994. Subscriptions: One year: $87; institutions: $85. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from NA Publishing, Inc., P.O. Box 998, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-0998. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Subscription information is at workers.org. Periódicos postal pagado at New York, N.Y. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011.

Join us in the fight for socialism!

Workers World
147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl.
New York, NY 10011
Phone: 212.627.2994
E-mail: ww@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org
Vol. 62, No. 10 • March 5, 2020
Closing date: March 4, 2020
Editor: Deirdre Griswold
Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, Martha Grevatt, Monica Moorehead, Betsey Piette, Minnie Bruce Pratt
Web Editors: Althea, Harvey Markowitz, Janet Mayes
Production & Design Editors: Gery Armsby, Sasha Mazumder, Scott Williams
Copyediting and Proofreading: Paddy Colligan, Sue Davis, S. Hedgecock
Contributing Writers: LeiLani Dowell, G. Dunkel, K. Durkin, Teresa Gutierrez, Gloria Rubac
Mundo Obrero: Albertó García, Teresa Gutierrez, Carlos Vargas
Supporter Program: Coordinator Sue Davis
Copyright © 2020 Workers World. Verbatim copying and distribution of articles is permitted in any medium without royalty provided this notice is preserved.
Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the last week of December by WW Publishers, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Phone: 212.627.2994. Subscriptions: One year: $87; institutions: $85. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from NA Publishing, Inc., P.O. Box 998, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-0998. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Subscription information is at workers.org. Periódicos postal pagado at New York, N.Y. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011.
Workers World hails International Working Women's Day!

Continued from page 1

and sexual violence, as they mistrust and disregard all workers. The quest for profits drives the horrible crimes of sex and human trafficking of women, children and people of all genders.

All this cries out for a socialist solution: public ownership of industries; production for human needs, not profits; guaranteed jobs, health care and all necessities; sharing of wealth and resources—and peace.

Cuba has shown that socialism can provide the basis for women's equality. Led by the Federation of Cuban Women, women there have made great political, economic and social strides since the revolution triumphed in 1959.

True character of Women's Day

The pro-socialist and working-class essence of IWWD remains, despite capitalist media cover-ups of its real meaning. Its history is rife with struggle and solidarity. This special day has been celebrated by socialist countries and parties, national liberation movements, anti-imperialist, anticolonial, women’s and workers’ organizations on many continents.

This historic day’s founder was Clara Zetkin, a leader of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) and head of their International Women’s Secretariat. The SPD, which had 82,000 women members in 1910, promoted women’s rights, including the right to organize politically and vote. Zetkin agitated for 21 years to establish International Working Women’s Day.

Women in Europe were pouring into factories as expanding industries needed their labor. They were hired at low pay to do unsafe, horrific jobs without legal rights. Determined to fight for political and economic rights, they joined labor unions and socialist parties. It was a time of great ferment and burgeoning socialist ideas.

German socialist Luise Zeitz, in collaboration with Zetkin, proposed at the Second International Socialist Congress in August 1910, held at the Workers Assembly Hall in Copenhagen, that a special day be set aside annually to recognize the worldwide struggles of women workers and to build solidarity. Participants agreed to hold the 8-hour workday, maternity leave and health benefits.

Another impetus for Women’s Day, Zetkin recognized, was the demonstration in New York by thousands of garment workers, mostly immigrant women and many self-styled “garment girls,” demanding their rights, on March 8, 1908. So was the three-month garment workers’ strike a year later—the “Uprising of the 20,000”—led by 23-year-old Clara Lemlich, a Russian immigrant.

Over 100 women from 17 countries, representing labor unions, women’s organizations and European socialist parties, voted unanimously for the proposal. It declared: “Agreement with the class-conscious political and trade union organizations of the [working class] in each country, socialist women in all countries shall organize a Women’s Day each year.” (Getwrite.wordpress.com)

Zetkin, a political strategist, calculated that organizing for IWWD was a crucial step in building an anti-capitalist movement. She aimed to foster cooperation among women in labor unions, women’s organizations and socialist parties so they would fight jointly. This would raise class and socialist consciousness and push the class struggle forward. In her estimation, the most political women workers would be won to opposing capitalism — the source of women’s oppression — and would embrace a socialist perspective.

Zetkin deduced that a yearly, coordinated multicity protest on the same day for the same demands would empower women’s struggles and also break down national chauvinism, strengthening ties between women in different countries and building antiwar sentiment.

One year later, Zetkin’s strategy took hold. More than 1 million people, mostly women, poured into the streets of four European countries on March 19 to demand jobs and an end to gender discrimination. Russian revolutionary Alexandra Kollontai said that the first “Working Women’s Day is one seeing sea of women, certainly the first show of militancy [in Europe] by working women.”

IWWD started a revolution!

In 1913 and 1914, European women protested the looming world war on Women’s Day. On March 8, 1917, striking women textile workers joined women attacking bakeries, pouring high bread prices in Petrograd, Russia. They asked soldiers to put down their rifles.

Soon 90,000 protestors were in the streets, calling for “peace, land and bread.” This earthshaking action led to the Russian czar’s ouster and the garbage workers’ revolution later that year. In 1921, the socialist Soviet Union was the first government in the world to codify women’s equality.

Zetkin, fervently antiwar, was jailed repeatedly for agitating against World War I. Demonstrations won her release. She left the SPD in 1916 because of its pro-war position and, with Rosa Luxemburg and others, established the precursor to the Communist Party of Germany.

An antiracist, Zetkin opposed U.S. Jim Crow laws. She wrote an impassioned plea in 1922 calling for the release of the Scottsboro Boys, young African Americans who were being railroaded to prison, and possible execution, on false charges of sexually assaulting two white women. One of the women later retracted the charges and then joined the mass movement that saved their lives.

As German fascism menaced, Zetkin agitated for all workers, women and men. She stood against fascism in the Parliament (Reichstag) on Aug. 30, 1932. At the age of 75, ailing and nearly blind, Zetkin bravely spoke for an hour as Nazis yelled death threats at her.

50 years of Women’s Day

IWWD actions around the globe over the last 50 years have included the freeing of political prisoners in Uruguay, sit-ins in Argentina of agricultural workers and uprisings in the Philippines. Coordinated actions have protested the U.S.-led war in Iraq and the U.S.-backed Israeli siege of Gaza. Yemeni women have denounced the U.S.-backed Saudi war in Yemen.

In 2010, there were worldwide commemorations of IWWD on its centennial, as well as a determined post-earthquake solidarity.

Indigenous peoples have protested corporate destruction of the planet. South Korean workers have demanded gender equality at work. Hong Kong garment workers have rallied, and domestic workers in Indonesia have marched. Sex workers have insisted on their rights. Migrant workers have demonstrated in Australia, Asia and Europe for legal protection and rights.

Demonstrations were held in the Middle East and North Africa in the early 2000s during the Arab Spring. Events hailng labor women workers have been held in South Africa. Through Latin America, marches for reproductive rights, especially safe legal abortion, and against antiracist violence have been held yearly. In 2018, winning LGBTQ+ rights was hailed in India. Last year, Cubans celebrated 60 years of socialist revolution.

In the U.S., the women of Youth Against War & Fascism and Workers World Party revived IWWD’s revolutionary legacy in 1979, marching from a rally in historic Union Square to the Women’s House of Detention in New York. They expressed solidarity with their imprisoned sisters, including two of the New York Panther 21.

The Women’s Fightback Network began to commemorate IWWD in New York in 2004. Out of that group—building might have kept the “Uprising of the 20,000” garment workers in three-month strike, 1909-1910, New York City.

Russian women workers’ strike on March 8, 1917, sparked the “Uprising of the 20,000.”

A global socialist women’s conference today would first extend invitations to women in Africa, the Middle East and the rest of Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean — whose countries have been oppressed by imperialism. Such a gathering would promote reparations for countries ravaged and impoverished by global capitalists and demand an end to all imperialist militarism.

Also invited would be women workers and people of all nationalities and genders in the U.S. —immigrants, refugees, single parents, the unemployed, homeless, seniors, youth, people with disabilities, survivors of sexual abuse and domestic violence, low-income individuals, rural women. LGBTQ+ people prisoners, sex workers, and all those lacking health care and other necessities. Everyone’s grievances would be heard and incorporated into demands.

Clara Zetkin was right in saying that international solidarity is essential. The struggle is that it is urgent that all women and all workers organize to get rid of capitalism and fight for socialism. That is the legacy of 110 years of Women’s Day each year.” (leftwrite.wordpress.com)
Wayne State teachers protest mass firings

By Jamie McQuaid
Detroit

On Feb. 26, nearly 100 lecturers, graduate assistants, students and allied workers marched through Wayne State University’s main campus in Detroit to protest the mass firing of lecturers, who are non-tenured instructors, announced in February.

The union was one of frustration and uncertainty, but also of solidarity and hope. To represent the collective voice of the union, the American Association of University Professors-AFT Local 6123, promised further protests at the next Board of Governors meeting, armed campus police assembled in the area. The representative of the union was not allowed to deliver a petition with over 800 signatures in support of the protesting lecturers to the university president until the chief of WSU’s special police force could arrive on the scene.

The demand for a demonstration and union action began the second week of February when 395 organized graduate assistants and faculty at Wayne State’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) received notifications that their employment contracts would not be renewed for the following academic year. Every lecturer in CLAS who was up for a renewal was denied, without exception.

Many of the lecturers did not receive a letter, and Leonid Tsimkin, a Ph.D. student in the History Department, who learned his contract would not be renewed, called the letter “a lie.”

The UWGB administration’s action on Feb. 26 was one of many recent federal appeals court decisions that the “number of striking workers surged in 2018 and 2019,” after decades in which “the number of major strikes 2018–19” was 35-year high in major strikes 2018–19.

The demonstration on Feb. 26 was not the first for secure tenured positions, stonewalling at reasonable demands for a cost-of-living adjustment or expanded benefits and an increased antibullying safe space from their administration, the union was beginning to realize that Wayne State’s administration was “not more than they need the administration.”

“While it was true, to not lose President Roy Wilson’s salary which, in his most recent contract, increased about $100,000 in 2018 to over $600,000 annually. As Wayne State’s teachers are organizing for a union, many WSU employees also want to rely on working-class power to win basic rights in the workplace. Attempts by the administration to justify these decisions by saying WSU employees, and faculty, offici-

Kickstarter workers first to unionize in tech industry

Kickstarter workers—engineers, directors, analysts, designers, coordinators and customer support specialists—are the first at a major tech company to unionize. Calling themselves Kickstarter United, the workers had been organizing since last March to join the Office and Professional Employees Union (OPEIU). The vote on Feb. 16 was 46 to 37, calling the tech sector “a quagmire of labor laws,” the OPEIU President Rebecca Dixon welcomed the workers into “the labor movement’s efforts to improve the livelihoods of tech workers everywhere.”

Although the Kickstarter CEO was initially wary of the union and insisted on an official NLRB vote, he told The Verge he doesn’t see the vote as dictating the company’s future. TechCrunch reported Feb. 18 that both staff and contractors at a growing list of tech companies have expressed interest in unionizing—Spotify, Instacart and Pittsburgh-based Google tech workers, along with media outlets BuzzFeed and Vox.

35-year high in major strikes 2018–19

No matter how much braggart in chief President Donald Trump boasts that his economy is benefiting his working-class base, the facts prove otherwise. According to the Economic Policy Institute report issued Feb. 11, the “number of striking workers surged in 2018 and 2019,” after decades in decline. Based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the EPI noted that it marked “a 35-year high for the number of workers involved in a major work stoppage over a two-year period.” That began with 485,200 workers in 2018—a nearly twentyfold increase from 23,300 workers in 2017—and continued with 425,500 workers.

The jump in numbers, EPI explained, “is largely fueled by an increase in stoppages involving at least 20,000 workers.” These include public school teachers from West Virginia to Chicago to Las Vegas and many states and cities in-between, as well as unionized workers at General Motors, Stop & Shop, the University of California and AT&T.

EPI Policy Director Heidi Shierholz, who co-authored the report, said in a statement, “The increase in strike numbers shows that workers understand that joining together in collective action remains an effective way to raise wages and benefits, and improve working conditions.”

Co-author Policy Associate Margaret Poydock pointed out that the uptick “has occurred despite current policy that makes it difficult for many workers to effectively engage in their fundamental right to strike.” She pointed to the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, which the House passed Feb. 6, but which will not be approved by the current Senate.

Will the surge continue? Stay tuned.

Fight for women’s liberation! Build Workers World!

As Marxists, we strive not just to honor his memory, but to make it — to promote changes that put women and oppressed first instead of last. That’s what motivated women at the Second International Socialist Congress in Copenhagen in 1910 to pass a unanimous resolution declaring March 8—the date in 1908 when women in Russia, Ukraine, and Persia marched— as International Women’s Day. Now IWWD is honored by people of all genders around the world.

As Marxists, we strive not just to honor his memory, but to make it — to promote changes that put women and oppressed first instead of last. That’s what motivated women at the Second International Socialist Congress in Copenhagen in 1910 to pass a unanimous resolution declaring March 8—the date in 1908 when women in Russia, Ukraine, and Persia marched— as International Women’s Day. Now IWWD is honored by people of all genders around the world.

That’s what motivated women at the Second International Socialist Congress in Copenhagen in 1910 to pass a unanimous resolution declaring March 8—the date in 1908 when women in Russia, Ukraine, and Persia marched— as International Women’s Day. Now IWWD is honored by people of all genders around the world.

That’s what motivated women at the Second International Socialist Congress in Copenhagen in 1910 to pass a unanimous resolution declaring March 8—the date in 1908 when women in Russia, Ukraine, and Persia marched— as International Women’s Day. Now IWWD is honored by people of all genders around the world.

That’s what motivated women at the Second International Socialist Congress in Copenhagen in 1910 to pass a unanimous resolution declaring March 8—the date in 1908 when women in Russia, Ukraine, and Persia marched— as International Women’s Day. Now IWWD is honored by people of all genders around the world.

That’s what motivated women at the Second International Socialist Congress in Copenhagen in 1910 to pass a unanimous resolution declaring March 8—the date in 1908 when women in Russia, Ukraine, and Persia marched— as International Women’s Day. Now IWWD is honored by people of all genders around the world.

That’s what motivated women at the Second International Socialist Congress in Copenhagen in 1910 to pass a unanimous resolution declaring March 8—the date in 1908 when women in Russia, Ukraine, and Persia marched— as International Women’s Day. Now IWWD is honored by people of all genders around the world.

That’s what motivated women at the Second International Socialist Congress in Copenhagen in 1910 to pass a unanimous resolution declaring March 8—the date in 1908 when women in Russia, Ukraine, and Persia marched— as International Women’s Day. Now IWWD is honored by people of all genders around the world.

That’s what motivated women at the Second International Socialist Congress in Copenhagen in 1910 to pass a unanimous resolution declaring March 8—the date in 1908 when women in Russia, Ukraine, and Persia marched— as International Women’s Day. Now IWWD is honored by people of all genders around the world.

That’s what motivated women at the Second International Socialist Congress in Copenhagen in 1910 to pass a unanimous resolution declaring March 8—the date in 1908 when women in Russia, Ukraine, and Persia marched— as International Women’s Day. Now IWWD is honored by people of all genders around the world.

That’s what motivated women at the Second International Socialist Congress in Copenhagen in 1910 to pass a unanimous resolution declaring March 8—the date in 1908 when women in Russia, Ukraine, and Persia marched— as International Women’s Day. Now IWWD is honored by people of all genders around the world.

That’s what motivated women at the Second International Socialist Congress in Copenhagen in 1910 to pass a unanimous resolution declaring March 8—the date in 1908 when women in Russia, Ukraine, and Persia marched— as International Women’s Day. Now IWWD is honored by people of all genders around the world.

That’s what motivated women at the Second International Socialist Congress in Copenhagen in 1910 to pass a unanimous resolution declaring March 8—the date in 1908 when women in Russia, Ukraine, and Persia marched— as International Women’s Day. Now IWWD is honored by people of all genders around the world.
How can we get rid of capitalism?

By Makazi Motema

The following slightly edited talk was given at a class on “Why We Need a Revolution” in New York City on Feb. 29.

How do we deal with the mass injustice perpetuated by the capitalist ruling class? Can we observe the same kind of reaction and see clearly there is no electoral road to socialism. There is no electoral road to justice. The ruling class owns our so-called democratic polities.

The politicians and officials in the Democratic and Republican parties are members of the overall political arena. They are real estate agents, and health insurance CEOs. They exist to do their bidding, and nothing more. Anyone attempting to use this lack of democracy to increase the power of the working class, at the expense of the capitalist ruling class, will find their way blocked.

What then is the solution? If the interests of the working class are irreconcilably opposed to the interests of the ruling class, the working class holds total control over the democratic process; how do we proceed? The solution is to abandon the specter of capitalist political power and embrace working-class power.

The strength of the working class is in our numbers and our labor. We greatly outnumber the capitalist ruling class. Even their security forces, the military and police—which make up the capitalist state—would be woefully outnumbered by the workers if a united day of action could bring to bear. And that is the key: the unity of the working class.

Separately, we are weak and powerless. United, we are unstoppable. A united working class would also withhold its labor from the capitalist ruling class. It is workers who possess power. The question is: Could we be organized toward a single goal, if we were ever to withhold our labor, as the workers were brought to do in democratically run councils. They debated and voted on measures which would improve their lives as workers. Being brought together in this manner, they would have realized and grew bolder in their demands.

In February 1917, the workers of one Petrograd factory asked their bosses for an eight-hour workday. By October 1917, those same workers were demanding their bosses provide them with arms. It was through the process of democratic organization that workers began to learn their power. There are no shortcuts. This pattern has held throughout the world. In China and Vietnam, village councils formed the backbone of the revolution, providing resources and security for China’s Red Army and Vietnam’s People’s Liberation Army. In Cuba, the backing of rural peasants gave cover to the guerrillas of the 26th of July Movement. Even today, in Bolivia and Venezuela, it is the neighborhood people’s councils that form the front line of the resistance against right-wing coup forces.

There are no shortcuts. The working class must be organized if we are ever to have a chance of defeating the capitalist ruling class. This must be done because it is our only hope of putting an end to the injustices of class society.

Black labor: From chattel slavery to wage slavery

The Black Freedom struggle

By Sam Marcy

The following is excerpted from chap-
ter 5 of Marcy’s “High Tech, Low Pay: A Marxist analysis of the changing charac-
ter of the working class,” first published in 1986. Note that a few selected words have been updated to reflect current usage. Marcy is the late chairman of Workers World Party. “High Tech, Low Pay” is available as a free download at workers.org/marcy.

It is utterly impossible to understand the contemporary role of Black workers in this country and particularly their situation in the trade union movement without con-
sidering them in a broader political frame-
work. A study of black labor, especially over the last 25 years, that omitted the gen-
eral political struggle, the freedom strug-
gle of the Black people as a whole, would find its way blocked.

The Black Freedom struggle

Racism has permeated every layer of capitalist society; the trade union move-
ment from its earliest times up to the pres-
ent. By its very nature it is a racist and vicious discriminatory practices. The trade unions are the most formidable working-class organizations in the coun-
try. Aside from temporary retreats and taking into account the long duration of the political reaction, they are bound to become involved in the great struggles for emancipation from both racist oppress-
ion and capitalist class exploitation.

But all of this has to be considered in the broader arena of the overall politi-
cal struggle of Black people, in which the trade unions have certainly been a signif-
ificant part, but only a part. In reality, what happens there is a reflection of what is going on in the Black struggle as a whole.

The Black freedom struggle

The great battles of the 1960s and 1970s in particular must be considered in evalu-
ating and analyzing how this reflected itself in the unions.

Just to take one example out of many: In April 1969, some 500 Black workers shut down production at the Ford plant in Mahwah, N.J., for several days. The workers walked out because a foreman called one of the workers a “Black bas-
tard.” Although the official United Auto Workers leadership urged the workers to return to their jobs, they nevertheless stayed out until the foreman was ousted from the plant. This was the famous so-called wildcat strike at Mahwah orga-
nized by the United Black Brothers, and it represented a significant victory for all the workers.

If this significant victory for the UAW at that period is seen only in the trade union framework, it could present an oddity. But when seen in the larger framework of the overall Black political struggle, one gets a far truer measure of its significance for local struggles as well as nationally.

There were other significant develop-
ments in the UAW that came on the heels of the Mahwah victory and ushered in a series of electoral vic-
tories for the Black workers in the UAW. “Suddenly the UAW leadership stopped the practice of mobilizing opposition to Black candidates in local elections. Within a few months after the forma-
tion of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, Black workers were elected as presidents of Local 900 (Ford’s Wayne plant), Local 47 (Chrysler Detroit Forge), Local 961 (Chrysler’s Elhroyd Gear), Local 7 (Chrysler), Local 51 (Plymouth), and even Local 1248 (Chrysler Mopar), where only 20 percent of the plant’s 1,898 workers were Black. A Black was elected for the first time as vice president of Briggs Local 21.”

Before the Mahwah struggle took place, there were a considerable number of political rebellions and insurrections of Black people. There was the Harlem rebellion, followed by Watts, Newark, and Cleveland, to name only a few, and of course the largest of the mass insurrections took place in Detroit. Following the assassination of Martin Luther King in 1968 there were a total of more than 500 rebellions and insurrections throughout the whole country.

How then can the struggles of Black workers for equality be seen as strictly trade union struggles? Few if any of the very significant gains made by Black workers could have been attained without the so-called outside struggle, that is, the general political struggle put up by Black people. That was the real catalyst, the basic generator, for the trade union gains, many of which were not only vital but indispensable, considering the long and arduous task to attain equality which still goes on.

What is said about the Black struggle applies equally to some extent even more to the Latinx struggle, the wom-

en’s struggle, and the [LGBTQ2+] strug-
gle. Any gains made in the unions must be related to the broader struggles which generated them. It would of course be fruitful to speculate on how different it could have been had the struggles been initiated by the trade union movement rather than being forced upon it. But this is the music of the future, not of the past.

There are about 110 million workers in the United States today. In the mid-1980s, only about 17.5 million belonged to unions, as we’ve discussed earlier. However, there can be no doubt that the union move-
ment will become the fundamental lever for working-class struggle. The anti-labor offensive which has been sweeping the country for several years is bound to pro-
duce one of the truly great upsurges of the working class, and this time the union movement will not be in the rearward but in the vanguard of the struggle as regards Black, Latinx, Asian, and Native people, women and [LGBTQ2+ people].

The tardiness of the working-class response to the offensive of the ruling class in the face of such profound politi-
cal and social reaction can be explained in part by the lack of a mass political party of the working class. The response from the working class, both organized and unor-
ganized, is likely to come as the result of the natural process of putting an end to the form of trade unionism but not neces-
sarily in the way the trade union official-

Continued on page 6
State makes last-ditch effort to deny Mumia justice

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court has a long and openly biased history when it comes to justice for political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, having denied all his appeals over the 37-year ordeal to win his freedom. True to form, on Feb. 24, four justices on the state’s highest court granted an extremely rare exception to King’s Bench Petition backed by the Fraternal Order of Police to move jurisdiction over Abu-Jamal’s current appeal away from Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner’s office.

This ruling, coming just one week before Krasner was due to respond to a request from Abu-Jamal’s attorneys for new hearings before the state’s Superior Court, brings a temporary halt to Mumia’s appeal.

Last November the FOP filed a King’s Bench petition in the name of Maureen Faulkner, who was the spouse of the police officer Abu-Jamal is accused of killing, after a lower court denied her previous request to be a ‘party of interest’ to the case. The petition, alleging ‘incompetence’ in favor of Abu-Jamal, asks the court to direct state Attorney General Josh Shapiro, not the Pennsylvania DA’s office, to handle up-and-coming appeals.

King’s Bench used for ‘extraordinary relief’

A throwback to British colonial rule, King’s Bench gives the highest courts extraordinary authority to override the ordinary legal process. It lets the Pennsylvania Supreme Court appoint a “special master”—most likely a prosecutor—to investigate whether Krasner’s office has a conflict of interest in handling Abu-Jamal’s appeals.

This granting of “extraordinary relief” reeks of a cover-up and is all about thwarting justice.

Last September Abu-Jamal’s attorneys petitioned to send the case back to the Philadelphia Courts of Common Pleas after new evidence in his case had been discovered in December 2018 in hidden file boxes. The subsequent FOP-filed filings came after Krasner accepted Mumia’s request. Krasner was expected to formally approve the petition on March 2.

The Faulkner/FOP King’s Bench petition criticizes Krasner for not doing enough to expose the evidence that could exonerate Abu-Jamal. It essentially asks the courts to intervene, in a case in which a supposed witness in favor of Abu-Jamal, a cab driver working with a revoked license, claimed to have been shot Abu-Jamal shot police officer Daniel Faulkner. However, photos belonging to the Philadelphia Bulletin proved that Chobert’s cab was not even at the scene. The King’s Bench Petition actually declares that DA Krasner should have colluded with prosecutor McGill to bury this evidence.

The real conflict of interest

While King’s Bench was not intended for use by an individual or group simply disposed with a government action, it appears that the Pennsylvania Supreme Court continues to make exceptions when it comes to the police. Many justices on this court, including two on the panel that ruled in favor of the petition, receive FOP funding.

This court’s actions delay Abu-Jamal’s pending appeal, which just happens to involve charges of misconduct by a former member of the same court, retired Justice Ronald Castille. His well-established alliance with the FOP and bias against Abu-Jamal is central to this case.

In 2016, a U.S. Supreme Court ruling declared it improper for a prosecutor who had sought the death penalty to later rule, as a judge, against the defendant’s appeal. That decision involved Castille, who was Philadelphia DA during the murder trial of Terrence Williams. Later, as a Pennsylvania Supreme Court justice, Castille voted with the FOP and bias against Abu-Jamal is central to this case.

As Philadelphia DA during Abu-Jamal’s initial hearings for a new trial, Castille sought to expedite the death penalty in the case. While campaigning for the higher court bench, Castille ran as a death penalty advocate with broad support from the National Association of Police. On the higher court, Castille refused to recuse himself from all four of Abu-Jamal’s appeals.

Judge Tucker’s granting of Abu-Jamal’s appeals was based, in part, on his Williams ruling. Summarizing his decision, Tucker wrote: “If a judge served as a prosecutor and then the judge, there is a finding of automatic bias and due process violation.”

Whither Krasner?

When Larry Krasner, a progressive defense attorney, ran for DA in 2017, many people of color communities and progressive organizations in Philadelphia had his back. He ran for office on his reputation as a lawyer who would take on the cops and the establishment.

However, in assuming the functions of Philadelphia district attorney, Krasner became part of the bourgeois state apparatus that functions to maintain systemic racism, classism and repression. Upholding Abu-Jamal’s conviction has been central to the legacy of this office. If Krasner has demonstrated any commitment to the proceedings, it’s been for the benefit of Castille and the FOP.

Krasner shocked and angered many supporters after the decision when he pointed Castille to his transition team. At a Common Pleas Court proceeding in April 2018, in which Krasner’s office argued against Abu-Jamal’s appeal, this reporter witnessed members of the FOP and the Faulkner family thanking Krasner’s community representative for the DA’s handling of the case.

At several hearings prior to Judge Tucker’s ruling in December 2018, the FOP, retired prosecutors and members of the Faulkner family packed the courtroom in obvious efforts to intimidate the judge. At a final hearing, as it became more evident that the judge might actually consider Abu-Jamal’s attorneys’ arguments, Maureen Faulkner threw a tantrum and denounced the court.

Now the FOP and Faulkner want to replace DA Krasner with Attorney General Shapiro, who has established a reputation as a lawyer who would take on the cops and the establishment.

In a 1997 decision, Commonwealth v. Mulholland, the higher court ruled against a King’s Bench petition that sought to replace a prosecutor with one thought to be more favorable. The court called this request “prosecutor shopping.”

The “Hail Mary” efforts by the FOP in this petition reveal their full intent to replace DA Krasner with Attorney General Shapiro, which could doom Abu-Jamal’s case from ever seeing the light of day. Many politicians whose careers were built on their participation in this case stand to lose.

Black labor: From chattel slavery to wage slavery

Continued from page 5

The very tautness in preparing a party of the working class, which in Europe and other areas has taken generations to build up, makes inevitable that the pay-up rate at the oppression and exploitation endured by all strata of the working class will break out in another form. It won’t seem to emanate most easily from the workplace and from the vast pool of unemployed.

The special oppression of women, Black, Latinx, Asian, Arab, Native and LGBTQ+ workers will make them a magnet for one another out of the workplace and from the vast pool of unemployed.

A former science advisor to Reagan in late 1985 told a Cable News Network (CNN) interviewer that “unemployment in Western Europe poses a real danger to Western civilization.” Of course, it’s true. But not only in Europe.

The capitalist “recovery” here in the U.S. has been taking place amidst some 15 million unemployed, if comprehensive calculations are made. Social peace cannot be maintained on such an explosive material base.

References

Pam Africa speaks at Philadelphia rally Feb. 28.


Demonstrators call for freedom for Mumia, slam state’s efforts to delay justice

Flanked by a large white “Bird of Freedom” wearing a “Free Mumia” sign, dozens of activists from Philadelphia and New York gathered outside the office of District Attorney Larry Krasner on Feb. 28. The demonstration was called in anticipation of Krasner’s final filing a response on March 2 to the Post Conviction Relief Act petitions filed by Mumia Abu-Jamal’s attorneys last September.

However, just days earlier on Feb. 24, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court accepted a King’s Bench petition from Fraternal Order of Police proxy Maureen Faulkner charging that Krasner with being biased toward Abu-Jamal. The FOP petition sought to replace Krasner with conservative Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro and bury new evidence uncovered in December 2018. The demonstration was held at Krasner’s office as his filing was followed by a spirited march through Center City, ending outside Shapiro’s office where activists blocked a busy intersection before dispersing.

Pam Africa, Minister of the Frontline for the MOVE Organization and leader of International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, opened the rally: “The struggle to free Mumia is a fire they can’t put out. They want to bury the evidence that Mumia is innocent. The system has used every ploy they can come up with to try to kill Mumia.”

Johanna Fernandez, with the Campaign to Bring Mumia Home, stated, “A King’s Bench petition essentially asks the courts to intervene in a situation of ‘great public interest.’ It is not intended to carry out a vendetta when a citizen in the case doesn’t like what the state is doing. And yet, in other cases, DA Krasner has vigorously opposed Mumia. The only thing he did, and that’s because he was told to by Judge Tucker, was to protect his hidden evidence. Now they want to bury that, too.”

Keith Cook, Abu-Jamal’s older brother, concluded the initial rally, calling for justice for his family: “We got railroaded because they wouldn’t let us speak in the court 37 years ago. Now we are so close to freedom, and we won’t let them silence us this time.”

— Philadelphia Workers World bureau
Boston forum honors Malcolm X

By Boston Workers World bureau

Feb. 22 -- Fifty-five years after his assassination on Feb. 21, 1965, Malcolm X continues to be an inspiration today for activists, young and old. This was expressed at a Black History Month forum held here tonight where people gathered to discuss, report on and learn about his life.

Sponsored by the Boston branch of Workers World Party, the meeting entitled “Malcolm X: What does his legacy mean for today’s global struggle?” featured Monica Moorehead, a managing editor of Workers World newspaper and editor of the book, “Marxism, Reparations and the Black Freedom Struggle.”

After showing a video clip of Malcolm’s speech “By Any Means Necessary,” Moorehead told the audience, “If Malcolm X only championed the rights of Black people inside the U.S., he would have failed. Malcolm X wanted to use the plight of African peoples globally with a declaration of demands from OAUI (Organization of Afro-American Unity) to the United Nations, when it provided a forum for oppressed peoples then and now, as it seeks to end the influence of national liberation struggles. And that perspective remains today with the struggle of migrants not just from Latin and South America but from Africa, the Caribbean, Asia and the Middle East, who have been driven from their homeland because of the superexploitation of their labor and resources by the profit-hungry multinational and banks.”

Tonight’s program was chaired by Yvia X and Robert Traynham, longtime leaders of WWBP Boston. They also introduced special guest speakers, Queen-Cheyenne and Leighsandra, co-presidents of the Marxist Student Association at Suffolk University.

Part of the students’ joint statement read, “Malcolm X,el-Haj Malik el-Shabazz has long been an inspiration to us, someone who we have looked to for empowerment, wisdom and his understanding of unity every day. One of the many reasons we continue to fight against these larger institutions that don’t believe we belong. We view solidarity with all the oppressed people of the world as all of us continuing Malcolm’s dedication to that work in spirit. We understand the needs for not only building solidarity and community, but educating those around us about the exploitative and violent history of the United States: the imperial core/empire.

“Malcolm gives a great quote about academia and our institutions’ failure to address our realities. Our higher education system are built on the backs of our ancestors and the ideals of white supremacy, continuing the oppressive cycle through ideas of elitism, ‘professionalism’ and the talented tenth. In the words of Malcolm X: ‘And just because you have colleges and universities, doesn’t mean you have education.’”

A special tribute was paid to Traynham, who recently turned 83 years old. He has been a leader of United Steelworkers Local 8751, Boston School Bus Drivers Union, for over 40 years. His militant life history traces the Black Freedom Struggle from the 1960s through the present day.

Pennsylvania prison officials refuse to distribute Workers World to prisoners

By Ted Kelly

This article was based on a March 2 national press release.

For the second time in less than three months, the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections has blocked prisoners’ subscriptions to Workers World newspaper. In a letter received at Workers World’s central office in New York City, the DOC announced their refusal to distribute two recent issues of the paper on the grounds that “the publications referenced above imply that striking achieved the inmate’s goal or prison reform. As such, it encourages this type of activity within the prison system.”

The issues in question (WW volume 62 #6 and #7) contain articles that describe a recent hunger strike carried out by Demetrius Grant, an inmate at State Correctional Institution Albion. In the interview, “Anatomy of a hunger strike: A prisoner speaks,” Grant told WW, “I went on a hunger strike because of the unconstitutional, inhumane and repressive conditions.”

The suicide rate among Pennsylvania prisoners is three times the national average. In 2010, the rate of suicide was the highest in 25 years. These conditions have been exacerbated by the repressive and heavy-handed tactics of the state’s DOC. Rather than address the incredible violence, toxic facilities and mental health crises in prisons, the administration has dedicated its efforts to blocking inmates’ access to reading materials.

Prisoners are well aware of how bad the situation is in the facilities that confine them — prisoners at SCI Albion already know why Dee Jay Grant went on a hunger strike. The inmates there know that an abusive staff doctor who was named in the article has either resigned or was forced to quit.

This rejection of Workers World newspaper is retaliation against prisoners who want to advocate for themselves in the face of dangerous and torturous conditions. A security captain at SCI Albion told Grant two weeks ago that the staff intended to block the newspaper because “it’s giving prisoners too much of a voice.”

In 2017, the Pennsylvania DOC sent a similar letter to Workers World denying the publication of the newspaper. In it, they said that the publication was blocked because it “contains[ed] articles that call for people to join the fight against white supremacy.”

The state DOC official who is responsible for that rejection, Diana Woodside, is the same one who has repeatedly blocked Workers World over the past several years.

This constitutes an attack on prisoners’ First Amendment rights, as well as the right of any news publication to cover what is being done to the tens of thousands of people currently being held in Pennsylvania state prisons. Workers World proudly aims to raise the voice of prisoners, all oppressed people and all readers who are currently incarcerated to receive their subscription completely free of charge.

Dr. Suzanne Ross, a prominent activist and mental health professional, responded to the DOC’s most recent censorship of Workers World: “Prisoners value reading Workers World newspaper. They want information. They need education. The prisons are not providing them with this kind of material. And here’s an organization that is providing it for free. To try to stop that is a clear violation of First Amendment rights, and it is outrageous to block prisoners’ right to education.”

Workers World calls on the DOC to cease rejecting this vital source of news and information for prisoners once and for all. These attacks on prisoners’ rights exacerbate the criminally dangerous conditions the DOC has inflicted on inmates across the state. Time and again the DOC has resorted to more brutal violence and deeper repression, rather than ameliorate the conditions that lead prisoners to strike and voice concerns in the first place.

Call the PA Dept. of Corrections today and tell them to stop blocking prisoners’ access to a newspaper that tells the truth about mass incarceration!

- Diana Woodside
  Policy Director
  717-728-4119

- John Wetzel
  DOC Secretary
  717-728-4109
A revolutionary view of the Sanders campaign

Part 2

By Scott Williams

The following article was written before the Nevada caucus and Super Tuesday, which were won by Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, respectively. As of March 3, Sanders remains the front-runner for the Democratic Party presidential nomination. For the entire article, and more coverage next week, see workers.org.

Elections: A barometer or an organizing tool?

As revolutionaries, we know that socialist transformation is necessary for humanity and to sustain life on Earth, and we know this transformation can’t come about by using the “master’s tools” described in the U.S. Constitution. Rather, we view capitalist elections as a limitation to the collective, class-conscious action by working-class supporters to their socialist organization.

Sanders’ campaign has attempted to use the Democratic Party to raise issues in the interests of the working class. Many Democratic Socialists of America members view the Sanders’ campaign, and electoral politics more generally, as the primary channel to engage and radicalize the working class. This is not unlike the period from the 1950s to the 1970s when the left looked toward the labor movement or other social movements as the centers of politicization and class identity development.

The argument ofDSA and other left groups that have worked alongside the Sanders’ campaign is that the campaign is a shortcut to building mass consciousness. Many young activists have hit the streets in the name of the Sanders’ campaign to promote classwide solidarity against the billionaire ruling class and to try to win supporters to their socialist organization.

Ruling-class ideology insists that the primary arena of politics is bourgeois elections, party elections, national elections, presidential elections. Thus, when the left plans a political strategy, the question of whether to run in elections is a question of what is the most effective type of mass organizing that can build revolutionary socialist consciousness.

The Sanders’ campaign has prioritized the central tenet of the Occupy movement—building a movement from the bottom up: the struggle of the 99% versus the 1%. Sanders has put forth stronger positions on racial justice, migrant rights and many other policies that reflect the hard work of organizers in people’s movements.

Sanders engaged in the 2016 primary campaign took on the right-wing establishment Democratic Party and had a major impact in winning thousands of new people to socialism organizations. The DSA and others have joined this year’s campaign with the goal of recruiting new members and pushing the campaign to the left, riding the wave and seeing where they will end up.

What happens when or if the DSC steals the nomination from Sanders? Will organizations to the left of the Democratic Party still insist on voting “Blue no matter what” when their policies are the only political option in which the Sanders’ movement, even despite the refusal of Sanders himself, decides to make a “dirty break” from the Democratic Party and form a new socialist electoral third party?

What if Sanders were to get the nomination and then win the election against Trump? Will this election spend him to the very depth of the wealth of the capitalists and a stock market that could be in free fall? Will a mass movement emerge and move in a more radical direction, emboldened by the results? Will the miracle of capitalist democracy be revealed as a fraud? Will that demoralize the masses or radicalize them?

While the fate of the Sanders’ movement is yet to unfold, the most pressing question for revolutionary socialists may be: What is the most effective way to agitate, educate and organize this Sanders’ movement into an anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist, revolutionary movement? Which road to socialism?

Workers World Party believes that the goal of revolutionary parties when entering capitalist electoral politics should be to advance a revolutionary program in order to shatter illusions of capitalist democracy and win broad working-class support. The Democratic Party in the past has been the graveyard of socialist movements. Still, bourgeois political campaigns can reflect and show the significance of people’s movements.

The question of critical support for or independence from the Sanders’ movement is one we plan to go through action. We will attend Sanders’ campaign rallies in order to meet this movement and push for revolutionary socialism. We will support the street movements and organizing, raising demands that speak to young people looking for revolutionary change. We look at this development with revolutionary optimism and we will study it closely.

WWP is still considering how to intervene in the 2020 presidential campaign. We will definitely run a major ideological campaign, entitled “Which road to socialism?” With this effort, we will put forward our revolutionary socialist perspective in a wide variety of ways. We will organize regular discussion groups in our branches across the country to engage these questions, all the while reaching out to the Sanders’ movement and those to its left to discuss the contradictions of social democracy and attempt to win people to fight for socialism.

We will challenge the weaknesses of Sanders’ movement and push it in a revolutionary direction, not by being sectarian opportunists or by weakening an honest ideological and mass struggle that speaks to the needs of the working class and the oppressed to go further.

Even moderate social reforms can take place only under the pressure of mass movements in the streets and in our workplaces. Real and effective social change can only be achieved by withholding our labor and by fighting for a real future, a socialist society.

Finally, we will use this election to push for real democracy. While this election may be seen as a referendum on Trump’s social and economic policies, we will push to make this election a referendum on the crimes of capitalism. Imagine, a people’s referendum in which we vote with our feet, civil rights for all, economic independence from the imperialists and the military-industrial complex, full employment, affordable health care, food and water for all, an end to all forms of colonialism, imperialism, racism, anti-Semitism and patriarchy.

With this in mind, we will launch a series of mobilizations to fight the racist, anti-worker policies of the Trump administration. That the Democratic Party has been no better than the Republicans. We will mobilize on May Day to unite the movements against capitalism, imperialism, racism and all the crimes of this system with a show of solidarity on this socialist-inspired, international day of struggle.

We will continue to mobilize against U.S. imperialism in all its manifestations, as part of our devotion to our worldwide class. We will continue to organize for the most oppressed of our class — for incarcerated workers, for political prisoners, for low-wage workers, for people with disabilities, for the homeless, for those oppressed because of gender or gender expression or national origin, and for migrants and refugees — all with the goal of building a broadly popular communist party steered in combat and the day-to-day struggles of our class.

Finally, we will use this election to push for real democracy. While this election may be seen as a referendum on Trump’s social and economic policies, we will push to make this election a referendum on the crimes of capitalism. Imagine, a people’s referendum in which we vote with our feet, civil rights for all, economic independence from the imperialists and the military-industrial complex, full employment, affordable health care, food and water for all, an end to all forms of colonialism, imperialism, racism, anti-Semitism and patriarchy.

A proud citizen of the troika

Why and how U.S. imperialism targeted Nicaragua

By Camilo Mejía

Part 1 of a talk Nicaraguan-born antiwar organizer and Iraq war resister Camilo Mejía gave Feb. 29 at the United National Anticapitalist Coalition meeting at The People’s Forum in New York. It has been slightly edited.

On Nov. 1, 2018, former National Security Advisor John Bolton gave a speech in Miami in which he first mentioned the “troika of tyranny,” referring to Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela, stating that the three are causing a tremendous amount of human suffering. So today I would like to speak to you as a Nicaraguan, a Sandinista and a proud citizen of the troika, because being a citizen of the troika means that my country is a main target of U.S. aggression and military intervention—which means we must be doing something good.

And just like the axis of evil in the Middle East, this troika is nothing but a political tool to pave the way for U.S. aggression toward Latin America. So I’d like to speak a little bit about the context that we’re in, but in simple terms, I believe that the time of U.S. hegemony has come to an end. We are aware of this being a lot more serious than that because the neoliberal economic world order has also proven to be ineffective and to be causing tremendous amounts of suffering, human suffering, as opposed to the troika.

These neoliberal policies have caused gross inequality, environmental destruction, great poverty, disease, infant and maternal mortality, the destruction of countries’ infrastructure and the destruction of countries’ sovereignty—which means we must be doing something good.

Alongside that, what we have is a world of emerging world powers that are taking shape. We know that in 2017, China was basically grounding its new relationships in collaboration and the rebuilding of infrastructure, the development of new, cleaner energy sources. We also know already that there is an alternative being created in the face of all this neoliberal suffering.

Yet, what we see is that the United States, rather than change its ways and right its many wrongs, continues to make the same mistakes and to try to impose its neoliberal policies all over the American continent and the world.

I don’t have to convince you that many of the disastrous impacts that we’re seeing in Latin America and the rest of the world are we are also seeing here. The neoliberal policies of privatization and austerity have caused the vast majority of people living in the United States great suffering, from gentrification to environmental impacts, from police and state brutality, to housing, health care and education crises. Neoliberalism, not the troika, is causing all this tremendous human suffering and the worst is yet to come.

The situation abroad isn’t less urgent. The massive uprisings that we’re seeing from Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula in Honduras to Barcelona, Colombia, throughout the rest of the world are in direct response to the impact of neoliberalism on our class and the future we’re having on the vast majority of humanity.

Continued on page 9
Solidarity with Kashmir!

By Calvin Deutschbein

Parts of this statement were presented at a March 1 rally in Durham, N.C.

Workers Party World is here today with you all to build a movement to counter racism, Islamophobia, inequality and other forms of oppression at home and to connect to liberation movements globally from Palestine to Kashmir. Workers Party World has always recognized the right of the people of Kashmir to self-determination. WWP considers Kashmir to be an oppressed nation under the rule of India—which is itself oppressed by world imperialism.

Kashmir’s population is about 14 million people. Two-thirds of its population are Muslims, making it India’s largest Muslim-majority state. Two-thirds of the valley is in India, about one-third in Pakistan, and the remaining inch along the Line of Control, which has never been recognized by the United Nations. Kashmir has been a region of deep dispute between India and Pakistan since 1947, when both countries gained independence from British colonial domination. India and Pakistan have fought four wars over the status of Kashmir. Following the revocation of Kashmir sovereignty on Aug. 5, 2019, Prime Minister Modi and the right-wing Indian Hindu nationalist party BJP have escalated attacks against the Kashmiri people and Muslims and other oppressed peoples throughout India.

In what bears striking similarity, to us in the U.S., to the actions of Trump and U.S. white nationalists, Modi uses religious differences as well as colonial divisions like race, gender, sexualities and ITI violence. Both claim and use their borders—either India-Pakistan or Mexico-U.S.—as battlegrounds in the Islamophobic conception of “war and terror.” They continue the practice of British colonial rule: “Divide and conquer” tactics have left a legacy of national, and especially religious, animosity among all the peoples of the Indian subcontinent and within the settler-colonialist U.S.

At this time, Modi and his BJP partners have been busy using nationalism. This makes it all the more clear that we need a movement at home in solidarity with liberation movements globally. Because of U.S. imperial power, Islamophobia and Hindu nationalism all divide people by religious groups, castes, languages spoken and nationalities, so that the workers under oppressive rule would not unite to threaten empire. And the cost to workers and millions of working people past and present alone led to the displacement of between 14 million and 16 million people and the killing of millions of Indians in mass riots; and it left a terri
ditorial dispute in Kashmir that has led to persistent atrocities to this day. On Aug. 5, 2019, the BJP, under Modi’s leadership, revoked Article 370, which had given Kashmiris the right to own land. Modi’s action was meant to encour"age millions of Hindus to move into the majority-Muslim territory of Kashmir. We cannot ignore the parallels between these actions and the U.S. campaign against majority-Muslim territory in Palestine and against Indigenous peoples in what is now called the U.S. 

Kashmir is a heavily militarized zone, with some 600,000 Indian soldiers and paramilitary cops stationed in the territory. They act as an army of occupation against Kashmir. More than 10,000 men have been arrested, and more than 10,000 women have faced sexual violence from the occupying force. India has cut all telephone and internet communications, including mobile phones and social media. Schools and markets are closed, and millions of people are left isolated and besieged. Police have opened fire on demonstrations in the capital, Srinagar, and other towns and cities. The population is under complete curfew, unable even to go outside. In the face of these challenges, Kashmiris have not backed down and have been fighting back, as they have done for the past two years.

The situation in all of India is becoming increasingly violent every day. The state is targeting Muslims and other minorities and torturing them in concentration camps. Hindu nationalist vigilantes are attacking Muslims at their homes, businesses and places of worship. Modi and the BJP won’t stop until India becomes an ethnorange"nalist state—or until a united working-class movement stops them. And the movement against them is powerful and growing!

Durham, N.C.—Over a hundred pro-
testers rallied here in solidarity with working-class and oppressed people under attack by right-wing Hindu nationalism and U.S. imperialism on March 1. They demonstrated here to say, “No to Fascism in India; No to Racism at Home” in response to recent anti-Muslim riots throughout Delhi and elsewhere in India. The action, called by Muslims for Social Justice and Movement to End Racism and Islamophobia, was attended by a broad multinational, multi
generational crowd. Speakers from Muslims for Social Justice, Movement to End Racism and Islamophobia, Black Workers For Justice, Democratic Socialists of America drew connections between British colonialism, U.S. imperialism and Hindu nationalism, which all divide working-class and oppressed people based on religion, language, nationality and other colonial divisions.

—Report by Calvin Deutschbein

A proud citizen of the troika

Continued from page 8

Neoliberal policies translate to environmental destruction, morbidity rates of mental destruction, alarming rates of addiction, mental health and drug-trafficking environment, causing alarming rates of addiction, mental health issues, unemployment, homelessness, and betrayal to obtain what Gen. Sandino referred to as “the right to the revolution.” Riverside, U.S., was later used against Kurds and the U.S. administration cut funding to social programs, including mental health services, housing, education and other basic needs.

To be continued in a future issue.
Weinstein verdict: Fame, fortune and rape

On Feb. 24, a New York state jury found former movie mogul Harvey Weinstein guilty of criminal sexual assault in the first degree and rape in the third degree. The first charge carries a sentence of 5 to 25 years in prison and could result in a life sentence, allowing a total maximum sentence of 29 years, minimum five. Sentencing is set for March 11.

The trial was a grueling ordeal for the brave women who charged Weinstein. Defense lawyers berated and intimidated accusers Jessica Mann and Miriam Haley, at times bringing them to tears and at one point inducing a panic attack.

This kind of revictimization, where the victim is put on trial, all too often serves to silence survivors and keep them isolated and unaware of one another. This kind of revictimization, where the victim is put on trial, all too often serves to silence survivors and keep them isolated and unaware of one another.

The legal maxim “innocent until proven guilty” complicates matters for survivors, who most often do not have witnesses. But with 10- plus accounts, what is the proof do you need in the case of Weinstein?

Yet presumption of innocence was the fallback position of his defense attorneys. Much like the actor Denzel Washington, who in his 1990 Oscar speech pointed out that the term “guilty” complicates matters for survivors, another.

But the women’s movement is alive and well. Protests in France, for example, inside and outside the César awards—the French equivalent of the Oscars—voiced outrage over the awards given to director Roman Polanski, who remains unrepentant of his 1977 statutory rape of a 13-year-old girl.

Weinstein’s high-priced lawyers managed to obscure him from the more serious charges of predatory sexual assault and first-degree rape. Nevertheless this serial rapist was stumped by the finding of partial guilt by the jury, which rejected the defense lawyer’s argument that the woman was a willing sexual expressionist.

This verdict, in the face of police assaults, on the subversion of historical analysis of racism against Chinese people in the U.S. calls for workers of all backgrounds to rise. The epidemic of anti-Asian racism is far beyond Hollywood and into the daily lives of us all in the rest of the world.

“Whether you are an office worker, a nanny, an assistant, a cook, a factory worker—we all have to deal with the spectre of sexual violence derailing our lives. “And, though today a man has been found guilty, we have to wonder whether anyone will care about the rest of us tomorrow. This is why we say MeToo.”

China has been an example to the world of how to limit and hopefully defeat COVID-19 by mobilizing a centralized "people’s response" to the COVID-19 epi- demic—a response only possible because People’s China has been working since 1949 to build a path to socialism. Let us in the workers’ and progressive movement in the U.S. strengthen our antiracist actions in response to the epidemic, so we can build solidarity that is the road to a socialist future here.

1,000 protest anti-Chinese racism in San Francisco

Over a thousand people marched from San Francisco Chinatown to Union Square on Feb. 29 to protest the wave of attacks against Chinese people in the U.S. media and political circles, since the outbreak of COVID-19 in Wuhan, China. Organized by a broad coalition of Chinese-American organizations and supported by a local chapter of Veterans for Peace, the march started out in Portsmouth Square Park, then took over Grant Avenue on the way to a mass rally in Union Square. People sang patriotic songs against Chinese people, which made it easier for women to enter communities, where lack of access to insurance and health care brings greater peril during an epidemic; renewed mili- tary efforts to free prisoners through bail and to close im/migrant detention camps, where infection risks are high from over-crowding and lack of health care; support to community health and home health care workers—the majority women of color—proper protective equipment; and close attention to price controls and food distribution plans in nationally oppressed communities if areas are quarantined.

China has been an example to the world of how to limit and hopefully defeat COVID-19 by mobilizing a centralized "people's response" to the COVID-19 epi- demic—a response only possible because People’s China has been working since 1949 to build a path to socialism.
Spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) exposes profit system

By Deirdre Griswold

March 2 – As this is written, the coronavirus (COVID-19) has become a pandemic reaching around the world, almost entirely in the Northern Hemisphere. The U.S., with 99 reported cases and six deaths, ranks 11th on the list of countries with confirmed COVID-19 cases. The number of confirmed positive cases reported in the U.S. is now 24 and climbing. China, where the outbreak began, is still the hardest hit country with a total of over 80,000 cases and 2,912 fatalities. With four times the population of the U.S., China has taken drastic measures to slow the spread of the disease. As of March 2, the National Health Commission reported only six new cases outside Hubei, where the outbreak started. Only one of these was a new importation; the other five were considered potential cases of infection among people infected.

Why is the U.S. nonresponse to the epidemic?

Given the speed with which these statistics have been compiled by the relevant health authorities, is there any reason why the U.S. government should not be in high gear preparing to deal with the spread of COVID-19?

But just the opposite is happening. Anyone with an ounce of common sense must have been appalled when President Donald Trump, a resident of South Carolina on Feb. 28, called the coronavirus a “new hoax” by Democrats to defame him. This made it clear that if people in government agencies are feeling pressure to release resources to fight the virus, they will have to challenge the White House. Is it too much to expect a White House toward the virus isn’t just stupidity. It’s an attempt to sidestep the consequences of not preparing for an outbreak in the U.S. That medical scientists have been predicting for months and that has already begun.

Stock market affected

Triggered by the news of COVID-19 deaths here, U.S. stock markets took a dive on Feb. 28. The Dow Jones dropped by 938 points — its biggest one-day decline since 2009. This certainly got the attention of Washington. But at this point, the Trump administration is much more focused on upholding the stock market than on protecting the population, generating products and disease control. Government intervention is expected to translate into the Federal Reserve lowering interest rates to stimulate “growth.” How will that help people without health insurance who get sick? Who will pay their bills? Or instead will they be stuck with huge debts?

A majority of U.S. workers are struggling with multiple financial stresses and don’t have enough cash to cover a $500 emergency. Some health authorities are telling workers to stay home if they feel sick, but nearly half get no paid sick leave. No provisions have been made to compensate sick workers who stay home in order to avoid spreading the disease. This includes health care workers, who are much more likely to be sickened by the virus.

Workers who have jobs where they can telecommute or perform home care won’t be penalized. But a huge percentage of workers can’t do their jobs at home, including fast food and hotel workers or cabbies and truck drivers, all of whom are notoriously underpaid.

What China did about it

All this contrasts sharply with China’s reaction to the spread of COVID-19 there. Measures were quickly taken to compensate for the lack of income caused by the quarantine of whole geographical areas. Debt payments were suspended by government decree.

Would Washington ever take such a step? The bankers and other creditors would scream bloody murder.

The Chinese government also built 16 brand-new hospitals to treat patients. No one is turned away for lack of insurance or money to pay the bills.

While China has in recent decades already made great progress, its basic infrastructure is state-owned, and policy is set by the 90-member million Communist Party. Its national health care system covered 90 percent of the population in 2019.

After decades of foreign domination that drained its wealth and stifled growth, China’s recent rapid economic and social development is due entirely to its great revolution that culminated in 1949. Workers and peasants who had fought the landlords and capitalist bosses were able to take the power and embark on the enormous task of lifting hundreds of millions out of extreme poverty while laying the basis for socialist development.

As young people in the U.S. yearn for an end to capitalist exploitation and war, they are looking ever more closely at how to achieve socialism here. The spread of COVID-19 will only deepen the need to make revolutionary social change.

How Cuba’s antiviral medicine is helping China

By Rosa Miriam Elizalde

Rosa Miriam Elizalde is a Cuban journalist and editor of the site Cubadebate. Reprinted from La Jornada, translation by Resumen Latinoamericano, North America bureau.

Cuba’s antiretroviral Recombinant Interferon alpha 2b (IFNrec) is among the medicines chosen by China to treat the coronavirus, Alpha 2B (IFNrec) is among the medicines by Resumen Latinoamericano, North American bureau. By Rosa Miriam Elizalde

Cuba’s antitropical Recombinant Interferon alpha 2b (IFNrec) is among the medicines chosen by China to treat the coronavirus, the disease that has caused at least 1,800 deaths in that country. To date, there is still no specific vaccine.

Interestingly, Interferon has been in Cuba for 30 years; the country began the development of this protein with antiviral properties at the same time that the biotechnology industry was being invented in 1981.

In that year, you could count on one hand the number of countries of the so-called first world that were working on this set of techniques that used living organisms — or part of them — with the aim of isolating DNA or DNA fragments or altering them to improve plants or animals, or developing biological systems for specific purposes, in particular for the improvement of human health.

This definition of biotechnology is based on a wide range of knowledge that is supported by elite disciplines such as microbiology, cell biology, biochemistry, genetics, bioengineering and chemical engineering, molecular biology and immunology. The combination of these new techniques led to the so-called aircraft carrier of science, molecular biology, which in Cuba opened to the so-called aircraft carrier of science, molecular biology, which in Cuba opened to the so-called aircraft carrier of science, molecular biology, which in Cuba...
Un orgulloso ciudadano de la troika

Por Camilo Mejía

El organizador anti-guerra nicaragüense Camilo Mejía, fue asesinado por el régimen de Ortega-rre de Nicaragua. Camilo Mejía, ofreció esta charla el 21 de febrero en la reunión de la Coalición Nacional Unida Anti-Guerra (UNAC) en el Foro del Pueblo en Nueva York. Primera parte. Ligeramente revisada.

El 1 de noviembre de 2018, John Bolton dio un discurso en Miami en el que hizo referencia por primera vez a la troika de la tiranía, para referirse a Cuba, Nicaragua y Venezuela, afirmando que los tres están causando una tremenda cantidad de sufrimiento humano. Así que me gustaría hablarles como un nicaragüense, como un sandinista, y como un orgulloso ciudadano de la troika, porque de estar un ciudadano de la troika significa que mi país es un blanco principal de la agresión de EE.UU., lo que significa que debemos de estar haciendo algo bueno.

Y al igual que el discurso “del elefante del mal”, en el año 2002, cuando George W. Bush estableció lo que sería la política extranjera para el Oriente Próximo, este discurso ha demostrado que eso, porque el orden económico neoliberal ha demostrado ser ineficaz, y que estoy causando enormes cantidades de sufrimiento, sufrimiento humano, a diferencia de la troika. Y entonces, ¿quién ha causado estas políticas neoliberales? Han causado una gran desigualdad, la destrucción del medio ambiente, una gran pobreza, enfermedades, mortalidad infantil y materna, destrucción de la infraestructura de los países, destrucción de la soberanía de los países. Y a la par de eso lo que tenemos es un mundo de potencias mundiales emergentes que están adoptando un enfoque muy diferente, y que básicamente está arrastrando sus nuevas relaciones en la colonización del curso de la tecnología, de la infraestructura, en el desarrollo de nuevas tecnologías más limpias. Por lo tanto lo que estamos viendo realmente es que se están creando una alternativa frente a todo este sufrimiento neoliberal.

Y sin embargo, lo que vemos es que los Estados Unidos, por ejemplo, para salvar sus formas y corregir sus errores, sigue cometiendo los mismos errores y tratando de imponer sus políticas neoliberales en todo el continente americano y el mundo.

No tengo que convencerles de que muchos de los impactos devastadores que estamos viendo en América Latina y el resto del mundo también los estamos viendo aquí (en Estados Unidos). Las políticas neoliberales de privatización y austeridad han causado a la gran mayoría de las personas que viven en los Estados Unidos grandes sufrimientos, desde el desplazamiento de las comunidades pobres de sus barrios, hasta la injusticia y la destrucción del medio ambiente, pasando por la brutalidad policial y estatal, y las crisis de la vivienda, de la atención sanitaria y de la educación. El neoliberalismo, no la troika, está causando todo este tremendo sufrimiento humano y ambiental.

Levantamientos masivos

La situación en el extranjero no es menos urgente. Los levantamientos masivos que estamos viendo desde Tegucigalpa, Honduras, y San Pedro Sula, hasta París, Francia y en todo el resto del mundo son una respuesta directa al impacto de las políticas neoliberales y el impacto que está teniendo en la gran mayoría de la humanidad. Las políticas neoliberales que se traducen en la destrucción del medio ambiente, en las numerosas muertes de mortalidad, hambre, enfermedades y guerras, sólo para nombrar algunas.

Así que aquí estamos esta noche, y qué podríamos pedir que podamos participar en una conferencia antiimperialista en las entradas de la bestia.

En este momento de transición a escala mundial, estamos en el epicentro mismo de esa transición - lo que significa que tenemos que ser muy conscientes de las circunstancias y el contexto histórico en el que nos encontramos, y el cual presenta la mayoría de los países de todo el mundo no esperó mucho para las políticas neoliberales comenzaron inmediatamente a socavar todo el orden de la revolución, incluyendo la reforma agraria, la campaña de alfabetización, las leyes en la que se trató la atención sanitaria, los programas de educación, los derechos de los trabajadores y mucho más. El país dejó de ser una nación soberana para convertirse en un mercado barato que las empresas transnacionales podrían explotar salvajemente, sin tener en cuenta a la población del país así como su entorno natural.

16 años de oscuridad

Una situación similar a la epidemia de drogas de Los Ángeles se produjo en Nicaragua, ya que la mayoría de nuestros ciudadanos perdieron la red de seguridad social que había sido proporcionada por el gobierno sandinista: las tasas de mortalidad se dispararon una vez más, los campesinos perdieron sus tierras, el analftabetismo se disparó, los niños pobres se desnutrieron, el desempleo masivo llevó a más tasas de criminalidad y a barrios inseguros, y la gran mayoría de los nicaragüenses durante este período neoliberal; no hubieron organismos médicos, chiribias o cualquier otra cosa causada por la falta de vivienda, por nombrar algunos...

El legado del General Sandino inspiró la lucha

Pero el legado del General Sandino inspiró la lucha por la liberación de un movimiento revolucionario, que no sólo derrotó lo que se convirtió en la dinastía Somoza, que gobernó Nicaragua durante más de 40 años, sino que también se convirtió en uno de los tres gobiernos conocidos colectivamente hoy como la troika de la tiranía! Por supuesto que hablo del Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional, o FSLN, cuyos colores (rojo y negro) llenaron puestos alrededor de mi cuello esta noche.

Así que, cuando el Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional derrotó la dictadura apoyada por los Estados Unidos de la familia Somoza en el 79, el gobierno de los Estados Unidos no esperó mucho para lanzar una contraofensiva para repuntar el control y comenzaron a entrenar a la tropa, y ofrecer financiación para reparar el ejército mercenario nicaragüense conocido como la contra.

Pero como el congreso estadounidense había prohibido la financiación de los ejércitos mercenarios, la administración Reagan tuvo que reconvertir a formas creativas para apoyar a su ejército títere, incluyendo la venta de armas a Irán durante la guerra entre el Irán e Irak, un escándalo que se conoció como el Asunto Irán-Contra, y esa fue la misma guerra en la que los Estados Unidos armaron al ejército de Saddam Hussein con armas químicas, que más tarde fueron utilizadas contra los kurdos iraquíes, y contra la población militar y civil iraní.

Otro turbio esquema para mantener la guerra fue que la CIA facilitó el tráfico de drogas en los barrios afroamericanos de Los Ángeles, lo que se convirtió no sólo en una epidemia de salud, sino también en una epidemia social, ya que creó un ambiente de droga de tráfico de drogas, causando altas tasas de adicción, problemas de salud mental, desempleo, falta de vivienda, por nombrar algunos, todo ello mientras la administración Reagan recaudaba grandes montos para otros programas sociales, incluyendo servicios de salud mental, vivienda, educación y otras necesidades básicas.

Cuando el FSLN perdió las elecciones generales en 1990, una serie de gobiernos neoliberales comenzaron inmediatamente a socavar todos los logros de la revolución, incluyendo la reforma agraria, la campaña de alfabetización, las leyes en la que se trató la atención sanitaria, los programas de educación, los derechos de los trabajadores y mucho más. El país dejó de ser una nación soberana para convertirse en un mercado barato que las empresas transnacionales podrían explotar salvajemente, sin tener en cuenta a la población del país así como su entorno natural.

Por Camilo Mejía habla a la conferencia de la UNAC el 21 de febrero en Nueva York.