

Black vote dumps Trump

By Monica Moorehead

Once it was confirmed on Nov. 7 that the Joe Biden and Kamala Harris ticket had defeated Trump, literally tens of thousands of people around the U.S. spontaneously took to the streets for hours in jubilation and celebration. Not only were downtown areas taken over but also neighborhoods, block by block, where traffic came to a standstill with horns blaring.

While the majority of those in the streets were young people, all ages participated regardless of nationality, gender, gender expression and abilities. People could hardly wait to let off steam after waiting for what must have seemed like an eternity — if only five days — to see if the four-year nightmare of Trump would come to an end.

And who could blame them, for he had insulted and degraded the dignity and integrity of so many sectors of the working class inside and outside the U.S. These include im/migrants, Black, Latinx, Asian and Indigenous communities, women, LGBTQ2S+ people and people with disabilities — anyone and everyone who has felt marginalized by Trump’s racism and misogyny felt exuberated to be seen and heard. Even other world imperialist leaders, though with a diplomatic tone, expressed relief at seeing Trump ousted.

And while many carried Biden/Harris placards and waved U.S. flags, there were many carrying Black Lives Matter signs as well as carrying the names and images of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, murdered by the police in Minneapolis, Minn.,

and Louisville, Ky., respectively this past spring. There were also signs saying that the election was not about Biden/Harris, but about the defeat of Trump and that the struggle will continue.

There was also the recognition of history being made with Kamala Harris being the first woman and the first woman of color to become a vice-president elect. While describing herself as a Black woman of Jamaican heritage, her family roots also come from the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. There were thousands of women, including Muslims, carrying signs expressing equal if not more support for Harris winning than Biden.

While there was a wide gauntlet of political views of people who poured out in the streets of Philadelphia, Atlanta, New York City, Chicago, the Bay Area, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles and elsewhere, there was one view that united them all — their utter hatred and disgust for Trump.

Referendum on police violence, health crisis

Close to 145 million people cast votes in the presidential election with Biden/Harris winning more than 74 million, the most in any U.S. election. The percentage of eligible voters who turned out was 66.3%, the highest since the 1908 election. And more than 100 million votes were cast early, compared to 47 million in 2016. (CBS Sunday Morning, Nov. 8) Biden was able to garner more votes than any U.S. presidential candidate with the help of an additional 6 million more voters compared to the 2016 election.

The “defeat Trump” sentiment was in essence a referendum rejecting his mishandling of COVID-19 and his white supremacy where police brutality is concerned. For months, Trump downplayed and dismissed the severity of the pandemic by speaking at ultraright-wing campaign rallies, where his supporters

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Lead banners of march in Philadelphia Center City, Nov. 7.

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Philly celebrates, pledges to keep fighting

By Ted Kelly
Philadelphia

As soon as the news broke late on the morning of Nov. 7 that the 2020 U.S. presidential election was over, workers here could be heard cheering the humiliating defeat of Donald Trump. Soon after, they were in the streets — dancing and banging pots and pans. Strangers greeted each other warmly on corners and waved to each other from their cars.

Thousands began to assemble at City Hall, Independence Mall, West Philadelphia’s Clark Park and elsewhere in this city, which is credited with pushing the vote for former Vice President Biden over the top. The spontaneous jubilation sparked by news of Trump’s ouster should not be underestimated!

Yet at the same time these celebrations began, a very different event was underway across town — the funeral of Walter Wallace Jr., a 27-year-old Black man gunned down Oct. 26 by two white Philadelphia cops, Sean Matarazzo and Thomas Munz. Classmates of Matarazzo claim that he is a longtime white supremacist.

Protests erupted immediately after

Wallace’s killing, as communities across the city condemned the cops for responding with deadly force to a Black man who was experiencing a mental health crisis. Police body camera footage released the day after the election reveals the cops saying “Shoot him” to each other as bystanders — including Wallace’s mother — beg the cops not to shoot.

On Nov. 7, one part of the city wept as the other danced. The distance between these two realities is only widened by the election of Biden, who, when asked prior to Election Day if he had any response to the murder of Wallace, responded by condemning the people protesting police violence.

Philly United Front: ‘Keep the struggle in the streets!’

Nov. 7 was also the day chosen by the Philly United Front to stage their first public demonstration in the city.

The United Front, initiated by Workers World Party’s Philadelphia branch, is a broad assembly of progressive and radical organizations, including Philly Boricuas, the Philly Black Radical Collective, Black Alliance for Peace, Black Lives

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PHOTO: BLACK VOTERS MATTER

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Seattle

Anti-racist marches continue during election week

By Jim McMahan
Seattle

Black-led marches against racist and economic oppression continued during election week in Seattle. Trump’s racism has led more people to stay in the streets. While the vote for Biden was big, the election definitely didn’t take people out of the streets.

The marches continued to press the five basic demands of the local Black Lives Matter movement: “Defund the Seattle police department — by 50% at least!” “Invest in the Black community!” “Free all the protesters!” “No new youth jail!” and “Mayor Durkan, you resign!”

On Nov. 4, mainly Black demonstrators marched past the East Precinct on Capitol Hill, carrying Black Lives Matter signs. The cops attacked. Seven were arrested for standing up against racist attacks on their community. Kel Murphy-Duford, a Black trans man, was grabbed by cops. They slammed him to the ground and “his head hit the pavement,” according to his lawyer, Karen Koeler. This was witnessed by demonstrators and even recorded on police body cameras.

Public officials and the cops have been extremely vague about Murphy-Duford’s medical condition. On the evening of Nov. 5, Karen Koeler reported he was “still intubated and unconscious” in the hospital. Murphy-Duford has been active in the LGBTQ2S+ community and has been a regular at anti-racist protests since June.

On Nov. 5 a large rally was held in Occidental Park for Black lives and to “Count every vote — Protect every person!” A Native Duwamish man from the First People of Seattle spoke and sang a drum song. Palmira Figueroa spoke from the Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network. A Black undocumented activist reminded the crowd that Joe Biden was a member of an administration



“Count Every Vote — Protect Every Person” rally, Seattle, Nov. 4.

that deported 4 million people between 2009 and 2017.

There were speakers from the Washington State Labor Council, representing 550,000 workers, and the Washington state Poor Peoples Campaign. The famous “Katie,” organizer of the daily Morning March, also spoke. People heard from the Black Action Coalition, which then led the 400-person crowd on a march through downtown. The following night the Black Action Coalition led demonstrators on an evening march to the massive construction site of a new youth jail. The march was guarded by volunteer car brigades in both the front and the rear, and bike brigades along the sides — a common security set-up. Marchers sat down and blocked the street for over an hour while a peoples assembly was held in front of the jail. People of color spoke bitterness and exposed the racist torture and loss of youth they endured in the so-called “Youth Service Center.”

In Seattle, Black Lives Matter protesters have marched for over 150 days and provided energy and leadership for the overall struggle of the working class. The struggle continues. □



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 neverending quest for ever-greater profits.

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on im/migrants, misogyny, LGBTQ2S+ 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

Join us in the fight
for socialism!

and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

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

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

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

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this week

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Movement welcomes release of Ant Smith

By Ted Kelly
Philadelphia

Beloved community organizer and teacher Anthony (Ant) Smith was finally released from federal custody on Nov. 9. “For the second time in just a few days, Ant’s defense attorney Paul Hetznecker successfully argued for his release on bail,” stated supporter Jasmine Peake-Miles. “We won the appeal, and Ant will be coming home. Let’s get ready to welcome him back!”

Smith was kidnapped by federal forces on Oct. 28. Acting on orders from right-wing U.S. attorney William McSwain, the feds trashed Smith’s house and terrorized his family. He was brought into custody on bogus charges related to vandalism of a cop car during a May 30 protest amid the uprisings protesting George Floyd’s murder by police.

Smith has been held in general population in Lehigh County Jail since then, over an hour outside Philadelphia.



Contingent calling for Ant Smith’s release in Nov. 7 march. WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Despite the fact that a federal judge ordered his release on Nov. 6, Smith remained imprisoned in Allentown, Pa., after McSwain’s team appealed the ruling of the detention hearing in an attempt to keep Smith in custody until his trial. If convicted of arson, he faces a mandatory minimum of 7 years in federal prison.

A petition circulated by Black Lives Matter Philly, a constituent of the Black Philly Radical Collective reads, “As we await his second detention hearing, we

urge the community to recommit to standing by Anthony as we continue the fight for his release. Anthony has always fought for the equitable treatment of the members of our community, and now it is our duty to stand up and fight for him.”

Supporters note that Smith is a key figure in the community, both as an activist and a teacher.

Over 70 letters attesting to Smith’s upstanding character and service to the people of Philadelphia were sent to the judge prior to the ruling that ordered his release. As well as being a member of REAL Justice, Ant spends every Friday feeding people in need at 60th and Market streets with Food Not Bombs Solidarity. Supporters have circulated a photo of Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney giving Smith an award for his distinguished service to the people of the city.

William McSwain, the U.S. attorney who

brought these politically motivated charges against Smith, is an ambitious and corrupt prosecutor who has been using public funds to plaster his face on billboards across the state, boasting of his “tough on crime” and “law and order” record. He regularly barges into the city to hold press conferences and claim jurisdiction on cases he deems the Philadelphia District Attorney’s office to be “too soft on.”

McSwain made the bogus claim at a press conference announcing the charges, that he did not know who Anthony Smith was before targeting this well-known activist in the midst of another uprising against police murder, this time against the murder of West Philly resident Walter Wallace Jr. He was killed by two white cops in front of his mother on Oct. 26, two days before Smith’s arrest.

Speaking at a press conference held for Smith on Oct. 30, Deandra Jefferson said, “They messed with the wrong person.”

Workers World Party welcomes the release of Anthony Smith and calls for all charges against him to be dropped immediately.

Free Ant! □

Wallace family calls for firing officers, criticizes lack of police reform

By Betsey Piette

The Oct. 26 police killing of Walter Wallace Jr. in Philadelphia was caught on a video that went viral, bringing thousands into the streets to demand justice for the 27-year-old Black man, who had been experiencing a mental health crisis. Despite a series of 911 callers saying Wallace needed an ambulance and two previous police visits where they were made aware of Wallace’s condition, the final response was by two police officers who fired 14 shots at Wallace within minutes of their arrival.

On Nov. 4, one day after the election, the city released police bodycam footage of Wallace’s killing by officers Thomas Munz Jr. and Sean Matarazzo, both in their 20s. The Wallace family had been shown the video days before it was made public. In the footage, one of the officers can be clearly heard saying “Shoot him” before both officers fired.

The Black Philly Radical Collective called a protest to disclose the officers’ names and denounce the city’s delay in releasing the footage. They gathered on one side of City Hall, while demonstrators demanding that every vote be counted in the presidential election amassed on the

other side. Eventually both demonstrations merged.

The 911 dispatch recordings that brought Munz and Matarazzo to the scene made no mention of Wallace’s mental health history or the two earlier police responses. In the bodycam footage, Wallace, who had a knife, appears to be walking aimlessly rather than aggressively. His mother and two neighbors were yelling at the police not to shoot.

Members of the Wallace family, their attorney Shaka Johnson and Gwen Carr, the mother of Eric Garner, spoke out at a press conference Nov. 6. Garner was killed by New York police in July 2014. His final words, like George Floyd’s, were “I can’t breathe,” and his case was a milestone in the Black Lives Matter movement.

Failure to follow 2015 Department of Justice call for reforms

While not calling for charges to be brought against the two officers, the Wallace family is demanding they be fired. Johnson criticized the Philadelphia Police Department for failing to implement reforms and training recommendations made in a 2015 U.S. Department of Justice report. The report, requested in 2013 by then Police Commissioner Charles

Black Philly Radical Collective member Gabriel Bryant calls for “Justice for Walter Wallace Jr.” at rally in Philadelphia, Nov. 7.



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Ramsey, identified “serious deficiencies in the department’s use-of-force policies and training, including a failure to maintain a certified field training program; deficient, inconsistent supervision and operational control of officer-involved shooting investigations and crime scenes.”

While the DOJ report applied to the entire Philadelphia Police Department, it named police districts where civilian complaints of brutality were particularly high — including the 18th district where Munz and Matarazzo are currently employed.

Johnson and other speakers called for all police to be armed with Tasers and for a change in the way the city responds to mental health crises. However, even with reforms like mandatory bodycam use implemented, it has not changed the “shoot him” mentality of racist police officers.

Gwen Carr noted that while she had learned of her son’s death in a phone call, Wallace’s parents had the horror of witnessing his killing. “Can you imagine, just imagine, what trauma they went through seeing their son murdered right in front of their eyes? There are

thousands of mentally ill people [who] are getting gunned down every day because the police are the first responders. This has to stop.” (Philly.com, Nov. 7)

In addition to support from Carr, other parents of victims of police violence visited with the Wallace family to offer support. They included Samaria Rice, whose 12-year-old son Tamir Rice was gunned down by Cleveland police Nov. 22, 2014, and Lisa Simpson, whose 18-year-old son Richard Risher was fatally shot by police in Los Angeles July 25, 2016.

A rank-and-file caucus of AFSCME District Council 33 and DC 47 issued a statement calling on Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney and the City Council to immediately defund the Philadelphia Police Department by at least half — \$364 million — with the money to go instead to fund public services, including mental health. Wallace’s father is a 33-year veteran of the city’s Streets Department.

Several hundred people attended the funeral for Wallace Nov. 7. All Wallace’s nine children including his infant daughter, born just days after he was murdered, were there. In his obituary, Wallace was remembered as “a handyman who would try to fix almost anything, he was dependable and an avid learner.”

The family wrote: “We never saw Walt having a disability. We saw the man who fought through it and did so with his best ability.” (Philly.com, Nov. 8) □

Workers Assembly against racism

A Workers Assembly against Racism rally in New York, near Trump International Hotel and Tower, builds anti-racist solidarity between organized and unorganized workers. This event started just as the Biden electoral victory was being announced on Nov. 7. Tens of thousands of people came out onto the streets of New York to celebrate the defeat of Trump. The message by the Workers Assembly Against Racism — of the need to continue the struggle and push far beyond Biden — was well received. The Workers Assembly Against Racism was a dose of class struggle and reality in the midst of a Biden celebration. Anti-racist solidarity is the key to uniting the struggles of working and oppressed people!

—By Sara Flounders



WW PHOTO: TONI ARENSTEIN

San Quentin

Sistas With Voices demand mass releases

By Judy Greenspan
San Rafael, Calif.

Nov. 8 — Today, prisoner support groups and family members held a spirited demonstration at San Quentin State Prison’s main gate, demanding the state order a mass release of incarcerated people instead of a transfer to other prisons. The protest was organized by Sistas With Voices and family members of people inside.

On Oct. 21, a state appellate court ordered the prison population at San Quentin be cut by half, due to mismanagement at the facility during the COVID-19 pandemic. San Quentin is not only the oldest California state prison, it houses death row for prisoners classified “male” by the California Department of Corrections and “Rehabilitation.” (AP, Oct. 21)

A transfer in May spread COVID from the California Institution for Men in Chino to San Quentin. Since then, over 2,800 of those held in San Quentin have contracted the virus, and 28 have died. The immunocompromised health suffered by most of the aging incarcerated population — coupled with poor ventilation and unsanitary conditions — accelerated COVID transmission.

As families of those inside rallied to demand “Mass Releases, Not Transfers!” a speak-out was held to reinforce this demand. As Elsie Lee of Sistas With Voices chaired, family members who had traveled from all over the state read statements from loved ones — most of whom had caught COVID while incarcerated.

Formerly incarcerated people from San Quentin and other state prisons spoke and emphasized the

horror of contracting COVID while inside. Lisa Strawn, a recently released trans woman spoke of getting COVID toward the end of her 25-year sentence: “I actually didn’t think I was going to make it out alive.” Strawn reminded the crowd that San Quentin is not just a “men’s prison”: “There is an entire LGBTQ community inside. I am here to represent that community.”

A phone call by J.B., who is held inside San Quentin, made it clear why CDCR is only interested in transfers, not releases: “CDCR knows that as long as they keep the beds filled and the cells filled, that’s money” coming in for the prison system. He added that the transfers from CIM have spread COVID to other prisons around the state besides San Quentin.

The decision by San Francisco’s First District Court of Appeal called the

CDCR’s handling of the virus “the worst epidemiological disaster in California correctional history.” But though the decision mandates the San Quentin prisoner population be reduced by 50%, it does not rule out the use of transfers.

Activism by groups like Sistas with Voices and No Justice Under Capitalism pushed the California courts to order some relief for those held in San Quentin.

But it will take additional pressure from prisoners’ rights organizations, family members, formerly incarcerated people, health care advocates and other allies to win the mass release of 1,500 San Quentin prisoners.

The Sistas organizers say that COVID-19 should not be a death sentence. Mass releases, not transfers — now! □



WV PHOTO: JUDY GREENSPAN
Elsie Lee of Sistas With Voices demands mass releases not transfers of San Quentin prisoners.

New Jersey releases 2,261—but to what?

By Mirinda Crissman

The State of New Jersey released 2,261 incarcerated workers from its state prisons on Nov. 4. This largest single-day release in U.S. history comes on the heels of state law S2519, passed in September, which calls for the release of nearly 3,000 people in prisons to stop the rampant spread of disease inside and protect the health of the public during the ravenous coronavirus pandemic. (NBC News, Nov. 4)

This release is an important win that was hard fought by various community organizations and saves thousands of lives. And, as we see this system reproducing its violence in mutated and new forms, we must be sure to fight all the conditions that have allowed the death-making policies of human captivity, trafficking, and family separation to flourish since settlers first stepped foot on the Western Hemisphere.

Whether it’s an im/migrant detention center, jail and/or prison, those walls don’t and won’t ever stop the spread of disease and death from reaching inhabitants outside walls. These cages in their various forms exist to maintain the law and so-called order of settler-imposed capitalism on stolen land, while simultaneously serving as lethal, overcrowded catch-alls for society’s contradictions.

Because prisons have been hotspots for COVID and a detriment to public health, the legislation passed in September explains that “prisoners in New Jersey within a year of completing sentences for crimes other than murder and sexual assault are eligible to

be released as many as eight months early.” (New York Times, Nov. 4)

This selection — between who is granted release from their own kidnapping from their communities at the hands of police, and who is left to face a possible COVID-19 death sentence inside jail facilities — reinforces and reproduces the myth that cages keep society safer from real harm, like murder and sexual assault. This false myth disregards the material reality that these cages reproduce murder and assault themselves, rather than addressing the root causes of these ills.

Mia Mingus, of the Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective and a fierce advocate around Disability Justice, explains: “As a survivor of child sexual abuse, working for abolition via transformative justice, more police and more prisons will not stop sexual violence. If it did, we would not have the devastatingly high epidemic-level rates of sexual violence that continue to persist.”

(tinyurl.com/yy6egrzd, June 26)

Collectively attacking cultural conditions of racism, ableism, patriarchal violence, and homophobia alongside attacking the structural conditions of housing, food and job insecurities are essential in our efforts to break free of the rot of this system, which was designed to divide and conquer.

Fighting further criminalization

In anticipation of these New Jersey mass releases, many volunteers and community organizers who greeted released people at bus stations used



Abolitionist Demands for prisons during COVID-19

Prisoners Solidarity Committee
of Workers World Party

@pscwvp

1

RELEASE THEM ALL!

The Prisoners Solidarity Committee of Workers World Party calls for immediate and mass releases of prisoners due to the inability to social distance. This must include the release of those workers sentenced to life in prison and life without parole (LWOP). We emphasize the immediate release of elder and immunocompromised prisoners. Those released should be assigned to a job or guaranteed income, housing, medical care and healthy food.

2

FREE ACCESS TO PHONE CALLS, MAIL AND DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

Prisoners, family and community have the right to communicate with each other. The state has used the pandemic to isolate incarcerated workers from their communities and their class.

3

END PRE-TRIAL DETENTION

We call for the immediate release of the thousands of workers currently being held in prisons, jails and detention centers across the country without having been convicted of a crime. We demand a complete moratorium of any prisoner transfers, especially without a conviction.

4

FREE NON-COERCIVE COVID TESTING, ACCESS TO CDC APPROVED HAND SANITIZER, PPE, AND HYGIENE ITEMS

5 ALL PRISONERS WHO TEST POSITIVE FOR COVID MUST BE IMMEDIATELY TRANSFERRED TO NON-PRISON HOSPITALS

No punishment for those who test positive. No more de facto executions by COVID-19!

6

STOP ALL PRISON TRANSFERS, CELL EXTRACTIONS AND SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

Transfers spread COVID19. Cell extractions and solitary confinement are tools of retaliation against prisoner organizers. Solitary confinement is torture.

7

HUMANE AND LIVABLE CONDITION FOR ALL

Including consistent showers and air conditioning in every cell and facility. A shocking number of prison facilities across the United States have no air conditioning in any spaces where prisoners are confined. Permanent lockdown in prisons has meant prisoners must choose between shower, exercise, fresh air, and speaking to their families.

8

HEALTHY AND FREE MEALS FOR ALL

The shocking decline of quality and portions of food in prisons is causing an entirely new public health crisis in prisons. Prisoners are being forced to eat expired, rotten, and otherwise unhealthy food in order for contractors to cut corners and collect more profits.

9

WORK FURLOUGH WITH FULL PAY

No prisoners should be forced to work for slave wages, especially during a pandemic. All prisoners should receive full wages during this requisite work stoppage and have access to commissary supplies free of charge. Prisoners should be paid the same minimum wage as workers on the other side of the walls.

10

ALLOW THE FORMATION OF PRISONER UNIONS

Incarcerated workers must have the right to organize unions and political organizations without fear of reprisals to address the threats unique to their facilities. For these demands to be effective in transitioning to full abolition, prisoners must be able to organize, politically and for self-defense. Organize for abolition!

Continued on page 5

Class oppression and the virus

By Deirdre Griswold

The United States continues to lead the world — in the number of COVID-19 cases as well as in deaths.

As of Nov. 9, this rich, high-tech imperialist country has now registered 243,302 deaths from the virus. This is twice as many coronavirus deaths as in India, even though the population of India is four times that of the U.S. and India is a country with a much lower standard of living.

The contrast becomes even more shocking when comparing the U.S. to China. With a population four times that of the U.S., China has had only 4,634 deaths from the virus. [Coronavirus Update (Live)] Breaking that down further, the U.S. has suffered 734 COVID-19 deaths per million people, while China has had only 3 deaths per million.

In addition, China is where the virus first broke out, meaning that everything about combating it there had to be learned from scratch.

How is this huge disparity possible?

Clearly, this virulent epidemic calls for an examination of health care in the U.S. But there are other issues as well. How much trust do people here put in what their government says needs to be done? How does the economic system we live under affect human behavior and solidarity?

The biggest difference between China and the U.S. is not population size or level of development. It is the type of social system and which class is in power.

The U.S. is unabashedly capitalist. Millionaires and billionaires control the political system. The people vote, yes, but they have to pick from candidates chosen by the ruling class. Trump is obviously a millionaire, but so is Biden. And Biden is also a serious contender only because he has the backing of the Democratic Party establishment.

China has a very different history. A Communist-led popular revolution there came to power in 1949, after years of guerrilla struggle against the old regime.

At the time, China was impoverished, having been pillaged for decades by the imperialist powers of Japan and the West. Rich landlords oppressed the majority, made up of landless peasants. Life expectancy then in China was 39.

Today life expectancy in China is 77 years, almost twice what it was when the revolution triumphed and just two years less than the U.S. With the coronavirus having been conquered in China, even as it continues to rage in the U.S., the contrast between the two countries becomes even greater.

In the election just ended here, both capitalist parties vied for control of a government that doles out favors to the winners. No change is expected in how this for-profit health system operates. Nor has the two-party system done anything to develop solidarity. On the contrary, it pits people against one another in a way



China has valuable lessons for the world in how to fight COVID-19.

that tears down — rightfully — trust in those who govern, but at the same time it puts the burden of this competition on the people themselves.

It will take a huge struggle by progressives to get even close to the kind of socialized medicine that exists in some of the European capitalist countries, where there has historically been a strong socialist-oriented mass movement.

But millions of lives are at stake. The COVID-19 epidemic must spur on the movement for universal, free healthcare. □

COVID-19 surges while the economy sputters

By G. Dunkel

Both the economy and COVID are vitally important issues for working people in the United States. Lost in the tension of the postelection week, news about better-than-expected unemployment figures and the horrible surge in COVID-19 cases were both almost completely ignored.

The official report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics makes this point: The unemployment rate for white workers is 6.0% while for Black workers it is 10.8%, which is more than 70% higher. The overall unemployment rate declined by a percentage point to 6.9%.

This rate understates real unemployment. A more accurate rate, called the U-6 rate, which includes workers who have given up looking for a job and workers who are forced to take part-time jobs, has unemployment at 12.1%.

But neither of these unemployment rates accurately reflects a more basic rate, that of participation in the labor force. This rate measures the number of people working or seeking work as a percentage of the total population of working-age people. This has decreased during the pandemic, particularly for parents, mostly women,

who have stopped working to help their kids with Internet-based schooling.

The Economic Policy Institute (EPI) estimates around 30 million workers in the U.S. have lost hours, jobs, or seen their wages cut because of the pandemic.

Long-term unemployment, defined as being “out of work” for over 27 weeks, increased sharply in October. This is a problem for many workers since 26 weeks is also the time in most states when unemployment insurance runs out.

While the economy has increased its production since last spring, it is still far



from reaching pre-COVID levels. The GDP for October was down 3.5% from February; in monetary terms, that is around \$800 billion. At the current rate of economic growth, it will take more than a year to eliminate this gap.

This will be a year in which many

workers will suffer hunger, homelessness, sickness brought on by a lack of a job, and the loss of public services brought on by the budget shortfalls afflicting state and local governments. Nearly every state government is facing a deep drop in tax revenue due to losses produced by the pandemic.

COVID-19 surge foretells economic devastation

The 10 millionth coronavirus case in the United States was reported Nov. 8, with the latest million added in just 10 days. The seven day average is over 100,000 new cases per day. With less than 5% of the world's population, the U.S. has 25% of the world's coronavirus cases.

People who were poor, or one major emergency away from being poor before the pandemic, have been pushed deeper into poverty. According to the EPI, this includes 60% of African American people (26 million), 64% of Latinx people (38 million) and 33% of white people (66 million). Systemic racism is behind impoverishment of people of color.

Poor people are exposed to more danger since there is no nationally coordinated policy on containing and controlling COVID-19. Mark Meadows,

Trump's chief of staff, who last week announced his administration's policy of not attempting to control it, has tested positive this week, along with five other White House staff.

North Dakota is a good example of the dangers COVID-19 brings about. This Great Plains state abutting Canada is mostly rural, with an extensive oil extraction industry and about 762,000 inhabitants. There are five federally recognized Native reservations and one other Indigenous community located at least partially within North Dakota borders, with the Native population over 36,000 — 60% of whom live on the reservations, and over 40% are under the age of 20.

According to Renae Moch, public health director for the city of Bismarck and Burleigh County, N.D., infections are occurring in North Dakota at six times the national rate. Gov. Doug Burgum has promoted what he calls a “pro-business policy” of “personal responsibility.” (Washington Post, Nov. 6)

Hospitals are overwhelmed, forcing the movement of patients from local hospitals to remote facilities. There are still no statewide mitigation measures being enforced in North Dakota; local governments must plead for accepting “personal responsibility.”

It is very likely that situations like that in North Dakota will continue to be the norm, while the Trump administration avoids assisting local health care measures. □

New Jersey releases 2,261—but to what?

Continued from page 4

community crowdfunds to provide people with resources upon their re-entrance into society.

New Jersey “Department of Corrections” officials spoke of how folks would be released with IDs so they could pick up prescriptions and procure housing, but community organizers witnessed many left stranded during the pandemic by state neglect, without a single one of the promised resources. (WNYC, Nov. 7)

They were released without even one of them having secured a safe housing plan or a way to access resources needed to not only survive but to live safely during an unprecedented pandemic. Such a lack dooms those released to a caged future, unless members of our collective class can intervene with

inside-outside solidarity.

Another related area of organized state violence we must organize against is immediate rearrests by Immigration and Customs Enforcement. ICE immediately rearrested 88 of the 2,261 people released. Although New Jersey was once a sanctuary state, prisons can and do notify ICE when prisoners who have committed certain crimes, specifically related to “violent crimes” and “drug offenses,” are released.

While some of these incarcerated workers are undocumented, others are permanent residents at risk of deportation because of prior convictions. Municipal, county, and out-of-state law enforcement agencies immediately recaptured 98 additional folks of the 2,261 released. (WNYC, Nov. 5)

Cages are a form of state surveillance and death-making machines

that target particular populations for genocide, and they currently serve the ruling class in their global plunder of the planet for profit over people's lives. Documentation of criminalization across borders drawn by the imperialists precipitate punishment and a never-ending conveyor belt of vulnerability to premature death rather than any substantive change in the material conditions that had led up to the bars of a cell.

We must be sure to resist criminalizing and caging members of our class trying to survive, whether they're using drugs or participating in sex work. We must attack harm at the root causes as we build for the presence of abolition and socialist revolution. Free them all for public health! Attack the conditions that necessitate cages! Tear down the walls! □

FOLLOW US!

THE PRISONERS SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE OF WWP

@PSCWWP



TEAR DOWN THE WALLS



Atlanta ‘Dancing in the streets’

By Dianne Mathiowetz

Nov. 8 — After spending days watching scenes of hundreds of election workers working long hours processing mail-in ballots in arenas and convention centers across metro Atlanta, this writer decided to attend a “Voters Decide” event at Freedom Park. It was called by many grassroots and nonprofit organizations that had carried out intense voter registration and “Get Out The Vote” campaigns.

Stacey Abrams’ “New Georgia Project” was the key organization that connected local efforts to statewide resources, advice and personnel. Abrams had made history as a Black woman candidate for the Georgia governorship, barely losing to then Secretary of State Brian Kemp, who as governor has overseen the elimination of thousands of voter registrations leading up to the election.

My goal was to see whether the struggles against racial injustice, immigrant detention and deportation, discrimination against LGBTQ2S+ communities, denial of women’s reproductive rights, the jobs and housing crises, the pandemic and more remained at the top of organizers’ future priority list.

What had been organized was a rally supporting the emerging vote count for the Biden/Harris ticket in Georgia, to counter the pro-Trump protesters alleging “fraud” and “illegal ballots.” Often armed right-wingers were outside the ballot-counting facilities — and so intimidating that in some cases workers were escorted to their cars by security guards.

Just before the rally was scheduled to start, however, the news came that with the count in Pennsylvania, Biden had passed the threshold of 270 electoral



Women celebrate Trump’s defeat in Atlanta, Ga., on Nov. 7.

votes needed to win. It quickly turned into a jubilant celebration of the end of the Trump presidency, with throngs moving in unison to dance music.

Understanding the real work is ahead

An AFL-CIO bus filled with members wearing union T-shirts unloaded and joined the festivities. Unable to find parking, dozens of drivers who had accompanied the bus kept up a horn-blowing circuit around the park.

When the rally began, speakers from the stage — mostly Black, women and LGBTQ+ — made clear that the vote in Georgia and the country was an encouraging sign: Working and oppressed people had exercised power, but the real work was ahead. The elimination of white supremacy, sexism, transphobia, mass incarceration and poverty would require efforts far beyond what the occupant of the White House could or would do. Everyone I spoke with echoed that same understanding of the groundwork

needed to be done to achieve progress on these issues.

Nevertheless, the absolute euphoria that Donald Trump would no longer be president exploded, with raucous, cheering crowds lining Moreland Avenue and John Lewis Parkway, and a cacophony of cars blew their horns for hours late into the night.

The same was true at a spontaneous celebration of thousands at the cross streets of 10th and Piedmont in Midtown Atlanta — part of the route of the annual Pride parade. Others gathered at the huge mural of voting rights champion and late Congressperson John Lewis, off historic Auburn Avenue.

Similar scenes were seen in Decatur near the square where a Confederate monument was recently removed after years of public protest. Immigrant communities celebrated another victory with the defeat of two proponents of 287g, the program that turns local sheriffs into ICE agents. The new Cobb and Gwinnett

County sheriffs campaigned on the promise of ending the program and won decisively.

Senate runoff ahead

Georgia remains squarely in the national spotlight with two Senate seats in a runoff scheduled for Jan. 5, 2021. Billionaire Kelly Loeffler, appointed to the Senate position by Governor Kemp, touts her 100% record of support for Trump. Her opponent is Rev. Raphael Warnock, well-known pastor of the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church, long identified with Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and his family.

Loeffler, who has described herself as being to “the right of Attila the Hun” in a series of TV ads, has so publicly disparaged the Black Lives Matter movement that the members of the Atlanta Dream — the WNBA basketball team Loeffler partially owns — are wearing Vote for Warnock T-shirts.

The other Senate seat is currently held by Sen. David Perdue, a wealthy businessman who was appointed to the influential Georgia State Boards by his cousin, then-Governor Sonny Perdue, before David Perdue jumped into the Senate race six years ago. David Perdue’s opponent Jon Ossoff, who barely lost a U.S. House election in 2018, heads a documentary film company that investigates corruption and other criminal behavior internationally.

At stake is potential Democratic control of the U.S. Senate, possibly ending a barrier to COVID stimulus legislation sought by millions without jobs, health care, affordable housing or education.

The many I spoke with on Saturday who celebrated Biden’s electoral victory said, “voting is just one element of the struggle for real justice. What people do afterwards is decisive.” □

Black vote dumps Trump

Continued from page 1

did not wear face masks, and there was no social distancing, until he and others in his administration tested positive. To date, close to 240,000 people have died in the U.S. from the virus.

Trump openly backed police assaults and arrests on activists in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement following the Floyd lynching. Every police “union” endorsed the reelection of Trump.

Impact of Black Lives Matter

Following the vicious attack on demonstrators by federal troops and police in Washington, D.C., on June 1 in front of the White House, paving the way for Trump to have a photo op with a bible in his hand, it was reported that voter registration increased dramatically during the BLM-led protests.

In the first half of June, more than 1 million registered to vote, compared to 1.5 million during the whole month of June 2016. Before June 1, there had been a decline in voter registration due to the coronavirus pandemic.

According to Pew Research Center, an estimated 76% of registered Biden supporters surveyed over the summer said that racial inequality would be a determining factor on who they voted for, compared to 68% surveyed around the question of climate change as a determining factor. (Nov. 6)

Some grassroots nonprofit groups that organized voter registration projects include Rock the Vote; Color of Change; New Georgia Project, initiated by former state gubernatorial candidate Stacey

Abrams; and More Than a Vote, organized by Black National Basketball players like LeBron James to register athletes. Football stadiums and basketball arenas were transformed into voting areas, following a three-day strike by NBA playoff teams following the police shooting of Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Wis.

The threat of voter suppression was also on the minds of these voting rights projects and rightfully so. Trump cried “voter fraud” in mainly cities like Philadelphia, Milwaukee and Detroit with large Black and brown populations who voted early by mail to help defeat Trump. Some of his supporters went to voting centers to try to intimidate and physically stop poll workers from counting votes.

With the changing of the guard in the White House, there is the immediate question of how will Trump’s neofascist base react to the defeat, especially with his not conceding defeat? How will the workers, organized and unorganized, along with revolutionaries and socialists respond to any right-wing attacks? These questions and many more will be answered in due time.

The electoral defeat of Trump has invigorated the more than 74 million people who voted for Biden and Harris, but it can’t be discounted that 70 million people voted for Trump. What also can’t be discounted is that an election cannot vote away police terror, mass incarceration, unemployment, evictions, hunger, lack of health care and the general mass suffering of the people. Only an independent, revolutionary struggle for socialism can bring about real equality and ensure all human needs are met. □

Buffalo, N.Y.

‘No matter who wins, we lose!’



Post-election demonstration in Buffalo, N.Y., on Nov. 4.

WW PHOTO: LYDIAN DEFORD

By Lydian Deford

Workers World Party and the Green Party of Erie County held a jointly sponsored protest called “No matter who wins, we lose!” on Nov. 4 evening. While most of the country is enraptured by the drama of the phony U.S. democracy, the demonstration carried the message that we must not relent in our work as activists in the streets. No matter who sits in the Oval Office — class struggle, not electoral politics, is the only avenue towards progress for oppressed people.

The rally drew around 50 left-wing activists. The two scheduled speakers of the event were Sandy Przybylak of the Green Party and RJ Red from Workers

World Party. After the main speakers, an open atmosphere encouraged people to take the megaphone who do not often get the chance to have their voices heard. Those speakers included WWP friend Kawiye Jumale, who spoke about her experience as an African immigrant, and Elise Schreiber (Seneca) who reminded the audience about Indigenous political prisoner Leonard Peltier.

As the first postelection demonstration in Buffalo, it put us on the right path towards leftist unity, with a goal of making sure the movement avoids falling asleep under a Democratic presidency or giving up at the prospect of another four years of the incumbent. □

‘We’ve got to see this election as a wake-up call’

The following is an edited interview conducted by Nate Chase, with Workers World Party First Secretary Larry Holmes, during a WWP post-election webinar on Nov. 5., two days before Biden officially became the president-elect. Go to workers.org to read more remarks.

Nate Chase: Even a Biden victory is not providing solutions to the crises faced by working and oppressed people in the U.S. He doesn’t have a program for that.

Larry Holmes: The Intifada against racist police terror still going on shows that they’re not an appendage to the elections. They’re not reduced to having some bourgeois politician speak for them, which would be disastrous. Neither Biden or Kamala Harris are big defenders of Black Lives Matter. Biden has said he is unequivocally against defunding the police. If they do win, there’s gonna be a lot of excitement amongst especially women voters, women of color, because

Kamala Harris is a Black woman. She’s also South Asian. We are sensitive to that. When you look at her class, she was a top cop, the top prosecutor in California and was no friend to poor and oppressed people, including women, who she had prosecuted for being poor.

NC: Given Trump’s record, given every atrocity he’s been responsible for the past four years, given his complete failure to address the COVID pandemic, why is this election remotely close?

LH: When the Democratic Party throws the working class under the bus to neoliberalism, wages a war on the working class, eviscerates wages, takes away gains, globalizes the competition for labor, then it becomes impossible for their leaders and their candidates to genuinely become the lightning rod for opposition to Trump. How can a party that’s done all of this terrible stuff to the working class — that’s discredited itself in the bourgeois media — how can it really lead something progressive, much

less revolutionary, in the interests of the workers and oppressed and against racism? It’s contradictory. It’s obviously problematic. And it creates a crisis for some of us who are really revolutionaries.

We’ve got to see this election as a wake-up call. We are in a political crisis. We see people being evicted, and those evictions are going to grow. There’s Depression-level unemployment. All those millions of jobs lost — they’re not coming back. There are huge budget cuts coming at every level. They’re waiting until after the elections. People are lining up to get food in larger and larger numbers. And the police war against Black and brown people continues. Either we see this election as a clarion call to get busy organizing a powerful, militant, anti-capitalist, kick-ass, workers fightback



Larry Holmes

around all these issues, stopping mass evictions, jobs or income for the unemployed, food for the hungry, health care, housing, everything that we need, or nature and politics are paused in a vacuum. And if there’s no class struggle, no unity in that class struggle will bring the working class into the anti-racist struggle.

A number of unions representing

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Revolutionaries worldwide on U.S. elections

The following are brief excerpts from a small sample of commentaries on the U.S. elections written by revolutionaries and anti-imperialists on three continents just before the U.S. corporate media declared the Biden/Harris ticket the winner.

— John Catalinotto, Workers World managing editor.

African NGOs call for United Nations intervention

Issued on Nov. 6 by Tiisetso Magama (www.africa4palestine.com)

The human rights organization #Africa4Palestine, together with the South African Peace Initiative (SAPI) and our partners, observe with concern the unravelling of the electoral process in the troubled, oil-rich, nuclear-armed, North American nation of the USA.

We join other NGOs and Africans in calling for people of both sides to practice restraint, while they await the outcome of the vote counting. We join all peace-loving peoples of the world in condemning recent incidents of incitement, violence and intimidation against voters by members and supporters of the ruling Republican Party.

We note that businesses and stores in the USA capital, Washington DC, are boarded up and that streets are abandoned amidst growing tension and fear gripping the troubled and disease-ridden country. We unequivocally condemn reports of armed militia, who back the embattled president, roaming the streets and interfering with voting processes.

We condemn the pronouncements by the unhinged USA President Donald Trump of declaring both victory (and fraud simultaneously), even before all votes were counted.

We are also extremely concerned by the dire humanitarian situation, exasperated in recent months due to COVID-19 in the crisis-wrecked USA. We support the call for humanitarian aid organisations, charities and the international community to do more to protect the civilian population of the USA, particularly vulnerable women and children in this male-dominated and patriarchal society.

We call for an urgent meeting of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to discuss the worsening tensions in the volatile, strategically located Western nation and to take firm measures to secure the country’s nuclear and chemical weapons stockpiles until stability is restored and the will of the American people is respected. If the UN must intervene militarily, including imposing a no-fly zone, then so be it.

Like many others in the Global South and civilized world, we make ourselves available to restore and rebuild democracy in the USA, for the people of the USA.

Dangerous decadence

By Jorge Cadima

Published Nov. 7 in *avante.pt*, newspaper of the Portuguese Communist Party.

The election of Trump in 2016 reflected the decadence of the United States. His presidency has accentuated that decadence. The social crisis has worsened for years. Most of the people of the greatest capitalist power live in poverty, even if they have a job. At the same time, the ruling class accumulates obscene wealth.

Inequalities have reached unprecedented levels for many decades. The disaster of COVID-19 in the U.S. reflects Trump’s disdain and attempt at anti-China politicization of the epidemic. But it reflects much more than that: the absence of a national health service and basic labor rights such as sick leave and glaring levels of poverty.

The election of Trump in 2016, like the election of Obama in 2008, was due in part to deep discontent and a desire for change. Many believed [Trump’s] false anti-system discourse, the proclamations about “draining the swamp,” the false promises to put an end to military adventures.

Of course, the reality was quite different. Underneath the radical nature of the anti-system discourse was hidden a candidate of the system, who fattened big business even more and who openly nurtures fascist and racist forces and unrestrained police violence to impose submission domestically.

On the contrary, U.S. external aggressiveness has not diminished, as can be seen in Iran, Venezuela, Bolivia, Palestine, Cuba, Syria, Yemen, or Belarus. The campaign against China, “guilty” of its economic and social development and growing role in the world, is leading the planet into a crisis that could have dramatic outcomes.

The violent clashes between sectors of the U.S. ruling class focus on how to halt decay and maintain Washington’s dominant position in the world. Trump bets on generalized confrontation, including with U.S. allies, to impose submission. He has recorded successes in the subordination of the European Union.

He is preparing a major clash with China. But Trump’s rise has been fueled by decades of war, crime and violence, including the wars against Syria and Libya, the coup by Ukrainian fascists, the siege of Venezuela and the confrontation with Russia, unleashed under Obama, with Biden as his vice president. These policies will

essentially continue [whoever wins], because these are the policies of the system.

Change can only come from the struggle of the workers and people of the USA, an integral part of the struggle of the peoples of the world. It is a struggle that has had moments of great expression in recent months, which are a factor of encouragement for the future, whatever the results of the elections.

It’s easier to guess who lost than to know who won

By Sergio Ortiz

Published in *laarena.com.ar*, web magazine in Argentina

In electoral competition both Republicans and Democrats tend to widen the political and style differences of candidates, seeking to win the electorate of that country of 332 million people. In the end, there are more similarities than differences. Both defend the economic system dominated by Wall Street, banks, investment funds, Silicon Valley, multinationals and international financial organizations where the U.S. vote weighs more than any other.

A Democrat started the blockade of Cuba, John F. Kennedy, and other Republicans tightened it, like Bush and Trump. The Democrat Barack Obama declared Venezuela a serious danger for U.S. security in 2015 and the neo-Nazi that today inhabits the Oval Office continued with the line of blockade, aggressions and even the project of military invasion.

In any case, with these and many other policies [in which the two parties] coincide, it is incorrect to say that Trump and Biden “are the same.”

Regarding the pandemic, Trump was criminal, minimizing it, without adopting health measures and accusing China of having manufactured and exported the coronavirus. In good measure, that is why today the U.S. has 9 million infections and more than 230,000 deaths, while the demonized Cuba and Venezuela regret only 129 and 810 deaths.

As in the rest of the world, the pandemic is linked to negative economic and social consequences. The U.S. has always had 40 million poor people, the result of the Republican-Democratic capitalist system of yesteryear. And with the COVID-19, another 25 million joined in, seeking unemployment benefits and state aid.

[Trump] even declared that he would not accept the results, that is to say, he would stay in the White House in anticipation. That would be a flagrant crime, but also an incitement to violence, in a country that is violent outside, like the sheriff of the world, and also violent inside, especially against the poor, African Americans, Latinos, Indians and women.

With incomplete recounts and denunciations, today it is not known who won; it is easier to venture who lost, the U.S. population.

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Like many others in the Global South and civilized world, we make ourselves available to restore and rebuild democracy in the USA, for the people of the USA.

— #Africa4Palestine

Voters approve police reforms and more

By Betsey Piette

Nov. 9 — The 2020 presidential election ended just short of noon ET on Nov. 7, when networks announced that former Vice President Joe Biden had passed the 270 Electoral College votes needed to be declared a winner.

Although Biden’s delegate count is now closer to 290, many in the progressive movement are stunned that Donald Trump received over 70 million popular votes, given his blatant failure to contain the coronavirus pandemic and his rabid embrace of far right, racist and neo-fascist elements.

Yet behind that disturbing fact, there are strong signs of hope in the variety of progressive referendums passed on state and local ballots.

Stop the cops!

Spurred by mass protest against the cop killing of George Floyd in May, 18 police-related measures were on the Nov. 3 ballot in nine cities and four counties in six states. The measures related to police practices, police oversight boards, staffing, funding, the use of police body cams and more.

At least ten measures designed to curtail police abuse passed.

Measure B in San Diego, Calif., replaced the existing police review board with one appointed by the City Council and having the power to conduct investigations and also subpoena witnesses and documents related to deaths from police interactions and other complaints against police officers.

Measure E in San Francisco removed mandatory police staffing levels from the city’s charter. In Portland, Ore., Measure 26-217 established a new police oversight board in the city’s charter. Question 1 on the ballot in Philadelphia added language to the city’s charter calling for police to “eliminate the practice of unconstitutional stop and frisk, consistent with judicial precedent.”

In Washington state’s King County voters approved Charter Amendment 1 requiring investigation into all police-related deaths and providing public attorney representation to the decedent’s family during the investigations.

The full impact of all these measures remains to be seen, but their passage clearly reflects the ongoing broad and vehement movement against police brutality.

More progressive wins

Ballot referenda for a \$15-per-hour minimum wage passed in Portland, Maine, and Florida, despite that state’s presidential vote going to Trump. Portland also voted for rent control, against facial surveillance and for a local Green New Deal. Voters in Wisconsin, Arizona and elsewhere passed referenda to increase public school funding.

In Boulder, Colo., a No Eviction Without Representation measure will tax landlords and use the money for legal representation for tenants facing eviction. Colorado also defeated an attempt to restrict abortions, family leave and medical leave. Oregon voters supported a



Among progressive ballot measures passed on Nov. 3, Florida approved raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

“tax the rich” resolution to fund universal pre-K. In several states, voters approved decriminalizing a range of drugs.

In Mississippi 73 percent of voters finally rejected the “Lost Cause” of the enslaving Confederacy by adopting a new state flag with the former Confederate symbol removed.

Gains in representation

While several centrist Democrats failed to win over incumbent Republicans on the state and local levels, many progressive incumbents were re-elected by wide margins. Winners included “the Squad” of women of color and immigrant descent frequently demonized by Trump: Ilhan Omar, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ayanna Pressley and Rashida Tlaib.

Other gains were widespread throughout the country. In New York state progressive educator Jamaal Bowman defeated an entrenched incumbent representative, while in Missouri Cori Bush became the first Black woman to represent the state

in Congress. Kim Jackson, a lesbian social justice advocate, became the first out queer member of the Georgia Senate. In Florida, Shevrin Jones is now the first openly gay member of the state’s Senate, while Michele Rayner-Goolsby is the first openly queer Black woman elected to its House of Representatives. In Kansas, Stephanie Byers, who is Indigenous, was elected as the state’s first transgender legislative member.

Desperate conditions demand faster change

All of these wins are to be applauded, but relying on the electoral process for change is coming at a pace that looks like too little, too late in the midst of country-wide crises.

Millions of workers continue to remain unjustly incarcerated by the U.S. injustice system. Nearly a quarter million have already died from COVID-19. Millions face job loss and the inability to feed and house their families. Police brutality, while challenged, continues to attack the lives of Black and Brown people. And in this election, no effective measures to curtail environmental destruction were on ballots for voters to okay.

Working and oppressed people in the U.S. are in desperate need of real social and economic change. Stopping Trump is important, but fighting capitalism — and its attacks on workers and oppressed peoples — must be the goal. This oppressive system can’t be voted away with a ballot initiative. We need a people’s revolution. This is change that a fight for socialism can bring on! □

After ‘Defund Police’ victory Portland keeps marching

By Lyn Neeley
Portland, Ore.

After 170 days of uninterrupted protests against racism, fascism and police brutality, 82 percent of Portlanders have voted for a community oversight board to investigate and discipline cases of police violence.

Since the brutal lynching of George Floyd, Black Lives Matter protests have finally led to this measure to partially defund the police by using 5 percent of the Portland Police Bureau’s budget to set up an independent committee. The board will “investigate police misconduct cases related to death, use of force, and discrimination — and to mandate officer discipline, including an officer’s termination, without a police chief’s approval.” (tinyurl.com/y537wgts)

Portland Labor for BLM Against Fascism, a newly formed group, joined the Nov. 4 “Count Every Vote” rally organized by the Defend Democracy Coalition. Hundreds of workers, unionists and unemployed people, many wearing union tee shirts, gathered at Portland’s Revolution Hall and marched across the river to Waterfront Park. They were joined by protesters from a second rally organized by the Pacific Northwest Community Action Network. Speakers

addressed Trump’s attempts to sabotage the election and prevent votes from being counted in other states. Black Lives Matter demonstrators joined the rally and then marched through downtown Portland later in the evening.

Protests continued in Portland all week after the election. On Nov. 7, 300 people took part in a Black Lives Matter march called “Break the White Silence.” Demonstrators carried signs saying “Just because Biden won doesn’t mean the job is done” and “The Vote Is Over. The Fight Goes On.”

On Nov. 8, a rally for Black Lives Matter and to defend workers’ rights ended with a silent vigil for eight minutes and 46 seconds in remembrance of George Floyd. The rally was organized by Jobs with Justice, Labor Action to Defend Democracy and the Black-led group J.U.I.C.E. (Justice, Unity, Integrity, Community, Equality). □



Rally for Black Lives Matter and to defend workers’ rights, Portland, Ore., Nov. 8.

Drug decriminalization: It works!

By Harmony Rodriquez

In Portugal, the drug policy since 2001 has been focused on decriminalization and treatment. The country decriminalized small personal use amounts of drugs, which led to a fall in HIV, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C rates, as well as overdose rates. People who had predicted that such a policy would cause a rise in drug use were proven wrong; fewer people there now use hard drugs.

Prior to the drug decriminalization policy, illnesses like HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and tuberculosis were on the rise in drug-injecting groups. Portugal didn’t just expand drug treatment spending, it expanded its welfare state and this aided in dealing with the drug problem.

In this year’s election, in which Trump and Biden were duking it out at the top of the ticket, Oregon passed Measure 110. M-110 decriminalizes small amounts of drugs, including so-called “hard drugs” like crystal methamphetamine and heroin. Additionally, money from the state’s marijuana tax revenue is to go towards drug treatment programs.

Why is this new drug policy important? It will serve as a pilot program for other states looking to end the supposed “War on Drugs,” which has driven a rise in mass incarceration.

Based in New York state, the Drug Policy Alliance, which supported legalizing marijuana in Oregon, was the primary backer of the Yes on M-110 campaign. The Alliance backs decriminalization of



A drug rehabilitation facility in Portugal.

all drugs and supports the legalization of marijuana in all 50 states. The United States spends \$1 trillion on drug criminalization and the War on Drugs, without any major achievements. The DPA supports the repeal of the Controlled Substances Act and the abolition of the Drug Enforcement Agency.

Decriminalization involves the elimination of punishment for possession of small amounts of drugs, drug paraphernalia such as needles and syringes, and low-level drug sales. This would save money spent on prisons, prioritize drug treatment above carceral non-solutions, and remove barriers to marijuana legalization and heroin/methadone/buprenorphine-assisted treatment.

In Portugal, drug use levels remained about the same before and during decriminalization, but overdoses, HIV and AIDS diagnoses, and crime spending went down. This is what we can look forward to if the whole U.S. goes down the path of decriminalization. □

Revolutionaries worldwide on U.S. elections

Continued from page 7

Some things remain: Trump, Biden and the U.S. elections

By Arnold Schölzel
Junge Welt daily newspaper, Germany

When the incumbent U.S. president declared that he had won the election, but that it was rigged, which is why he will have any lengthy counting stopped by the courts, he once again changed the structure of the U.S. state system to make it recognizable. Billionaires like him don't even bother with a façade democracy, but instead they throw a political party with all the trimmings: vulgarity, criminal energy, enjoyment of dissipation, habitual corruption, infantile me-me shouting, including state-terrorist assassination attempts and a robust armament program. Trump may not have started a great war, but he did everything he could to make future wars "great again."

A President Joseph Biden will probably slow down the [U.S.] decline, but nothing is certain. After all, for almost 50 years he was one of the people high up in Washington who helped to bring the United States into the impasse in which up to recently the "only superpower" today finds itself.

Will Trump attempt a power grab with the help of the Supreme Court?

Statement published Nov. 3 at initiative-communiste.fr/, monthly magazine of the Pole of Communist Revival in France.

No one can believe for a second that Joe Biden, the great "Democrat" who dreams no less than the fascistic Trump of taking on Castro, Maduro and Putin, is the awful "communist" who populates the nocturnal fantasies of the increasingly fascistic "Republican" militants. However, the testimonies of the comrades from the USA who reach us show that the situation in this country is so explosive, and the class struggle there lacks even more than here the means of its frank and direct expression, [that] a violent outburst is by no means to be excluded in the "world's greatest democracy."

And meanwhile, Americans continue to die like flies from Covid 19. While there is one U.S. resident for every 23 people on Earth, one out of every 4.5 Covid deaths is from the United States. ... A dreadful record of health problems that cannot be compared, either remotely or closely, to that of China, not to mention the record of Cuba or Venezuela, both of which are under an American blockade.

If there is one thing that is certain, it is that the openly

pro-fascist Trump, the current President of the United States of America, is a clear loser at the ballot box in the American general elections that are drawing to a close. This is obviously not a surprise. Not that the candidate nominated by the Democratic Party leadership after a completely unfair "primary" process — which once again discarded the most progressive candidate of Bernie Sanders — raises popular enthusiasm.

Let us also recall at the international level that Biden, Obama's right-hand man in every sense of the word, makes no secret of his intention to continue his ambitious warfare program and to step up the imperialist wars waged by Washington against the peoples who dare to claim sovereignty and a multi-polar world, and above all against progressive and socialist countries such as Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia, China and North Korea.

While there is nothing to be expected from the U.S. elections on the international level, since Trump and Biden are only two sides of the same imperialist war policy, the danger of an openly fascist overthrow in the short term should not be underestimated in a U.S. brought to the point of ignition by the systemic crisis of capitalism.

This election remains in fact marked by the daily decline of the hegemon, which wanted to be bigger than it really is. The capitalist U.S., the dominant imperialists, is a tragic drama for which all workers, Black workers in particular, pay the price. □

Black Lives Matter — from Nigeria to the U.S.

By Olujimi Alade

As a Nigerian-American, I was very disappointed in myself for my lack of knowledge about #EndSARS protests in Nigeria that have captivated the world recently. (In Nigeria, SARS stands for the so-called "Special Anti-Robbery Squad" police force unit.)

The dissonance between my words and my action was painfully obvious. I've been saying that all Black lives should matter, no matter what part of the world they inhabit, and I was ignoring an important movement from my mother country. Rectifying that, I spent the past week reading up on #EndSARS protests.



People protest against abuses by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) in Lagos, Nigeria, Oct. 12.

As I read, I noticed similarities between violence carried out by SARS in Nigeria and violence doled out by the "men in blue" in the U.S. Both forces rely on profiling in order to identify targets for their attacks. The SARS forces carouse the streets looking for "suspects" based on certain lifestyle traits, such as the car they are driving or the jewelry on their wrists. SARS used this disturbing method on Oct. 3 to rob a yet-to-be-identified young adult of his life in Ughelli, a town in southeastern Nigeria. He was killed for the dangerous crime of driving a Lexus. Two days later, SARS forces shot and killed Daniel Chibuke, a 20-year-old up-and-coming rapper, for daring to sit near a hotel with a friend.

I was reminded of the laws and methods U.S. police use to target Black people, such as "stop and frisk." Black men and masculine of center people are targeted by police for the most frivolous minutiae, such as wearing a hoodie or driving a car with the radio too loud. Basic things that people of other ethnicities can do without a second thought can endanger the lives of Black masculine people.

In both countries, Black masculine people are harassed, beaten and killed for not buying into classist respectability politics and daring to live as their true selves. The young men's deaths remind me of a time when I was profiled and patted down by a police officer for having the audacity to go to a grocery store wearing a hoodie on a chilly night. The fear I felt at that moment must have been exactly what those two men — and others — were experiencing as they met their tragic end.

In Nigeria the deaths of the two young men became a call to action for that country's marginalized, just like Trayvon Martin's death in 2012 provided the impetus for the Black Lives Matter movement in the U.S.

Nigerian LGBTQ+ resistance builds

Learning about the origin of the #EndSARS movement piqued my interest. To find out more about this grassroots organizing, I googled SARS and discovered this hashtag: #QueerNigerianLivesMatter. Seeing those four words pleasantly surprised me as it's not often that LGBTQ+ people in Nigeria are granted such visibility.

There, as in the States, queer and trans people live under the specter of police violence. Earlier this year, police raided a Lagos Hotel and arrested 57 men on the mere suspicion of being gay. Similar police raids are conducted all over Nigeria on gay men and lesbian women.

Since President Muhammadu Buhari signed the 2014 Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Act into law, police violence against queer and trans people has skyrocketed. It is noteworthy that many current oppressive anti-queer laws stem from the colonial era when the British instituted puritanical, Western-style sexual mores into law against Nigeria's many ethnic groups.

For Nigerian LGBTQ+ people, the

#EndSARS movement could potentially be their Stonewall movement. That uprising in the U.S. in late June 1969 was the culmination of frustration and anger that the most marginalized LGBTQ+ people felt at being on the receiving end of police brutality.

The Stonewall Rebellion sent shockwaves throughout the world and compelled generations to fight for queer liberation. As the current rebellion against police violence is waged in Nigeria, queer and trans activists leading the charge could serve as inspiration to the BLM activists in the U.S., like the Stonewall activists have inspired millions.

In Nigeria, people such as non-binary activist Matthew Blaise and queer liberation organizer Ani Kayode Somtochukwu could be the Marsha P. Johnson and the Storme DeLarverie of the modern day. Queer and trans Nigerians' fight to have the #EndSARS movement recognize their trials and tribulations mirrors the fight for Black LGBTQ+ people to gain visibility within the mainstream Black Lives Matter movement in the States.

In the U.S., local grassroots organizations have worked hard to recognize Black queer and trans victims of police brutality, but Tony McDade and Layleen Polanco haven't been able to garner as much notice as George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and even Breonna Taylor. McDade, a Black trans man, was gunned

down by Tallahassee, Fla., police, and Polanco, an Afro-Latinx trans woman, died because of medical negligence by Rikers Island prison staff in New York City. They have been rendered invisible relative to the cisgendered, heterosexual Black victims of police brutality.

The spirited fight of queer #EndSARS protesters in Nigeria could provide the impetus for Black LGBTQ+ activists in the U.S. to increase their fight for representation within the broader Black Lives Matter movement.

Women's pivotal role in #EndSARS

As someone with lifelong sympathies with feminism, I feel proud of the role women have played in the #EndSARS movement. While a large focus on police brutality centers on cisgender men, women are also victims of sexual violence at the hands of SARS and the Nigerian police in general. One grassroots organization in particular, the Feminist Coalition, is playing a pivotal role in the ongoing protests, providing food, shelter and medical treatment to protesters fighting for an end to police brutality.

Black Lives Matter was founded in the U.S. in 2012 by three Black women, at least one of whom identifies as gender-nonconforming. Black women and femmes have been a major presence at protests against police brutality.

It warms my heart to witness the long tradition of Black women and femmes continuing and driving political movements forward. From Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth during the 19th-century abolition movement, to today's protests spearheaded by Damilola Odufuwa, Odunayo Eweniyi, Patrisse Cullors, Alicia Garza and so many more, Black women have contributed immensely to the fight for Black liberation.

The week I spent educating myself about #EndSARS has taught me that the global fight for Black lives is alive and well. In an era of increasing fascism, Black people — no matter which part of the world they inhabit — need to band together to rebel against oppression — no matter how it manifests itself.

The simultaneous protests in Nigeria and the United States are a positive development in working toward a world where all Black people are truly free. □

Get out, 45!

President-elect Joe Biden probably scored a few debating points with voters when he said, bluntly, to the 45th president: “Will you shut up already?”

Now the question has become: Will he concede already?

But Trump is defying tradition and insisting, over appeals from some of his advisors and family members and with zero proof, that the election is being stolen from him. A captive Republican Party, with a few notable exceptions, has so far allowed him to do so. Whether the right wing — after more days of posturing and tantrums and baseless legal threats — accepts defeat remains to be seen.

Until then Trump might try extra-legal means to stay in office, like a coup attempt.

Right now large masses of oppressed workers and anti-racist white workers are celebrating their electoral win over the bigot-in-chief. It’s like his knee has been lifted off their collective necks, bringing tears of relief. The news of Biden’s win was met with horn honking, street dancing and champagne toasts.

A mass get-out-the-vote mobilization overcame Trump’s crass appeals to

the basest racist prejudices. The vote of long-disenfranchised Black and brown communities drove the much-needed nails into the coffin of Trump’s poisonous rule.

Now how much of a struggle will it take to force out the defeated president? General strikes, continued mass demonstrations, direct action and more have been discussed, which is a healthy step forward in the struggle.

But donor lists expose that a big section of the capitalist class prefers a stable, centrist Biden over Trump’s erratic extremism.

Unfolding events will reveal more.

Dems bait progressive wing

If a smooth transition to a Biden presidency is the best case scenario for workers and oppressed people, it leaves a lot to be desired.

Once elections are out of the way, capitalist politicians usually commence a wide range of nefarious bipartisan acts, from sanctions and war to expanding the prison-industrial complex. The exploitation of labor by capital goes on regardless of who controls the branches of government, despite all the blather about

compassion, empathy and the sanctity of democracy.

Since this election, mainstream Democrats have wasted no time in denouncing the party’s “progressive” wing, blaming key losses in the House and Senate on candidates who raised “Medicare for All,” “Defund the Police,” and a “Green New Deal.”

A lot of their ire is directed at the four women of color known as “The Squad,” even though Ayanna Pressley, Ilhan Omar, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (AOC) and Rashida Tlaib easily won reelection to Congress.

Ocasio-Cortez pointed out in a post-election interview: “Every single candidate that co-sponsored Medicare for All in a swing district kept their seat.”

When the interviewer asked, “What if the administration is hostile? If they take the [former Republican governor of Ohio] John Kasich view of who Joe Biden should be?” Ocasio-Cortez replied, “It’s going to be really hard after immigrant youth activists helped potentially deliver Arizona and Nevada. It’s going to be really hard after Detroit and Rashida Tlaib ran up the numbers in her district.”

Arguing “electability,” the Biden win is being used to counter progressives. The New York Times cites examples where voters picked Biden but voted for Republicans in Senate and House races. But the flip side is that many reluctantly voted for Biden to get rid of Trump but skipped over the rest of the ballot because they didn’t see much difference between the candidates.

Socialist-baiting is not the sole province of the Republicans. “We need to not ever use the words ‘socialist’ or ‘socialism’ ever again,” Virginia’s Democratic Congresswoman Abigail Spanberger stated. Biden repeatedly bragged that he “beat the socialist” — a reference to Bernie Sanders. (wjla.com)

In fact, the only meaningful message to workers worried about their future is a real socialist program. Reforms under the capitalist system of exploitation go only so far. Any serious threat to Wall Street’s bottom line will face a right-wing backlash — and a Biden administration won’t offer up a serious challenge.

Stay in the streets — and not just to dance.

Keep your marching shoes nearby. □

Philly celebrates, pledges to keep fighting

Continued from page 1

Matter Philly, Mobilization For Mumia, the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the MOVE Organization, Anakbayan Philly, Socialist Alternative, the Black and Brown Coalition, the Black Trans Assembly for Abolition, Amistad Law Project, Food Not Bombs Solidarity, the Party for Socialism and Liberation and the Democratic Socialists of America. It also includes rank-and-file members of the Temple Association of University Professionals, Philadelphia Joint Board Workers, the International Electrical Workers (IBEW), the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers, and retired postal workers.

Organizers from this impressive alliance gathered for a rally at City Hall, where hundreds joined in to voice their commitment to the principles that unite them: opposition to white supremacy; abolishing police and carceral violence; and defending workers rights.

“We’re gonna keep our feet on the gas,” said Kempis Ghani Songster of the Amistad Law Project, who opened the rally. “We don’t care about your mandate,” Songster said, referring to the recent electoral victory of the Democrats, “Our movement has a mandate!”

“For the first time ever, we have a woman in the White House. Make no mistake, women of color showed up strong. So let’s salute our sisters; let’s salute all women, but especially those who are always forgotten. They got Trump out of there. Now we have a woman of color in the White House, which is poetic, considering that Trump started his political career on birtherism, which is essentially delegitimizing nonwhite people in positions of power.

“But let’s be clear. Women in seats of power don’t necessarily translate into power for women, if those women are upholding patriarchy and white male domination. Just as Black people in seats of power don’t translate into the empowerment of Black communities. We know [Kamala Harris’] history — we know her



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Kempis Ghani Songster of the Amistad Law Project addresses Philadelphia rally, Nov. 7.

history, especially as it relates to the Black community. And we know Biden’s history.”

‘Fighting injustice is a lifelong struggle’

Vanessa Maria of Philly Boricuas told the growing crowd, “Fighting against injustice is a lifelong struggle. We have to be committed to organizing beyond this election and to fighting for the rest of our lives, not just to make sure that we’re free, but that everybody is free. We have millions of comrades who are behind bars right now, who don’t have a say in what’s happening in these elections. We have to continue to fight for them and to free them all.”

Tamara Anderson from the Racial Justice Organizing Committee explained the history of Philadelphia arch-racist mayor and police commissioner Frank Rizzo and gave an emotional appeal. “Just like how America has never achieved the promise of democracy for all its citizens, American public schools have not achieved equity, democracy, and liberation for all of her students. If this Philadelphia is where the history of America began, then we should be the leader in showing everyone else what it should be.”

Gabe Bryant from the Black Philly Radical Collective came to the rally straight from the funeral of Walter Wallace, Jr., saying: “Although we may have slayed the dragon today, we have

several more dragons out there to fight.”

“If you been fighting, if you been campaigning, if you been hitting the streets, if you been dismantling, if you been destroying, you know it in your heart that today feels a little bit still like yesterday,” Bryant said. “Because you’re gonna keep fighting; you’re gonna keep building; you’re gonna keep collaborating; you’re gonna keep coming together; you’re gonna keep unifying. You’re gonna destroy the systems that are not in our interest, and, more

importantly, build the world that we all want to see.”

‘Justice for Walter Wallace! Free Ant!’

Hundreds of workers marched behind the United Front’s banners from City Hall to Rittenhouse Square, one of the city’s wealthiest neighborhoods, demanding justice for Walter Wallace Jr. and calling for the release of Anthony Smith, a local organizer who was arrested on false charges by federal forces. Several people in outdoor restaurant seating stood and applauded the march and joined in with “Justice for Walter Wallace” chants.

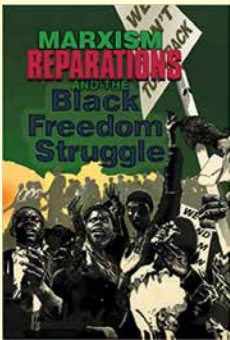
Fermin Morales, a union worker and member of Philly Boricuas, took to the mic after the march wound its way around Center City, where it picked up hundreds more protesters to swell the ranks of the United Front. He proudly and uncompromisingly declared that he was a socialist and that no one should be ashamed to say it:

“When you become a socialist, you stop being a racist. Socialism is the way we will end racism and imperialism. Don’t learn about socialism from a capitalist! Learn what socialism really is!” □

Marxism, Reparations & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper.
Edited by Monica Moorehead.

Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination ♦ Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery ♦ Black Youth: Repression & Resistance ♦ The Struggle for Socialism Is Key ♦ Domestic Workers United Demand Passage of a Bill of Rights ♦ Black & Brown Unity: A Pillar of Struggle for Human Rights & Global Justice! ♦ Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior ♦ Racism & Poverty in the Delta ♦ Haiti Needs Reparations, Not Sanctions ♦ Alabama’s Black Belt: Legacy of Slavery, Sharecropping & Segregation ♦ Are Conditions Ripe Again Today? Anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion



COVER GRAPHIC: SAHU BARRON

Available at online booksellers and workers.org.books

Bolivia

Massive rally ushers in new MAS government

By Marco Teruggi
La Paz, Bolivia

Published first in pagina12.com.ar on Nov. 8. The inauguration reported on here follows the landslide victory of pro-socialist forces in the Oct. 18 elections. They took place almost a year after a coup backed by U.S. imperialism drove Evo Morales, Bolivia's first Indigenous president, from office. Morales is expected to return to Bolivia from exile on Nov. 9 for a triumphant caravan. Translation by John Catalinotto.

"We hope to be remembered as the government in which the Bolivian people rose up to recover democracy, dignity, peace, growth, and social justice," said President Luis Arce in his inaugural speech, from the premises of the Legislative Assembly. At his side were Vice President David Choquehuanca, President of the Senate Andónico Rodríguez, and President of the House of Representatives Freddy Mamani.

As he spoke, the social, Indigenous, mining, union, and militant movements that make up the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS), which had come from different parts of the country, filled and surrounded Plaza Murillo, turning the center of La Paz into a celebration. The mobilization had begun the night before when the organizations held a vigil near where the inauguration was scheduled.

The movements making up MAS mobilized early to counter threats from a sector of the right wing — threats that persisted until the last minute. On Saturday night, Nov. 7, a rightist rally and march took place in La Paz, its slogans charging election fraud and demanding the inauguration be suspended.

Although at that time it was clear that the transfer of office would take place and that the social forces of the right were demoralized, the movements stayed alert up to the last moment to counter any unforeseen events.

In his speech, President Arce focused on the political climate. He characterized what has happened since the coup d'état as "an internal and systematic war against the people, especially against the poorest (...) they sowed death, fear and discrimination, intensified racism (...) persecuted the leaders of MAS and the social movements, and caused deaths, injuries, imprisonment, persecution, isolation and exile."

There was constant mention of the massacres in the cities of Sacaba

and Senkata, which had occurred a few days after the coup in November 2019. A minute's silence was held for those who were killed. The new president referred to them as "a symbol of dignity and resistance," and paid homage to "the fallen, the heroes of the people who have won back democracy."

Several international delegations were present at the inauguration, including from the governments of Argentina, Paraguay, Colombia, Spain, Venezuela, Uruguay, Iran, Chile, Arab Emirates, as well as delegations of political parties from different countries, along with Bolivian movements and members of parliament.

As expected, the coup "interim" President Jeanine Áñez failed to show up. After her departure to the city of Trinidad, in the department of Beni, she announced her absence and also denied that she planned to flee the country [to escape prosecution].

From the opposition to MAS, the political leader Carlos Mesa was present. Mesa came in second in the Oct. 18 elections [with about only half of the 55% who voted for MAS]. Mesa recognized Arce's victory from the beginning. However, both he and his parliamentary group left the premises before the speeches.

In a message of dialogue and unity, present also in President Arce's speech, Vice President Choquehuanca said, "We must overcome the division, hatred, racism and discrimination among compatriots, end the persecution of freedom of expression, and stop judicialization [using the courts to eliminate political opposition], no more abuse of power (...) no more impunity — we'll have justice, brothers, but justice must be truly independent."

What will the ultra-rightists do?

The new government takes office in a climate of instability. It may be that on the one hand, those who made up the de facto coup government are in retreat and may try to escape from Bolivia so as to avoid

prosecution for crimes, while in addition Carlos Mesa is trying to consolidate his place as the main [legal] opposition. Nevertheless, there is another sector, led in part by Luis Fernando Camacho — who finished a distant third in the elections — that embodies the most radical pro-coup wing of the rightist forces.

This same Camacho sector refuses to recognize the validity of the election results or the inauguration. What will they do from now on? This is one of the main questions.

President Arce said, "These minority sectors raise the banner of democracy only when it is convenient for them, and when it is not, they resort to destabilization, violence, or coups d'état to take power." Arce referred to the use that these sectors made of "paramilitary groups," which carried out actions until Friday, Nov. 6, in Cochabamba and Santa Cruz.

New gov't faces triple crisis

The new government faces a triple crisis, mentioned by Arce: democratic, a product of the coup regime's persecution of the people; health care, because of the pandemic; and economic. Áñez's government left the budget with a deficit, with a drop of 11.1% of the Gross National Product, a fiscal deficit of 12.1%, a deficit of 8.7% of the Federal Treasury, and a debt of \$4.2 billion contracted in the last eleven months. "Each day that passes without taking action is a day that the situation becomes more complicated," said President Arce.

Social expectations of the new government are high. This is on the part of those who mobilized in the Plaza Murillo, as well as the 36 Indigenous nationalities, the organization of the Ponchos Rojos that was part of presidential security, and the



President Luis Arce (left) and Vice President David Choquehuanca.

PHOTO: MAS

Bolivian Workers Central, as well as by broad layers of the population who in less than a year faced the impacts of a recession, the pandemic, and a de facto government that threatened and persecuted the popular organizations, and failed to honor any of its promises.

The new president referred to the international situation and affirmed, as had been anticipated, that he will focus efforts on building the "political unity of the diversity of Latin America and the Caribbean" through the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), and in the South American arena through the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), "as a space for integration and a mechanism for coordinating policy, where we all meet regardless of the political orientations of the governments."

The new Bolivian government seems to be a possible actor to bring together and work together with different parts of Latin American progressivism.

The inauguration opens a new moment within the process of change in Bolivia: "We are committed to rectify what was wrong and deepen what was right," affirmed Arce. Within this new stage, there are challenges to the internal order, such as requests from movements for a change of leadership, as well as threats from destabilizing forces that have already warned they will not return to the democratic road — or so it seems.

Sunday, Nov. 8, was a day of celebration in La Paz, now that Evo Morales is close to re-entering the country, and Bolivia is leaving behind one of the grimmest pages of its recent history with a democratic victory and a new popular government. □



'We've got to see this election as a wake-up call'

Continued from page 7

millions of workers came out around Labor Day and said that unions need to be organizing work stoppages in support of Black Lives Matter. This is a step forward. The mere fact that some unions and some labor councils have passed resolutions calling for a general strike if Trump refuses to concede, shows that there is something going on.

There's a change that's being brought about by COVID, by the capitalist crisis, by Depression-level unemployment. And some of us are working to form a revolutionary merger of the anti-racist Intifada and the workers movement. Let's talk about white workers who are freaking out, because maybe not so long ago, they

thought they were on the top of the hill — they were in the U.S. imperialist empire, the greatest empire in human history. And they were above everybody else. But that's changing. U.S. imperialism is falling. And the living standards of the entire working class, including white workers, are falling. And in the absence of a struggle, workers who are freaking out will drink anybody's Kool Aid, including Trump's. A racist white supremacist and fascist danger has to be countered by a united, militant, revolutionary and anti-capitalist class uprising. Or that danger will grow. So we want to be involved in that uprising.

NC: How do we address so many people who consider themselves progressive, who still think that Biden will solve everything? And on the other hand, we have those in

the streets, who see Biden as just another oligarch — that of course includes us. So how do we reach those who believe that Biden is just going to solve everything? And how can we win them to a more struggle-oriented revolutionary perspective?

LH: The Democratic Party doesn't come off the same way as Trump and the fascist allies, the Proud Boys and all the mercenary groups do. They're more dangerous because they lull you into passivity. You end up with a greater fear of white supremacy and violent fascist developments. When Barack Obama was elected, it was a historic moment — a Black person becoming president. But that smooth-talking, skillful politician, servant of the ruling class made it very difficult for us to unite and fight the class

struggle. He shut the struggle down. He pursued a program of globalization and neoliberalism, union busting, and the concentration of even more and more wealth to fewer and fewer people. The Democratic Party is dangerous because it paved the way for Donald Trump. We have to make sure going forward that the class struggle in the streets, in the workplaces, amongst the unemployed, fighting the evictions — takes over all at once. The conditions are there. The only question is: Are the people going to fight?

Someone who wants socialism and the end of capitalism and all of the nastiness and horror, that's part of it, COVID, and so forth, we've got to bust a move, we've got to get deeply involved in organizing our class. □



FOTO MO: JUDY GREENSPAN

El 23 de octubre, en Bakersfield, California, se entonó el coro "¡Liberen a nuestras hermanas!", en el que se pedía a dos mujeres que se protegieran a sí mismas y a sus familias contra la violencia doméstica.

¡La autodefensa es un derecho!

protesta en California contra violencia doméstica

Por Judy Greenspan

23 de octubre — El coro de "La autodefensa no es un crimen! Liberen a nuestras hermanas que cumplen condena!" sonó hoy en el edificio de la Corte Superior del Condado de Kern en apoyo de dos mujeres que se defendieron a sí mismas y a sus familias contra parejas abusivas.

Las sobrevivientes de violencia doméstica, personas anteriormente encarceladas, activistas por la abolición de la prisión, clérigos y familiares que convergen en el tribunal estuvieron allí en apoyo de Wendy Howard, una mujer blanca que enfrenta cargos de asesinato en primer grado por matar a su compañero abusivo, y Michael Bowers, una mujer negra encarcelada desde febrero de 2017 por defenderse de su abusador.

Howard — una madre, abuela y líder de la comunidad en el condado de Kern — no pudo hablar en el mitin debido a una "orden de mordaza" de la corte. Fue representada por amigos y varios de sus hijos, que llevaban fotos de su madre con las palabras "Justicia para Wendy". La hija mayor, Miranda, habló de la violencia que había sufrido la familia y de por qué creen que Howard no debería ser encarcelada por defenderse a sí misma y a sus hijas del abuso físico.

También se leyó una declaración del hijo de Michael Bowers, Orlynn Bailey, durante la manifestación. Aunque dos jurados en desacuerdo han producido juicios erróneos en el caso de Bowers, Bailey señaló: "El fiscal insiste en mantener a mi madre encarcelada".

Bailey también criticó el racismo del sistema de justicia del condado de Kern: "El condado de Kern sigue marginando a los negros a través de la aplicación de la ley y el sistema judicial. Hay grandes disparidades entre las mujeres negras y las mujeres caucásicas que enfrentan cargos similares, y las mujeres negras suelen cumplir sentencias más severas".

Un grupo de coalición que apoya ambos casos es Survived and Punished, con sede en Los Ángeles. Varios miembros hablaron en la manifestación en nombre de ambas mujeres. Alisa Bierria vinculó la lucha de las mujeres maltratadas con el Black Lives Matter Movement, diciendo: "Estamos aquí para ganar justicia para Michael Bowers y Wendy Howard. ...recuerden que Black Lives Matter incluye vidas negras que son víctimas de violencia doméstica".

Bierria añadió: "Diga su nombre" para todas las mujeres negras cuyas vidas se han perdido por la violencia policial, y también para todas aquellas mujeres negras que siguen vivas pero no están con sus familias porque han sido atacadas y criminalizadas y encarceladas".

Lucha contra la violencia doméstica

Después de la charla, el grupo se reunió en la oficina de la Fiscal de Distrito Cynthia Zimmer, que está procesando los casos. Allí la gente sacó sus teléfonos celulares y marcó a Zimmer, exigiendo que retirara todos los cargos contra Bowers y Howard. "¡Retiren los cargos ahora!" sonó durante todo el día.

El mitin estaba programado para coincidir con una

audiencia para Howard, cuyo juicio se pospone hasta finales de marzo de 2021. Permanece libre bajo fianza hasta entonces pero bajo la sombra de una posible sentencia a cadena perpetua.

Mientras Howard estaba en la cárcel del condado de Kern, conoció a Bowers y a otras mujeres con cargos similares. Ahora Bowers y Howard están luchando para retirar los cargos y educar a la comunidad sobre los derechos de los sobrevivientes de la violencia doméstica.

La protesta, durante el mes de octubre, fue organizada y coordinada por No Justice Under Capitalism (No hay justicia bajo el capitalismo), una coalición del área de la bahía que protestaba por las condiciones dentro de las prisiones para las personas con COVID, y Survived and Punished (Sobrevivida y Castigada), que apoya a las mujeres encarceladas y a los transexuales dentro de las prisiones de mujeres.

La protesta — durante el mes de octubre de la Concienciación sobre la Violencia Doméstica — fue organizada y coordinada por No Justice Under Capitalism, una coalición del Área de la Bahía que protesta por las condiciones dentro de las prisiones para las personas con COVID, y Survived and Punished, que apoya a las mujeres encarceladas y a las personas trans dentro de las prisiones de mujeres.

Para obtener más información, consulte el equipo y el comunicado de prensa de Violencia Doméstica y Procesamiento de la Autodefensa preparado por la NJUC.

Niños perdidos — y el imperio de los EE.UU.

El Departamento de Seguridad Nacional de EE.UU. ha tenido que revelar que "perdió el rastro" de las familias de 545 niños separados a la fuerza de sus padres en la frontera entre EE.UU. y México. Los niños migrantes siguen sufriendo, solos y sin padres, en los EE.UU. Una presentación judicial del 21 de octubre por la Unión Americana de Libertades Civiles (ACLU) dice que sus padres deportados son inalcanzables, muchos de ellos han huido a la clandestinidad en sus países de origen.

El "enjaulamiento" de las familias migrantes y de los menores no acompañados en albergues temporales comenzó durante el gobierno de Obama. El supremacista blanco Trump puso entonces en marcha un ataque de "tolerancia cero" contra los inmigrantes, que incluía ordenar la separación de padres e hijos en la frontera de los Estados Unidos en 2017-2018. Se trataba de una medida deliberada para que las familias temieran buscar refugio en los Estados Unidos al huir de sus países de origen devastados por las guerras militares y económicas fomentadas por el imperialismo estadounidense.

La cifra de niños migrantes bajo custodia de los Estados Unidos ha vuelto a aumentar hasta unos 1.900 en octubre, en comparación con los 800 de hace unos meses, a medida que más niños no acompañados cruzan la frontera, enviados solos por sus familias desesperadas. (Washington Post, 23 de octubre)

Mientras tanto, el asalto de la administración Trump a los niños migrantes continúa, esta vez con la presión sobre los científicos de los Centros de Control y Prevención de Enfermedades para que acepten un plan peligroso y prohibido por los tribunales para utilizar los hoteles de la frontera para retener a los niños antes de deportarlos. Los funcionarios de los CDC se han resistido, diciendo que esto pone a los niños en grave

riesgo de salud durante la pandemia de coronavirus.

El horror generalizado ante las anteriores separaciones de padres e hijos provocó manifestaciones masivas en los Estados Unidos. Estas protestas deben continuar — constante y enérgicamente — contra todas las políticas racistas de los Estados Unidos que atacan, socavan e intentan destruir las estructuras familiares y culturales que son esenciales para la supervivencia y la resistencia de los pueblos oprimidos.

El enjaulamiento continúa la historia racista de los EE.UU.

Tales ataques racistas han sido parte de la estrategia de construcción del imperio de los EE.UU. desde su inicio.

En 1779, durante la Guerra Revolucionaria Americana, el General George Washington (el "Padre de su País") ordenó una campaña militar de tierra quemada contra las naciones Haudenosaunee en el Valle Mohawk de lo que hoy es el estado de Nueva York. Los soldados "revolucionarios" arrasaron aldeas y huertos, quemaron cosechas de invierno y condujeron a las familias indígenas al exilio, donde muchos murieron de hambre.

La historia de los Estados Unidos está ensangrentada por las masacres de indígenas desarmados, a menudo niños y ancianos, a medida que los ejércitos estadounidenses pusieron en práctica el "Destino Manifiesto" de la expansión de los Estados Unidos mediante el robo de tierras indígenas en todo el continente.

Y la esclavitud legal de los pueblos africanos en los Estados Unidos desde sus comienzos, con la designación

de seres humanos como bienes inmuebles para ser comprados y vendidos, significó siglos de ruptura forzosa de las unidades y relaciones de las familias negras. Este asalto de compra y venta a las estructuras sociales del pueblo negro fue la base original de la actual riqueza económica capitalista de los EE.UU.

La estructura misma de los Estados Unidos como país imperialista sigue descansando en ataques sistemáticos y legalmente "justificados" de supremacía blanca contra las comunidades de indígenas, negros y morenos. Estos ataques continúan, desde la separación de las familias migrantes de Latinx en la frontera de los Estados Unidos, hasta los ataques a las comunidades indígenas que defienden los derechos a la tierra y al agua, pasando por los asesinatos policiales y el encarcelamiento masivo de las comunidades oprimidas y empobrecidas.

Un programa de transición destinado al fin del capitalismo en los EE.UU. y al comienzo del socialismo significa luchar para abolir el ICE y la Patrulla Fronteriza, luchar para abolir la policía y cerrar las prisiones, y luchar para acabar con la supremacía blanca.

Los revolucionarios comunistas pretenden poner fin para siempre a estos ataques racistas contra las comunidades y familias oprimidas, incluidos los niños migrantes que todavía esperan reunirse con sus padres. □

MUNDO OBRERO

editorial