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Bolivians eject coup regime

By John Catalinotto

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In the past year, the mass movement of Indigenous peoples, workers and peasants was able to retake the government and drive out the right wing. They did this even though the rightists had a near monopoly of arms and had control of the Bolivian state—the army and police—plus their own armed paramilitaries. (See Jan. 18 editorial in Workers World—workers.org/2020/01/45843/)

Hundreds of thousands of supporters greeted Morales and former Vice President Álvaro García Linera as their motorcade wound through some 700 miles over three days, starting at the Argentine border. On Nov. 11, the caravan reached Chimoré airport in the heart of the Chapare region, where Morales once organized coca growers.

At just about the geographic center of Bolivia, the airport had been on a U.S. military base until 2006. The Morales government expelled the U.S. forces from there in 2008. On Nov. 12, Morales and García Linera left from Chimoré airport for Mexico, which he did. Morales and García Linera left from Chimoré airport for Mexico, then went to Buenos Aires, Argentina.

At the time the Organization of American States, and of course all agencies of U.S. imperialism and U.S. corporate media, backed ousting Morales. Most charged the MAS with voting fraud and mismanagement of the government, without evidence.

Movement reverses coup

Police and soldiers carried out two massacres of mostly Indigenous people demonstrating in the towns of Sacaba and Senkata in the week after last year’s coup, killing 11 people in each town and wounding many more. Despite this and other repression, the popular movement continued defending itself and rebuilding.

Pandemic surges, economy sputters

It’s really quite sickening. The bourgeoisie calculates profit and loss with callous disregard for the masses suffering from both the soaring COVID case-load and a collapsed job market. Now, many who became unemployed in the spring are running out of their 26 weeks of unemployment benefits. There were nearly 1 million new applications for unemployment insurance in the second week of November.

But the stock market went up and down like a roller coaster last week, as hopeful news about Pfizer’s COVID-19 vaccine was followed by reports of surging viral infections.

On the one hand, the shareholders could not contain their orgiastic excitement over Big Pharma making big money on millions and millions of vaccinations. But their enthusiasm was deflated as they counted the costs of more COVID cases: more medical bills for insurance companies to cover, more workers calling out sick, more deaths—and potentially more mass anger.

Why does the Dow Jones or the S&P rise and fall? Stock fluctuations are basically random optimism or pessimism on the part of the 1% about their future bottom line—i.e., their ability to maximize the exploitation of labor. If there is a successful vaccine that will eventually help get workers back to producing what Marxists call “surplus value,” the portion of sales revenue above and beyond the cost of labor power, they will reap profits. But right now, workers can’t produce wealth if they are sick, dead or have to be quarantined so they don’t bring the virus into the workplace.

Roughly 57.6 million Americans lost their jobs as virus spreaded, a record rate. Millions were laid off, five million more became unemployed and lost any unemployment benefits. There were nearly 1 million new applications for unemployment insurance in the second week of November.

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Amazon is censoring

We need your help to distribute this book!

“Capitalism on a Ventilator” is a new anthology comparing the effective Chinese response to COVID-19 to the disastrous response in the U.S. This book pushes back against the racist anti-China campaign in U.S. media.

However, Amazon is currently censoring the book’s distribution. We need your support to get the book out and to fight back against censorship!

Make a tax-deductible $25 contribution to oppose Amazon and you’ll be sent a free copy. The book’s table of contents and list of authors, along with four chapters and a donation button, are available at wp.me/p4Yme1-404.

The U.S. establishment continues its growing hostility towards China, with an accompanying surge in anti-Asian racism. The effort to place this challenging book on a corporate website has turned into a struggle against censorship. Amazon, the world’s largest online retailer, claims ease of placement and lack of censorship — but failed to deliver.

Instead, the company sent a notice censoring this book and its up-to-date information about COVID-19. Amazon reserves the right to determine what content we offer according to our content guidelines. Your book does not comply with our guidelines. As a result, we are not offering your book for sale.

The notice claimed Amazon refers people only to “official sources for advice” on the COVID-19 virus. But the corporation has accepted books with wild pandemic conspiracy theories — that the virus is exaggerated, a hoax or human-made, and that masks and quarantine are useless.

Readers are urged to buy the ban on “Capitalism on a Ventilator” by sharing the link widely on social media, along with your short reviews. Maintain pressure against Amazon banning books with a left perspective by tweeting the Washington Post editorial office, which first reported this.

“Capitalism on a Ventilator” was written by people around the world, edited by a U.S. activist and a Chinese activist, and answers a question working people worldwide are asking: Why has China done so much better in containing COVID-19 and saving lives?

Evidence and available data provide a very different answer from that given by the corporate media. China contained the virus because its free medical care and planned economic system are science based and intensely cooperative. By every statistic, countries building socialism have done far better in combating the virus: Cuba, China, Laos, Vietnam and North Korea, to name a few.

We hope you read “Capitalism on a Ventilator” and explore the reasons why China and other countries building socialism are doing better in this pandemic than the capitalist world. Please share the previous chapters: wp.me/p4Yme1-404. And your tax-deductible $25 (or more) contribution to this cause will encourage censorship will qualify you for a free copy!

Join us in the fight for socialism!

Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a multinational, multigenerational and multidisciplinary 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. Black, Brown and Indigenous youth and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

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

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

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

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

Join us in the fight for socialism!

Workers World

147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl.
New York, NY 10011

Phone: 212.627.2994

E-mail: ww@workers.org

Web: www.workers.org

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Editor: Deirdre Griswold
Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, Martha Grevatt, Monica Moorehead, Betsey Piette, Minnie Bruce Pratt
Web Editors: Alarre, Harvey Markowitz, Janet Meyes

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Bay Area protest demands 'Close the camps, abolish ICE!'  

By Judy Greenspan  
San Francisco  

Nov. 14 – If today’s demonstration is any indication, the Bay Area immigrant rights movement holds both Republican and Democratic Parties responsible for inhumane U.S. detention camps and deportations and won’t stop until all camps are closed and ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) is abolished. Chanting “Joe Biden heerd our call, now’s the time to free them all,” several hundred people marched from Union Square through the Tenderloin to the San Francisco Federal Building.  

The protest was organized before the elections under the call: “No Matter Who”. “Now’s the time to free them all,” several hundred people marched from Union Square through the Tenderloin to the San Francisco Federal Building.  

At the Union Square, speaker after speaker lambasted both the Trump administration and President-elect Biden for anti-im/migrant policies such as the kidnapping of migrant children and their placement in cages as well as the forced sterilizations of migrant women in a Georgia detention center. All agreed that the immigration system was broken before Trump was elected president and that militant action was needed by the entire progressive movement to support im/migrants in the U.S.  

Rosa Carranza, a TPS (Temporary Protective Status) holder and activist with the National TPS Coalition, expressed her concern for the hundreds of im/migrant children who have been stolen from their families. She said, “I lie the blame for this policy on the Obama administration which built the cages and on Trump who is now using them. Both administrations are guilty,” she said.  

Speakers called out serious human rights abuses in U.S. prisons and jails and demanded that the criminal injustice system “Free Them All.” The march stopped at a halfway house run by GEO Group, a major private company managing ICE detention centers. Malik Washington, a current resident of the Tenderloin halfway house and the new editor of the SF Democratic Workers Party newspaper, expressed the solidarity of the prisoners’ rights struggle with the fight for justice for im/migrants. At the Federal Building, demonstrators sprayed stencil words on the street and sidewalk demanding an end to the camps, cages and inhumane conditions of im/migrants. The coalition has vowed to continue its efforts to both close the camps and abolish ICE.

Alaska and the Caribbean  

Storms increase dangers for indigenous peoples, workers  

By Paddy Colligan and G. Dunkel

Nov. 16 – The storms battering the north and northwest coasts of the Americas are making recovery very difficult for the indigenous peoples and workers in their paths, who often lack the money to move out of the way or weatherproof their homes.

How close are we to the tipping point when human intervention can no longer interrupt the climatic feedback loops and when global climate change cannot be reversed, halted or even slowed?

Hurricanes in the Caribbean

There have been 30 named storms as of Nov. 15 in the current season, surpassing the record 28 major storms in 2019. The character of the 2020 hurricanes has also changed. The winds are more intense; gusts last longer, and the speed out hand sanitizer and masks, but with hundreds of thousands of people crowding into mass shelters and living under bridges and abutments, the sanitary situation is not good.

The Honduran government estimates that the U.S. government could be paying $2 billion a year to support it.

Hurricane Eta hit Nicaragua Nov. 3 as a Category 4, before slamming into Honduras and Guatemala. Some 120 people died and 113 are still missing, with 210,000 evacuated from their homes. Communities living along the Caribbean coast, particularly the Indigenous Miskito and Garifuna peoples, have been devastated by mudslides, floods and landslides. Storms have caused widespread destruction and devastation to villages and other vital village infrastructure. Some 30 communities, many very old, are facing relocating due to changing climate, moving inland to be farther from the coast—and farther from their livelihood and cultural ways of life. And now this climate catastrophe is taking place within a pandemic that is hitting Native communities four to five times harder than non-Native Alaskans.

Capitalists profit off pandemic

By Deirdre Griswold

Many countries around the world have successfully contained the coronavirus. Most notable is China, the most populous nation and the place where the virus first appeared. As of Nov. 13, China had reported a total of 4,634 deaths from COVID-19 and only 11 new cases. (worldometers.info/coronavirus)

Here in the United States, however, 25,525 deaths have already occurred, and there is now a surge of new cases. This shocking number is only expected to grow as cold weather sets in.

Clearly, the U.S. capitalist government has done practically nothing to protect the population from this lethal new disease. With mass sickness and quarantine has come a drastic downturn in the U.S. economy. As of mid-October, almost 21.4 million workers had lost their jobs. Others were trying to work from home in order to avoid the pandemic, but this has been one bright spot. Guess where? You got it – Wall Street.

The investment bank Morgan Stanley announced in mid-August that, in the past three months, the company had earned $2.7 billion in profits—a rise of 25% compared to a year earlier.

The investment bank Morgan Stanley said it had earned in the same quarter in 2019.

If this were a society based on serving the public, the firm would have spent on helping the sick and the dying while finding a cure for this terrible disease.

It’s just another reason, on top of so many others, why we need revolutionary change in this country.
Remembering Sue Davis: Comrade, fighter, writer (1942-2020)

By Kathy Durkin

Workers World Press lost a dynamic, dedicated comrade on Sept. 26 when Sue Davis, a militant activist, died of a massive stroke. A member of the party since 1967, Sue had early on been a militant activist on the streets of Chicago, New York City and its environs. She fought Fascism, the youth group's protest, the U.S. war against Vietnam and supporting the Black Panther Party against government repression. She was also a staunch fighter for women's, workers' and LGBTQ2S+ rights.

Sue was an organism of capitalism, the root cause of oppression, war and poverty, and advocated for socialism for 53 years, among her other accomplishments.

Larry Holmes, WW's First Secretary, says of her that “Comrade Sue was so remarkable and formidable that she could have done more. She has her life and succeeded. But she chose to be a revolutionary socialist fighter, and dedicated her entire life to the struggle of the women and the oppressed. She was a model for anyone, regardless of their generation, who makes the hard decisions to give their life to the struggle for socialism and revolution.”

No U.S. war in Vietnam!

After joining YAWF, Sue, along with other members, participated in “Stop the Draft Week” marches in December 1967 in Chicago and New York City. In New York, she donned a white helmet, she participated in many protests against Washington’s war in Vietnam in the late 1960s and early 1970s, chanting “Big financial war, big financial life.”

Sue reached out to women’s groups and helped mobilize for the historic women-led march on April 15, 1970, in New Jersey, supporting anti-war GIs in the stockade there. YAWF organizer Laurie Fiorentino was a coordinator of that bold action. That year, Sue was added as a technical editor on The Bond, newspaper of the American Servicemen’s Union.

Women in struggle, Sue became a militant activist playing a central role in dealing with the problems of young women workers and clients from the vile right-wingers of the Women’s House of Detention in NYC’s Greenwich Village, in solidarity with oppressed women imprisoned inside. As the demonstrators chanted "Free our sisters" the women inside yelled out the windows "Power to the people!"

Sue was instrumental in this mobilization. One way she contributed was to research the march route taken on March 8, 1908, by 15,000 immigrant garment workers demanding higher pay and an end to sweatshops and child labor. That demonstration had been an impetus for women socialists in Europe to establish International Women’s Day on 1910. YAWF Women reclaimed the militant, socialist character of this special day by following the route taken in 1908, while highlighting the struggles of the most oppressed women in the first such protest in the U.S. in decades.

A fighter for workers’ rights, Sue attempted to unionize staff at publishing company McGraw-Hill. In April 1970, she was fired by the bosses, who opposed not only her pro-worker activism, but her work-place organizing against the Vietnam War and support for the Black Panther Party. That year, Women in Publishing of other workers in the industry picketed the company’s building, calling for Sue’s re-hiring and denouncing this political repression.

In 1987, Sue joined the National Writers Union and played a leadership role for the last 20 years centered on dealing with grievances and contracts. She also mentored NWU volunteers on how to work on behalf of the members. She strongly urged the NWU to take a significant role in supporting political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. The union’s wonderful tribute to Sue appears on the NWU website and was emailed to its members (tinyurl.com/3yypf6wy).

Reproductive justice now!

YAWF Women and WW participated in the mass movement demanding legal abortion since its beginning. The right that was finally won from the Supreme Court in 1973. Sue made fighting for reproductive justice—and writing about it in WW newspaper and other publications—a special focus for decades. In addition to her activism and writing, Sue was involved in defending women’s clinics to protect sex workers and clients from the vile right-wingers attacking them.

A YAWF Women’s banner was carried to every demonstration on reproductive rights. Its slogan, unique in that period, read: “Free, safe legal abortions! No forced sterilization! Raising healthy children: The choice must be ours!” This was always the pro-working class, anti-racist viewpoint espoused by YAWF and WW on reproductive rights, explained in a brochure entitled “Abortion and Class Society.”

Composed by Sue and this writer, it was updated frequently as the struggle developed into a multi-issue movement, speaking to the needs of all women.

Representing YAWF Women, Sue became very active in the Committee to End Sterilization Abuse, founded in the early 1970s by Dr. Helen Rodriguez Trías. The organization, which included the American Indian Movement and the Third World Women’s Alliance, campaigned against the rampant coercive sterilization of women in Puerto Rico and of Black, Latinx, Indigenous and poor women in the U.S. The group successfully won regulations barring this racist practice and mandating informed consent, in New York City in 1977-77 and then federally in 1979.

Anne Teicher, Sue’s friend and collaborator, told WW that they both were members of the Steering Committee of the Committee for Abortion Rights and Sterilization Abuse, formed in 1977 to support jurist Hyde Addington’s suit and the redemption of Medicaid funding for abortions. The group was active through the 1980s.

In the 1970s, Sue and Anne wrote a pamphlet on sterilization abuse. Sue also edited a CARASA book, which was reissued as “Women Under Attack: Victories, Struggles and the Fight for Reproductive Freedom.”

Sue was a tireless advocate, organizing demonstrations, writing newsletter articles and tabling on the streets,” explained Anne.

Sue also self-published her novel, “Love means Second Chances”—a moving examination of abortion within a family. In her words, “Ultimately the book shows that women must have access to all options to enable them to own their own lives.”

Sue was also active with YAWF Women in protests initiated by the Joanne Little Defense Committee, which the Norfolk, Va., branch of WW helped to found, along with the Prisoners Solidarity Committee.

Little, who is African American, defended herself against a white deputy sheriff who attempted to rape her in prison in Beaufort, N.C., in 1975. She was tried for murder and faced life in jail or execution, but a national campaign won her acquittal and release.

Support Workers World newspaper!

Sue’s dedication to WW newspaper went back to the 1970s, when the staff worked (pre-computer) at the office until the wee hours of the morning, went home, slept for a few hours, and then went to their day jobs. For over four decades, Sue wrote, proofread and edited, using her professional expertise for the working-class weekly. She covered labor activism in her biweekly column in WW newspaper, On the Picket Line.

Monica Moorehead, a WW managing editor and coordinator of the International Working Women’s Day Coalition in NYC, said: “Sue Davis was an indispensable member of our editorial staff, a brilliant copy editor who paid so much attention to both political and grammatical detail. Her articles on labor and women’s issues helped to raise the sensitivity and political level of our readers.

“Sue helped to found our IWWDC in the early 2000s, when she would speak at our rallies and forums on reproductive justice which she spent many decades of her life defending and fighting for. She was always expanding her political understanding while under oppression and repression. The working class movement has truly lost a precious revolutionary whose spirit can now needlessly guide the world.”

Because of her firm commitment to the newspaper, Sue single-handedly initiated and carried out the WW Supporter Program for 43 years, sending out a monthly letter, which included a personalized hand-written note to each donor. That’s about 35,000 letters! She cultivated friendships and regularly kept in touch with many supporters.

Sue’s work raised funds that helped to publish and mail out the publication. She was elated when supporters donated. Sue was so dedicated to WW newspaper that she prioritized donating as generously as she could every month to publish it—like clockwork.

She had friends from many milieus, even going back to her high school and college days, who had vastly different political viewpoints and philosophies. Yet she maintained her anti-racist, pro-worker and pro-socialist perspective. Sue led a full life, contributing to many struggles, diligently working on WW newspaper advocating for NWU members and demonstrating—all while enjoying New York’s cultural events and treasuring her family, friends and comrades.

Sue Davis, Presente!

Political and personal comments by Sue’s comrades and friends are posted at workers.org/2020/11/52183/
The white vote for Trump
Is multinational working class solidarity possible?

By Nathaniel Chase

Why did nearly 73 million people vote for Trump, given his disastrous pandemic response and the economic collapse? The answer, simply put, is racism. In a country built on white supremacy, from slavery and genocide to mass incarceration and imperialist war, it should come as no surprise that a segment of the population would back a candidate openly espousing white supremacist views.

Trump’s voters were overwhelmingly white. They are not white workers, but white working-class voters who have long aligned with the white supremacist policies emanating from the ruling class.

There were exceptions. Among all voters, including white voters, the majority of the vote for Trump was below the Biden/Harris ticket, for example. (NBC, Oct. 1) But even among white union members, a significant number backed Trump. It is easy to see across sectors of the ruling class would support Trump. Same for the cops, and for the petty-bourgeoisie, historically the base for far-right movements. Why so many white workers supported Trump, given his openly anti-working class program, is a more complex question.

Material basis for racist ideology

Support for white supremacy among white workers is not a new phenomenon in the U.S. This support has two primary sources: one material and one ideological.

Materially, white workers are in a contradiction. They are alienated in relation to the capitalist, imperialist, white supremacist system. On one hand, white workers on average enjoy a substantially higher standard of living, more positive cultural representation, and a generally higher status than Black, Brown, Indigenous and Asian workers. The white vote for Trump海尔s off white workers. With crumbs, the biggest crumbs going to cisgendered, non-disabled white men.

On the other hand, they are still exploited as workers, with surplus value extracted from their labor by the ruling class, though to a lesser degree than from oppressed workers. This means a commitment to working supremacy actually facilitates their own exploitation by limiting the possibility of a united struggle—crucially, with oppressed workers in the leading role—against the ruling class. So there is a contradiction between two aspects of their identity: the “white” aspect aligning them with the white ruling class, and the “worker” aspect aligning them with workers of color.

In addition to the material contradiction, there is the ideological factor. As Karl Marx put it: “The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas.” This has never been more true than in the age of 24-hour news, consumer culture and social media. We live inside the most expansive propaganda machine ever devised, one that indoctrinates us with the ideas of the ruling class. The ruling class uses this machine to ensure a majority of white workers identify more as white than as workers.

As Malcolm X put it: “If you’re not careful, the newspapers will have you hat- ing the people who are being oppressed, and loving the people who are doing the oppressing.”

Struggle breaks through ruling class propaganda

The ideological arena is not completely under ruling class control. The struggle of working and oppressed people can have enormous influence. Consider this summer’s rebellions following the racist police lynching of George Floyd. A Pew Research Center study found that 67 percent of U.S. adults supported the Black Lives Matter movement this past June. But, by September, support had dropped to 55 percent. In June a surprising 57 percent of white Republicans supported BLM, but in September less than half that, only 46 percent. (tinyurl.com/y42zfd7m)

This leads to the peculiar conclusion that millions of white workers, even Republicans who cast ballots for white supremacist Trump, had voiced support for an anti-racist movement just months before. What could account for such an enormous contradiction? The anti-racist struggle!

In June the rebellions were at their height, but by September they had tapered off amidst growing attacks against them, emanating from both Republicans and Democrats. At their peak, the rebellions affected the consciousness of millions of people in the U.S. Imagine if the organization of working and oppressed people had been sufficient to sustain and expand the rebellions indefinitely! The other ruling class party, the Democrats, has abandoned almost all pretense of defending the interests of working people. This strengthens white supremacy by giving more space for the most reactionary ideas to prosper. Make no mistake: Biden also is a white supremacist. Biden’s list of racist policies includes the 1994 Crime Bill, destroying welfare in 1996, organizing imperialist coups in Honduras and Libya, and backing millions of deportations while vice president under Barack Obama.

If the Democratic Party pays lip service to progressive ideas, it is a disingenuous manoeuvre to capture and defang people’s movements. The post-election hostility emanating from both Democrats and Republicans, both of whom have now technically won the presidency, is aimed at opposing, the right of oppressed nations to self-determination builds unity. Revolutionaries must ally with oppressed nations in every epoch, to put it lightly. But we would do well to look at this past summer for a hint of how revolutionary solidarity builds unity.

An honest assessment of the consciousness of white workers shows why the strategy of building revolutionary unity and mobilizing against the white supremacist Trump administration is the right one. The working and oppressed people in the U.S. have been roused to the mass mobilization of the summer 2020 rebellions. This radical development is the result of the decline of U.S. imperialism. The United States has never been more isolated, more open to the attacks of its enemies.

In June the rebellions were at their height, but by September they had tapered off amidst growing attacks against them, emanating from both Republicans and Democrats. The Black Lives Matter movement has issued a statement calling for workers’ mobilization, to put it lightly. But we would do well to look to this past summer for a hint of how revolutionary solidarity builds unity. An honest assessment of the consciousness of white workers shows why the strategy of building revolutionary unity and mobilizing against the white supremacist Trump administration is the right one. The working and oppressed people in the U.S. have been roused to the mass mobilization of the summer 2020 rebellions. This radical development is the result of the decline of U.S. imperialism. The United States has never been more isolated, more open to the attacks of its enemies.

The decline of U.S. imperialism creates greater reaction, and at the same time, a greater materialist basis of solidarity. Dare to struggle, dare to win!

Again, the ideological struggle is key. It is the duty of revolutionaries, in particu- lar those involved in organizing the grow- ing anti-racist class consciousness among white workers. Without the interven- tion of organized revolutionary forces, the ideological apparatus of the ruling class will always prevent the development of revolutionary, anti-racist working class solidarity, to the benefit of the strength of its material basis. Revolutionaries must build class unity on the basis of total com- mitment to the struggle against racism and the recognition of the leadership of the most oppressed sectors of our class.

Oppressed nations may, understand- ably, reject organizing with white work- ers entirely and choose a separate path. The choice to carry out their struggle as they see fit must be defended on the basis of self-determination. Defending, not opposing, the right of oppressed nations to self-determination builds unity.

In the 2019 Buffalo Pride Parade, the Anti-Capitalist Leftist Solidarity Bloc contingent, including Workers World Party, marched to fight for racial justice.

Kaepernick joins the call to ‘Free Mumia!’

By Betsye Piette

Philadelphia

A virtual press conference on the critical juncture in the fight to free political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal was held here Nov. 16. A special highlight was a seven-minute message from Colin Kaepernick, expressing his support. Kaepernick sacrificed his stellar athletic career in 2016 when he began to take a knee in protest against police terror during the playing of the U.S. national anthem at National Football League games.

Kaepernick called on the current move- ment against white supremacy to draw the work to bring Mumia Abu-Jamal home: “If the Black Lives Matter movement is to be meaningful and robust, and to have a lasting impact on American life and legacy must also matter. Mumia still fights for our human rights. We must continue to fight for his right to be free.”

Pennsylvania, a distinguished panel who addressed the history and status of Abu-Jamal’s case. The speakers, including Pam Africa of MOVE, Prof. Linn Washington Jr., Kwame Ajamu, Prof. Greg Gonsalves, Dwayne Betts and Angela Davis, also commented on the fight to abolish the carceral state. The event was chaired by Johanna Fernandez. Go to tinyurl.com/ygra2gze to see the complete 2:50-hour video.

Washington, a Philadelphia journalist who has covered Abu-Jamal’s case from the beginning, described the “obscene” judicial, prosecutorial, and police miscon- duct that has marked this case as “blue suit, black robe corruption that masquer- ades as justice not only in Pennsylvania but across the U.S.”

Long-time activist Angela Davis stated: “Mumia’s case exemplifies the length to which the state will go to silence the crit- ics of police power. It is time to accelerate the campaign to bring Mumia home!”

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By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

When the coronavirus first became a global pandemic in the spring of 2020, there were widespread demands, met with promises from state officials, to release particularly vulnerable incarcerated workers. Some states and municipalities did release people, but never in the numbers the situation warranted.

Instead of broad releases, prison officials in Pennsylvania instituted draconian lockdowns where prisoners daily spent 23 hours in cells and were given only 45 minutes per day to shower, make phone calls or get fresh air. In person visits were stopped, and access to libraries, commissaries and other programs were strictly curtailed. Eating habits were altered.

While until recently, only 160 cases of COVID-19 were reported among the incarcerated workers, these restrictive measures never applied to the guards and prison staff, who appear to be the ones bringing COVID-19 into the prisons.

Next fast forward six months, and prisons, including those in Pennsylvania, are facing a deadly full-blown resurgence of COVID-19 among those incarcerated as well as staff. The result has been outbreaks among those incarcerated as well as staff. The result has been outbreaks at State Correctional Institution Chester just outside Philadelphia, as of Nov. 10, half of the prison’s test results and 90% of staff tests were positive. Incarcerated workers there are reporting that prison officials are passing out power of attorney and property release forms in anticipation of more deaths. The 943 men in Chester are only tested if they have a fever, even when many are experiencing other classic COVID-19 symptoms. The crisis is not limited to state prisons. A recent court filing by U.S. attorney a report has noted that 1,400 prison staff tested positive at the Federal Detention Center in Philadelphia. At the Federal Corrections Institution at Fort Dix, in nearby New Jersey, 244 of 1,400 in one unit tested positive.

As far as numbers in county jails, Claire Shubik-Richards, executive director of the Pennsylvania Prison Society said: “We don’t know, because our county governments aren’t telling us, and that is astounding.” (Philly.com, Nov. 12)

The consistent refusal by prison officials to release at-risk incarcerated workers, and to even provide basic PPE and other preventative items, amounts to the cruel and unusual punishment expressly forbidden by the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution. It is turning every sentence into a death sentence with no chance of appeal.

By Johnnie Lewis
Montana State Prison reported Nov. 6 that Robert Gonzalez, 27, died Oct. 24 of COVID and that “underlying health conditions contributed to his death.” MSP reported another prisoner Jeffrey Alan Lefeld died of COVID the same day. (tinyurl.com/y347y5f)

According to NRC Montana, this prisoner, also in his 70s, had underlying conditions. (Nov. 2)

Age, in itself, is an underlying condition. At 79%, Montana ranks No. 1 in U.S. states for its percentage of older (55+) prisoners. (tinyurl.com/y52wjkph)

Additionally, according to 2015 Bureau of Justice statistics, 32% of people in prisons and 40% in local and county jails are disabled, making them more susceptible to COVID. (tinyurl.com/ydyj0fj)

In April, Disability Rights Montana and ACLU sought the release of all prisoners with disabilities, older people and those with underlying health conditions.

The state’s Supreme Court unanimously denied the claim. (tinyurl.com/yaj7y8h) COVID-19 deaths and infections are increasing in Montana prisons. Of some 3,600 prisoners that the Montana Department of Corrections listed in the state system at the end of 2019, percentages of infections have been reported variably, from 12% of the population at MSP to 43% at privately run CoreCivic’s Crossroads in Shelby. (tinyurl.com/yyh2bwur)

The consistent refusal by prison officials to release at-risk incarcerated workers, and to even provide basic PPE and other preventative items, amounts to the cruel and unusual punishment expressly forbidden by the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution. It is turning every sentence into a death sentence with no chance of appeal.

By Gloria Rubac

“…We’re already stressed out because of the virus. We’ve all had it, and now there are new threats that it’s returning. On top of that, there’s a new worry in the prison community, he is preparing for audits and trying to make the prison environment safer, but then that’s making more funding. And once again, Lieutenant Lopez is having guards write up a disciplinary case report, even if they have to make it up.”

So wrote a prisoner at the Ramsey Unit in Waco.

A quota system was imposed at the Ramsey Unit two years ago through a written order that all guards issue at least three disciplinary write-ups per shift. An email ordering the quotas was found by a prisoner and smuggled out and sent to Workers World, as well as the Houston Chronicle and other publications. It was widely reported, resulting in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice changing a policy to expressly prohibit disciplinary quotas.

But now there is reportedly a new, unwritten verbal order from Lieutenant Joe M. Lopez for a write-up every shift, leading to fabricated infractions.

On a phone call the evening of Nov. 12, a prisoner told this reporter he’s starving. “I got up at 3:00 a.m. to go to my prison job. When I got off around 11:00 a.m., it was too late for lunch; and right now it’s after 8:00 a.m., and they are still feeding dinner. I haven’t eaten in over 24 hours! I’m going to refuse to go to work tomorrow, even if I get written up. It’s not worth it to be so hungry,” he reported.

The Ramsey Unit is expecting a PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act) audit in November and a security audit in December according to prisoners.

“Stress is at an all-time high, and false cases over malicious charges—like having a clothing line up dry our clothes or not wearing a mask, which are only sporadically given out—–it’s crazy. We try to keep our clothes clean, washing them and hanging them up to dry. Now it’s illegal unless done during certain hours. We’ve always worn our shorts and T-shirts in the day room, but now if we don’t have on the prison uniform, we’re written up,” a prisoner reported.

Guards are written up for walking to the cell block every 15 minutes—–also rarely happens.”

According to other reports from prisoners, “Rules are not being followed by staff. A lieutenant is supposed to be on each cell block at least two times a day. This never happens. Guards are not supposed to walk each cell block every 15 minutes—–also rarely happens.”

The stress of no visits, no recreation time, no craft shop time, of hunger if you

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A survivor speaks: ‘I had to defend myself’

I first met Wendy Howard when I joined the No Justice Under Capitalism coalition in spring 2020. She attended many of its demonstrations demanding mass release of prisoners due to the COVID epidemic. Later I found out Wendy was facing felony murder charges for killing her physically and sexually abusive spouse. Howard is a mother of seven, and also defending her daughters against her ex-partner, who was a sexual predator. Wendy is a strong, heroic woman, now working tirelessly for survivors of domestic violence. Her trial is scheduled for March 29, 2022. She could be facing 50 years inside one of California’s women’s dungeons. The Prisoners Solidarity Committee of Workers World Party supports Wendy Howard and joins the demand that the Kern County District Attorney drop the charges now. Self-defense is a right! — Judy Greenspan

This is a slightly edited version of a talk given at the webinar “Women and Oppressed Genders: Survival and Resistance” hosted by WWP’s Prisoners Solidarity Committee on Sept. 24.

By Wendy Howard

I’m facing charges of first degree murder, which will come with a potential life sentence if I am convicted. This was after years of abuse, restraining orders, inefficacious policing, with very little to any help in those phone calls to police. The non-prosecution of this person, and him not being held accountable, ended up empowering him to do worse.

When the unfortunate situation occurred in which I had to defend myself, I called the police seeking their assistance and help and ended up being the one taken to jail. I truly believed in the justice system up to a point that I was impacted by it.

At that point, when I went in there, I quickly learned exactly the tactics that they use, even in the county jail. And I wasn’t even convicted of anything. I was only charged with something. Some of the things that they do in even the jails are harmful. I had just experienced a kind of medical evaluation or attention, specifically a mental evaluation. They also denied me my medication for six weeks. I have to take a shot every week for rheumatoid arthritis; they denied me medication, and I ended up with permanent joint damage.

‘Brought us to have a connection and a deep respect’

I also met other ladies that were in there with similar charges as mine. When I first went in, I was not as close to the ladies as I could have been. But then I realized that a lot of the ladies in there were in there for things that really they didn’t have control over, such as [spouse/partner] abuse, early childhood abuse — some with stories as bad as mine, if not worse.

That brought us to have a connection and a deep respect for each other and helping one another while we were there.

There is a lot of discrepancies in the way that the system works. There’s one lady in particular that has charges that are very similar to mine. She’s been through two mistrials. And they’re now trying her for the third time. They have refused to give her bail reduction. And she

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COVID-19 protocols

Recipe for disaster in Pennsylvania prisons

By Bryant Arroyo

Incarcerated workers across Pennsylvania are demanding that Department of Corrections Secretary John Wetzel halt mass transfers by deciding to begin mass transfers of prisoners at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. The following statement from house organizer and environmentalist Bryant Arroyo, confined at State Correctional Institution Frackville, falsely convicted of a crime.

The DOC policy contradicts Wetzel’s supposed concern for the health, safety, custody and control. People are feeling anxiety. We can’t tell what it’s gonna be from one day to the next because of these unpredictable decisions that are detrimental to our very lives.

It exacerbates mental health. It has staff in the middle. They can’t say anything because they’re employed here. But the top officials making these decisions place them in harm’s way, as well as us.

Concerned staff tell us that their boss, Wetzel, “would rather have a dangerous plan in place than no plan.” Wetzel has not only-backed policies on that seemed to be working to protect people, he is now putting staff and inmates in a more vulnerable position. But he’s not here. He’s in an office. Staff are on the ground. The fish rots from the head down.

These are not emergency transfers. They are mass transfers that are used in the event of natural disaster, but these are not being utilized. Instead, prisoners are being transferred from COVID-19 hotspot housing units.

What if one of them gets it from an inmate transferred from a particular hotspot, an officer takes it home? Then what do you have? You’re creating one outbreak on top of another, instead of coming up with a true solution and protecting the DOC’s bottom line.

Subsequent to this policy change, SCI Pine Grove announced it will be transferring all prisoners and staffs into an exclusively youth detention facility. The DOC intends to do this mass transfer at the height of the new spike in cases.

Meals are usually delivered during lockdowns, but now prisoners are made to wait in line and bring meals back to their cells. The meals are cold by the time they receive them. Meals for those in the Behavioral Modification Units and other restricted housing units are delivered in “hot carts” to keep them warm. But there aren’t enough for general population. It’s not even winter, and the meals are already stone cold by the time prisoners receive them.

Isolation anxiety

We need sunshine, exercise and, most importantly, social interaction. We are locked into our cells 23 hours a day. The mass mental health crisis that is exploding in prisons, after [people are] being confined like this for over eight months, is isolation. Anxiety. Panic, rage, loss of control and complete mental breakdown. We need at least two hours [out of our cells]. Straight. No intervals. Or three hours, one period during the day and one at night.

The tension of solitary confinement is causing fights to break out during the few hours imprisoned workers aren’t locked in. Like a chemical reaction, the end result of isolation anxiety is you react and combat. It’s like we’re starved dogs getting fed out of a pot. All you want to do is eat, nourish yourself and feel normal. And Secretary Wetzel has put the entire Pennsylvania DOC in its director’s office by ignoring the protocols set out by the Centers for Disease Control.

There are a hundred people on the block. Each tier is about 50 people. They are unlocked on a staggered schedule, one tier at a time on one-hour intervals, which creates a situation that deprives us of our full time. Even when people can congregate on the block, are they able to practice safe social distancing? Not at all. You can’t stay six feet apart.

Prisoners are taking extraordinary measures to stay safe. We’re taking our prisoners to protect themselves from the virus.

Making matters worse, incarcerated workers like John Ludovici have raised the alarm on a systematic violation of their rights as mental health patients. He says his two staff psychologists work in the same office as his unit manager. The presence of someone who is not a patient’s health care provider — let alone someone who is their jailer — during sessions is a flagrant violation of privacy rights enshrined in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. Ludovici has filed a complaint to the board of licensure that certified his staff psychologists. He also filed an administrative grievance against his unit manager, despite being pressured by her not to do so.

Protocol noncompliance

There are both male and female staff who are sincerely and genuinely concerned about not only contracting [COVID-19], but taking it home to their family members. Wetzel is opening up the floodgates into a facility where we have had basically zero cases.

There are 256 inmates [who] fill up the dormitories, which are open without cell doors. Ninety-eight men who fill up the dormitories, a hundred people on the block. Ninety-eight men who fill up the dormitories, and genuinely concerned [Staff] are on the ground. The fish rots from the head down.

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From an inside / outside art exhibition "Picturing a world without prisons," curated by Project N/A and Free Write Jail Arts & Literacy Program in 2013.
A survivor speaks: ‘I had to defend myself’

By Martha Grevatt

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have no money for commissary food and now false disciplinary cases is pushing prisoners to the brink. Those who are coming up for parole know they’d better keep quiet. Those whose family live near Houston don’t want to be sent to a prison or 600 miles away. Prisoners who file grievances or just complain have been immediately shipped out to another prison. For this reason, no prisoner names are used in this article.

On a phone call Nov. 16, the problem with feeding prisoners was again described: “We had breakfast at 5:00 a.m. but lunch was at 12 hours later, from about 3:00 p.m. until 4:30. Then dinner was just an hour and a half later. This craziness is just more stress.”

Ramsey Unit: over a century of abuse

The Ramsey Unit opened in 1908 and was a huge property consisting of five former plantation homes. It has had a long and sordid history of racist, violence, brutality and deaths. This continues today. As in all Texas prisons, the guards wear grey and blue uniforms to represent the Confederacy.

Texas Governor Greg Abbott has largely ignored the pandemic inside the Texas prison system. The Texas Observer reported May 9 that about 77,000 people have been approved for parole. Another 15,000 people have been approved for release and are waiting for counseling, substance abuse classes or other programs they’re required to finish before leaving lockup — programs that prisoners claim have been delayed during the pandemic.

Last week the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas released a report, “COVID and Corrections: A Profile of COVID Deaths in Custody in Texas,” which reads as an indictment of the prisons and jails in the state. These facts from the report explain why Ramsey

A survivor speaks: ‘I had to defend myself’

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has been in pretrial detention, not guilty of anything. I have this kind of survivor’s guilt, I guess I would say, because I was given bail reduction in my hearing. I am now out on a $200,000 bail, while she is still being held on a $1.5 million bail. It’s kind of made me pretty angry to see those discrepancies and to see how they treat people in there. Because the only real difference that I can see between her case and my case is the color of our skin and how we’re perceived in that regard.

‘An eye-opening experience to be in the system’

So as soon as I got out on bail, I decided that it was time to hit the ground running and try to make as many changes as I possibly could until I was put in that trial room and tried. Which was another whole thing, the whole plea bargain thing [before the trial]. They really do try to intimidate people into taking those pleas, including me and I know it’s much harder to say, because I was given bail reduction in my hearing.

My passion now is to try to bring that to light and bring people to realize that the people that are inside are really people who have suffered. And maybe there’s a different way that we can look at what healing and restoration to community might really look like in the future. That’s my goal.

Some actions you can take to support Wendy Housard: Contact Kern County District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer and Deputy Attorney Courtney Lewis to demand justice for Wendy: Email: cazimmer@kernda.org and clewis@kernda.org. Call: (661) 868-2340. BCC: justice@justiceforwendy.com so Wendy can use emails in court. Sign and share the petition: facebook.com/groups/JusticeForWendyHousard.

Workers World supports prisoners in struggle

Red salute to 104 of our members incarcerated across the country.

Just like in this 1970s Houston Chronicle photo, Texas prisoners still pick cotton with armed guards on horseback overseeing them. Prisoners earn $0.00 an hour.

Beatings by guards — not by other incarcerated people — have led to multiple lawsuits. The same week that Trawick’s death was reported, Jasper Muldrow Jr. sued the county over the 2018 traumatic beating of his mentally ill son, Jasper Muldrow III. The jail officer, Charles Etoch, who instigated the assault, was recently sentenced to a year probation with no jail time. Four other guards who joined Etoch in attacking Muldrow have not been charged.

The jail’s scandalous conditions and high rate of deaths led to the formation of the Coalition to Stop the Inhumanity at the Cuyahoga County Jail in December 2018. Regular protests have taken place outside the downtown jail for almost two years. The Coalition joined LGBTIQ+ and homeless advocates in a joint online press conference (covered by Workers World) after Daye’s death.

What drew media national attention to the county jail, however, was not the deplorable conditions. It was the widely-tailed decision to shrink the jail population to limit COVID-19 spread. But many prisoners were then transferred to state prisons that were COVID hotspots. Now the county jail population, previously subjected to massive overcrowding that intensified spread of the virus, is again nearing capacity.

It is possible that jail authorities will use Trawick’s tragic death to impose collective punishment — such as lockdowns and harsher restrictions — on all 1,500 people now housed at the county jail.

Everything happening at the Cuyahoga County Jail is another argument for prison abolition and another reason to “free them all.”

Texas Governor Greg Abbott has largely ignored the panic in the prisons and jails of Texas. The Texas Observer reported April 21 that the University of Texas released a report, “COVID and Corrections: A Profile of COVID Deaths in Custody in Texas,” which reads as an indictment of the prisons and jails in the state.

The report states that incarcerated Texans are dying from COVID-19 at a rate 33% higher than the rest of the U.S. prison population, and no hand sanitizer is allowed because the TDCJ says it could be used to drink or to start fires.

These statistics represent actual crimes against real people — incarcerated workers. In a real peoples’ court, the whole prison and jail systems would be found guilty and shut down for their murders and total disregard for humanity.

But that is our job. As the chant says: “What do we want? Justice! And if we don’t get it? Gonna shut shit down!”
From the Immigration Movement, for the Left

Election 2020 lessons

By Teresa Gutierrez
San Antonio

We have an opportunity to push like hell right now and win some concessions, because capitalism is at a dead end. And it can go either fascist, or it could go to where they have to give us some more concessions.

We’ve got to organize that!

Teresa Gutierrez

The huge voter turnout from the Latinx and the im/migrant rights movement for the 2020 presidential election must be put into the context of developments on immigration since 2006. Under a Democratic administration, a horrific war against immigrants began, one that was intensified by Trump. I am talking about the Latinx and im/migrant movements in particular to make it clear that I do not want to imply that all im/migrants are Latinx. In fact, they are Central and South Asian, African, Haitian, etc. But the bulk of migrants are Latinx because they come from south of the U.S. border, so I’m putting it within that context.

Also, the Latinx vote is not a monolithic vote. There’s a Latinx vote, but not a Latinx voter. It is very, very complex. Many Cuban Americans are beholden to anti-communism, and they will vote in a certain way. Puerto Ricans tend to be more progressive and revolutionary and will vote or not vote a certain way and so forth. So it’s not one vote.

But I want to specifically talk about the im/migrant rights movement and what happened with the vote.

The reports I’ve heard are that some millions of im/migrant rights advocates and Latinx voted in this election. There was massive organizing, there was a mobilization of three million workers. There were 800,000 calls made by VotoLatino. My phone, my email were really burning up before the election. Every im/migrant rights organization that I’ve ever worked with in New York or Wisconsin or Arizona — everybody was reaching out.

Defeat of Trump — ‘buoyed, but not duped’

We’ve got to understand that the defeat of Trump for the im/migrant rights movement is a step forward. That movement is buoyed by this defeat of Trumpism. They’re buoyed, but they’re not duped. I want to make that clear. This is a sophisticated, experienced movement. As many activists have said, they mobilized not to pick a savior, but to pick a target.

We talk of a class war, do we not? We’ve got to push hard to get some concessions from this government. I’m very excited by the struggle that’s going on within the Democratic Party because for once it’s out in the open. And we have to credit women of color for bringing that struggle out into the open.

Fight for concessions now

This is a moment to fight for concessions. This is a moment when the oppressed and the working class can make gains and win concessions. For example, here in San Antonio there is a housing project with a long history of struggle and a symbol for the community.

At the end of December, it stands to face many evictions when the moratorium ends. Many of the supporters are connected to organizations that mobilized for Biden. They should count on his administration to give some concessions because it will be an embarrassment for Biden to be inaugurated with all the evictions, with all the deaths from COVID.

So we’ve got to push hard to get some concessions from this government.

Abolish ICE!

As for freeing the thousands of people who are still in ICE detention, I think that’s why this im/migrant rights movement was so active in this period. They felt Trump, who wants to be a fascist and openly represents a fascist movement, was like a dog whistle to the right wing, an armed right wing.

I think that the im/migrant rights movement is very much going to challenge the Biden administration and the Democratic Party about ICE detention. They’re going to normalize, they’re going to expect some victories.

Already Biden has supposedly agreed publicly that he will stop building “the wall.” I don’t think that’s a major victory myself — Trump wasn’t even able to build the wall that he talked about. But Biden has said that the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) youth will get full relief. He has said that he will look for a path for citizenship and amnesty for the undocumented. We’ll see where that goes.

Deep organizing

The main point I want to make about the im/migrant rights movement is how we have to really deepen our organizing, as Marcello was saying earlier, among the working class.

This is what has saved the im/migrant rights movement. This is what has resulted in fewer deaths and deportations. We have so much to learn, not just from the Black Lives Matter movement, but from the im/migrant rights movement as well.

The day-to-day work of organizing means building a base, winning the trust and understanding of the masses, and for the movement of im/migrants rights it has meant moving as a bloc.

This is the kind of deep organizing that we have to do if we’re going to influence any of those 70 million that voted for Trump. And if we’re going to win back people from the Democratic Party, we’ve got to get on the ground. And we’ve got to sustain.

The elections determine who governs, not who rules. It’s still the Wall Streeters and the Bill Gates types, they’re the ones who are really ruling, right?

So how are we going to get to rule? How are we going to defeat the police or abolish ICE? How are we going to get there? We’re only going to get there if we do the deep organizing that especially the young comrades are talking about. I really feel like that’s the task of revolutionaries.

The lessons from the im/migrant rights movement are to deepen ourselves among the working class, to elevate consciousness, to win the victories of defending the police, but also to get to the point where we abolish ICE and abolish the police altogether. We have to do that.

And that means abolishing capitalism, because as long as capitalism exists, the threat of fascism is real. That’s why the victory of defeating Trump was so important. Because it was a pushing back of white supremacy, and an element in this country that would very much welcome fascism. To push it back at this moment, that’s no small thing.

This is the moment for the workers and the oppressed to win things. And do deep organizing. This is the lesson of the im/migrant rights movement for us right now. }
Pandemic surges, economy sputters

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needed second stimulus bill, such as the HEROES Act passed by the House but not the Senate. Meanwhile, records are being broken every day for new infections. As with any crisis under capitalism dependent on racism, Black, Latinx and Indigenous communities suffer disproportionally.

It doesn't have to be this way

Even with the prospects of a COVID-19 vaccine, it's hard for the masses of working class and oppressed people to see light at the end of the tunnel.

And a cure for the pandemic will not cure capitalism of its built-in sickness—a drive to maximize individual profits by driving down labor costs and thus beating out competitively. This has, since the early 1800s, caused more global uprisings and upturns—crises of overproduction—that are doubly devastating in the current period of generalized capitalist decline. A lot of the jobs recently lost will not come back.

As COVID deaths in the U.S. approach 250,000, and cases now top 11 million, the economic damage will be even worse than the 90,000 cases and below 5,000 deaths. Progress on a vaccine is still years away, but the one triumph is that the working class has never before had a more powerful ally, the militant medical industrial complex. Workers know the power of the for-profit medical industrial complex. There would be no Big Pharma bosses, who see only par-

lar signs in a much-needed COVID vaccine and treatment drugs. There would be laws to guarantee that everyone’s basic economic needs would be met.

That won't come about overnight, of course. But in the meantime, socialists need to be in the vanguard of pushing demands that address the survival needs of the working class. These include good-paying jobs for those able to work and comparable income for anyone unable; free health care for everyone; and safe working conditions for anyone unable to work safely.

As the struggle grows, so will the realization of this basic class truth: A system that cannot meet these basic demands is a system that belongs in the trash can of history!

Evo Morales returns

Bolivians eject coup regime

Continued from page 1

its strength. By last spring and summer, the people fought the coup regime and held strikes in August to fix the election date for Oct. 18.

Throughout the year, the coup government barred Morales and Garcia Linera from returning to Bolivia. The MAS nominated Arce and Choquehuanca, who ran with Morales’ political blessing and won. Meanwhile, the right-wing coup regime barred Morales and García Linera from running for Oct. 18.

The people fought the coup regime and fought for the restoration of a socialist government, whichever party is in office. These are the conditions under which the Bolivian working class can challenge the rulers and their government, whichever party is in office. This campaign can start by defeating Trump.

Stop #45—a first step

Although the Democratic Party presidential candidate defeated the Republican candidate by some 6 million votes overall, as well as with a majority of the undemocratic and bizarre Electoral College, #45 refuses to concede, continuing as if he and Mike Pence had won a second term.

Meanwhile, he appointed his own toadies to be Pentagon executives, replacing those he appointed earlier. These earlier appointees were equally pro-imperialist officials, belligerent toward foreign rivals and enemies of socialist transformation. They were just more likely to do his orders.

Reactionary Republican senators continue to back the lame-duck president’s tweets that he will remain in office.

On Nov. 14, a more significant event occurred. Some thousands of pro-Trump demonstrators, including some of the most vile venemous vermin from the Proud Boys and the KKK, held a super-spreader gathering in Washington, D.C., to shout their fervor for his second term.

Because Workers World knows in the bodies of those big capitalist parties serves the U.S. imperialist ruling class, even those who tentatively assume we’re neutral in their conflict leading up to the Jan. 20 inauguration. Far from it. Although neither of those parties represents U.S. workers, their conflict and a possible “coup” by #45 affect the working class.

Workers World addresses our comments to the masses in the Marxist and Leninist movement, as well as anyone active in the move-
mend for workers’ rights and the rights of all people facing oppression under capitalism.

How the battle is fought

The working class of the U.S. has a stake in the outcome of the succession struggle. Even more, we have a stake in how the battle is fought.

Regarding who is the next president, we start with this fact: The intervention of Black people, mostly led by Black women, in the election process, itself flipped Georgia, Pennsylvania and Michigan. This determined the election. To allow #45 and his cultish followers to overturn that effort would be a blow to the rights of all oppressed peoples. That reason alone is enough to make it necessary to join this struggle. There are plenty of others.

Remember that on Nov. 7, millions of peo-
ples cheered all day in the streets after the corporate media announced #45’s defeat. To excise the fascist tumor apparent in the D.C. demonstration, these millions should be called back into the streets— with umbrellas, small distance and a will to win.

They, and not some deal brokered by CEOs or centrist politicians, must assert that the legal democratic succession carrying out their legal vote occurs. A good day could be when the Electoral College meets, Dec. 11, or on Jan. 20.

It might appear that a majority of the bil-
nionaire ruling class, happy with the trillions of dollars in tax breaks and the free access to fed-
eral and Indigenous lands that #45 handed the corporatism, now back a mere pro-imperialist capital-
ist candidate Biden/Harris administration.

First of all, their backing is no guarantee of victory. Strategies are decided by active forces. More important, an independent mobiliza-
tion of workers and the oppressed is central to stopping the Trump gang from overriding the votes of tens of millions of people. Then, assum-
ing the working-class mobilization wins, it is in a better position for the necessary next step.

That next step is to bring the battle to the Biden/Harris administration, assuming they take office, as well as to the Republicans. From the Democrats we can expect an imperialist and warlike foreign policy—which has always been bipartisan. We can expect bad compromises with the Republicans, a friendly atti-

dude toward the police and a wish to stay in the good graces of the ruling class.

Only independent actions of the working class can challenge the rulers and their gov-
ernment, whichever party is in office. These can start by defeating Trump.
A Palestinian comments on the U.S. election

By Susan Abulhawa

As results of the U.S. presidential election started coming in last week, the reactions across the country, at least on the left, was incredulity. They could not fathom that the race could be so close after four years of Donald Trump, whose administration — all they agreed — had been abhorrent and evil.

They are right that his overt racism, incitement to violence, and explicit misogyny have been more pronounced than that of previous U.S. presidents, who’ve tended to mask their impulses for all the above with social spit shine.

But the truth is that the only thing that truly separates him from past presidents is that he turned the ethos of supremacy, racism and division inward, whereas his predecessors — in all their polish, at times eloquence, winning smiles and even tempers — unleashed them on the defenseless of the world.

Tell me, how is Trump saying “Stand back and stand by” more egregious than President Bill Clinton carpet bombing Iraq’s water infrastructure to distract from his domestic sex scandal with Monica Lewinsky?

Or more egregious than U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Madeleine Albright declaring that 900,000 dead Iraqi children as a result of U.S. sanctions are “worth it” (presumably worth the destruction of an ancient civilization to get its oil and ensure Israeli hegemony in the region)?

Or more egregious than Secretary of State Hillary Clinton quipping, “We came, we saw, he died,” about the some murder of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi and the utter decimation of yet another previously high-functioning Arab and African nation.

Generational destruction and pain inflicted on Global South

It is true that Trump winning almost half of the votes points to the already well-known sentiment that Black America has been talking about for decades — that this country is racist as hell.

But what does the sheer shock, incredulity and outrage of many of the “other half” who are willing to say about the U.S.?

It says they have never seen — or even bothered trying to see — the ongoing indefensible generational destruction and pain the U.S. has inflicted on the Global South and, in particular, Arab nations who have done nothing to the U.S., but who lie in indescribable tatters and anguish as a result of the U.S. war industry.

To this half of the United States, I say: You are wrong, Trump is not an aberration. He is the truest face of this country. All of it, save for the minority who have a sense of history and global human solidarity.

To this half of the U.S. now celebrating Biden’s victory, I ask: What will it take when he launches a new war? Because he will. That is the only thing U.S. presidents know to do when they need to increase their popularity. And with a country so divided now, it is almost certain Biden will take that route.

He has already hinted that Iran needs to be put in its place, and as the U.S. seems to do Israel’s bidding in most things, it may well become the latest target of U.S. imperialism.

This slightly edited article originally appeared in Al Jazeera on Nov. 12 as “Donald Trump is the truest face of the United States.”

Susan Abulhawa is a Palestinian writer and the author of the international bestselling novel, “Mornings in Jenin” (Bloomsbury, 2020) and her most recent “Against the Loveless World” (Simon and Schuster, 2020).

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Cómó COVID-19 revela las desigualdades en la economía de EE.UU.

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que dependen de las propias o de la comisión de ventas.

Los trabajadores peor pagados, como los que tienen el rango de emer- gencia, ahora se enfrentan al mayor desempleo. El número de empleos para los trabajadores que ganaban menos de $14 por hora ha bajado un 20% desde enero. El número de trabajos que pagan entre 14 y 20 dólares por hora ha disminuido casi tanto como el 16%, mientras que el número de trabajadores que ganan $20 o más por hora ha aumentado en un 2%. (Encuesta sobre la población actual)

Los jefes se hacen más ricos, los trabajadores se enferman

Mientras que los trabajadores sufren bajo el azote del desempleo y se ven obliga- dos a aceptar trabajos peligrosos y mal pagados para sobrevivir, los ricos se hacen cada vez más ricos. Los ingresos del tercer trimestre de Google ascendieron a $46.020 millones de dólares, frente a los $39.500 millones del trimestre anterior. Amazon informó que los ingresos del tercer trimes- tre fiscal de 2020 aumentaron un 37% con respecto a los de 2019, hasta alcanzar los 96.100 millones de dólares.

Un área de venta al por menor que sigue funcionando a plena capacidad son las tiendas de comestibles, incluyendo la tienda Whole Foods, propiedad de Amazon. Aunque sus propietarios están obteniendo miles de millones de benefi- cios, los trabajadores de las tiendas de comestibles siguen enfrentándose a ries- gos mortales todos los días, a pesar de que los jefes les han cortado su paga de “bonificación por peligrosidad”.

Según el Washington Post (12 de agosto), “Al menos 130 trabajadores de supermercados de EE.UU. han muerto, y más de 8.200 han dado positivo por el nuevo coronavirus desde fines de marzo. Con o sin pago por riesgo, dadas las altas tasas de desempleo, la mayoría de los trabajadores están dispuestos a aceptar los trabajos.

Los grandes jefes -que saben lo deses- perados que están los trabajadores por poner comida en la mesa para sus famil- ias y mantener un techo sobre sus cabe- zas- se comportan en el trabajo, recortan las horas y obligan a los trabajadores a tratar con clientes sin má- caras que no tienen en cuenta el distan- ciamiento social. Algunos trabajadores están tan disgustados con su tratamiento que renuncian a mitad de turno. Pero otros están tan desesperados que vienen a trabajar aunque enfermos.

Las estadísticas de EE.UU. comparadas con las de China

El Departamento de Comercio informó que la producción de bienes y servi- cios de los Estados Unidos, el Producto Interno Bruto, cayó por el precipicio en el segundo trimestre (abril, mayo, junio). Se redujo un 9,5%, unos 450.000 millones de dólares. Esta fue el mayor descenso porcentual desde 1982. Este siguió a un descenso en el primer trimestre.

Podría ser que el PIB de EE.UU. cayera un 7% en el tercer trime- stre, ayudado por el paquete de estímulo de marzo, la economía de EE.UU. ha disminuido un 3,5% desde principios de enero.

Compare esto con la tasa de crecimien- to de China de 4,9% según el Banco Mundial. China, que ha tenido 4.746 muertes de 91.921 casos de COVID-19 según la Organización Mundial de la Salud, (OMS) ha logrado controlar la pandemia allá.

China ha mostrado una respuesta orde- nada, científica y altamente organizada a escala nacional. El gobierno de China sigue planeando poner fin a la pobreza antes de 2021 a pesar de la pandemia. Tiene previsto llegar a una sociedad mod- eradamente próspera para todos en 2030 y alcanzar una economía desarrollada y socialista en 2050.

Lo que está claro es que los traba- jadores estadounidenses necesitan un nuevo enfoque para controlar esta pandemia y su impacto económico. China podría proveer un buen ejemplo de lo que se necesita. (1)
Por Gloria Rubac

Una elección sorprendentemente progresista de la Corte Suprema encontró que más de un tercio de Oklahoma todavía no se destina en una muerte legal, incluyendo la ley federal para la tribu Muscogee Creek y otras tribus de Oklahoma. El tribunal dictaminó el 5 de octubre en el caso McGirt v. Oklahoma que, según tratados, que danan de hace dos siglos, gran parte del este de Oklahoma es territorio indígena. Esos hogares son el la ley tribual y la ley federal se aplican en esos casos, ya que hay ciudadanos indígenas, la ley estatal de Oklahoma. Los tratados reconocen en la Constitución de los Estados Unidos como “la ley del país”.

Hasta el fallo de la Corte Suprema, la mayoría de los delitos graves en el este de Oklahoma, incluidos los casos que involucran a ciudadanos indígenas, había sido procesados en tribunales estatales por fiscales que no conocían el tratado. El tribunal afirmó que la cuestión de si la reserva Muscogee/Creek continuó existiendo después de que Oklahoma se convirtió en estado en 1907.

Esta decisión se aplica a las cinco naciones del este de Oklahoma: las naciones Muscogee o Creek, Cherokee, Chickasaw y Seminole. Estas Cinco Tribus fueron expulsadas de sus tierras ancestrales en el sureste en el Sendero de las Lágrimas en la década de 1830 por el gobierno de Estados Unidos. Hoy, medio millón de ciudadanos tribales viven en docenas de condados de Oklahoma que cubren más tierra que el estado de Carolina del Sur.

Hace doscientos años, todo Oklahoma, excepto la península, era territorio indio. Este territorio incluía las tierras de origen de varias naciones indígenas, incluidos los Apache, Arapaho, Comanche y Osage. El periódico The New York Times escribió el 9 de julio: “La decisión de 5 a 4, potencialmente una de las victorias legales más importantes para los nativos americanos en décadas, podría tener implicaciones de gran alcance para las personas que viven en lo que el tribunal afirmó que era un país indígena”. Las tierras incluyen gran parte de Tulsa, la segunda ciudad más grande de Oklahoma.

El juez Neil M. Gorsuch, que anteriormente se había puesto el lado de las tribus nativas en otros casos, se unió a los jueces más liberales del tribunal en este fallo. En opinión de la mayoría, escribió que “el Congreso le había concedido a Creek una reserva y que Estados Unidos necesitaba cumplir sus promesas. Hoy nos preguntan si la tierra que estos tratados prometieron sigue siendo una reserva indígena a efectos de la ley penal federal”, escribió Gorsuch. “Del mismo modo, no hay razón para no mantener la palabra del gobierno.”

El presidente del Tribunal Supremo John G. Roberts Jr. advirtió en una opinión escrita que no hay que entender la decisión del tribunal como una violación de la jurisdicción de los tribunales estatales. En un comunicado de prensa con varios periodistas desde la Corte Suprema, Roberts recordó que el Congreso no ha dicho lo contrario, mantienen la palabra del gobierno.”

Causar estragos y genocidio en las naciones indígenas ha resultado en decisiones racistas desde la educación a la vivienda y el uso de la tierra indígena - esto es lo que el gobierno de EE.UU., y los estados individuales han hecho a los pueblos indígenas desde que las primeras colonias fueron fundadas por Inglaterra. Madonna Thunder Hawk, organizadora de la Casa del Comercio en el Territorio Indio, dijo que la decisión del tribunal y un reciente fallo federal que ordenó el cierre del oleoducto de acceso a Dakota del Norte habían sido motivo de celebración. Sólo Cherokee, Náyge y Sarah Deer (Mvskoke) presentaron un informe amicus curiae en nombre del Centro Nacional de Recursos para Mujeres Indígenas, la Unión Americana de Libertades Civiles y otras organizaciones para analizar las implicaciones de género de la decisión. Ella habló en el aire para desafiar las preocupaciones que un grupo de expertos conservadores, el Consejo de Asuntos Públicos de Oklahoma, ha expresado sobre la delegación del Congreso de Oklahoma. (timyruf.com/y/g90vhf) “No se puede firmar un tratado con una nación indígena, firmó el presidente, que lo ratifique el Senado de EE.UU. diciendo que es su reserva, y luego quitárselo porque en 2020 el estado de Oklahoma piensa que es una realidad inconveniente para ellos”, dijo Náyge.

“Los intereses privados no nativos han estado tratando de eliminar, desestabilizar, exterminar las naciones tribales. Los intereses corporativos han estado tratando de eliminar desde que los Estados Unidos existen. Ahora todos ellos han fallado. Nosotros seguimos aquí. Y este esfuerzo también va a fracasar. Aunque el juez Roberts haya dicho que la Corte Suprema en McGirt como una gran amenaza. Quieren caracterizarlo como una amenaza a la seguridad pública, cuando en realidad es lo contrario. Y como notarás si lees esta carta, dicen, bueno, hay todos estos problemas creados por la decisión de la Corte Suprema en McGirt. La decisión de la Corte Suprema en McGirt no crea ni un solo problema. "De hecho, un problema gigante que se ha aclarado es que Oklahoma está ejerciendo ilegalmente la jurisdicción que nunca tuvo, por más de cien años... Que Oklahoma no tenía esa autoridad, y sin embargo la estaba ejerciendo. Mucha gente como estos petroleros y gasistas se han referido a estas lagunas jurisdiccionales como seguridad pública. Eso también es una pista falsa. No hay lagunas jurisdiccionales.

"El simple hecho de la cuestión es que Oklahoma mantiene la mayoría de su jurisdicción. Todavía tiene jurisdicción sobre los crímenes cometidos por no indios. Los únicos crímenes sobre los que no tienen jurisdicción son los cometidos por indios, contra indios, en tierras tribales, en la reserva.”

En un año en el que se han cambiado los nombres y logotipos racistas de los equipos deportivos, cuando la Corte Suprema falló en contra del oleoducto de acceso a Dakota, cuando se han derribado o desfigurado estatuas racistas, el fallo de McGirt en julio es un paso más en el progreso de los pueblos que han estado luchando contra los invasores coloniales desde que se descubrió a Colón en 1492.

Cómomo COVID-19 revela las desigualdades en la economía de EE.UU.

Por G. Dunkel

La administración de Trump ha admitido que no tiene ningún plan controlar el virus COVID-19. El jefe de personal, el presidente, dijo a CNN el 23 de octubre que “No vamos a controlar el país. Vamos a controlar el hecho de que tenemos vacunas, terapias y otras áreas de mitigación”. Esas son una estrategia muy arriesgada, dado que las vacunas y la terapéutica aún no existen. Lo que Meadows está diciendo realmente es que más trabajadores arriesgan sus vidas al verse obligados a volver a trabajar para poder sobrevivir, el gobierno no hará nada para ayudarlos. Los trabajadores que se enfrentan al mayor desafío son los que empezaron con los salarios más bajos y los que se enfrentan a la opresión sistémica. Eso es lo que revelan las estadísticas.

Los trabajadores en los EE.UU. han enfrentado tasas de desempleo tan altas como el 14,9% en 2020. En septiembre era de 8,9% para todos los trabajadores - y esas tasas omiten a los trabajadores subempleados y desmotivados. Si miras las tasas de desempleo de los trabajadores de color, como se informa en la Encuesta de Población Actual, las desigualdades salten a la vista: 7,2% para los trabajadores blancos, los trabajadores latinos 11,2%, los trabajadores negros 13,2% - casi el doble de la tasa de los trabajadores blancos. Para todas las mujeres, la tasa de desempleo es más alta que para los hombres.

Un gran porcentaje de las mujeres negras y latinas se concentran en trabajos de servicios y de venta al por menor y se han visto especialmente afectadas. Bajo las presiones del comercio electrónico y la pandemia, cerca de un millón de trabajadores del comercio minorista han perdido sus empleos, que en un principio eran considerados inmobiliarios. Cuando los restaurantes y las tiendas están abiertas, los clientes se mantienen alejados por miedo a ser infectados. Esto crea dificultades adicionales para los trabajadoresContinúa en la página 11