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U.S. election

Detroit smashes racist plot

By Martha Grevatt

The voters of Michigan dealt President Donald Trump a crushing defeat on Nov. 3. He lost to President-elect Joe Biden by over 154,000 votes. Black-majority cities, including Flint, Benton Harbor and especially Detroit, were decisive in a state the blatant white supremacist had narrowly won in 2016. In other “battleground” states, the pattern was replicated, with Atlanta, Milwaukee and Philadelphia playing a decisive role in Trump’s loss.

Rather than accept the numbers — which show him trailing in the popular vote tally by over 6 million — Trump and his cohorts, led by racist ex-mayor of New York City Rudy Giuliani, have launched a vicious campaign to disenfranchise Black voters. With the dozens of court challenges all failing to bolster Trump’s bogus case, political maneuvers are being employed to subvert the voters’ will.

On Nov. 17, a city with a proud history in the labor and Black liberation movements — Detroit — pushed back.

In Michigan the County Boards of Canvassers, with two Republican and two Democratic members appointed by the elected County Board of Commissioners, certify the election results in each of the state’s 83 counties. The results are then sent to the State Board of Canvassers for approval. This is normally a routine, non-controversial procedure.

Wayne County, whose largest city is Detroit, proved to be the exception. The two Republicans on the Board refused to approve the results, which by law are considered



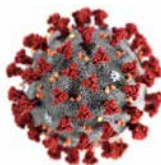
Detroit protest, Nov. 21.

not certified in the case of a tie. But the county had rejected Trump by over 323,000 votes. The excuse given was that there were discrepancies in some precincts between the number of votes tallied and the number of voters registered. None of the counts were off by more than half a dozen, hardly enough to impact the election’s outcome.

Board Chair Monica Palmer, a Republican and loyal Trumpite, at one point wanted to certify all the results except Detroit’s. This despite the fact that the city of Livonia, which is over 95 percent white, had more vote/voter discrepancies than Detroit, which is over 80 percent African American and about 10 percent Latinx. There is not even a legal mechanism for the mixed report Palmer proposed.

Crimes against humanity

We charge genocide!



On Friday, Nov. 20, over 200,000 new cases of the COVID-19 were diagnosed in the U.S. — on that one day!

Since the virus began to travel through the country in late January — at first undetected — over 265,000 people have died, and nearly 13 million people have contracted the disease. (worldometer.com) Accounts are spreading of city morgues overwhelmed with bodies and hospitals running out of treatment space, as infection rates spike in almost every state.

We are in the middle of carnage far, far more deadly than that suffered by U.S. soldiers during 20th century wars. In 11 months, over four times more people have died from COVID in the U.S. than U.S. troops died in an 11-year war on Vietnam. And the country’s coronavirus

deaths will soon exceed the 290,000 deaths of U.S. soldiers in battle during the four-year WWII conflict. (U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, “America’s Wars”)

These numbers are a damning indictment of the so-called U.S. “democracy” that those wars were supposedly waged to defend. The numbers reveal the continued crimes of a government set up to rule, from its beginning, through colonialism, capitalism and imperialism.

Now, in the middle of a worldwide health crisis, we see that this U.S.-for-profit has no organized, effective, timely help — or mercy — for the people who live here. No plan for millions of people out of work, facing eviction or foreclosure, hungry and even starving

Public comments hit racism

The entire Board meeting was conducted virtually on Zoom. Board rules mandate that time be allotted for “public comment.” After learning of the Republicans’ attempts to suppress the vote, U.S. Reps. Rashida Tlaib and Debbie Dingell appealed to their constituents to join the virtual meeting and speak out. Rep. Tlaib, who represents Detroit, is one of the progressive women of color who comprise the “Squad.”

With almost no advance notice, more than 300 people from Detroit and the surrounding community got on the meeting and made it clear they would not allow this racist voter suppression to go forward. Detroit NAACP President Rev. Wendell Anthony blasted Palmer and her fellow Board member, William Hartmann. In a video that has gone viral, a white Ann Arbor resident compared them to Bull Connor, the segregationist Commissioner of Public Safety of Birmingham, Ala., during the Civil

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# Transgender liberation: A movement whose time is now!

By Devin C

*This article elaborates remarks made by the writer at a Nov. 19 Workers World Party webinar, “Leslie Feinberg: ‘Remember Me as a Revolutionary.’” View the webinar on Facebook @WorkersWorldParty - Political Organization.*

Nov. 20 — Today is Transgender Day of Remembrance. As of today, 2020 is the deadliest year on record for transgender violence in the U.S. Over 30 murders of transgender people have been recorded in the country, with 350 murders recorded worldwide. Since 2008, at least 3,600 transgender people have been murdered worldwide. (tinyurl.com/y5a2kcdq)

Of these killings, 98 percent were committed against transgender women and trans feminine people, primarily Black trans women and other trans women of color. Transgender sex workers were 62 percent of the people who died.

Those figures do not count the countless trans people who died “in the closet,” not having publicly revealed their identity, or those whose deaths were covered up by hateful family members. The figures do not count the countless trans people who have died by suicide, died due to inadequate health care and/or constant mistreatment, or died unhoused on the streets.

### Capitalist war on trans and gender non-conforming people

“Transgender liberation” is a phrase that may seem like a distant dream right now. Oppressed people might very well respond: “We are a million miles away from that!” The odds for survival are still stacked very high against transgender and gender non-conforming people.

But trans liberation also seemed far away almost 30 years ago, in 1992, when Leslie Feinberg released his groundbreaking pamphlet, “Transgender Liberation: A Movement Whose Time Has Come.” (Free download at tinyurl.com/y5vg2r43.)

One month after Leslie released this work — which liberates the history of trans and gender non-conforming people from behind the lock and key of capitalist oppression — revolutionary Black transgender advocate Marsha P. Johnson was found dead in the Hudson River in New York City. What a hopeless time it must have felt for so many — to have a beacon of revolutionary hope dashed out in such a cruel fate.

But in the same way that our comrade Leslie Feinberg’s legacy and fighting spirit lives on, so does the legacy and fighting spirit of Marsha P. Johnson, and that of Latinx trans leader Sylvia Rivera, and all the others who have lit the way by which we now march.

Does not the revolutionary die? Of course. Does not the revolution live on? Of course! Transgender people, given the tools by revolutionary transgender warriors like Leslie Feinberg, Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera, and those still living, like Miss Major and Jennicet Gutierrez, have seized the moment — today!

### A trans revolutionary struggle

Our time of liberation has arrived. It is here. On this Transgender Day of Remembrance, we must take our time to mourn and grieve those we lost and celebrate their lives — and also celebrate our lives as transgender people still living.

Then we must continue to wage a revolutionary struggle against capitalism — both its imperialism and its continuation of colonialism in the 21st century. This is the exploitative, oppressive system that unleashed transgender oppression around the globe.

In his 1995 book, “Transgender Warriors” — the first extended Marxist analysis of transgender oppression — Leslie Feinberg traced the roots of hatred and discrimination against trans people to their origin in the formation of class society.

The struggle for transgender liberation is part of the class struggle. Trans people are part of the working class

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## 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 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 immigrants, 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

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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# Whose lives matter?

# Trans women of color and police violence

The article below was originally published on Dec. 9, 2014, at [www.bgdblog.org](http://www.bgdblog.org). It has been slightly edited. Since that time, according to the Philadelphia Police Department, police lost the records of Nizah's case. In 2018, transgender activist and lawyer Julie Chovanes argued in front of Common Pleas Judge Edward Wright using Pennsylvania's Right to Know Law. Instead of issuing a decision from the bench, the judge gave a single sentence response: "This court affirms the decision of the District Attorney's Office of Open Records" — which denied access to the records.

In February 2018, Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner said that the Morris case was not an open criminal investigation. Yet in 2019, a former District Attorney staffer claimed it was an open investigation. An important fact to remember is that Elizabeth Skala DiDonato was with Nizah Morris when she was attacked, according to her own words. Chovanes has pursued the coverup and continues to fight for Nizah.

By Princess Harmony Rodriguez

At 207 Juniper Street, in the City of Brotherly Love, stood a bar called the Key West Bar and Grille. It had its own rich history, having been Philadelphia's only integrated gay bar. But there, 12 years ago, lives were irrevocably changed. On any given night, there are thousands of drunk people in bars in that city. We are often reminded, however, that what are normal occurrences for the general public are "crimes" for trans people of color. Crimes that make us targets of police and police violence. Trans women of color are stopped, harassed, assaulted and murdered by police with impunity. The conversation about police violence must include us because our bodies, too, lie dead at their hands.

On Dec. 22, 2002, a Black Trans woman named Nizah Morris was drunk at Key West. Officers Elizabeth Skala-DiDonato, Thomas Berry, and Kenneth Novak were dispatched to the scene after a 911 call was placed by concerned friends. Skala-DiDonato offered Ms. Morris a courtesy ride to her home, and Berry accompanied them. Then, according to the police, Nizah sobered up and left the vehicle at 3:25 a.m.

Two minutes later, she was found bleeding and unconscious in the middle of the street. Berry was again dispatched to her location, where he declared a crime had not taken place, covering her face while she was still alive. Had she been taken to a hospital as soon as she was found, she more than likely would have



Nizah Morris

lived. Instead, she was left on the scene for 40 minutes. She was taken to the hospital at 4:13 a.m. and died at 8:30 p.m. on Christmas Eve from a wound that could only have come from the butt of a gun.

While police say they do not know who or what killed her, the answer is obvious. The officers involved in her final moments, Skala-DiDonato, Berry, and Novak — the third officer sent to Key West who never accounted for his whereabouts between 3:13 a.m. and 3:25 a.m. — could more than likely have been her murderers. Nizah Morris's death highlighted the immeasurable social and emotional distance between the trans community and the Philadelphia Police Department.

## Police target transgender people of color

All over the U.S., police and transgender people are often at odds, the result of decades of policing that did not stop crimes, but enforced the unwritten laws of patriarchy and ensured social conformity. Black and/or Latinx transgender people often find ourselves the targets of increased police hostility because of white supremacist, transphobic policing being distinctly opposed to our continued existence.

In Philadelphia, trans women of color are often profiled as sex workers, drug addicts, or just plain criminals. Some of us are sex workers and/or drug addicts, the end result of being targeted for discrimination by the same oppressive system that profiles us. It doesn't matter whether or not you're actually doing something illegal, though, because being transgender (resisting patriarchy's desire for our lives) is essentially illegal.

There used to be a competition among

the officers of the Philadelphia Police Department. Precincts and individual officers would compete to see how many transgender women they could arrest or stop in one night. Did they ever stop this cruelty? I don't know, but they adopted new standards and policies that would on paper give the impression that transgender people are respected by the PPD. Those new policies came about as the result of a laundry list of complaints of assault, sexual violence, and unrelenting insults during arrests, which the transgender community presented to the PPD.

## Cops harass this writer

Sometimes what minor privileges we may have as individuals save us from the full depth of police violence. And sometimes they don't. Despite being a trans woman of color from a lower economic class, I was able to attend a relatively inexpensive university in Philadelphia. I was standing at the corner of Broad and Diamond streets, walking home after visiting a friend, when two cops in an unmarked car and two more in a police cruiser pulled up and started catcalling and mocking me. They were asking for sexual favors, propositioning me, assuming I was a sex worker only because I'm transgender (I am, but they didn't know that).

It wasn't until they noticed that I had my school's lanyard with my school ID card on it that they became silent and their demeanor changed. They sped off as soon as they got the chance. I didn't think about it much when it happened, I was shaken up over it, but I realized that my school ID conferred upon me the illusion of class privilege. I still had the privilege that came with being a college student

and that was my saving grace that night. I had other run-ins with the police where I wasn't so lucky, but that incident stood out to me.

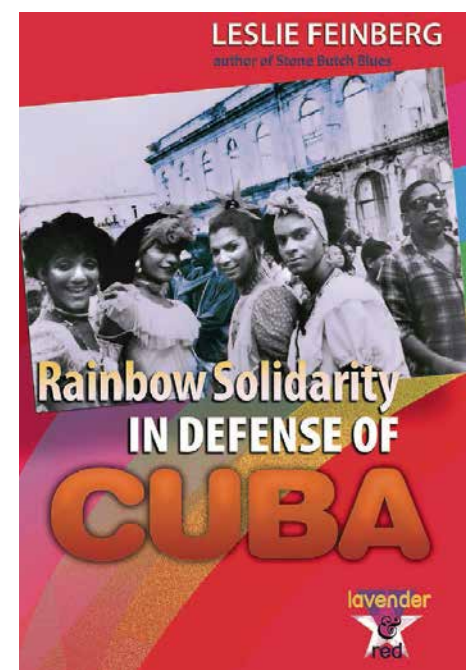
What many people don't realize is that the police brutality the trans community faces is directly tied to other forms of discrimination we face. Some trans women of color are thrown out of their homes—even as children—and have to support themselves by attempting to get a job. Discrimination against transgender people in the workplace causes us to be unemployed or underemployed, so we have to turn to sex work. As sex workers, we get mistreated by clients and the police.

Police violence against sex workers, and those presumed to be sex workers, goes unpunished and uninvestigated because sex workers are seen as expendable by clients and worthy of destruction by the state. It's a vicious cycle that is worsened by the constant threat of police violence towards anyone who is transgender or gender non-conforming.

## Need for solidarity

There are thousands of us on any given day in any city who are harassed and abused by police. It's why, even when we're the victims of crime, we don't ask for help. We're often the ones who end up arrested, injured, or emotionally traumatized, while even in the process of asking for their help. There have been times in Philadelphia when cisgender people got into fights with us. Like anyone else, we respond by defending ourselves, but what happens when we do? We're often the ones carted away.

We must expand the conversation surrounding police brutality to include trans women who have been victimized or murdered by police. People like Nizah Morris, who was murdered for what white cisgender people do every day in this country with nary a peep from the police, can't fight for themselves. We must take up the fight for them, for our sisters who have been harassed, but survived, and ultimately for ourselves, because the next time it happens, it may be us. □



## Rainbow Solidarity in DEFENSE of CUBA

By Leslie Feinberg,  
author of Stone Butch Blues

This book is an edited compilation of chapters 86 to 110 from the Lavender & Red series in Workers World newspaper that began June 3, 2004.

It is available free online at:

[www.workers.org/book/rainbow-solidarity-in-defense-of-cuba/](http://www.workers.org/book/rainbow-solidarity-in-defense-of-cuba/)

# Transgender liberation

Continued from page 2

and the oppressed. At various intersections, one will find Black trans women, who face the highest amount of violence of any other demographic, as well as Brown trans people, Indigenous Two-Spirit/trans people, undocumented trans people, disabled trans people, HIV+ trans people, incarcerated trans people, trans sex workers, homeless trans people, and, of course, trans workers of all kinds.

Feinberg said, "Bigotry against transgender people is a deadly carcinogen," and ze was, and still is, correct. It is a poison in this world. Transgender people

who dare to wage the struggle against this bigotry have the antidote and the cure: revolutionary socialism.

To win revolutionary socialism means to struggle for solidarity between and among oppressed people and workers. So it is mandatory that the transgender liberation struggle within the U.S. — and the LGBTQ2S+ struggle as a whole — unite with other struggles: with the Black Lives Matter movement against police terror, with the Palestinian struggle against Israeli apartheid, with the struggle to abolish police and prisons, with the struggle to decolonize this land for Indigenous people to have it once

again, for the struggle for reparations for Black and Indigenous people — and with the struggle against low wages, high-tech capitalism, homelessness, and the chaotic, unplanned capitalist economy that keeps us poor and starving.

For there to be transgender liberation, there must be socialism.

*Devin C is a transgender Marxist and member of Workers World Party. They are the president of Strive (Socialist Trans Initiative), a transgender advocacy organization in the Gulf Coast West area of Florida/Alabama.*



# Protest demands health care is a right—Treat Tyejaun or free him!

By Judy Greenspan  
Martinez, Calif.

Family members, friends, social workers, teachers and prisoners’ rights advocates converged on the Martinez Detention Facility in Martinez, Calif., on Nov. 22, to demand immediate medical care for Tyejaun Shepherd, an 18-year-old Black youth who is awaiting trial. His relatives say he is experiencing stroke-like symptoms, and the Sheriff’s Department refuses to get him medical treatment. The angry group of supporters chanted, “Treat Tyejaun or release him now!”

Lavette Alexander, Shepherd’s mother, spoke outside the jail about her son’s deteriorating medical condition: “My son needs to be in an outside facility where he can be monitored, and people can really take care of him. The symptoms that he has are all consistent with a stroke. They are telling me it’s not a stroke, and that everything is

fine. Everything is not fine.” Shepherd was able to call out to the protest, but his supporters were alarmed because he had a severe stutter, was confused and could not remember some friends and family.

At the rally, Joey Villareal, a formerly imprisoned Chicano activist and radio host of Free Aztlan, exposed the prison system for its virulent racism against oppressed nations in the U.S. He described the rampant spread of COVID inside jails, where prisoners have little or no access to personal protective equipment. “Being a prisoner in the U.S. today, all prisoners are on death row.” Pointing at the jail, he said, “All of these prisoners in this concentration camp are being held on death row, because they can die at any time. COVID is real.”

“TJ,” as Shepherd is referred to by his friends and family, was supported at the



San Francisco Bay Area protest, Nov. 22. WWW PHOTO: JUDY GREENSPAN

protest by his relatives, high school vice principal and social worker. There, his 12-year-old nephew, Deandra’ Williams said it best, “Free my uncle! We love you Tyejaun.”

### Lawsuits mount

Medical neglect is nothing new to the Contra Costa Sheriff’s Department, which is knee-deep in lawsuits, legal complaints

and eyewitness reports of severe medical neglect and racist brutality against the Black and Latinx people incarcerated there.

On Oct. 1, Contra Costa County was forced to agree to spend \$250 million to increase staffing and improve health care at its jail facilities, as a result of a class action lawsuit filed on behalf of some inmates by the Prison Law Office. It alleged inmates with physical and mental illnesses were being neglected. A separate lawsuit was filed June 26 by DeAndre Bolden, a formerly incarcerated person with mental health challenges who was brutally beaten by Contra Costa deputies.

No Justice Under Capitalism and Shepherd’s family organized the protest. For more information, [www.facebook.com/NoJusticeUnderCapitalism](http://www.facebook.com/NoJusticeUnderCapitalism). □



## Joann Little and the right to self-defense

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

*The following remarks were given at the Sept. 24 webinar “Women and Gender Oppressed Prisoners: Survival and Resistance,” hosted by the Prisoners Solidarity Committee of Workers World Party.*

A struggle waged in the U.S. South gives a historic lesson in how imprisoned women and gender-oppressed people have fought back.

I was living in North Carolina, becoming active in struggle, when in August 1975, Joann Little, a 20-year-old African American woman, fled her jail cell in Beaufort — an isolated coastal town in the state — after killing a white deputy sheriff who attempted to rape her.

Little used the jailer’s icepick weapon against him in her desperate struggle to resist. When she surrendered to authorities, citing self-defense, she was arrested and put on trial for murder.

Little was saved from execution or life in prison by the first U.S. struggle successful in asserting that African American

women had the right to self-defense against white rapists.

In 1975 — as now — white supremacy was integral to a state erected for the oppression and exploitation of Indigenous and African American people.

And on the night that Joann Little defended herself, she was also fighting back against the triple oppression of African American women, in place since the time enslavers had first held African women as property, exploited their labor as workers, and used their ability to reproduce as a source of profit.

In 1975 a “Free Joann Little” movement sprang up — a broad coalition of women’s liberation, Black Liberation, left and prisoner struggle groups. The Winston-Salem, N.C., branch of the Black Panther Party staunchly defended Little, connecting her self-defense to international struggle. A moving support



Joann Little in 1975.

statement came from Prisoners Against Rape — current and formerly incarcerated people convicted of rape — and women active in feminist groups.

In the 1970s, people imprisoned in the U.S., including in the South, were rising up. In Alabama they organized as the Atmore-Holman Brothers to end racist killings in the prisons. In North Carolina, women at the state prison in Raleigh rebelled against club-wielding guards to protest slave-labor conditions in the sweatshop laundries.

A key organization within the Free Joann campaign was the Prisoner Solidarity Committee, an initiative of Workers World Party. Led by the Norfolk, Va., branch of WWP, the PSC organized rallies, marches, vigils, leafleting and petitioning in Little’s defense in cities across the U.S.

At a Richmond, Va., march, the banner of the Gay Caucus of YAWF, another

WWP mass group, said: “Gay people demand: Free Joann Little! Free all political prisoners!”

Mass organizing forced a move of Little’s trial to Raleigh, the state capital. Of the trial, Little herself said, “My life is not in the hands of the court. My life is in the hands of the people.” On Aug. 22, the people prevailed as a jury declared Joann Little “Not guilty!”

Monica Moorehead, a leader of Norfolk’s PSC at the time, and now a leader in Workers World Party, said in 2006:

“One of the most important lessons of the Joann Little case ... is that extending working class solidarity to the most oppressed is not an act of charity but holds the key to building an effective fightback movement to liberate our entire class from all forms of bigotry and exploitation by the bosses.

“Every leaflet, every slogan and every demonstration in that earlier struggle not only demanded that the murder charges be dropped against our heroic sister Joann, but also that the walls of the prisons be torn down. Because just as they were then, prisons still remain concentration camps for the poor and oppressed.” □

### WW COMMENTARY

## Death behind jail walls

By Mirinda Crissman

The number of deaths in local jails as documented by Reuters, along with data collected by The Marshall Project and the New York Times on state and federal prisons, clearly illustrates that these various cages are concentration camps. People are dying premature and unnecessary deaths there, in disproportionate numbers for people of color and for people with various intersections based on nationality, gender, sexual orientation and disability. (Reuters, “Dying Inside,” The Marshall Project COVID-19, New York Times data COVID clusters.)

These deaths, particularly in U.S. jails, are being undercounted for many reasons. The prison-complex facilities transfer incarcerated workers to outside medical facilities before they die so their deaths won’t be counted as happening in custody. There are “compassionate

releases” where folks who have been locked up and are terminally ill will die in their own communities rather than in the damning custody of municipal, county, state and federal agencies.

Data on deaths in local jails is also difficult to capture, due in part to the decentralization of incarceration within county and municipal structures. Jails are operated by county sheriff departments and other law enforcement agencies, such as city police departments.

People with longer sentences are generally transferred from local jails to prisons, which are complexes usually operated by state and federal agencies. Legislation relating to prisons is frequently put in place at both the state and federal level with the intent to suppress data and maintain secrecy — for a state that serves the ruling class rather than the workers who produce its great wealth.

Overall, data is made hard to collect on

the number of deaths in im/migrant detention centers, jails and prisons — in that order — to intentionally erase the criminalization of human beings from public life and public responsibility. This erasure happens to everyone’s detriment — except the rich.

An Oct. 16 article distributed by Reuters reveals the scandalous suppression of data on jail deaths: “The Justice Department’s Bureau of Justice Statistics has collected inmate mortality data for two decades — but statistics for individual jails are withheld from the public, government officials and oversight agencies under a 1984 law limiting the release of BJS data. ... Local policy makers can’t learn if their jails’ death rates are higher than those in similar



CREDIT: RAS ALLEN

From “Care Not Cages: A People’s Guide to Healing” — a 2018 zine and video series featuring incarcerated artists dreamt up by Decarcerate Alameda County and Prison Renaissance.

communities.... The Justice Department’s own lawyers, charged with taking legal action when corrections facilities violate constitutional standards, can’t readily identify jails where high death counts warrant federal investigation.”

### How and why are people dying in jail?

A Reuters analysis of deaths in 523 jails across the U.S. between 2008 and 2019  
*Continued on page 6*



# Marietta, Ga., demonstrators demand ‘Justice for Vincent Truitt!’

By **Arielle Robinson**  
**Marietta, Ga.**

About 75 demonstrators rallied at Marietta Square on Nov. 14, demanding justice for 17-year-old Vincent Truitt, a Black teenager who was killed by Cobb County Police. He was shot twice in the back by an unidentified police officer on July 13, as he ran away from the officer near Six Flags water park in Marietta, Ga. Truitt died from his injuries the next day, alone. His family hadn’t been notified he was shot and then hospitalized.

The protest was held by Truitt’s family, friends, teachers, advisers and other administrators from his charter school, Kipp Atlanta Collegiate (KAC). At the rally, speakers said there is dashcam footage of the officer shooting Truitt and not rendering CPR after killing him. Truitt’s family, along with their supporters, are calling on Cobb Police Chief Tim Cox to release the footage to the public.

The Cobb Police Department is refusing to release any information to the public about the officer who killed Truitt, who protesters say is still employed.

Only Truitt’s family and their attorney, Gerald Griggs, as well as District Attorney Joyette Holmes, her office staff, and law enforcement officials, have been shown this footage. Griggs said that Truitt’s

family still has not received sufficient answers from Cobb County in the four months since he was killed.

## ‘Release the tapes!’

At the rally, people held signs reading “Release the tapes!” “Justice for Vincent Truitt!” and “Cobb County police kills kids!” Rally goers chanted “Vincent

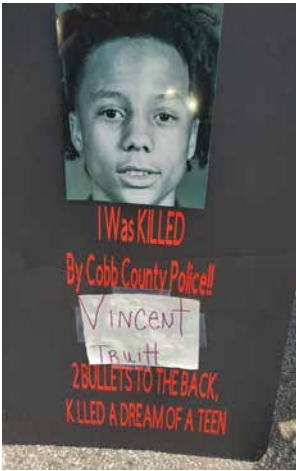


PHOTO: JUSTICE FOR VINCENT FACEBOOK

Truitt!” and “Two shots to the back. You got to justify that!”

Griggs told protesters: “For far too long in Cobb County, Black lives have not mattered. So today, on this square, we’re sending a message. This is a message to all of the residents of Cobb County. It’s time for y’all to realize that your Brown and Black brothers and sisters matter, too. We’re sending a message to Tim Cox: Release the tapes.”

Truitt’s parents also spoke at the rally. His father, Andre Truitt, said that he saw the video of his son, while running away, being shot twice in the back by Cobb County police. He asked, “In what world is that humane?”

Venethia Cook-Lewis, Truitt’s mother, tearfully said she never imagined she would be in this situation: “It’s not fair we have to go through this pain while [the officer] lives his life. He should not be working on this force.” She said that

the video of her son’s murder showed the officer who killed him was asked to help with CPR, but instead just stood over him, not offering any help.

Cook-Lewis stated, “I had Vince at a young age. We grew together and we learned together. He was almost at the age where I could be more of a friend than a mom. He was just starting to live his life.” Her son would never have hurt anyone, she said, let alone a police officer, and said living without her son hurts terribly.

Cook-Lewis emphasized: “Tim Cox, it’s time for you to resign! This officer should not be working after shooting a kid in the back. Not once, but twice. Justice for Vince!”

Authur Washington, an assistant principal at KAC, said Truitt’s family has been calmly asking for the tapes, and the Cobb Board of Commissioners tells the relatives to be patient, but its members are being hypocritical. He said: “They’re not giving us what they want us to give them. They want us to give an unidentified person just cause, but it was a shame that Vincent didn’t make it home.”

## ‘Truitt full of life and love’

Washington explained the rally’s purpose was to paint a bigger picture of Truitt’s life, as the picture the Cobb police have put out is inadequate for a young man who was full of life and love. Classmates described Truitt as a teen who loved to play basketball, and emphasized they wanted Truitt’s case to be recognized nationally.

Jondré Pryor, principal of KAC, said

that at their first meeting Truitt had questioned who Pryor was. As time went by, Truitt smiled and hugged Pryor.

Pryor said: “I am sick and tired of the adultification of our Black and Brown babies. Media makes them out to be grown women and grown men. Vince was a kid, he was a teenager. He did those things that teenagers do. But in the media, they portray him as this older person, this man, who was threatening the Cobb County officer. I’m just sick of this adultification. Vincent was a wonderful child, he had passion, he had energy. We have to make sure we find justice for this warrior.”

Toward the end of the rally, attorney Griggs returned to speak. He said the family of Ahmaud Arbery sent their condolences to Truitt’s family and friends. (Arbery, a 25-year-old unarmed Black man, was murdered by white vigilantes near Brunswick, Ga., in February.)

Griggs described the contents of the tape of Truitt’s killing: He was a passenger in the vehicle he was accused of stealing. The Cobb County police chased the vehicle down. The police eventually hit the car to slow it down. The car stopped, but then started again and drove farther, near a warehouse. Dashcam footage showed the driver of the car exiting the vehicle. The police officer got out of his vehicle and switched to his body camera. Truitt eventually crawled from the passenger seat into the driver’s seat and exited the vehicle.

The Cobb County Medical Examiner’s Office declared Truitt’s death a homicide on Oct. 5. (Atlanta Tribune, Oct. 6) □

# Portland Disabled Black Lives Matter protesters demand rights

By **WW Portland, Ore., bureau**

A claim was filed in U.S. District Court here on Nov. 1 charging that disabled people are being denied their right to protest against “systemic racism” by local, state, and federal police agencies. The claim cites Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Joining in the claim were four disabled Black Lives Matter activists of Portland; the Civil Rights Education and Enforcement Center of Los Angeles; and the Disability Rights Legal Center of Denver. Specifically, it cites protests against police “killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and many other Black, Indigenous, or people of color.” (tinyurl.com/y26dz944, pp. 1-3)

The plaintiffs include Juniper Simonis, “a non-binary transgender individual with PTSD,” Katalina (Katie) Durden, “who is legally blind,” Melissa Lewis, “a person with photosensitive epilepsy and Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, a connective tissue disorder, which means she cannot run or move quickly,” and Philip Wolfe, who “has been deaf since birth and communicates through American Sign Language (ASL).” (tinyurl.com/y3kx53ur)



August protest

PHOTO: PAULA BRONSTEIN

Their disabilities, if not visible, were told to police verbally. Nevertheless, these four and thousands of others were corralled, pushed to the ground by gangs of cops, beaten with nightsticks and fists, tear-gassed, flash-bombed, and shot at with plastic bullets.

In addition, plaintiff Simonis was arrested for trying to

take their service dog back from a cop, while police-operated strobe lights caused plaintiff Lewis to have an epileptic seizure during a protest.

Their legal complaint declares that in attempts by police at all levels to unlawfully disperse or corral protesters, disabled persons’ rights were specifically denied, as they were forced, along with others, into traps by gangs of cops in body armor, wielding clubs and gloved fists. The police beat them to the ground, teargassed their faces at close range, and then arrested them on wholly trumped-up charges.

Mobs of police terrorize entire residential neighborhoods with clouds of noxious gasses, discharge flashbang and pepper grenades. They fire rubber bullets at protesters, one of whom was shot in the face as police used U.S. military-provided grenade launchers, automatic assault rifles, and handguns.

The complaint also notes that at these protests police target people with disabilities and, when disabled activists demand their rights as police beat, tear gas, and arrest them, the cops tell them they “should not attend protests at all,” a direct violation of Section 504 of the ADA. □

# ‘We did not sign up to be raped’ Women veterans fight back against military sexual trauma

By **Johnnie Lewis**

*The writer is a U.S. Army veteran and was an organizer of the American Servicemen’s Union, 1968-69.*

This month two veterans, represented by the Yale Law School Veterans Legal Service Clinic, won a lawsuit against the U.S. Army for giving “bad paper” discharges to veterans with mental health diagnoses. The discharges include women victims of sexual assault, abuse and harassment, known collectively as Military Sexual Trauma (MST). Additionally, the lawsuit supported all veterans with diagnoses of traumatic brain injury and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder who were given bad paper discharges. (tinyurl.com/y5evwecc)

The lawsuit settlement allows fast-tracking of applications for upgrades of bad paper discharges related to these and other mental health diagnoses.

The widespread problem of MST was spotlighted Aug. 1 at a protest in Radcliff, Ky., near the U.S. Army base Fort Knox. It was organized by Our Sister’s Keeper, a national group of veterans united by their survival of sexual assault while in the U.S. military. This protest was one of many held across the U.S. that day in response to the sexual assault and brutal murder of Vanessa Guillen, a Latinx soldier at Fort Hood in Texas. She was killed by a higher ranking soldier in her own unit.

“We did not sign up to be raped,” Army veteran Heather DeBice said. “We’re standing up because we are those victims. We’ve been victimized ourselves.” DeBice said she was raped while stationed in Texas, and that the mental side effects eventually led to her discharge. “I did not get justice,” she charged. “My rapist was transitioned out of the military and went on to offend again.”

“Twelve years later, I’m still destroyed,” another woman shouted through tears. “This is not an invisible war. We

have to make our voices heard!” Activists called out the U.S. military establishment for its blatant refusal to acknowledge the scourge of MST committed by male soldiers on female soldiers. (tinyurl.com/y36t34kn)

## One in three military women suffer from MST

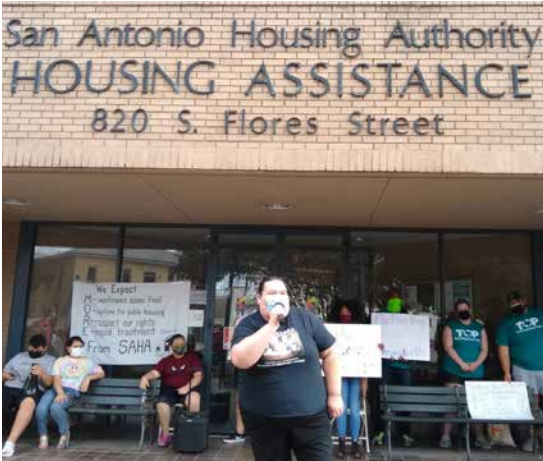
This month the Veterans Administration reported that one in three women members of the U.S. military have MST, compared to one in 50 men. (mentalhealth.va.gov) According to a just-published U.S. Dept. of Defense report, retaliation against those reporting MST is the norm. Sixty-six percent reported retaliation after filing a sexual assault complaint; 73% of retaliators were above the MST victim in rank. One-third of those reporting MST were discharged within seven months, 24% of whom received bad paper discharges which disallows them VA medical and other benefits, including mental health services. (sapr.mil/reports)

*Continued on page 6*



# San Antonio: ‘Save public housing!’

Scores of public housing residents and their supporters gathered outside the San Antonio Housing Authority’s so-called “housing assistance office” Nov. 21 to protest SAHA’s plan to demolish the historic Alazán Courts. Alazán is the city’s oldest and biggest public housing project, located in the historic center of the city’s Latinx, mostly Chicanx/Mexicanx, community.



Kayla Miranda on the mic.

Even though more than 1,200 people live in Alazán, SAHA is moving to tear it down and “redevelop” the site. Speakers called the plan an obvious part of the gentrification drive displacing so many poor and working people on San Antonio’s South and West Sides.

Alazán resident Kayla Miranda said that with more than 45,000 people on the waiting list for public housing, and with homelessness at crisis levels, the city should be building more units, not tearing down people’s homes.

After the rally, marchers chanting “Mi barrio no se vende” and “Save public housing” took the protest directly to SAHA CEO David Nisivoccia’s home — at, appropriately enough, the South End Lofts, one of many expensive new buildings in the downtown area.

— Story and photo by Shelley Ettinger

# Postal workers delivered votes — Now defend the Post Office!

By Joe Piette Philadelphia

Postal workers and supporters of a vibrant postal service held rallies in dozens of cities on Nov. 17 that highlighted the work postal workers did during the election. They also raised the continued need for COVID-19 financial relief for the U.S. Postal Service.

The rallies took place at a time when the numbers of pandemic exposures, hospitalizations and deaths are reaching new highs. This is causing more mail delays as postal facilities experience severe understaffing levels from workers being unable to work.

At the Philadelphia rally, actor Mitchell Kramer, dressed as Ben Franklin — the first Postmaster General in 1775 — joined American Postal Workers Union (APWU) Philadelphia Local President Nick Casselli in pointing to the USPS need for emergency funding. Postmaster General Louis DeJoy’s policies are degrading postal services that have been the right of the people since Ben Franklin’s time.

With the election over, there is nothing to stop DeJoy from implementing policies federal judges forced him to pause before Nov. 3.



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Rally held outside historic first post office in Philadelphia, Nov. 17.

Even further cuts in services are possible. Postal workers and allies handed out an APWU flier to passersby asking them to call their U.S. senator at (844) 402-1001 to demand Congress provide the USPS with \$25 billion in funding and permanently reverse DeJoy’s policies.

Postal workers also handed out a fact sheet entitled “The Postal Service: What Now?” comparing DeJoy’s vision of privatization to a people’s vision of what the Postal Service could be. For a link to the fact sheet visit [bit.ly/postalvision](https://bit.ly/postalvision). □

# Growing threats to workers’ homes

By G. Dunkel

In March and April, over 22 million workers in the United States lost their jobs. So far, the stumbling economic recovery has brought 12 million back, but 10 million workers — 90% of them in the low-paid service sector — still do not have a job.

A majority of these workers are women. Service sector job losses and remote schooling have had a major impact on Black and Latinx women; at least 824,000 Latinx women have left the labor force since February. (NYT, Nov. 3)

It’s hard to get a true picture of what is happening in the job market and the overall economy because conditions and policies are changing so rapidly. It is not clear how many long-term (over 26 weeks) unemployed there are, because the labor force participation rate — the percentage of the working-age population working or actively seeking employment — is so low, even lower than it was in the 2008 Great Recession.

For the week ending Nov. 14, initial claims for state unemployment were slightly above 743,000, a jump from the previous week, and there were 320,000 claims filed with the federal unemployment programs. This doesn’t indicate a real economic recovery with more jobs

being created. How long an unemployed worker gets benefits, and what happens to them when benefits are exhausted, varies from state to state. The government’s priority is to keep workers from getting state benefits, not to guarantee workers get what is their due. In some states, workers’ benefits have been held up when their claims are wrongfully flagged as fraudulent.

## Mass evictions on the horizon

One thing is clear. This pandemic is hitting low-income renters very hard. The Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University reports more than half of renters who earn less than \$25,000 a year lost wages between March and September. “While 15% of white renters at that income level are behind, 25% of Black and Hispanic renters are behind,” said Chris Herbert, the center’s managing director. This is another reflection of the systemic racism in U.S. society.

There will be major economic fallout from this crisis. The Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia has estimated U.S. renters will owe roughly \$7.2 billion in unpaid rent by December. While evictions don’t clear up back rent, they do give landlords a glimmer of future revenue.

There is a strong possibility that a tsunami of evictions will begin in January 2021.

The CARES Act, the pandemic relief bill that Congress passed in March, prohibited evictions in buildings with a federally guaranteed mortgage — about half of the market for renters was covered.

There was a lot of confusion about these restrictions. Landlords and tenants had trouble finding information; complex paperwork was required to prove that inability to pay was COVID-related. Some landlords resorted to “private” evictions — changing locks, taking away the front door, stopping maintenance, hiring thugs — most of which are illegal because they lead to strife and violence.

The Centers for Disease Control stepped in and restricted evictions on the grounds that they would contribute to the current health emergency. Various states and even some cities passed similar restrictions.

Even in states like Arizona and Arkansas, where tenant protections are scarce, court-supervised evictions fell sharply, and “private” evictions were sometimes reversed. Still,

Princeton’s Eviction Lab has counted over 100,000 eviction filings during the pandemic in the 25 cities it tracks.

However, these prohibitions against evictions are scheduled to sunset Dec. 31. There are predictions that as many as 4.1 million eviction cases will be filed in the first month of 2021. And the CDC’s order and the CARES Act just postponed the rent’s due date; the measures didn’t forgive rent debt.

While many renters are struggling to stay afloat and avoid the catastrophes that homelessness would bring, the big bourgeoisie in this country are doing swell. Business Insider (Oct. 30) estimates that U.S. billionaires increased their wealth by half a trillion dollars in 2020, while 40 million U.S. workers applied for unemployment insurance. □



A rent-controlled apartment building, Washington, D.C.

# Death behind jail walls

Continued from page 4

found 7,571 reported deaths. Of the people who died in these cages, 4,998 — or about two thirds — were killed by conditions they were already suffering from before they were in custody or saw their day in court.

Of the total number of reported deaths, 2,000 were due to suicide. About 1,500 of those suicides were by people not yet convicted of anything. There are essentially no figures available on the number of deaths resulting from guard or police assault on incarcerated people within jails and prisons.

A myriad of deplorable factors continue to contribute to premature death imposed on already vulnerable people. Many jails are not responsible to any agency to maintain basic, safe standards

for operation or health care. Mandatory bail requirements trap poorer people in pre-trial detention for long periods.

Since the end of the Reuters study, the death rate for incarcerated people due to drug and alcohol overdose has increased by 72%. This has occurred amid an opioid epidemic developed and exploited by a pharmaceutical industry determined to reap mega-profits and by complicit government entities.

## Incarceration should not be a death sentence

Im/migrant detention centers, jails and prisons are consistently used as weapons against members of the working class and against oppressed people. Arrest and incarceration can be used against anyone at any time for the most

arbitrary of reasons.

Threats of these cages can be invoked to bust up and contain revolutionary movements fighting for a world free of cages and borders — a world that will not produce violence in the name of profit for a ruling class that holds the keys to these cages.

Those of us on the outside will not allow the prison walls to divide us from our common interest in fighting together with incarcerated workers for a planet free of the organized violence of police and prisons, a world free of the willfully imposed poverty and everyday violence of capitalism.

Save their lives and free them all for public health! Provide released folks with housing, healthcare and a guaranteed income upon release! Attack the conditions that necessitate cages! Tear down the walls! □

# Women veterans fight back against military sexual trauma

Continued from page 5

A 2013 study showed 40% of all women homeless veterans experience MST, compared to only 3.3% of men. Veterans presenting with MST demonstrate “a significantly higher likelihood of almost all mental health conditions examined, as compared to other homeless women and men, including depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, other anxiety disorders, substance use disorders, bipolar disorders, personality disorders, suicide, and among men only, schizophrenia and psychotic disorders.” However, veterans with bad paper discharges, among those most in need, were not counted in the study. (Journal of General Internal Medicine, July 2013)

The lawsuit win is, of course, a victory for women veterans with MST-related PTSD and all veterans presenting with mental health diagnoses. However, they still must file claims to upgrade their discharge papers, although representation through the various veterans service organizations, such as Disabled American Veterans, American Legion and others, is free to all veterans. ([www.va.gov/vso/](https://www.va.gov/vso/))

There are still many hurdles to overcome in the struggle against the patriarchal abuse that permeates the imperialist military and all of capitalist society. □



WW COMMENTARY

Active forces decide political struggles – battling #45

*Bulletin: After this article was written, on Nov. 23 pressure from business executives forced the administration to cooperate with the transition to Biden/Harris. #45, however, has yet to concede the election and continues filing lawsuits to reverse vote counts.*

By John Catalinotto

If the political struggle were determined simply by adding up potential forces, #45 would be meeting now with Joe Biden, and the two would be preparing the next capitalist administration of the U.S. government.

Have no illusions. Both Republicans and Democrats share a common imperialist foreign policy. They both defend the interests of Wall Street. They both feed the Pentagon.

For more than the past century, the two big political parties, despite bitter competition to get control of a two-trillion-dollar budget, have cooperated in the transition. This year Biden can't even get his hands on government funds to prepare to take office.

Judging by statements of CEOs and former government officials, the ruling class backs Biden. Each day another Republican politician or two goes on record of advising #45 to concede, to cooperate with the transition team. Each day, another European imperialist head of state calls Biden to congratulate him.

If you believed that political struggles or class struggles — or for that matter, wars — were decided by counting the number of boots on each side, you might conclude that this battle is over.

Yet as of Nov. 23, no such transition meetings are taking place. The grotesque Rudy Giuliani sues another state; #45 refuses to give in.

It raises the following questions for the working class — considered in its broadest definition — employed, unemployed, gig and permanent, im/migrants, youth and retired, and including all nationalities, genders and people with special oppressions: Should the working class get involved in this struggle and how?

**The workers have a side**

The answer should be obvious. Allowing #45 to overthrow the elections would be a blow to democratic rights, a blow to the workers and a surrender to his attack on the voting rights of workers, especially of the Black community.

Have no illusions. Big money, big media and decades

of anti-socialist indoctrination determine U.S. elections. Neither major party represents the working class. But we can't let the Trumpites throw votes from Black and other people of color in the trash can.

The working class should intervene and has the opportunity to do so as an active force. It should make its own demands, not simply as an appendage to the Biden/Harris administration and its ruling class backers.

Voters rejected #45 by a lead of nearly 7 million votes. Judging by the cheers on Nov. 7 when the media opted for Biden/Harris, millions of people felt great. More quotes from those celebrating reflected relief at rejecting Trump than elation at electing Biden.

The voters said no to #45, despite the Republican effort to suppress Black and — except in Florida with a large number of right-wing Cubans and Venezuelans — Latinx voters. In the states Biden flipped — Georgia, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin — a high turnout in the big cities with large Black populations — Atlanta, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Detroit and Milwaukee — made the difference.

Thus, despite the distortion of the undemocratic Electoral College that weighs the vote toward rural areas and away from cities, the Democrats also won in that undemocratic arena, by 306 to 232.

Now the desperate loser is trying to overturn votes by claiming — without evidence — electoral fraud in largely Black cities like Detroit and Philadelphia. He's trying to reverse — that is, steal — the election, and suppressing Black voters — suppression that has a long history in the U.S. — is his tactic.

So far, nearly all the court cases have gone against #45. His legal representative, former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, keeps filing new lawsuits.

**Active forces count**

If Wall Street, the establishment and the courts have decided for Biden, you might conclude that workers and progressive forces no longer need to act. But then you would be ignoring an important truth: In a crisis, it's active forces, social forces in motion, that determine political struggles and class struggles.

Even if #45 fails in his grotesque attempt to overturn the election, his stubborn repetition of his Big Lie has already mobilized his reactionary base. Tens of thousands of them took the streets of Washington, D.C., on Nov. 14. They will still be around after Jan. 20.

There are other millions, however — consider those



Detroit

who cheered on Nov. 7 — who it's possible to mobilize to come out again. This time they can actively counter #45 and his followers. They can show the reactionaries what they're up against. And as they do this, the workers can make their own demands on Biden.

It's obvious such demands are needed. Already, it seems that the Democratic leaders are yielding to pressure from the Republican resistance in the Senate. A report in the Nov. 22 New York Times says, "Advisers to President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. are pushing for Democratic leaders in Congress to reach a quick stimulus deal with Senate Republicans, even if it falls short of the larger package Democrats have been seeking."

That's early notice of a rotten compromise with the Republicans. A massive mobilization can stop this.

Such a mobilization can stop the Democratic leadership from cutting down the left wing of their own party. The center-right leaders have already blamed the leftists for "down-ticket" losses, that is, where those running for lesser offices fared worse than Biden/Harris.

That argument contradicts the success of the furthest left Democratic representatives, for example, the women in "the Squad," who all won reelection, most by large majorities. These candidates raised issues the working class is concerned about, like health care and the climate crisis and fighting racism, and aroused enthusiastic support.

It was one of the Squad, Rep. Rashida Tlaib, who with Rep. Debbie Dingell led the mobilization of people in her Michigan district against the Trumpites' attempt to subvert the vote in that state. It's a beginning of what can be done on a national level.

Stop #45's fight to stay in office. Don't even let him leave with his head up. □

Detroit smashes racist plot in U.S. election

Continued from page 1

Rights Movement.

"You are certainly showing that you are a racist," State Representative Abraham Aiyash said. "You may say that you are not, you may claim that you are not, but let's be very clear. Your words today and your actions today made it clear that you are OK with silencing the votes of

an 80-percent African-American city." (Detroit Free Press, Nov. 17)

The multinational virtual mobilization was not only a powerful statement against racism, it was effective. By the end of the day the Board voted unanimously to certify the results.

At this point the matter should have been closed. But after getting a call from Trump himself, Palmer and Hartmann tried to

rescind their vote after the deadline for certification had passed. Palmer complained that she was "threatened" on social media. In fact, the worst threats on social media were directed at Representative Aiyash, who is Arab and Muslim.

After losing in Wayne County, Trump summoned a delegation of Michigan Republican state legislators to the White House to get them to illegally appoint his supporters as Michigan's 16 Electoral College electors. So far they have declined to do so.

On Nov. 23 the state Board of Canvassers, after getting an earful during public

comment, voted 3-1 to certify the election results. Over 700 signed up to speak.

But Trump and Giuliani continue to pursue similar strategies in other states to overturn the vote — particularly the Black vote in Atlanta, Milwaukee and Philadelphia.

If the Wayne County canvassers' meeting had been held in person, community members would have packed the room to overflowing. Yet even with the surging pandemic and cold weather limiting our ability to protest, it is possible to fight the racists and win — and fighting back is the only way to block racist voter suppression. □



**Palestine Writes Literature Festival**

كانون الأول ٢٠٢٠ • December 2-6, 2020

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The common threads uniting all participants are the love of books and support of justice for Palestine. Our festival honors the many historic personalities who have walked this path before us, and showcases living voices celebrating Palestinian life, devoted to the belief that art challenges repression

and creates bonds between Palestine and the rest of the world. The Palestine Writes Literature Festival, from Dec. 2-6, features five days of virtual readings, talks, and performances celebrating Palestinian literature. Visit [www.palestinewrites.org](http://www.palestinewrites.org) for information on the program and how to register. □

Dancing in the streets

By Mumia Abu-Jamal

Taken from a Nov. 8 audio column on [prisonradio.org](http://prisonradio.org).



An American president loses his hard-fought reelection bid, and within moments, the streets are full of people, who are beyond exultant: they are singing, they are dancing — dancing in the streets!

I've never seen such a thing, nor was it expected.

The end of the Trump regime was within sight and people in Philadelphia, New York City, Wilmington, Del., in

San Francisco — and right outside the White House in Washington, D.C. — exploded into the streets, expressing paroxysms of purest joy.

What could it mean?

I think it reflected the heaviness of state repression, the aura of threat and intimidation being lifted, and the psyche sought expression.

People felt like they could breathe again, sing again, and even dance again.

As soon as I saw it, I thought of the song "Dancing in the Streets" by Martha [Reeves] and the Vandellas, a song popular in the '60s.

"Dancing in the streets!" □



# Trump pushes ANWR drilling — what will Biden do?

By Betsey Piette

Since Nov. 7, corporate media has focused on President Donald Trump’s refusal to accept his election defeat, labeling his actions “damaging to [the myth of bourgeois] democracy.” Yet one of Trump’s few concrete actions since the election — speeding up controversial oil and gas drilling in Alaska’s Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) — has received scant media attention even though it is more dangerous.

Right after the election, the Trump administration increased harmful seismic testing in the ANWR. Now the president is rushing to auction off drilling rights to fossil fuel companies before President-elect Joe Biden takes office, despite strong opposition from environmentalists and Indigenous communities in the region. (tinyurl.com/y6myshsz)

Since taking office in 2017, the White House occupant has reversed or removed over 100 environmental protections and regulations designed to limit climate change and protect air and water. One of his first priorities was opening up the ANWR for potential development.

In December 2017, Congress passed the “Tax Cuts and Jobs Act” which granted the Trump administration authority to sell oil and gas leases in the refuge after a 40-year fight to prevent drilling in ANWR. The legislation opened the Arctic coast for potential development. Trump is now in a mad scramble to get sales done.

### Major oil spill could devastate Indigenous lands

The acrimonious battle over the ANWR is one of the longest-running environmental fights in U.S. history, dating back to 1980 when Congress passed the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. While establishing the ANWR as a new national wilderness area, the act left it open to future gas exploration.

The impending auction of drilling rights pits Indigenous communities with differing interests in the area against each other — a situation oil and gas companies have long exploited. Some in the Inupiat Tribe perceive of drilling as an economic windfall, potentially bringing jobs and infrastructure funds to very impoverished communities. For other Inupiat tribal members, and especially for the Gwich’in Nation, who are Indigenous people reliant on the annual migration of a herd of over 160,000 porcupine caribou through the region, it is an attack on their very existence.

Decades after the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill released 42 million liters of crude oil and contaminated 1,236.5 miles (1,990 kilometers) of shoreline in Alaska’s Prince William Sound, the environmental impact is still felt. If a major disaster — an oil spill or gas leak — were to result



Defend the Sacred Alaska — Arctic Refuge rally, Fairbanks, Alaska, March 7, 2018.

from drilling in the ANWR, it would devastate the only homeland for many Indigenous people.

### Who stands to benefit?

The multibillion-dollar energy industry clearly has a friend in Trump. Since taking office, he lifted bans on oil and gas exploration, including in the ANWR and other parts of Alaska, in coastal waters around the U.S. and in areas formerly protected as national monuments. Trump has assisted fossil fuel infrastructure projects including the Keystone XL pipeline to bring tar sands crude oil from Canada, the Dakota Access Pipeline to move oil from North Dakota oil fields and the Atlantic Coast pipeline that would transport natural gas from the Marcellus Shale in West Virginia. (brookings.edu, Aug. 4)

Now, despite years of protests, and with an energy industry facing financial decline due to overproduction plus the coronavirus pandemic, the Trump administration is speeding up the process to sell ANWR leases. On Nov. 17, the Bureau of Land Management opened 32 plots covering 1.5 million acres of the North Slope along the ANWR for drilling. Oil companies have 30 days to submit their lease bids for an auction that could occur just days before Biden takes office Jan. 20.

Even with the bids, it is not guaranteed that the environmentally dangerous drilling will take place. A number of big banks, including five out of the six biggest U.S. banks, say they will not finance new drilling in the Arctic. (Highnorthnews.com, Nov. 20) It is possible that Biden will block or reverse the sales.

### What path for Biden?

During his run for the White House, Joe Biden voiced opposition to drilling in the ANWR. He also promised to rejoin the Paris [Climate] Agreement on “day one.” However, the Democratic National Committee platform stopped short of opposing fracking for fossil fuels and failed to embrace more progressive calls for immediate climate change actions.

In fact, the Paris Agreement has proven very ineffective in limiting global warming. During the 2015 Paris Climate Summit, the U.S. blocked any binding language. And it continued a provision from the 1998 Kyoto Accords that explicitly guaranteed the U.S. military exemption from any international climate agreement. With deadly emissions greater than the entire output of some industrialized nations, the Pentagon is the largest producer of greenhouse gases in the world.

Environmental activists are raising concern over Ernest Moniz, Secretary of Energy in President Barack Obama’s administration from 2013 to 2017 and potentially a top contender to lead Biden’s Department of Energy. Moniz, who supports fracking, launched the liquefied natural gas export regime under Obama. He is currently a director of Southern Company, the second-highest carbon-polluting energy utility in the U.S. (Readsludge.com, Nov. 19)

Another potential candidate for Energy Secretary is Arun Majumdar, who served under Moniz. Majumdar, like Moniz, is opposed to stopping fossil fuel extraction. On Nov. 17, Biden named fossil fuel industry advocate Cedric Richmond to a White House liaison position between the business community and climate change activists.

Concern over Biden’s “climate advisors” led Indigenous, racial justice and climate activists to stage an occupation outside the Democratic National Committee headquarters in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 19, calling for a corporate-free Cabinet. Protesters, including Ta’Sina Sapa Win of the Cheyenne River Grassroots Collective, Missouri Congressperson-elect Cori Bush and Congressperson Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, also called for Biden to take immediate climate action and approve the Green New Deal. (tinyurl.com/y3rehu8l) □

## WW Commentary Living with addiction and COVID-19

By Princess Harmony

In the countrywide COVID-19 epidemic, it is easy to forget that the most vulnerable among us include those with opioid addictions who use the medications methadone (Diskets, Methadose) and buprenorphine (Suboxone, Subutex, Sublocade, Zubsolv, Bunavail).

These people, who are reliant on constant and steady dosing of their medicines to stave off the horrors of opioid addiction, cannot be separated from their medications. That’s why COVID-19 presents such a problem: places that dose methadone or prescribe buprenorphine are very busy with large amounts of people in an often small space.

This massive change in lifestyle, in how we live in a COVID-19 infected world, impacts us in a different way from other people because we have to put ourselves at risk for the coronavirus just to get the medicine we need to survive. Studies have found that people with opioid use disorder and methamphetamine use disorder are at a higher risk for contracting COVID-19 than the average non-user. This shows that going to a crowded clinic is a risk for those of us with those disorders.

Before the coronavirus crisis started, states had the limited power of deciding how many take-home doses patients could have. The reason the power was limited was because, on the federal level, a patient can only have a maximum of 30 take-home doses after two years. These restrictions, which served as an insult to the community, were said to prevent overdoses and mostly “diversion,” meaning the sharing or selling of methadone to other people. That being said, diversion of methadone serves as an aid to the community, though the government doesn’t see it that way.

In a COVID-19 impacted world, the rules for methadone changed. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration changed the rules so that states that have declared states of emergency due to COVID-19 can now permit their methadone treatment centers to distribute 28 doses to patients who are stabilized, regardless of how long they’ve been in treatment, and 14 doses to patients who are not yet stabilized.

This serves to make access to important recovery resources much easier than it had been in the past. Patients seeking help can finally overcome the barrier that was daily visits to the methadone clinic. This may strip the clinic of structure, but that’s a sacrifice that’s ultimately worth making. □

# Climate change lurks Hurricanes strike Central America

By G. Dunkel

Hurricane Iota, the 30th named storm, 13th hurricane and 6th major hurricane of 2020, made landfall in Nicaragua just 10 miles south of where Hurricane Eta struck two weeks earlier.

Iota was more powerful than Eta, carried more rain and did more damage, especially to the Indigenous communities in Honduras and Guatemala, peoples whom the pandemic has already devastated.

In certain areas, the water left from Eta had not completely drained.

In northern Honduras, Iota flooded most of San Pedro Sula’s 800,000 people. About 100,000 people there are piled up in shelters, unable to take any precautions against COVID-19. They have an urgent need to obtain food and water. Some of them have not been home for two weeks and must dread what they will find when they return to their homes.

The Red Cross estimates that these two back-to-back November hurricanes affected about 4.2 million people in Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala.

### Effects of global warming

It is not currently possible to scientifically tie an individual hurricane to the overall process of climate change. Long before “climate change” was a topic of discussion, in November of 1932, the horribly destructive Hurricane Cuba, a category 5 storm, made landfall



Honduran shelter

on the Caribbean island and immediately killed 3,100 people.

But Iota was a hurricane of a new type. Initiated by a tropical wave off the coast of Columbia on Nov. 10, Iota developed rapidly and three days later became a tropical storm. Two days later, it intensified overnight from a Category 1 storm of winds at least 74 mph, to a Category 5 storm with winds of at least 157 mph.

This rapid intensification at what is usually the end of the hurricane season testifies to how much warmer the Caribbean has become and how this warmth makes the storms brewed there more powerful.

Meteorologists looking at 120 years worth of data have established that hurricanes’ forward speed has recently diminished by 17%. This makes them more destructive since structures have to withstand their winds for longer, and they can drop more rain. □



# Class struggle in China

## How to deal with multibillionaires?

By Sara Flounders

“The Sorcerer’s Apprentice” is an old story repeated in many variations, from Greek myths to a famous German poem by Goethe in 1797 to an Alfred Hitchcock film and several Disney versions. All variations deal with summoning or unleashing overwhelming forces that can’t be controlled.

In “The Communist Manifesto,” Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels compared modern capitalism’s wild, reckless overproduction that leads to uncontrollable crashes to “the sorcerer who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells.”

That is China’s concern today: how to deal with multibillionaire Jack Ma and his Ant Group, the world’s biggest fintech (financial technology) enterprise and a modern-day sorcerer’s apprentice.



Ant had been set to sell shares worth a record-breaking \$34.4 billion, but on Nov. 3, just two days before the company was to hold the largest initial public offering (IPO) in the world, the Chinese government and top state banks suddenly moved to suspend the sale. This unprecedented action was the most dramatic example to date of a continuing effort to rein in Chinese capitalists and restrict some of their most dangerous schemes.

Jack Ma is a strong proponent of an open and market-driven economy. His often expressed view is that government regulation stifles innovation. He is also a long-time member of the Chinese Communist Party. Allowing Chinese capitalists into the party began as an effort to secure the loyalty of these emerging capitalists to socialist construction and have some means of control over them. It is clearly a contradiction, however, because they use their influence and party positions to promote their own wealth.

### High interest, high debt

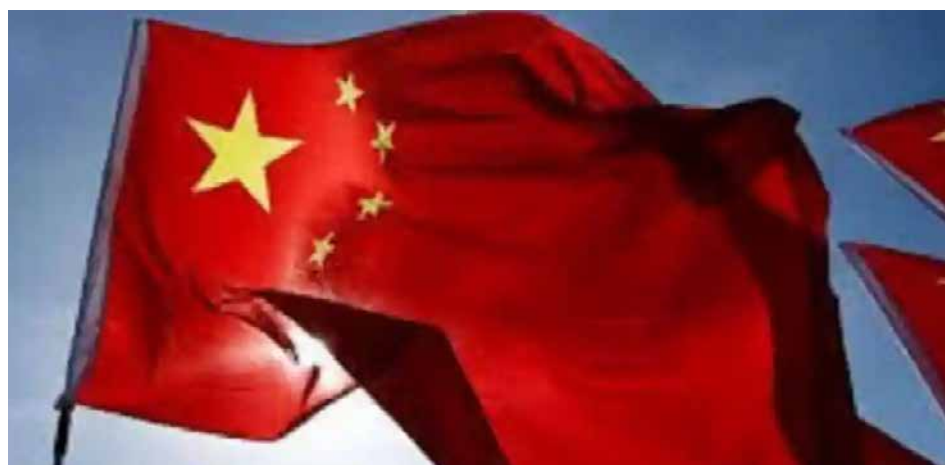
Ant Group was set up as a technical company, to get around stricter Chinese regulations on banks. But Ant Group actually is a bank — without one branch office, but making millions of microloans and extending credit at the tap of a phone app.

Because Ant Group is registered as a technical company, it charged interest to consumers at a rate four times higher than what banks can charge.

Ant runs Alipay, whose one billion active users make it the main online payment system in China, overtaking cash, checks and credit cards. Through its payment and lending platforms, Alipay has processed \$17 trillion worth of transactions in China over the past year.

Like other Chinese tech giants, Ant Group holds precious data on customers and controls a digital pipeline through which hundreds of billions of dollars are lent and spent. Having such power in private hands is a source of tension between socialist planners and capitalist entrepreneurs.

Ant Group began as a payment service for the giant, privately owned e-commerce platform Alibaba, also founded by Jack Ma. Alibaba owns one-third of Ant Group. The projected combined valuation



of Alibaba and Ant is over \$1 trillion.

For those who support the Chinese Revolution, the question is whether this abrupt government decision to stop the sale of shares is an essential choice or just a heavy-handed decision by banking regulators.

Are these new financial entities disruptive to China’s socialist planning? Or are they a creative, cutting edge, a way to give millions of working people easy access to funds and products?

A state-compiled report examines the way microlending by Ant Group and other fintech companies encourages poor and young people to pile up debt — at four times the regular interest rate. This easy credit has led to a surge of bad debts, especially for inexperienced young workers. Credit card debt is rising by 30 percent a year and has reached 10 times the level of 2010.

How will the fact that hundreds of millions of people now face growing debt impact on China’s widely publicized plan to end poverty in 2020?

Can Chinese state banks weather a crisis the way global capitalist banks did in 2008? To bail out the banks, capitalist governments imposed ruthless austerity. Millions of people lost their homes, while social programs were cut to the bone.

### Global banks jump in

The decision by Chinese financial regulators and the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party to suspend the Ant Technology Group has been covered extensively in financial and business publications in the capitalist West.

This coverage expresses shock and worry. Restricting the capitalist market in China, even at the risk of international criticism, is a new thing. The anticipated sale of Ant shares on the Shanghai and Hong Kong stock exchanges had been described in glowing terms. Billions were at stake and involved high financial leverage and anxious investors buying on margin.

China’s Ant Group hired Goldman Sachs as the joint lead manager in the IPO, while Citigroup Global Markets Asia Ltd., JPMorgan Chase & Co., J.P. Morgan Securities (Far East) Ltd., Morgan Stanley Asia Ltd., and Hong Kong Securities Ltd. are the joint sponsors.

Credit Suisse Group AG was reportedly working as a joint global coordinator. Two state-owned banks, China International Capital Corp. and China Securities Co., were part of a listing on the Shanghai Stock Exchange Science and Technology Innovation Board — called the STAR Market.

It is clear that imperialist banks, which are completely hostile to socialist construction, have had a big role in this privately owned Chinese bank. The listing had been expected to generate \$400 million just in fees for global investment banks.

“The IPO would have pegged Ant’s worth at a stunning US\$359 billion, higher than the world’s largest bank, JP Morgan, and bigger than the state-backed Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC),” wrote Yahoo!News on Nov. 7. “China feared the privately-run company, which was on the cusp of bringing more foreign investors into its capital structure, had become too big to fail.”

### Risk to socialist planning

The Economist of Nov. 14 called the action a shot across the bow of China’s largest financial-technology group.

The Nov. 5 suspension by regulators of Ant’s \$37-billion initial public offering on less than 48 hours’ notice was at first interpreted merely as a warning to its founder, Jack Ma, who had previously criticized China’s state-owned banks. But on Nov. 10 the publication of an extensive draft of new rules for all technology groups made it clear that Ant was not the only target. The new regulations involve all of China’s tech industry.

Clearly, there is also a growing realization on the part of international capitalists that the Chinese Communist Party still plays a dominant role and is determined to maintain socialist planning. This means refusing to let powerful Chinese capitalists put the planned economy at risk.

It is also clear from the sheer size of this one proposed sale that Chinese capitalists like Jack Ma are enormously powerful and internationally connected. Their size and influence has grown.

Do they actually pose a risk to the stability of the state?

The media in China have paid much attention to explaining the risks involved. Similar speculative schemes involving financial leverage led to the 2008 global capitalist crash and earlier ones.

With so many imperialist banks involved in Ant Group and its risky leveraged set-up, China could be especially vulnerable in a capitalist crisis, especially when there are growing U.S. threats to deliberately sabotage China’s growth.

### Debt trap

The People’s Daily, official newspaper of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, published an article on Oct. 28, a week before the Ant IPO was suspended, headlined “Maintaining financial security a top priority.” The article warned: “China has established a huge banking, stock market and bond system. However, this has led to new regulation risks and challenges. ... Financial security is an important part of national security.” The article called for financial institutions to “strengthen the Party’s leadership.”

The Ant Group and other fintech companies promoted easy loans to customers who are young and Internet-savvy but do not have access to a credit card. Their claim was to be serving financially

excluded, previously underserved customers, with instantaneous underwriting and receipt of funds.

Easy credit at a phone tap for consumer products, travel and small business start-ups can quickly lead to debt traps for millions who have no experience with being in debt.

In the U.S. today, almost all workers live their lives in debt. Some 41 percent are in medical debt. Millions are overwhelmed by student loans and car loans. Loss of a job can lead quickly to homelessness.

For three generations, since the 1949 Communist revolution, debt was almost unknown in China among workers and peasants. Before the revolution, millions of people were born into debt, carrying the debt of their families, and were forced to sell themselves and their children to landlords to pay debts.

### New regulations

Growing volumes of credit card debt are overwhelming some banks. Should a mass default occur, the Ant Group keeps the money while the state banks bear the risk.

How is this possible?

Ant Group policy has been to use the same Wall Street sleight of hand that led to the 2008 global capitalist crash. This is hardly new or innovative. The fintech companies have been repackaging and selling off millions of risky loans. Only 2 percent of the loans Ant had facilitated as of the end of June were on its balance sheet in October, according to its IPO prospectus.

Ant Group partners with China’s state-owned banks. The group reaps the initial fees and payments and then repackages millions of microloans and sells them to the state banks. Now 98 percent of Ant Group’s debt is owned by state banks. This leaves the state banks taking on most of the credit risk.

In brief, Jack Ma was putting up \$2 to do \$100 worth of business, using state banks to finance the other \$98. This repackaging of debt is called securitization. It is the conversion of an asset, especially a loan, into marketable securities, typically for the purpose of raising cash by selling them to other investors.

Clearly, such capitalist schemes have nothing to do with modernizing China, raising its productive capacity, or improving the lives of working people.

Now the new draft regulations aimed at online microlending would force fintech companies such as Ant to fund close to a third of their loans. This could reduce the value of the company by half, to \$150 billion.

The antitrust regulations are also aimed at preventing digital platforms such as Alibaba from using their dominance to bully sellers into exclusivity contracts.

### Struggle against Chinese capitalists

The struggle against Chinese capitalists is protracted. Both the power and wealth of the capitalists has grown explosively. But so has the coordination of socialist planning. Over 70 years, the conditions of life for hundreds millions have steadily improved.

The Economist, a British weekly business newspaper, described this growing tension, which is of great concern to the capitalist class as a whole. (“China takes aim at its entrepreneurs,” Nov. 14)

Over the last few years, several campaigns have tried to rein in big Chinese capitalists and the resulting corruption and debt they bring, in order to maintain China’s social and financial stability. This

*Continued on page 10*



Crimes against humanity

We charge genocide!

Continued from page 1

at this moment.

And no plan to stop the pandemic, except a not-yet-available vaccine that will undoubtedly go first to those who can afford it and maybe never to the most oppressed — who will die before it comes anywhere near their neighborhood.

The war on oppressed and working people

We are in the middle of a war to the death on oppressed and working people in the U.S. To name this genocide is not an exaggeration — as the spotlight of these numbers exposes. The greatest weight of the pandemic in the U.S. is falling on Black, Latinx and Indigenous people. And those getting sick, dying and being affected disproportionately are also those who have trouble accessing medical care under any circumstances — disabled people, elderly, poor people, people in prison, queer and trans people.

APM Research Lab in its Nov. 12 report, “The Color of Coronavirus,” documented: “Black Americans continue to experience the highest actual COVID-19 mortality

rates nationwide — about two or more times as high as the rate for whites ... who have the lowest actual rates.” When APM adjusted the mortality rates for differences in age distribution of populations, it found “even larger documented mortality disparities — Black, Indigenous and Latinx [people in the U.S.] all have a COVID-19 death rate of triple or more than white Americans, who experience the lowest age-adjusted rates.” ([tinyurl.com/y9l4v9xm](https://tinyurl.com/y9l4v9xm))

In a Sept. 15 Workers World article, “COVID and people of color: Is it genocide yet?” Teresa Gutierrez connects the deadly assaults of capitalism: “Substitute ‘coronavirus’ with most diseases or other dire social conditions such as unemployment, gentrification, hunger or broader social calamities such as climate change — and there too, people of color will be the most impacted. In other words, people of color bear the brunt of every single damn capitalist calamity.

“COVID-19 has exposed the fact that the current global infrastructure of capitalism — which the majority of the people live under — is not only incapable of addressing the pandemic, it is aggravating it.”

**The crimes of the U.S. ruling class**

We charge the U.S. government — and its ruling class — with genocide and with crimes against humanity for refusing to mount an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We raise again the charges against the U.S. made in 1951 by the Civil Rights Congress affiliated with the Communist Party USA. Led by illustrious African American activists including Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, Claudia Jones, Paul Robeson and Mary Church Terrell, the CRC brought forward: “We Charge Genocide: The Historic Petition to the U.N. for Relief from a Crime of The United States against the Negro People.” (Trigger warning, racist violence: [tinyurl.com/y63w2fzc](https://tinyurl.com/y63w2fzc))

The CRC petition defined U.S. genocide as “willful creation of conditions making for premature death, poverty and disease, including the killings of unarmed Black people by police and lynch mob, and the lack of the same quality health care, jobs, education, and housing as whites.”

Filed under the U.N. Genocide Convention, the petition defined “genocide” as “acts committed to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, or

religious group,” including “killing members of the group,” “causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group,” and “deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.” ([tinyurl.com/y3lmtfvv](https://tinyurl.com/y3lmtfvv))

The Convention makes genocide a punishable offense under international law whether committed “in time of peace or in time of war.”

Through and during the coronavirus epidemic, the U.S. ruling class — along with its capitalist government — is waging an undeclared and very real war on the oppressed and working people of this country, including using police and ICE terror.

So we charge genocide! We charge crimes against humanity!

We say “Forward!” on the road to socialism, where the deaths of working and oppressed people are not judged as inevitable, where government is structured not to profit from people but to meet our needs. Let us advance step by unrelenting step, until we come to the place where the power of the people creates a healthful and liberated world. □

Class struggle in China: How to deal with multibillionaires?

Continued from page 9

has been especially true since 2013 and the presidency of Xi Jinping.

The first step was a 2013 campaign against corruption and lavish spending by party officials.

The next was dealing with Chinese capitalists who were ploughing billions into overseas investments that state regulators considered thinly disguised maneuvers to divert capital out of China. These were not investments that in any way aided China’s development.

Purchases such as the amusement park SeaWorld, European football clubs and large stakes in Hilton Worldwide Holdings were ordered reversed. Wu Xiaohui, chairperson of Anbang Insurance, purchased the Waldorf Astoria hotel in Manhattan. In 2018, Wu wound up with with an 18-year prison sentence for financial crimes — and Anbang was nationalized.

Ren Zhiqiang, a senior member of the Communist Party and a housing tycoon who ran a state-owned property firm, was sentenced to 18 years in prison in September for bribery and embezzlement.

The crackdown has put an abrupt end to a boom in global spending by Chinese firms. While in 2016 overseas mergers and acquisitions amounted to \$200 billion, in 2019 they had shrunk to less than a fifth of that.

Raising strict standards for online lending, limiting the amount available

for borrowing, and changing the financial regulatory environment are all efforts to regain control.

**Workers’ oversight**

How to safeguard state-owned property from corrupt officials and stop backroom deals with powerful Chinese capitalists who are linked to international finance is a far larger challenge. It takes the involvement and surveillance of the workers in each industry.

A new political structure is being established to empower workers to speak up and to encourage communist cadre at a local level to monitor what capitalist owners may be up to.

Most important, it is being set up through the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce. This is a powerful nongovernmental organization of Chinese industrialists and business people under the leadership of the United Front Work of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

The federation was established in 1953, in a very different era. Those were the early days of reorganizing industry and building a socialist base. The federation describes itself as a body to increase communication between government and the private economy, and to assist the government in managing the private economy and achieving sustainable development. It has a number of seats in the National People’s Congress.

In the past its goal has been to build

closer relations with foreign commercial and industrial entities and help Chinese members go overseas for business opportunities that would help further China’s economic reforms. This body has now called for private groups to establish human-resources departments led by the party and monitoring units that would allow the party to audit company managers in both private and state corporations. Party oversight committees are expected to play a larger role in the giant tech firms.

A raft of new regulations will also bar foreign investors from taking direct stakes in Chinese banking.

**Socialist base**

Since 1979 China has cultivated the policy of opening up to the West and allowing Chinese capitalists to grow and accumulate vast wealth. They were meant to act as intermediaries with the West. Capitalism, both Chinese and Western, is usually given all the credit for the leap in productive capacity and modern development in China since 1979.

However, precisely because China maintained a planned economy and state ownership of core industries, it has been able to avoid the economic crises that hit all capitalist economies every seven to ten years.

The real driving force in China’s rapid modernization and leap from grinding poverty, illiteracy, famines and imperialist domination is the Chinese Revolution, led by the Chinese Communist Party.

The dramatic change that began with the 1979 opening of China was due to an agreement by the government, under Deng Xiaoping, to allow Western capitalist investment in China under controlled conditions. The goal was to achieve faster economic growth through the active introduction of foreign capital and technology, while maintaining its commitment to socialism.

It was a risk, especially because imperialism saw it as a way back into China.

China’s opening to investment in 1979 was conditioned on the West lifting its complete economic sanctions, which ever since the 1949 Revolution had been used to strangle China and bar all technology, industrial equipment, investment and trade.

For 30 years, from the 1949 Chinese Revolution to 1979, China’s efforts at growth and modernization were made more difficult by the U.S.-imposed sanctions. Nevertheless, in these three decades China reorganized a chaotic, war-torn, underdeveloped society, building the technology and infrastructure and educating the working class. This is what made the next step possible.

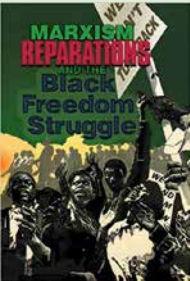
As U.S. imperialism’s hostility to China grows, threatening military encirclement, and trade wars and sanctions tighten, the leaders may now be taking a closer look at the dangers internal capitalist forces bring to the country’s stable socialist development. □

Marxism, Reparations & the Black Freedom Struggle

Edited by Monica Moorehead

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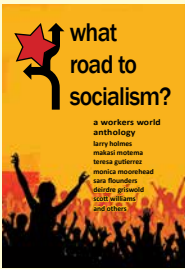


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# New stage of ‘process’ opens in Bolivia

By Marco Teruggi  
La Paz, Bolivia

*Published in pagina12.com.ar on Nov. 19 following the Nov. 8 inauguration of the Movement toward Socialism (MAS) president Luis Arce and vice president David Choquehuanca and the Nov. 9 return to Bolivia of former President Evo Morales. Translation by John Catalinotto.*

Little by little the daily conversations stop reviewing the months spent under the coup regime and start discussing what happens next. The country is calm, no soldiers remain in the streets, daily life has resumed in La Paz overlooked by the snowy peaks of the Illimani — a word meaning resplendent in the Aymara language — and the cable car that crosses the city reaches El Alto, from where the roads of the altiplano open out.

News still arrives about those who led the de facto [coup] government. Javier Issa, who led the Ministry of Interior, has joined the flight from the country with Arturo Murillo and Fernando López, ex-ministers of Government and Defense. According to the national director of Interpol, Issa flew on Nov. 9 from Bolivia to Miami.

New information has also appeared about the central actors who carried out the November 2019 coup: the National Police. Carlos Romero, a [MAS] government minister at the time of the overthrow, who was later arrested and imprisoned, declared that he had a list of “the police chiefs who organized and led the police mutiny,” particularly in the city of Cochabamba, one of the critical centers during the days of the siege.

According to Romero, 92 weapons disappeared in the Cochabamba riot, which, according to “hypotheses from police circles,” ended up in the hands of snipers who used them to open fire in the town of Sacaba on Nov. 15, the day of the massacre there. The former minister also emphasized that the police “were never friendly to the MAS,” because the MAS had taken away businesses worth millions, and “the police



Following the inauguration and Evo Morales’ return, street life returns to normal in La Paz – or does it?

hierarchy” was waiting for “any political condition in which the MAS would stop having this leading role so they could conspire, and the political opportunity arose on Oct. 20 of last year.”

Romero also referred to 300 people, including businessmen and private individuals, who contributed money to the coup, some up to \$200,000 each, reaching a sum of “several million dollars.” This last statement was denied by [fascist leader] Luis Fernando Camacho, who claimed to have fully financed the actions himself, in a statement with which he aimed to remain the main leader of the 2019 coup events. He did this as disputes within the rightwing are taking place in the city of Santa Cruz in the East, Camacho’s base.

### Reorganization of the right wing

The Santa Cruz divisions occur within the lodges [secret societies of the wealthy], and in their political organizations, such as the Civic Committee and the Santa Cruz Youth Union. These divisions are part of a process of right-wing reorganization, to determine which sector will take the lead and what strategy will be developed for this new phase.

This reorganization of the right wing indicates something clear: With the defeat of the coup, one stage has ended. One of

the questions still unanswered is how to redirect the whole country to the arena of dialogue, coexistence and democracy. This is a complex question at each level — in the police and the armed forces, as well as among the political actors of the right; in business circles, as well as in society; between regions and within the cities.

The coup, as well as the months of de facto government, escalated and exposed the depths of the historical divisions in Bolivia. During that time there was aggression against women in pollera skirts (that is, for being Aymaras, Quechuas [Indigenous nations]) and against people for being or appearing to be with the MAS. These were expressions of colonial contempt. You saw also the phantoms of the middle and upper classes of La Paz, armed inside barricades, expressing their fears of a possible uprising in El Alto [a mostly Indigenous city up the mountain from La Paz] and its descent into the center of the city.

The coup opened up the hatred like a can of worms; it showed that something that seemed largely past had only been contained. How can the abyss be narrowed? Is there an irretrievably irreconcilable dimension? The process of change, the proposal of a plurinational state, had made progress, but the coup called this progress into question.

On the other hand, in El Alto, for example, the youngest people, who had not experienced coup or right-wing governments before, went through a strong political development. They demanded justice for the massacres that had taken place, like that in the towns of Sacaba and Senkata. This turned into a massive uprising following the whipala banner of the Indigenous, with a renewed sense of political power which, in part, explains the 55.1 percent landslide that handed the MAS the Oct. 18 elections.

### Movement for change strengthened

The process of change has come out of the coup period strengthened. The offense against the whipala by the police and the de facto government, the persecutions, the militarization of public space, the televised threats and humiliations resulted in reaffirming identities, political views, and leadership roles among the oppressed. Now a stage of internal reorganization begins among the different elements that make up the process, taking up the role of leadership in each movement and organization, of the political instrument — including the parliamentary representation, the executive — that can lead to a correction of errors.

After a year that left a deep mark on the lives of millions of people, the political balance has been reset to that of a year earlier. But what does the majority expect, in particular those who voted for MAS? Economic and political stabilization, deepening of the transformations. The first thing they expect is that the government of the [new President] Luis Arce will impose a permanent tax on large fortunes.

The new stage in Bolivia represents an opportunity for the process of change, which managed to return to political power in a scenario where shots were being fired. For the moment, the country can breathe again. La Paz is that city carved between mountains and summits, at the foot of El Alto with its markets, stores, networks of organizations and Aymara knowledge, amid the immensity of the Andes mountains. □

# Are U.S. nuclear missiles returning to Europe?

By Manlio Dinucci

*Published Nov. 17 in the Italian daily newspaper, Il Manifesto, where Dinucci analyzes military developments. Translation by John Catalinotto.*

More than five years ago we published a headline in the [June 9, 2015] issue of Il Manifesto: “Are the missiles coming back to Comiso?” This hypothesis was ignored by all the political parties in parliament from left to right, and dismissed by self-styled experts as “alarmist.” The alarm, unfortunately, was on target. [Comiso is a town in Sicily where the Italian anti-war movement waged a struggle against a cruise missile base in the early 1980s.]

This Nov. 6, Lockheed Martin (the same corporation that produces the F-35s) signed an initial \$340-million contract with the U.S. Army to produce medium range missiles, capable of carrying nuclear warheads, designed to be installed in Europe.

The missiles of this category (based on land with a range between 500 and 5,500 kilometers) were prohibited by the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, signed in 1987 by Presidents Gorbachev and Reagan. The INF had

eliminated the Pershing 2 nuclear ballistic missiles, deployed by the United States in West Germany, and the Tomahawk nuclear cruise missiles, deployed by the United States in Italy (in Comiso), Great Britain, West Germany, Belgium and Holland, and at the same time the SS-20 ballistic missiles deployed by the Soviet Union on its territory.

In 2014, without offering any proof, the Obama administration accused Russia of having tested a cruise missile (initials 9M729) of the category prohibited by the INF Treaty and, in 2015, announced that “faced with the violation of the INF Treaty by Russia, the United States is considering the deployment in Europe of ground-based missiles.”

The policy then passed to the Trump administration, which in 2019 decided to withdraw the United States from the INF Treaty, accusing Russia of “deliberately violating” it. After several missile tests, Lockheed Martin was commissioned to build a cruise missile derived from the Tomahawk and a ballistic missile derived from Raytheon’s SM-6.

According to the contract, the two missiles will be operational in 2023. That means they will be ready to be installed in Europe in two years.

The geographical factor must be taken into account: While a U.S. medium-range nuclear ballistic missile, launched from Europe, can hit Moscow within a few minutes, a similar missile launched from Russia can hit European capitals — but not Washington. Reversing the scenario, it is as if Russia were deploying medium-range nuclear missiles in Mexico.

According to Raytheon, the SM-6 performs the function of “three missiles in one”: anti-aircraft, anti-missile and attack. The nuclear missile derived from the SM-6 can therefore be used by both ships and ground installations of the U.S. “shield” in Europe, whose launch tubes, according to Lockheed Martin, can launch “missiles for all missions.”

In an Oct. 26 statement, Russian President Vladimir Putin reaffirmed the validity of the INF Treaty, calling the U.S. withdrawal a “serious mistake” and affirming Russia’s commitment not to deploy similar missiles unless the U.S. deploys theirs close to Russian territory.

Putin therefore proposes to NATO countries a “mutual moratorium” and “reciprocal verification measures,” i.e., inspections of each other’s missile installations. The Russian proposal has been ignored by NATO, whose Secretary

General Jens Stoltenberg reiterated on Nov. 10 that “in such an uncertain world, nuclear weapons continue to play a vital role in the preservation of peace.”

No voice has been raised by European governments and parliaments, even though Europe risks being at the front line of a nuclear confrontation similar to or more dangerous than that of the Cold War. But this is not the threat of the COVID and therefore no one is speaking about it.

The European Union, in which 21 of the 27 members are part of NATO, had already made its voice heard when, in 2018, it rejected at the United Nations the resolution presented by Russia on “Preservation and Observance of the INF Treaty,” giving a green light to the installation of new U.S. nuclear missiles in Europe.

Will anything change once Joe Biden takes office in the White House? Or, after Democrat Obama opened the new nuclear confrontation with Russia and Republican Trump has aggravated it by shredding the INF Treaty, will Democrat Biden (formerly Obama’s vice president) sign onto the installation of new U.S. nuclear missiles in Europe? □





La bandera transgénero

## Liberación transgénero: ¡Un movimiento cuyo momento es ahora!

Por Devin C

*Este artículo detalla los comentarios hechos por el escritor en un seminario web del Workers World Party/ Partido Mundo Obrero el 19 de noviembre, “Leslie Feinberg: ‘Recuérdame como revolucionaria’”. Vea el seminario web en Facebook @WorkersWorldParty — Organización política.*

20 de noviembre: hoy es el Día del Recuerdo de las Personas Transgénero. A este día el año, 2020 es el año más mortífero registrado por violencia contra las personas transgénero en los EE. UU. Se han registrado más de 30 asesinatos de personas transgénero en el país, con 350 asesinatos registrados en todo el mundo. Desde 2008, al menos 3.600 personas transgénero han sido asesinadas en todo el mundo. ([tinyurl.com/y5a2kcdq](https://tinyurl.com/y5a2kcdq))

De estos asesinatos, el 98 por ciento se cometieron contra mujeres transgénero y personas trans femininas, principalmente mujeres trans negras y otras mujeres trans de color. Las trabajadoras sexuales transgénero fueron el 62 por ciento de las personas que murieron. Esas cifras no cuentan las innumerables personas trans que murieron “en el armario”, sin haber revelado públicamente su identidad, o aquellas cuyas muertes fueron encubiertas por familiares odiosos. Las cifras no cuentan las innumerables personas trans que han muerto por suicidio, fallecido por atención médica

inadecuada y/o malos tratos constantes, o fallecido sin vivienda en las calles.

### Guerra capitalista contra personas trans y no conformistas de género

“Liberación transgénero” es una frase que puede parecer un sueño lejano en este momento. Las personas oprimidas muy bien podrían responder: “¡Estamos a un millón de millas de eso!” Las probabilidades de supervivencia siguen siendo muy altas contra las personas transgénero y no conformes con el género. Pero la liberación trans también parecía muy lejana

hace casi 30 años, en 1992, cuando Leslie Feinberg publicó su innovador folleto, “Liberación transgénero: un movimiento cuyo tiempo ha llegado”. (Descarga gratuita en [tinyurl.com/y5vg2r43](https://tinyurl.com/y5vg2r43).)

Un mes después de que Leslie publicara este trabajo, que libera la historia de las personas trans y no conformistas de género detrás de la cerradura y la

llave de la opresión capitalista, la revolucionaria defensora de los transexuales negros Marsha P. Johnson fue encontrada muerta en el río Hudson en la ciudad de Nueva York. Qué época tan desesperada debió haber sido para muchos: tener un faro de esperanza revolucionaria desvanecido en un destino tan cruel.

Pero de la misma manera que el legado y el espíritu de lucha de nuestra compañera Leslie Feinberg perdura, también el legado y el espíritu de lucha de Marsha P. Johnson, y el de la líder trans latina Sylvia Rivera, y todos los demás que han iluminado el

camino por el cual ahora marchamos.

¿No muere el revolucionario? Por supuesto. ¿No sigue viva la revolución? ¡Por supuesto! Las personas transgénero, que recibieron las herramientas de guerreros transgénero revolucionarios como Leslie Feinberg, Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera y los que aún viven, como Miss Major y Jennicet Gutierrez, han aprovechado el momento, ¡hoy!

### Una lucha trans revolucionaria

Ha llegado nuestro tiempo de liberación. Esta aquí. En este Día del Recuerdo de las Personas Transgénero, debemos tomarnos nuestro tiempo para llorar y llorar a los que perdimos y celebrar sus vidas, y también celebrar nuestras vidas como personas transgénero que aún viven.

Entonces debemos continuar librando una lucha revolucionaria contra el capitalismo, tanto su imperialismo como su continuación del colonialismo en el siglo XXI. Este es el sistema opresivo y explotador que desató la opresión transgénero en todo el mundo.

En su libro de 1995, “Transgender Warriors” - el primer análisis marxista extendido de la opresión transgénero - Leslie Feinberg rastreó las raíces del odio y la discriminación contra las personas trans hasta su origen en la formación de la sociedad de clases.

La lucha por la liberación transgénero es parte de la lucha de clases. Las personas trans son parte de la clase trabajadora y los oprimidos. En varias intersecciones, se encontrarán mujeres trans negras, que enfrentan la mayor cantidad de violencia de cualquier otro grupo demográfico, así como personas trans morenas, personas

indígenas de dos espíritus/trans, personas trans indocumentadas, personas trans discapacitadas, personas trans VIH+, personas trans encarceladas, trabajadoras sexuales trans, personas trans sin hogar y, por supuesto, trabajadoras trans de todo tipo.

Feinberg dijo: “La intolerancia contra las personas transgénero es un carcinógeno mortal”, y ze estaba y sigue en lo correcto. Es un veneno en este mundo. Las personas transgénero que se atreven a luchar contra este fanatismo tienen el antídoto y la cura: el socialismo revolucionario.

Ganar el socialismo revolucionario significa luchar por la solidaridad entre los oprimidos y los trabajadores. Por lo tanto, es obligatorio que la lucha de liberación transgénero dentro de los EE. UU. - Y la lucha LGBTQ2S + en su conjunto — se una a otras luchas: con el movimiento Black Lives Matter contra el terror policial, con la lucha palestina contra el apartheid israelí, con la lucha por abolir la policía y cárceles, con la lucha por descolonizar esta tierra para que los pueblos indígenas la tengan una vez más, por la lucha por la reparación de los negros e indígenas — y con la lucha contra los bajos salarios, el capitalismo de alta tecnología, la falta de vivienda y la caótica, no planificada economía capitalista que nos mantiene pobres y hambrientos.

Para que haya liberación transgénero, debe haber socialismo.

*Devin C es un marxista transgénero y miembro del Workers World Party. Son presidente de Strive (Socialist Trans Initiative), una organización de defensa de las personas transgénero en el área de la costa oeste del Golfo de Florida/Alabama.*

## La pandemia se eleva y la economía se afloja

### MUNDO OBRERO editorial

Realmente es bastante repugnante.

La burguesía calcula las pérdidas y ganancias con insensible desprecio por las masas que sufren tanto por el aumento vertiginoso de los casos de COVID como por el colapso del mercado laboral. Ahora, muchos de los que quedaron desempleados en la primavera se están quedando sin sus 26 semanas de beneficios por desempleo. Hubo casi 1 millón de nuevas solicitudes de seguro de desempleo en la segunda semana de noviembre.

Pero el mercado de valores subió y bajó como una montaña rusa la semana pasada, ya que las noticias esperanzadoras sobre la vacuna COVID-19 de Pfizer fueron seguidas por informes sobre el aumento de infecciones virales. Por un lado, los accionistas no pudieron contener su entusiasmo orgiástico por que las grandes farmacéuticas ganaran mucho dinero con millones y millones de vacunas. Pero su entusiasmo se desinfló cuando contaron los costos de más casos de COVID: más facturas médicas para que las cubran las compañías de seguros, más trabajadores llamando enfermos, más muertes y, potencialmente, más ira popular.

¿Por qué sube y baja el Dow Jones o el

S&P? Las fluctuaciones de las acciones básicamente reflejan optimismo o pesimismo por parte del 1% sobre su resultado final futuro, es decir, su capacidad para maximizar la explotación del trabajo. Si hay una vacuna exitosa que eventualmente ayude a que los trabajadores vuelvan a producir lo que los marxistas llaman “plusvalía”, la porción de los ingresos por ventas que superan el costo de la fuerza de trabajo, obtendrán ganancias. Pero en este momento, los trabajadores no pueden producir riqueza si están enfermos, muertos o deben ser puestos en cuarentena para no llevar el virus al lugar de trabajo.

Los republicanos y los demócratas no han presentado un segundo proyecto de ley de estímulo urgentemente necesario, como la Ley HEROES aprobada por la Cámara, pero no por el Senado.

Mientras tanto, todos los días se rompen récords de nuevas infecciones. Como ocurre con cualquier crisis bajo el capitalismo que depende del racismo, las comunidades negras, latinas e indígenas sufren de manera desproporcionada.

### No tiene por qué ser así

Incluso con las perspectivas de una vacuna COVID-19, es difícil para las masas trabajadoras y la gente oprimida ver la luz al final del túnel. Y una cura para la pandemia no curará al capitalismo de su propia

enfermedad incorporada: un impulso para maximizar las ganancias individuales reduciendo los costos laborales y, por lo tanto, superando a los competidores. Esto, desde principios del siglo XIX, ha provocado recesiones económicas cíclicas (crisis de sobreproducción) que son doblemente devastadoras en el período actual de declive capitalista generalizado. Muchos de los trabajos perdidos recientemente no volverán.

A medida que las muertes por COVID en los EE. UU. se acercan a las 250.000 y los casos superan los 11 millones; China, por el contrario, ha tenido menos de 5.000 muertes y menos de 90.000 casos. El progreso para hacer una vacuna en China está más avanzado que en los EE.UU.

Además, la economía de China no solo se ha reabierto y se ha recuperado, es la única economía nacional importante que se prevé que crezca en el 2020. Esto no es solo el alarde de China. ¡La predicción proviene del informe Perspectivas de la economía mundial del Fondo Monetario Internacional!

¿Por qué la discrepancia entre EE.UU. y China? Si bien hay una clase capitalista en China, con algunos de sus miembros muy ricos en comparación con las masas chinas, China tiene un estado obrero cuya orientación es fundamentalmente socialista. Esto significa que las necesidades humanas tienen prioridad sobre las ganancias.

El socialismo es exactamente lo que necesitan los trabajadores de todo el mundo, y los EE.UU. no es una excepción. Con un sistema de salud socializado, los trabajadores ya no estarían a merced del complejo industrial médico con fines de lucro. No habría jefes de las grandes farmacéuticas, que solo ven signos de dólar en una vacuna contra el COVID y medicamentos de tratamiento muy necesarios. Habrán leyes para garantizar que se satisfagan las necesidades económicas básicas de todos.

Eso no ocurrirá de la noche a la mañana, por supuesto. Mientras tanto, los socialistas deben estar a la vanguardia de impulsar demandas que aborden las necesidades de supervivencia de la clase trabajadora. Estos incluyen trabajos bien pagados para quienes pueden trabajar e ingresos comparables para quienes no pueden; atención médica gratuita para todos; y condiciones de trabajo seguras, incluido el equipo de protección personal, la prestación por condiciones de vida peligrosas y no tomar represalias contra los trabajadores que se enferman, deben ser puestos en cuarentena o rehusarse a trabajar de manera insegura.

A medida que la lucha crezca, también lo hará la realización de esta verdad básica de clase: ¡un sistema que no puede satisfacer estas demandas básicas es un sistema que pertenece al bote de basura de la historia! □