



If Trump won't quit

SHUT! IT! DOWN!

By Larry Holmes

The Rochester Labor Council passed a very forward-thinking resolution on Oct. 8, calling on the AFL-CIO to call a general strike if President Donald Trump refuses to leave office. Soon after, the Central Wisconsin Area Labor Federation passed a similar resolution.

The Southern Workers Assembly called for “No business as usual at work, school, wherever you are!” if Trump attempts a coup. And the Unite All Workers for Democracy caucus inside the United Auto Workers endorsed the Rochester resolution.

Many other labor bodies are now taking this up. Labor unionists everywhere are talking about the need for a general strike if Trump tries to hold on to power.

This is a huge development.

A general strike against a Trump coup?

In an article published by Workers World Newspaper called “The Left, the election crisis and the ‘elephant in the room,’” I speculated that very few socialists, if any, were considering what the working class would do, apart from voting, in response to the threat of violent fascist attacks, and an attempted coup next month by Trump and his loyalists. (workers.org, Sept. 25)



Demonstrators block I-64 in Louisville, Ky., Sept. 24, to protest no charges against police who murdered Breonna Taylor.

That article said that most of the left did not expect the working class, as a class, to intervene in the election crisis in any way that differs from — and suggests some independence from — the ruling class political establishment, because the top labor movement leaders only do what Democratic Party leaders tell them to do.

We have been pleasantly surprised.

What this talk of a general strike will lead to is uncertain. The general strike

talk is not about demanding protection for workers against COVID-19 or aid for the millions of unemployed workers or a permanent moratorium on evictions and foreclosures. It is essentially about defending the candidates of the Democratic Party, a capitalist tool whose function is to keep the workers and

oppressed hostage to the capitalist system.

But even with this contradiction, the talk of a general strike — two words that are feared by the ruling class, and rarely if ever taken seriously by unionists — is something new and something big.

The working class intervenes in the political crisis

A few weeks ago, the call by a significant number of unions and labor unionists for work actions against racism represented the beginning of a new phase that held the potential of forging a new relationship between the anti-racist rebellion and organized sectors of the working class.

It now appears that the new talk in the organized labor movement about the need for a general strike if Trump tries to stay in power has taken center stage. In my view, this development is about more than the issue of the general strike, which is, of course, central.

This development is a sign that the present political crisis is so unique, so serious, that it is compelling the organized

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Workers Assembly, Oct. 18, NYC. More on p. 5.




WWW PHOTOS: TONI ARENSTEIN



All-India General Strike, last Jan. 8. This is what a general strike looks like!

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WFTU 75 years of working-class unionism

By Martha Grevatt

The World Federation of Trade Unions marked its 75th anniversary on Oct. 3. Its 1945 founding Congress in Paris “spoke in the name of the working people of the world organized in trade unions who wanted a world free from war and social injustices. The foundation of the WFTU was thus seen as indicative of the new era that had opened with the defeat of fascism at the hands of the anti-fascist alliance of states. The working people and the democratic forces saw in that victory the new future of the world, where imperialism and colonialism would retreat and where freedom, peace, democracy and prosperity would advance for all humankind.” (wftucentral.org)

At the 17th Congress, held in 2016 in Durban, South Africa, the federation proclaimed its adherence to anti-imperialist and “class-oriented” union principles. This distinguishes the WFTU from other world labor bodies, which have historically advanced an anti-communist and class collaborationist agenda.

In 2016, unions affiliated with WFTU represented 92 million workers around the world, and the federation continues to grow.

Speaking in front of a new monument erected in Greece to honor the 75th anniversary, WFTU Secretary-General George Mavrikos said: “We are proud for our 75 years, always together with the ordinary people, always, 75 years, with the workers, with the people who struggle for their interests, for their benefits, for their children and their families. We are optimistic that through our efforts we will build unions strong and with spirit, militant, all



Pedro Eusse, Secretary General of the United Confederation of Venezuelan Workers, and comrades celebrate the World Federation of Trade Unions (Federación Sindical Mundial).

PHOTO: WFTU

over the world.” (wftucentral.org)

President Mzwandile Michael Makwayiba of South Africa added: “75 years later WFTU continues the same uncompromising path — with unity, class orientation that is international” and, despite the COVID pandemic, “successfully combining struggles for health of the people with 75 years of life and action of WFTU.” (wftucentral.org)

Since the anniversary celebrations, held in numerous countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and North and South America, the WFTU has issued progressive statements on the military conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, the conviction of fascist Golden Dawn members in Greece and in solidarity with education workers on World Teachers Day. (Oct. 5)

Martha Grevatt was a delegate to the 17th Congress of the WFTU.

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

Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the neverending quest for ever-greater profits.

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on im/migrants, misogyny, LGBTQ2S+ oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and impoverishment and lack of hope for the future. No social problems can be solved under capitalism.

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

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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Indigenous Peoples Day in the time of COVID-19

By Stephanie Tromblay

To see people still celebrating Columbus in the time of COVID immediately brings to mind the smallpox and other pandemics which swept this hemisphere from ocean to ocean as it was stolen following 1492.

Spanish conquistadors and European colonial invaders carried disease to every corner of this hemisphere. In 1492 no one in the so-called “western” hemisphere had immunity to European and Asian diseases, which had jumped species from rats and domesticated herd animals to humans. It is estimated that some 112 million people were living in this hemisphere in 1491: Smallpox, flu, measles and other imported infectious disease vectors then killed 80 million to 100 million people in 100 years.

Christopher Columbus’ real name was Cristóbal Colón; he was a Spanish pirate. The Spanish Queen would have executed him had she known. There is no evidence he was ever in Genoa. When he landed in

1492 in the Bay of Pigs (Playa Giron) in Cuba, he immediately wrote to the queen to advocate enslaving Native peoples. Columbus cut off the arms of Taíno men to feed the war dogs he used to terrorize Indigenous people.

Mercenary conquistadors

From contemporary descriptions of conquistadors Cristóbal Colón, Hernán Cortés, Francisco Pizarro, Juan de Oñate, Francisco Vásquez de Coronado and Hernando de Soto, we can characterize them as completely out-of-control mercenary forces. They committed murder, rape, torture and robbery on a global level, followed by enslavement of whole Indigenous nations.

Pizarro took Inca leader Atahualpa hostage, and melted down his ransom of seven tons of gold and 13 tons of silver, all of which was artwork and jewelry. Some \$129 million in gold was shipped to Spain every year. In the largest colonial rebellion against Spain, the Incas melted gold and poured it down the conquistadors’ throats.

De Soto’s expedition group traveled from Florida across the Mississippi to Arkansas, all the way following existing Indigenous roads and paths from Native town to Native city — stealing food and burning storehouses, fields and towns. They enslaved local Indigenous people and burned them alive if they made trouble. De Soto cut off their hands if they didn’t lead him to gold.

De Soto used his imported war hogs to roust people out of fields as they invaded: Smallpox and seven other disease vectors living in the guts of de Soto’s pigs spread disease everywhere. The great Mississippian culture fell in a few short years as a result of these new diseases. Only mounds remain of their vast earthen pyramids.

After Oñate worked thousands of people to death in the gold and silver mines of Zacatecas, he left Mexico to take over the vast lands to the north, which he named New Mexico — home of the great Puebloan cities, as well as the Diné and Apache Nations.

Oñate attacked Acoma Pueblo in 1599, when it rose up against the settlers. His men killed 800 children, women and men. Oñate ordered every man over 25 to have a foot cut off and sentenced each to 25 years of slavery. Females and males between 12 and 25 years of age got 25 years of slavery. Sixty young girls were sent to priests in Mexico, never to return to their homes.

In New Mexico in 1680, the Pueblos rebelled and burnt out the Spanish and kicked them out for 12 years — the second largest anti-Spanish colonial rebellion. No one erects a statue to Oñate to this day without protest, and this year his statues were brought down across New Mexico by Puebloan activists.

Coronado wandered all over the Southwest in search of gold; he attacked, occupied and burned the Pueblo towns he encountered — Puebloan territory had then extended all the way into Texas.

Decimated Indigenous nations faced unending waves of Spanish, French, English and then American settlers — all mean with greed and emboldened by racist propaganda — coming to steal the land and create wealth. Smallpox blankets were used to steal lands to build the United States.

Before 1492

Historically, Indigenous societies were gardening and farming societies. Over one half of all food crops in the world, by



“We are not your Halloween costumes! We are not your dime store Indians!” a speaker shouted from the bandstand on the Santa Fe Plaza this Indigenous Peoples Day in Santa Fe, N.M., as a colonialist obelisk was taken down by Puebloan activists.

numbers of species and by volume, were domesticated by Indigenous people in this hemisphere — tomatoes, squashes, beans, chocolate, pumpkins, pineapples, cassava, avocados, papaya, quinoa, amaranth, acai, chiles and many more.

Maize corn was the world’s first selectively bred food grain. Varieties of maize corn were cropped from Mexico up and down the East Coast, all over the Mississippi River valley and the Southwest.

In the Chilca Canyon of Peru, 10,000 years ago, the potato was domesticated — hundreds of varieties for every altitude from the high peaks to the valleys. Incan civilization grew from ancient farming communities, which held land in common. Incas distributed stored supplies from public warehouses to the sick, elderly, poor, widows and the disabled. Cusco had a population of 50,000-100,000, and there were many smaller cities and towns.

And across this continent, people lived communally in small villages and cities; most of those societies still had a matrilineal structure. The precolonial history and cultures of Indigenous societies are what Indigenous Peoples Day celebrates.

This is all stolen land. The struggle continues. This is the significance of Indigenous Peoples Day.

Tromblay’s heritage is Huron non-status and mixed Southeast nations undocumented.

Resources:

“Columbus: In The Bay Of Pigs,” John Curl, 1988, Homeward Press.

“Guns, Germs, and Steel,” Jared Diamond, 1997, Norton.

“Stolen Continents: The New World Through Indian Eyes,” Ronald Wright, 1992, Houghton Mifflin.

“More Than Bows & Arrows,” documentary film, 1978, Conrad W. Denke & Gray Warriner directors, narrated by N. Scott Momaday.



The 21st annual Indigenous Peoples Day Pow Wow, Berkeley, Calif., 2013.

On Indigenous Peoples Day 2020 Junipero Serra statue bites the dust

By Dave Welsh
Mission San Rafael, Calif.

Some 60 people responded to a call by members of the Coast Miwok of Marin for a Red Paint Rally on Indigenous Peoples Day at the Mission San Rafael. The crowd gathered Oct. 12 at the statue of Junipero Serra outside the mission, which is one of the California missions established by Spain in the 1700s.

Protesters covered the Serra statue with red paint. Then they toppled the statue of Spanish priest and missionary Junipero Serra. (tinyurl.com/yxku9535)

Organizers said Indigenous Peoples Day is a day to honor Indigenous people and their ancestors. “To tell our true history and who we are,” said Dean Hoaglin with Coast Miwok of Marin. “Our people were forcibly put here. They did not ask

to come here to this mission. They were enslaved here.” (tinyurl.com/yxlzk2zp)

Miwok speakers pointed out that Native peoples had been subjected to floggings and slavery inside the California missions, as part of the Spanish conquest. Serra was the father of the notorious California Mission system, during which Spanish soldiers kidnapped Native people, forced them to build the missions and worked them to death at early ages.

Five young women alleged to have participated were issued citations and released by San Rafael police.

Serra was canonized as a saint in 2015 by Pope Francis during a visit to the United States. However, Serra has become a symbol of the land theft and genocidal abuses against the First Peoples by Spanish and United States colonializers down through the years. □



WW PHOTO: JUDY GREENSPAN

Junipero Serra statue pulled down on Indigenous Peoples Day, Oct. 12, San Rafael, Calif.

Philadelphia

March for trans liberation

For the tenth year in a row, several hundred people — trans, non-binary, gender non-conforming and all gender identities, expressions, and experiences — marched on Oct. 10. The march, this time in North Philadelphia, asserted loudly and clearly, “Trans lives matter!”

— Report and photo
by Joe Piette



For migrants and allies

Providing water is a U.S. crime

By Teresa Gutierrez

Not only does Trump continue to carry out a vile anti-immigrant diatribe almost daily, agents from Immigration and Custom Enforcement carried out an ominous SWAT attack in Arizona recently. And in New York City, ICE agents are arresting immigrants by pretending to be NYC police.

Dying of thirst acceptable in the U.S.

On Oct. 5, the U.S. Border Patrol raided the No More Deaths camp in Arizona near the U.S./Mexico border. This humanitarian organization, a vital lifesaving group of heroic individuals, reported from the camp that ICE agents captured 12 immigrants and detained seven volunteers. No More Deaths characterized the arrests and detentions as “a pattern of criminalization.”

This was the second raid at the group’s camp since this summer. According to the Washington Post, No More Deaths “is a faith-based group formed in 2004 in response to a large number of migrants who were dying while attempting to cross the brutal Sonoran Desert.” (Oct. 6)

A No More Deaths press release stated: “After sunset on Oct. 5, U.S. Border Patrol entered . . . Byrd Camp with a federal warrant. Volunteers were held for 3 hours while people receiving medical care, food, water and shelter from the 100+ degree

heat were detained.”

According to the organization, the state invasion was “a massive show of armed force” as BORTAC (Border Patrol Tactical Unit) “descended on the camp with an armored tank, ATVs, a helicopter and many marked and unmarked vehicles. Agents armed with assault rifles chased and terrorized those [who] were receiving care.” In addition, they broke windows and doors and destroyed essential infrastructure and supplies.

The press release continued: “This criminalization of the humanitarian aid and medical care we provide is only a furtherance of the agency’s deadly policies. Border Patrol detains people in unsafe and deadly facilities where medical neglect is rampant and human rights abuses are well documented.”

To send messages of solidarity or a much-needed monetary donation, please visit: nomoredeaths.org

ICE and police, one and the same

New Yorkers have every reason to be intimidated and leery of the New York police, after the infamous “stop and frisk” debacle that targeted Black and Brown communities and the tragic murder in 2014 of Eric Garner, whose cry “I can’t breathe” generated mass protest.

So when police come to the door searching for someone, and the cops turn out to be ICE agents, you can rest assured the

community will resist.

That is why advocates and city officials gathered with immigrant families on Oct. 10 to denounce reports of “deceptive practices by ICE officers to detain and deport people.”

According to City Council member Ydanis Rodriguez, one of the rally’s organizers, the community was calling for the release of Fernando Santos-Martinez, seized by ICE officers claiming to be NYPD officers from the 34th Precinct.

According to Rodriguez, ICE showed up in plain clothes at the family’s apartment and repeatedly tried to get inside while identifying themselves as police. Not letting the family’s resistance stop them, ICE agents then tried to intimidate the building superintendent into getting Santos-Martinez’s spouse, Maria, to open the door,

The ICE agents said they needed to speak with Santos-Martinez “about a prior incident,” so the spouse “unknowingly gave them his phone number,” Rodriguez said.

NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio reportedly said on Friday that he had “asked ICE to order its agents to not state or imply they represent the NYPD.”

But both the NYPD and ICE cops are rogue agents protecting a capitalist state.



No More Deaths volunteers have distributed water along desert migrant paths since 2013.

They will do what they want to do to and put in action their white supremacist beliefs, not do what de Blasio orders. The police and ICE have shown over and over they are politically aligned with the Trump administration’s vile racist policies. In fact, the NYPD, through its “Police Benevolent Association” propaganda unit, came out in August in a historic first to endorse Trump for another term as president.

As ICE prevents migrants from obtaining water in the desert with armored tanks — and as police and ICE join forces more and more — it is past time for the movement to abolish the police and ICE once and for all. □

Rochester Labor Council resolution

General strike if Trump won’t go

On Oct. 8, the Rochester [N.Y.] Labor Council passed a resolution supporting a general strike if Trump refuses to leave office after a November election defeat. Council President Dan Maloney is also president of United Auto Workers Local 1097, which, after a six-week strike, overwhelmingly rejected the 2019 concessionary contract with General Motors. The roots of the Rochester Labor Council go back to 1855. The current resolution has encouraged widespread discussion and additional labor resolutions on the need to “Shut it down” if Trump attempts a coup.

Whereas, the Rochester Labor Council, AFL-CIO is committed to the defense of democratic rights and the institutions of democracy regardless of party affiliations in our nation;

Whereas, the current President of the United States of America, Donald Trump, and Vice-President Mike Pence, have consistently refused to state publicly that [they] will respect the outcomes of the election and, in the case of [a Presidential Election] loss, concede the office of President;

Whereas, numerous public officials, including the President, have begun a concerted campaign of dismantling of key infrastructure, such as the U.S. Postal

Service, [and] engaged in clear acts of voter suppression and misinformation designed to sow mistrust in the integrity of our national elections;

Whereas, the U.S. Constitution requires voting results and Electoral College tallies to be completed and submitted to Congress by the first Tuesday after the second Monday in December, and the new 2021 Congress to validate the results, we demand the Constitution be followed, requiring voters and not the courts, to determine election results;

Whereas, the President has failed, on multiple occasions, to denounce the activities of white supremacist and fascist militias and organizations that have



stated desires to overthrow American democracy;

Whereas, a climate of political polarization has weakened the framework of democratic institutions in our nation, resulting in a diminished system of checks and balances to stand against the potential rise of a tyrant Dictator;

Whereas, the Labor Movement and trade unions have played a proud and vital role in protecting democracy and opposing authoritarianism in many nations throughout the world;

Whereas, the extreme risk currently posed to the historic institutions of democracy in our nation may require more widespread and vigorous resistance than at any time in recent history;

Whereas, the most powerful tool of the Labor Movement in our history has been the power of the General Strike;

Whereas, united working people refusing to work across the nation have a greater power than any political machinations of aspiring despots;

Therefore, now be it resolved that the Rochester Labor Council, AFL-CIO stands firmly in opposition to any effort to subvert, distort, misrepresent or disregard the final outcome of the 2020 Presidential elections;

Therefore, be it finally resolved that the Rochester Labor Council, AFL-CIO calls on the National AFL-CIO, all of its affiliate unions, and all other labor organizations in the United States of America to prepare for and enact a general strike of all working people, if necessary, to ensure a Constitutionally mandated peaceful transition of power as a result of the 2020 Presidential Elections. □

If Trump won’t quit

SHUT! IT! DOWN!

Continued from page 1

labor movement to consider acting somewhat independently of ruling class politics — and acting as a class that has social power. This transcends waging the narrow day-to-day struggle over working conditions or merely urging union members to vote.

Neither the Republicans nor the Democrats nor the capitalists they represent want a revival of the general strike. To them, it would signify a harbinger of a turn in the organized labor movement toward a measure of independence from the capitalist political parties.

Movement for general strike could intensify class struggle

If this movement for a general strike isn’t quashed soon, it will reanimate other

issues vital to the working class, such as the need for a 180-degree turn towards the mass organization of workers — especially those workers who have been so terribly neglected by the top leadership of the organized labor movement.

It could open the door to a more militant upsurge in the class struggle. Maybe it could even lead to a much needed reconsideration of organized labor’s pitiful relationship to the migrant workers’ struggle. The call for work stoppages against racism may be on the back burner for a while, but that will only be temporary. Events will reawaken it.

And, it will be clear that the movement for a general strike against a coup attempt by Trump — and strikes against racism — are being driven by the same things that are pushing the working class to act in its own defense.

The article on “The Left, the election crisis and ‘the elephant in the room’” imagined the prospect of a fusion between the militants in the street who have carried out an “intifada” against police terror since the spring, on the one hand, and the best forces within the labor movement, on the other hand. Such a fusion will not be based on something one-dimensional, like a meeting between these two forces, although such a meeting would be an excellent idea.

The fusion will derive from, and be tested by, the next uprising. But most importantly, the resolve of a critical force of militants to do whatever is needed to see that such a fusion becomes a reality will be decisive.

Larry Holmes is the First Secretary of Workers World Party.

New York

Workers Assembly Against Racism

By Sara Flounders

A powerful and forward-planning Workers Assembly Against Racism was held at Union Square in New York City on Oct. 18. Participants projected the possibilities of workers' power through general strikes, shutdowns and mass actions to dramatically push back ongoing attacks — including police and racist violence, evictions, lack of stimulus money, lack of protective gear and tests, and a threatened fascist electoral coup within the current dysfunctional system.

There was a great deal of unity behind a call to build for a mass action on Saturday, Nov. 7, four days after the presidential election, as a time that a workers' intervention in an unfolding crisis would resonate.

The assembly, co-chaired by Terrea Mitchell and Joan Hwang of Peoples' Power Assembly NYC and Lorraine

Liriano of Call to Action on Puerto Rico, was opened by Larry Holmes of Workers World Party, who spoke on the potential of a Workers Assembly Against Racism.

Approximately 70 community activists participated, including Chris Silvera, secretary-treasurer and principal officer of Teamsters Local 808, and Charles Jenkins of Transport Workers Union Local 100 and president of the NYC chapter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. These speakers emphasized the ability of workers to intervene decisively.

Mahoma Lopez of the Laundry Workers Center and Eliana Jaramillo of the Street Vendor Project focused on demands of migrant workers. Margaret Kimberley of Black Agenda Report and Omowale Clay of the December 12 Movement raised the systemic racism not addressed in elections. The enormity of the current crisis that requires an urgent

mass response was the focus of remarks by Jessica Schwartz of New York Community Action Project, Rafael Agosto Miranda of Boricua Resistencia Nueva York, as well as by Lucy Cruz, Tsehai Hiwot, Comrade Shahid, Sara Flounders, Tony Murphy, Yhamir Chabur and others.

Speakers emphasized the power of the mass shutdowns and rebellions which followed the racist police murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor and the dramatic work shutdowns by professional athletes, all of which demonstrated the growing consciousness for continued mass action.

The recent call by Labor for Black Lives for mass work stoppages and the call for a general strike by the Rochester (N.Y.)



WWW PHOTO: TONI ARENSTEIN

Yhamir Chabur speaks to the Workers Assembly Against Racism, New York City, Oct. 18.

Labor Council if Trump tries to steal the presidential election affirm the need for a workers' response far more decisive than voting. □

How do we defend reproductive justice?

By Martha Grevatt

It appears likely that the Trump wing of the ruling class will ram through the Supreme Court nomination of Judge Amy Coney Barrett, who is racist, pro-patriarchy, anti-woman, anti-LGBTQ2S+ and anti-worker. The Senate Judiciary Committee votes on the nomination Oct. 22, and the full Senate vote is expected before the Nov. 3 election. The judge's right-wing billionaire backers include the Koch brothers, the DeVos family, the Mercers and the Bradley Foundation.

Many are worried that with a clear 6-3 SCOTUS majority, the right wing will have an unimpeded path to accomplishing goals that include overturning Roe v. Wade, Obergefell v. Hodges (the decision legalizing same-sex marriage) and ending the Affordable Care Act, known informally as Obamacare. The latter would deprive millions of health insurance. Barrett evaded questions on these issues during the confirmation hearings.

This rushed appointment is not, however, going unchallenged. Women's Marches, held in 438 cities across the country Oct. 17, expressed mass opposition to Barrett and Trump. In

Washington, D.C., thousands marching in the streets vastly outnumbered those in a small, pro-Trump and pro-Barrett "I'm With Her" rally.

"We're holding socially distant actions across the country to send an unmistakable message about the fierce opposition to Trump and his agenda, including his attempt to fill Ruth Bader Ginsburg's seat," the Women's March organization stated in its appeal. The organization promotes progressive initiatives such as "Defund the Police" and "Mask up." Marchers' signs raised a range of slogans, from "Justice for Breonna Taylor" to "End the Subminimum wage for tipped workers" to "Keep your tiny hands off my rights." (womensmarch.com)

Can the patriarchy be voted out?

Women, nonbinary and gender-nonconforming people, and allies turned out in militant defiance of the sexist, fascist-oriented Trump cabal. However, the primary focus was not building a mass movement in the streets to push back fascism — which could have been given a real boost Oct. 17.

Instead the overarching theme was "Get Out the Vote!" and "Vote Trump out!" i.e., "Vote for Biden," etc.

Understandably, people feel an urgency to prevent another four years of Trump. But Biden himself has a history of misogynistic behavior, from engaging in unwanted touching to his poor treatment of Professor Anita Hill during the confirmation hearings for SCOTUS Justice Clarence Thomas.

One should question whether the former vice president's recent apologies for past behavior are sincere. But regardless, it is illusory to think the electoral process alone can secure women's rights. Mass protests are what won the right to obtain a legal abortion from a conservative SCOTUS in 1973.

Since the landmark ruling, there have been multiple battles against right-wing attempts to roll back the Roe v. Wade decision. It's worthwhile to recall the 1992 "Battle of Buffalo" movement, which pushed back the reactionary, anti-abortion, misogynist "Operation Rescue" and blocked the group's stated goal of shutting down Buffalo's reproductive health clinics.

1992: Buffalo United for Choice 'booted' em out of Buffalo'

Operation Rescue's targeting of Buffalo followed its 1991 siege of clinics in Wichita, Kan. In response, Buffalo United for Choice was formed, with the participation of Workers World Party, around the slogan "Boot 'em out of Buffalo!"

As WWP's pamphlet "The Lessons of Buffalo" explains: "The underlying message of mass clinic defense is that the people, especially women themselves, not only can do it but are the only ones who will do it. To call for mass clinic defense is to say, in essence, that the police, the courts, the state don't act in the interest of the people or of women."

Buffalo United for Choice built a multi-national, working-class oriented coalition. When Operation Rescue leader Randall



Women's march in Staten Island, N.Y., demands justice for Breonna Taylor.

Terry compared himself to the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Coalition representative Vera Spruill, an African-American founding member of Workers World Party, took him on: "Randall Terry is the David Duke of the North: anti-woman, anti-Civil Rights, anti-lesbian and gay, anti-union and certainly antichoice."

The Buffalo coalition laid the groundwork for a people's defense of women's clinics. "The technique of several rows of defenders, arms and legs linked in formation around clinic doors, was practiced for weeks by hundreds of people. It could easily be likened to a people's militia," the pamphlet explains.

Despite a court injunction to keep the clinics open, it was clear the police were aiding Operation Rescue. But from the day when this right-wing organization threatened to begin its clinic blockade, the hundreds of defenders arriving in the wee hours of the morning made it clear that the right-wingers were out-organized — by the people, not the state!

This is the kind of movement that will defend and expand reproductive justice for all, regardless of the makeup of the Supreme Court. □



Thousands in Washington, D.C., march to oppose Barrett confirmation Oct. 17.

PHOTO: WOMEN'S MARCH TWITTER



100 Years Later Some Lessons of the Great Bolshevik Revolution

By Deirdre Griswold

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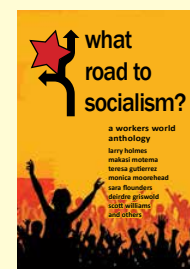
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FILM REVIEW

"Belly of the Beast"

Sterilizations inside the world's largest women's prison

By Judy Greenspan

With the world spotlight currently on the forced sterilizations of migrant women inside the ICE detention center in Georgia, the release of the documentary "Belly of the Beast" is timely. The film, by Erica Cohn, exposes the inhumane and illegal practice of sterilizations inside the Central California Women's Facility, the largest women's prison in the world. The crime of nearly 150 sterilizations over a four-year period is told by Kelli Dillon, an incredibly brave formerly incarcerated woman who suffered illegal sterilization herself.

CCWF, where a death row for women is located, has a prison hospital. CCWF had also been a prison where HIV-positive incarcerated women were segregated and dying at alarming rates. For decades, this prison has been the subject of protests, a major class action lawsuit and federal receivership, all targeting the abysmal, criminally negligent care received by women and trans people inside.

"Belly of the Beast" focuses on the testimonies of women inside CCWF who were victims of involuntary sterilizations. The film shows extensive interviews with Dillon, who blew the whistle on this crime. Between 2006 and 2010, CCWF doctors and medical staff were responsible for coercing and tricking women into signing consent forms while they were on an operating table receiving unnecessary and costly c-sections during childbirth. According to "Belly of the Beast," more than 1,400 sterilizations occurred at CCWF from 1997 to 2013.



Kelli Dillon, right, and Cynthia Chandler PHOTO: BELLY OF THE BEAST

These stories only came to light due to the tireless and selfless work of attorney Cynthia Chandler, founder of the public interest law office Justice Now. Justice Now investigated medical neglect claims and championed the rights of incarcerated women inside CCWF, as well as in Valley State Prison when it was still a women's prison. In the film, Chandler is joined by Corey Johnson, a reporter from the Center for Investigative Reporting, who helps publicize the story.

The film interviews Kelli Dillon, a woman imprisoned for killing her abusive partner, who physically injured both her and her two children. Dillon poignantly describes the pain of separation from her children during

her incarceration. She says, "I'm trying to remember what my children felt like ... what their skin ... their breath felt like."

One day she goes into the prison hospital for the removal of a cyst on her ovaries. The doctor asks if she wants a tubal ligation and she says no. The prison doctor illegally sterilizes her, without her consent or knowledge. She only finds out about it later when she realizes that she has not had her period for a long time. In the film Dillon says, "I've always been a fighter but I wasn't truly birthed until I was in prison."

Chandler and Johnson, along with Dillon, joined forces to expose the illegal sterilizations. They found that prison administrators, the medical establishment and even the Federal Receiver knew about these illegal practices. Some even tried to justify the sterilizations by calling these women criminals who shouldn't raise children. "Belly of the Beast" also documents the ugly, genocidal role of California doctors in the racist eugenics movement in this country.

The documentary ends with the passage of SB 1135, signed into law in 2014, which prohibits sterilization of incarcerated women as a form of birth control in California. "Belly of the Beast" is an amazing story of struggle on both sides of the walls. The film leaves one with the realization that the only way to win true justice is to tear down those prison walls once and for all.

For information about "Belly of the Beast" and how to organize a community showing, check out their website at www.bellyofthebeastfilm.com. □



Oregon prisoners resist denial of COVID-19 protocol

By Johnnie Lewis
Portland, Ore.

On four successive days in late September, four prisoners in Oregon state prisons died of COVID-19. On Oct. 17, two more prisoners died of the virus.

In mid-September more than 3,000 prisoners, including over 1,000 women, were evacuated under the most horrific conditions from several Oregon prisons due to historic forest fires and smoke. These evacuations — so-called "super-spreader events" — are a probable cause for the current spike in COVID-19 deaths.

Evacuated prisoners were handcuffed in pairs and packed in buses with little or no personal protective equipment — in flagrant disregard of public health protocols.

Women prisoners evacuated to Deer Ridge, a men's prison, were kept on buses for more than seven hours straight with



Family members protest Covid conditions in Oregon prisons, Pendleton, July. PHOTO: BOB LONERGAN

no toilet facilities. They were callously told by guards to "go in your pants." There was no food and little or no water.

Demonstrations against horrid conditions

The women protested vehemently against the unacceptable conditions, and demonstrated loudly and defiantly on each bus. When they arrived at Deer

Ridge, all prisoners, men and women, were forced to sleep only six inches apart in cells, hallways, a recreation center, and other spaces.

Over 200 male prisoners rioted, sitting down in the yard, after being told they would be housed in a building that had been closed for four years. Upon entering, they found the space overrun with mice, littered with mice feces and smelling of urine — which is not only grossly unpleasant but can carry the potentially lethal hantavirus, especially in dry climates like

eastern Oregon.

In addition, the space reeked of mildew and the walls were covered with green and black mold. On top of this, the prisoners were not provided with sleeping gear and were expected to sleep in the trash and filth.

Of approximately 15,000 people incarcerated in Oregon's state prisons, 1,403 have contracted the novel coronavirus. Of

72 "workplaces" in the state known to have high concentrations of COVID-19, three of the top four are state prisons. Oregon calls prisons "workplaces" because guards and staff work in them. While no staff members employed in any prison have died of the virus, 17 prisoners have.

But Oregon prisons, like all U.S. prisons, are workplaces. In 2019, prisoners in the state produced \$29 million in value. Nevertheless, they were paid only a maximum hourly wage of 5 cents to 47 cents. Additionally, 345 Oregon prisoners are firefighters who risk their lives for a maximum pay of \$9.80 per day.

Of the 1,403 virus cases among prisoners, 498 are in Snake River prison. There, guards and staff notoriously and flagrantly refuse to use PPE or adhere to public health protocols for either themselves or for prisoners. Snake River has the highest death count among prisoners; seven have died there.

Resources: perilouschronicle.com; prisonpolicy.com; oregonlive.com

Death penalty protested in Texas for 21st year

By Gloria Rubac
Houston

The incredible depth and breadth of capital punishment was brought out very clearly on Oct. 10, as the 21st Annual March to Abolish the Death Penalty was held. Even though it was a virtual event this year, the passions, emotions, dedication and love shared by all participants were empowering tributes to the determination of Texas families and activists to stop legal lynchings.

Sandra Reed spoke, as her three-year-old grandson, R.J., peered into the camera from behind her. She raised goosebumps on participants, as she described all the

"illegalities, lies, deceits and conspiracies" that sent her innocent son, Rodney Reed, to death row in 1998. She declared: "The death penalty is heartless. It is racist. It is wrong. We will continue to fight for what is right — and that is to end this death penalty now!"

From Sandrine Ageorges-Skinner, an activist in Paris, an organizer for the World Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, and the spouse of Hank Skinner — who is on death row in Texas — to Bill Pelke, based in Alaska, founder of the Journey of Hope, the speakers captivated attendees.

Dee Colonize, a poet and recognized spoken word artist, shared her own

moving work, "Cruel and Unusual," and then she read a poem entitled "Miracles" by political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Walter Long spoke. He is the attorney who founded the Texas After Violence Project, and a new program at St. Edward's University in Austin which provides therapeutic counseling for death row families dealing with complex grief and unique trauma.

Families express deep angst, trauma and fear

It was the words spoken by those with family members on death row who revealed how deep the angst, trauma and

fear runs. Yancy Balderas, spouse of Juan Balderas on the row, spoke through tears: "The death penalty affects me every day. The process of justice is not right. How did the nephew of the prosecutor get to sit on Juan's jury? Why wouldn't the judge accept the hung jury in Juan's case?"

Balderas stressed: "If this had been a cop case, the judge would have accepted a hung jury and ended it. Juan's appointed attorney was Jerome Godinich who was chastised by the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals for repeatedly failing to meet federal death penalty deadlines, and who never did an investigation. We never even

Continued on page 10

Mumia Abu-Jamal Way

By Workers World Bureau Philadelphia

In a campaign which began in early summer, activists are working with residents of Council District 5 in Philadelphia to petition City Council to change the name of a block of North Wallace Street, where he grew up, to “Mumia Abu-Jamal Way.”

Their petition reads: “Mumia [Abu Jamal] is one of the leading figures of contemporary Philadelphia Black history who has tackled issues of racial injustice, policing, prisons, labor and international politics. In this city of ‘brotherly love’ there has been little love shown to the brothers and less to the sisters. Philadelphia is a mostly Black city, and yet Black residents are virtually absent from the public history and monuments of the city.”

Mumia Abu-Jamal grew up in a close-knit Black community on Wallace Street. A Philadelphia “native son,” he became a high school activist, journalist, member of the Black Panther Party, author and a scholar. His voice became recognized as a powerful tool for social change during his career on WHYY radio.

Now unjustly imprisoned since 1981, and under constant censorship, he has written more than a dozen books



In 2006 the Paris suburb of St. Denis named a street in honor of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

about Black history, global imperialism and social justice issues, including his recent book “Have Black Lives Ever Mattered?” (2017)

Petition: ‘Monuments are central’

The petition also states: “In this mostly Black city, which boasts over 1,500 public sculptures and monuments, only two sculptures pay tribute to Black history and life in the city — the recently constructed monuments of an unnamed school-aged Black girl which stands in South Philadelphia’s Smith Playground (2019) and the statue of [the late 1800s civil rights activist] Octavius Catto at City Hall in 2017.

“Monuments and memorials are central to making important history public and accessible. The renaming of Wallace St. is a crucial symbol that will mark the history and future of movements for social justice in the city that claims to be the birthplace of liberty.”

Dr. Tajah Ebram, a scholar of African American Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, who wrote her dissertation on the MOVE organization’s conflict with the city government, wrote the petition.

Workers World spoke with MOVE member Mike Africa Jr. about the project. “The Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police have tried to use their power to bury Mumia’s case and his story in this city. Yet around the world he is well-known and loved,” Africa noted.

“There is a street named after him in St. Denis in France. His image is seen on T-shirts anywhere you go in the world. We wanted to show that despite what the police say, Mumia is loved in his hometown.”

Most recently the FOP backed a questionable Pennsylvania Supreme Court procedure that has unnecessarily delayed a promising appeal case Abu-Jamal first filed in 2016.

Children chant ‘Free Mumia!’

Mike Africa noted, “Every time we start explaining the petition, people are eager to sign even before

we can say Mumia’s name. Children as young as four were chanting ‘Free Mumia.’ We have gathered hundreds of signatures in that community, and we hope to broaden the campaign to include all of Philadelphia.

“Whenever we go there, we also take food, movies about Mumia, books and other information to educate the people. We have also reached out several times and in different ways to Councilmember Darrell Clark, who represents the district, but he has not responded. We are giving him a chance.”

The petition notes that little significant history of Black Philadelphia life and struggle has been documented. This history was mocked in 2018, when a portion of 59th Street in West Philadelphia was renamed “Wilson Goode Sr. Way.”

In 1985, Philadelphia Mayor Goode allowed police to drop a bomb on MOVE’s home on Osage Avenue. Goode stood back as firefighters allowed the resulting fire to eventually destroy 61 homes in the Black neighborhood of Cobbs Creek and to kill 11 MOVE members — including six young children.

Rizzo statue down, Columbus next?

The Black Lives Matter movement inspired recent struggles over the names of city streets, buildings and statues. After protests in Philadelphia followed the police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis last May, the city government finally removed the Center City statue of racist former mayor and police commissioner Frank Rizzo.

The petition concludes: “Christopher Columbus has a major boulevard named after him, as well as a statue, which until very recently stood looming as a violent symbol of his and other colonizer[s]’ violent massacre of Native peoples in the Americas.

“Statues and street names in our city must more accurately convey the history of Black residents who have for generations survived continued racism and violence. It is imperative that we honor the Black activists who have pushed to transform our society into one that is truly free for all. Mumia Abu-Jamal is just that person.” □

Kaepernick’s “Abolition for the People” series to include essay by Mumia!

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

Former National Football League player Colin Kaepernick made history in August 2016 when, during the playing of the national anthem, he refused to stand, in order to protest brutal police killings of Black people across the U.S. Kaepernick, then a 28-year-old quarterback with the San Francisco 49ers, had led his team to the Super Bowl in 2013.

Kaepernick’s bold action became an inspiration for other athletes to follow, one that continues today. It also drew the wrath of NFL team owners, who to this day have collectively refused to rehire the talented free agent. However, Kaepernick’s voice could not be silenced.

Kaepernick published an essay on Oct. 6 entitled “The Demand for Abolition,” which called for the abolition of police and prison systems. This article launched a new four-week series called “Abolition for the People—the Movement for a Future Without Policing and Prisons.” The project was created in partnership with Kaepernick Publishing and the Medium publication LEVEL, which builds on traditions of organizing for Black freedom.

The “Abolition for the People” website states that the project “will publish 30 stories from organizers, political prisoners, scholars, and advocates — all of which point to the crucial conclusion that policing and prisons do not serve as

catch-all solutions for the issues and people the state deems social problems.”

The article continues: “Not only do police and prisons fail to make us safer, but reform has only strengthened their most toxic ingrained practices. The only answer is abolition, a full dismantling of the carceral state and the institutions that support it.” (tinyurl.com/y3vz4rm)

Mumia Abu-Jamal’s essay is vital

An essay by Mumia Abu-Jamal, U.S. political prisoner and world-renowned journalist, will appear Oct. 26 on that website, which already includes contributions by Dr. Angela Davis, Dr. Ameer Hasan Loggins, political prisoner Russell Maroon Shoatz, and his son, Russell Shoatz, III. Also posted are articles by LGBTQ essayist Kenyon Farrow, immigrant rights activists Cynthia Garcia and Cristina Jiménez Moreta, Indigenous organizer Morning Star Gali, and Kimberlé Crenshaw, who is credited with coining the term “intersectionality.”

The inclusion of Abu-Jamal’s writing in this project comes at a critical time. His current legal appeal, initially filed in 2016, has been bogged down since

Feb. 24, when the Pennsylvania Supreme Court accepted a “King’s Bench” petition, initiated by the Fraternal Order of Police, requesting a change of venue in the case.

Issues of police brutality and the power exerted by police organizations like the Philadelphia FOP over the U.S. judicial system are central to Abu-Jamal’s case. The fight to win his release continues after nearly 39 years of unjust incarceration.

Abolish the police and prisons!

In his essay, Kaepernick writes: “It’s been four years since I first protested during ‘The Star-Spangled Banner.’ At the time, my protest was tethered to my understanding that something was not

right. ... Unconsciously, my critique of police terrorism was fastened to a reformist framework. My want for accountability focused on the cops receiving convictions and punishment, not acquittals and paid vacations. But I had missed the larger picture.”

The essay continues: “Ultimately, I realized that seeking reform would make me an active participant in reforming, reshaping, and rebranding institutional white supremacy, oppression, and death. This constant re-interrogation of my own analysis has been part of my political evolution. ... Reform, at its core, preserves, enhances, and further entrenches policing and prisons into the United States’ social order. Abolition is the only way to secure a future beyond anti-Black institutions of social control, violence, and premature death.”

Kaepernick asserts: “Another world is possible, a world grounded in love, justice, and accountability, a world grounded in safety and good health, a world grounded in meeting the needs of the people.” He concludes: “Abolition now! Abolition for the people!” □



Colin Kaepernick

Corporate money militarizes the police

By **Betsey Piette**

After police murders of George Floyd in Minneapolis and Breonna Taylor in Louisville, Ky., demonstrators across the U.S. called for defunding police departments. The Center for Popular Democracy Action, in a June 10 report, estimates \$100 billion is spent each year in the U.S. on policing — between 20% to 45% of municipal budgets. (tinyurl.com/yy8ro8lf)

As activists target state and municipal funding sources, it is important to shine the spotlight on often hidden corporate police funding. A popular street chant against the police has been “Who do they protect? Who do they serve?”

Another question must also be asked: Who protects the police?

Secret slush funds funnel to police

Huge multinational corporations, particularly the oil industry giants, are funneling money to powerful police groups in exchange for police serving corporate interests. A network of police foundations, corporations and other special interest groups raise money to bankroll police departments. Many also organize galas and other events to benefit police.

Municipal police budgets are subject to public scrutiny and must be approved by elected officials. But private charities and police foundations do not fall under freedom of information laws. Set up as nonprofit “charities,” these secret slush funds hide the names of donors from public oversight, so that wealthy donors can influence police priorities, including contracts for equipment purchase.

These private funding sources have been largely responsible for militarizing police departments by bankrolling SWAT equipment, weaponized sound equipment, drones and more. In several cities, police foundation funds provide department access to controversial surveillance software and technology. Increasingly, these funds provide military grade weapons and combat training often reserved for war zones.

A June report from the Public Accountability Initiative (PAI) identified over 25 large corporations contributing to private police foundations over the last three years. These include financial institutions, tech giants, retailers,



Black Lives Matter protesters in Queens, N.Y., on May 30.

big oil and utility companies, and universities and professional sports teams. (tinyurl.com/ydy7cduk)

Corporate funds target protesters

It is possible that SWAT tank turrets used to shoot pepper spray onto protesters during demonstrations this summer were paid for through donations to the police by Target, Walmart, Starbucks, Coca-Cola or a convenience store conglomerate like Wawa or 7-Eleven.

Some of the new high-tech surveillance software and equipment used by police came courtesy of Amazon, Microsoft, Google or Facebook. In 2007, the Los Angeles Police Foundation, with a \$200,000 gift from Target Corp., provided the LAPD with controversial software from Palantir, a data analytics company launched with CIA funding. (Huffpost.com, June 25)

Following widespread anti-police protests this summer, foundations affiliated with private police funding in New York City, Washington, D.C., Seattle and Philadelphia quickly removed website information about board members and partners, including amounts of money each had donated.

The Philadelphia Police Foundation

removal of references to donor corporations stemmed in part from student protests at Temple University and the University of Pennsylvania, both reported to be major contributors. These schools have since withdrawn support, although Drexel University maintains a connection to the foundation. Media outlets Comcast and Philadelphia News 6ABC still have members on the foundation board.

The University of Virginia sponsors the local police foundation in Charlottesville, Va., site of the infamous 2017 “Unite the Right” rally, where anti-racist protester Heather Heyer was killed when a white supremacist rammed a car into a group of protesters.

Corporate quid pro quo

A certain quid pro quo is often expected by corporations making these generous donations. Technology giant IBM has been a corporate sponsor of the New York City Police Foundation, which in turn helped finance a citywide surveillance hub using IBM software.

When the NYPD was under orders from a federal judge to put 1,000 body cameras into use in 2013, the police foundation “gifted” them with demonstration cameras produced by two of its donors — Taser and VieVu. Both companies made the list of top contract bidders, with VieVu awarded the bid.

Motorola, a major donor to the Los Angeles Police Foundation, was granted a \$600 million contract to upgrade the city’s emergency communication network. (ProPublica, Oct. 13, 2014)

Verizon and AT&T have partnered with the National Sheriff’s Association to lobby Congress to make the Defense Department’s 1033 Program permanent. (Readsludge.com, June 4) Since 1997, that program has shipped over \$7.4 billion in “excess” military equipment to over 8,000 law enforcement agencies. (Wired.com, June 2)

Oil giants pollute, back police

PAI details how Chevron, Shell and other oil giants exert their influence by sponsoring public fundraising events for police and providing corporate executive personnel to serve as directors of police foundations. The report states: “Many powerful companies that drive environmental injustice are also backers of the

same police departments that tyrannize the very communities these corporate actors pollute.” (theguardian.com/UK, July 28)

Chevron is involved with police foundations in Houston, New Orleans and Salt Lake City. Shell, one of the world’s biggest fossil fuel companies, is a “featured partner” of the New Orleans police foundation. Marathon Petroleum, the largest U.S. oil refining company, is on the Detroit police foundation. PAI notes that Marathon’s refinery in Detroit has received 15 environmental violation citations since 2013.

Wells Fargo Bank, the second biggest global funder of fossil fuels, contributes to police foundations and gala events in Charlotte, N.C., Seattle, Atlanta and Salt Lake City. Financial institutions including Bank of America and Goldman Sachs, as well as BlackRock CEO Larry Fink, are among the biggest backers of police foundations.

Sports players protest, team owners donate to cops

During the Black Lives Matter protests this spring, athletes in every major sport staged strikes and other job actions in support. Yet in many cases, team management and franchises continued to participate in police funding foundations.

In Seattle, the MLB Mariners have someone on the board of the city’s police foundation board, and the NFL Seattle Seahawks donate to the foundation. In Detroit, the management of the National Football League Lions, National Basketball Association Pistons and Major League Baseball Tigers each have a representative on the Detroit Public Safety Foundation board of trustees. (Readsludge.com, June 4)

There are members from the MLB Tampa Bay Rays and the NFL Tampa Bay Buccaneers on that city’s police foundation. The NBA Dallas Mavericks are corporate-level sponsors of Friends of the Dallas Police. And the owner of the New York Mets is on the board of trustees for the New York City Police Foundation.

But targeting individual corporations for their support of police is not enough. The movement must indict the entire capitalist system, including the corporate power that funds and relies on the police to protect the rotten racist economic system. □

Ignoring history to our detriment

These lightly edited remarks were made by Mumia Abu-Jamal in a prerecorded message that aired on October 14 during “Conversations with Trudy,” an online interview program hosted by Trudy Knockless. The full episode is available at tinyurl.com/y3p5cmjr and includes commentary by Workers World Party member Ted Kelly.

Why did I even suggest the radical notion that the government is totally fascist? Most historians would disagree with the idea that there could ever be fascism in the U.S. As a student of history, I probably would have disagreed myself a few years ago.

I know that in my youth as a member of the Black Panther Party we spoke about “the fascist government” of Richard Nixon, the former Attorney General John Mitchell and Spiro Agnew, and their war against Black America and Black freedom movements. We used words like fascism and I think we were trying to speak about

the threat of things coming but not the threat of things that existed.

Until a friend of mine — my doctor, actually — talked to me about the period of American history after Reconstruction. Again, students of history know we’re talking about a period of history after 1865, after the Civil War, and after the so-called Reconstruction amendments to the Constitution, the 13th, the 14th, and the 15th amendments which granted the rights to vote and the right to be a citizen to African American freedmen. So for ten, perhaps fifteen years, Reconstruction obtained that in many parts of the South.

And then it was crushed by terrorist wars waged by the Ku Klux Klan, the White Citizens Council, and other similar white supremacist organizations allied with the state to crush the freedom movement of African American people. This was a fascist war that the government ignored because it was on one side.

People wrote to Washington but they

got no answers. Black people were driven out of Congress and then driven away from the vote at the risk of being robbed, beaten, terrorized, murdered, or burned — or all those things. So we had fascism in the United States at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th.

W.E.B. DuBois writes about the Red Summers of the teens of the 20th century, 1918, 1919. And there were white riots against Black communities in Cincinnati, in Philadelphia, in Louisville, and all across the country. That was fascism. And we’re used to thinking about fascism in the context of Mussolini in Italy or Hitler in Germany. But we’re not used to seeing this read as an American face or in an American accent. And that’s our fault. That’s our problem. We have ignored history to our detriment.



Mumia Abu-Jamal

Think about this. If the American Constitution granted the rights of Black people to vote after the Civil War ended in 1865, why did it take the Civil Rights Movement of 100 years later to make those rights real and to call for the recall of laws that diminished Black freedom?

So we’re thinking about fascism. And I think we need to look at it and then look at this era that we’re living in now.

Ona MOVE. From a Prison Nation, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal. □

Elections under siege — time to mobilize

by calvin deutschbein
Chapel Hill, N.C.

The sitting president of the United States has once again vowed to flout the results of the 2020 election. Donald Trump has called on his supporters — including police and sheriffs — to go to the polls on Election Day. He implies their role is to prevent people from voting — people he expects will vote against him. He implies if he loses the vote, he'll defy the will of the people from a position of control of the government and in de facto command of various white supremacist militias around the U.S.

Trump's words indicate that an increasingly desperate and violent faction of the ruling class is preparing to call into question even the theater of elections. As ever, voter suppression and violence will be felt first and foremost by nationally and/or gender-oppressed members of the working class, especially in the South.

Trump's threats have already aroused resistance. Locally in the South, workers' organizations have started fighting back. Antiwar military veteran groups called for poll watchers to facilitate voting for the voters whom Trump's people want to suppress. More Than a Vote, a collective of athletes headlined by LeBron James, is fighting to combat voter suppression by increasing the number of poll workers in Black electoral districts. And one group has asked the United Nations to supply poll watchers.

Trump incites violence at polls

On April 17, Trump took to Twitter to call for his supporters to "Liberate Michigan." Two weeks later, police stood back as armed reactionary groups entered the Capitol to threaten Gov. Gretchen Whitmer for taking measures against the pandemic — and for daring to be a woman running Michigan.



In Alabama in the mid-1960s, the Lowndes County Freedom Organization defended the right to vote for the Black community — the origin of the Black Panther Party.

On Oct. 8, federal law officers announced they had disrupted a plan by militia groups to kidnap Whitmer. No one on the left would look to the FBI to defend democracy, so its involvement in this case illustrates the heightening contradictions within the U.S. political system and the dangers ahead.

This recent attack against the Michigan governor mirrors earlier actions in June 2019 in Oregon. At that time, armed militias shut down the statehouse to prevent a legislative session from taking place. The militias specifically targeted another of the few women elected as governors in the U.S., Gov. Kate Brown, an openly bisexual woman.

The combination of male chauvinism and racism, which leads white gunmen hellbent on besieging the government to overturn nominally democratic processes, is itself an immediate threat. Should Trump be voted out, yet try to remain in office on Nov. 3, this threat will escalate further.

Even the corporate-owned news media expressed vague alarm at Trump's reaction to clear demands he condemn white supremacist militias such as the Proud Boys. During his first presidential debate with Biden, Trump instead told these fascists to "Stand by" — an order more akin

to his tweet to "Liberate Michigan," which is connected to the assault on Michigan's Capitol. Trump's public statements are a likely signal of what to be ready for on Election Day and immediately thereafter.

It is worth noting that this voter intimidation is nothing new. It was uniform throughout the South in the Jim Crow period. And as recently as 2017, a court ruling freed the Republican Party from a 35-year-old consent decree banning the party from coordinating voter intimidation efforts.

This is the first major election cycle after the courts gutted a renewed attempt at voter protection. And what happened? A sitting president called for the exact same attempts at voter intimidation deployed decades earlier.

The working class fights back!

The International Association Against Torture (IAAT-AICT) and the December 12th Movement have called on the United Nations to provide international election observers from the African Union or CARICOM (Caribbean Community), the major organizations of Black U.N. member states, to observe the U.S. elections next month.

A letter signed by D12M leaders points out Trump's threats and the dangers of having groups like the Proud Boys at the polling places, in terms of denying ballot access to Black people in the U.S.

And as the working class thinks globally, it may also act locally. Voter intimidation has always been the sharpest in the South, and in North Carolina, Black Workers for Justice has echoed the demands of the IAAT-AICT and D12M, but also called for local action. Their statement reads in part:

"Social movement and civic organizations are organizing 'Safe Vote' activities that include culture, grassroots surveillance and security. These measures need to be widespread and highly organized whether in urban areas or polls in rural communities. In the remaining days leading up to the election, our communities need to be assured that if they haven't voted by mail, that when they show up at the polls, someone will have their backs. This work is an important way for activists to connect with their neighbors, co-workers and allies.

"Another important tool that has been suggested by Mississippi activists is to call on local police chiefs and sheriffs, now, to publicly state what they intend to do if the Proud Boys or other similar forces show up. Put them on the record about whose side they are on."

There are many existing efforts at community self-defense at poll sites, such as the Democracy N.C. election protection program, which has previously been covered in Workers World (workers.org/2020/10/51673/) and the call by the Election Defenders. (workers.org/2020/10/51766/)

The strongest defense for the working class and the oppressed is solidarity — internationalist, proletarian, and as ever, in the streets, factories and shops.

Regardless of what happens in November our only way forward is to stay mobilized! Keep it in the streets! □

From Texas to Nigeria, end police brutality!

By Mirinda Crissman
Houston

Hundreds of people gathered near Wazobia African Market on the southwest side of Houston on Oct. 14 to protest police brutality in Nigeria. They came together to draw attention to the Special Anti-Robbery Squad, known in Nigeria for its extrajudicial killings, torture, extortion, frame-ups and blackmail. "End SARS" protests exploded on a global scale after viral videos of police brutality caught the attention of people of the African diaspora and those allied against global colonial structures of power.

At least 1,900 Nigerians have been killed by security forces in that country this year. In the last five years in the U.S., nearly 1,000 people have been reported to be extrajudicially executed by police annually since the 2014 Ferguson uprisings.

On Oct. 11, in the wake of international protests, the Nigerian government called for the disbanding of SARS and for its officers to be relocated to other sections of the police force. (Guardian, Oct. 16)

But a new Special Weapons and Tactics team was proposed to replace the SARS formation. SWAT teams were an invention of the Los Angeles Police Department and linked to attempts to quell internationally minded liberation movements in the U.S. and abroad. (Stuart Schrader, "Badges Without Borders," 2019)

"Anger with law enforcement is nothing new in Nigeria. The country's police



Houston, Oct. 14.

PHOTO: DOLAPO ADEKOYA

force evolved from colonial era institutions and still perceives its role as protecting the interests of the ruling regime rather than citizens themselves," says Lanre Ikuteyijo, a researcher at Obafemi Awolowo University in southwestern Nigeria. (New Statesman, Oct. 16)

Despite the Nigerian government's concession to disband SARS, protests rage on because the masses will not be fooled by empty promises. The October ruling to end the terror group marks the fifth time since 2015 that the Nigerian government has promised reform of SARS. (Guardian, Oct. 13) "Reforming" violent colonial paramilitaries that protect extraction

empire only results in new policing structures and continued violence.

Both the Black Lives Matter movement originating in the U.S. and the End SARS movement originating in Nigeria are international mass movements against police brutality, which affirm Black life around the world. The #BLM and #EndSARS movements are decentralized, somewhat spontaneous outpourings, very notably youth driven. As a result of these international

movements, colonial monuments have come down on nearly every continent.

People have targeted police precincts in Minneapolis and the SARS headquarters in Abuja, Nigeria and are rising in cities across the globe for an end to police brutality. (Washington Post, Oct. 11) This global movement against the oppressive material reality maintained by centuries of white supremacist rule cannot be stopped by empty promises or mass death.

Facing tactics of law enforcement that know no borders — repression from tear gas, kidnapping into unmarked vehicles and brutalization of protesters and journalists — the people are moving forward toward collective liberation.

Nigerian novelist Chibundu Onuzo said of the protests, "When one of us hurts, we all hurt. When one of us wins, we all win. This was the Pan-African dream of Marcus Garvey, of W.E.B. Du Bois . . . of Kwame Nkrumah and of many others." (Guardian, Oct. 16)

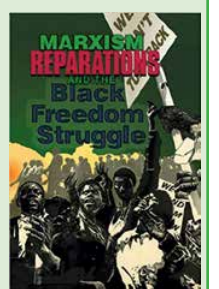
From Texas to Nigeria, abolish the police! □

Marxism, Reparations & the Black Freedom Struggle

Edited by Monica Moorehead

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper.

Available at major online booksellers. Free PDF at workers.org/books



This system is sick

The COVID-19 crisis is shedding a glaring light on the contradictions and failures of capitalism. Millions of lives are at risk — and it doesn't have to be this way.

Here in the United States — a country that for more than a century has been in the forefront of the world's most economically developed nations — the pandemic is killing hundreds of people every day. Nearly a quarter million people in the U.S. have died of the virus since last December — less than a year. That's nearly a fifth of all the deaths in the world from this disease.

Why do we say capitalism is responsible? Just compare the U.S. to the People's Republic of China — which is NOT capitalist.

China has a much bigger population — 1.4 billion people, or four times the U.S. population of 331 million — living on about the same amount of land. And before China's socialist revolution triumphed in 1949, its development had been held back by imperialist interventions — from Japan, the U.S. and Europe.

China was also the first country to be hit by the coronavirus. The first case was reported in Wuhan, back in December 2019.

The Chinese government had to quickly mobilize just to find out what was happening with this new disease. Where did it come from? How do you treat it? Should

whole neighborhoods be quarantined? If so, how will the people get food and other necessities?

All this had to be figured out and acted on quickly.

And that's exactly what happened. Medical teams were rushed to Wuhan. Whole new hospitals were built within days.

And sick people were not asked "Do you have health insurance? Who will pay for this?"

The disease was quickly contained. As of this Oct. 19, China, with four times the population of the U.S., has had only 4,634 deaths from the virus, compared to — get this — 224,824 deaths in this country, and still rising. (worldometers.info/coronavirus)

This boils down to the statistic that a person living in the United States is 200 times more likely to die of the coronavirus than a person in China.

What an indictment of this capitalist system!

What makes this huge difference?

China has a centrally planned, socially owned economy, meaning that in an emergency of this kind, all the resources of society can be focused on dealing with the problem. The health of the people, not the profits of a few, becomes the first priority.

If that means commerce in an affected area must be shut down, it happens. If the people need to be

quarantined, plans are made to make sure that food and other necessities are safely delivered to them. If they can't get to their jobs, they won't get tossed out of their homes or left to starve.

All of that was taken care of when the virus first broke out in Wuhan.

This is inconceivable in a capitalist country — even one as wealthy as the United States.

Right now, millions have been laid off. Small businesses are failing as people hunker down because of the virus. The additional unemployment benefits were terminated in July. The so-called individual "stimulus" payment of \$1,200 in April was spent months ago, and neither Trump nor Biden is talking about another one. (It should be noted that more millionaires are actually supporting Biden now than Trump.)

This is capitalism. If you're a worker, you're on your own. It becomes clearer every day that the accumulation of so many problems, so much suffering, comes from this profit system.

It doesn't have to be this way. Oppression breeds resistance. Resistance brings people together to fight for a common cause. And the struggle must go deeper than just trying to alleviate the symptoms. It must get to the source of the sickness itself: capitalism. □

Death penalty protested in Texas for 21st year

Continued from page 6

met him for four years."

And Balderas asks further leading questions: "Why did we wait over eight years for a trial? Juan has been on death row for six years, and we just got evidence turned over in 2018 that should have been given to us at trial. This system is broken in Texas. It can't be fixed. It's got to be abolished."

María Victoria Reyes, the mother of Juan Balderas, cried as she told us, "Every single day I suffer, every single day because I cannot even touch my son. There's no justice for poor people, people like us. We feel this every day."

'This is not justice. It is revenge'

Elsa Alcalá, a former judge who served six years on Texas' highest court, was a special guest: "As a young prosecutor, I was told that the death penalty was reserved for the worst of the worst. I bought into that. But after serving on the Court of Criminal Appeals, I learned that this just is not true. . . . Taking a live human being and causing their death is called homicide. That's what it is," she explained. "It's revenge, pure and simple. That is not justice."

Texas State Rep. Harold Dutton, an ally of abolitionists since first elected to the House in 1984, has introduced a bill in every session to abolish the death penalty. He has held a Day of the Innocent at the Legislature and recognized death row exonerees on the floor of the House.

Rep. Dutton says: "The death penalty is only applied to poor people, Black and Brown people! In Texas, you can get the death penalty and not have killed anybody. This is called the 'Law of Parties' — and it is absurd. Since the death penalty doesn't apply to the rich, we must just eliminate it. Let's keep the movement up, and keep this fire burning brighter. We need to just abolish the death penalty."

Terri Been, Jeff Wood's sister, attended. Wood is a death row prisoner even though he wasn't in the building where a murder took place. He is one of many — Randy Halprin, Rudy Medrano, Juan Ramirez, Humberto Garza and others — who are on death row under the Law of Parties.

Been explains: "I consider myself to be a victim of this crime. So is his daughter, his grandkids, our parents. There are not words to describe what our family goes through. Emotionally, I am in that cell with my brother every single second of every single day. Every day I am awaiting death.



Sandra Reed, mother of Rodney Reed, with grandson R.J.

"Our stresses come in many forms. We as family members receive hate mail. We are called names. Guns have been pulled on us. Our loved family members are called 'monsters,' and family members become the 'monsters' our loved ones are called. We've lost jobs. We have contemplated suicide. We've had to move. I have PTSD. I've been put on drugs. This is our life on death row."

Sabrina Butler Smith: first woman exonerated

"My name is Sabrina Butler Smith, and I was charged with murdering my baby son and sentenced to death by an all-white jury in Mississippi," the first exonerated woman explained. "One of my attorneys was a divorce attorney, who was drunk every day of my trial. I was poor, young, Black and undereducated. My execution date was July 2, but no one even told me that I had appeals. I was waiting all day to die. Since I have been freed, I have learned that together we can accomplish a lot. I am the first woman exonerated from death row, and I will

continue to fight as a member of Witness To Innocence and with all of you."

Another exoneree, Ron Keine, a board member of Witness To Innocence, is on a committee called Justice After Exoneration. He said: "We're 172 people who were exonerated from death row. But not every state provides compensation. So I'm working in New Mexico and other states to get compensation for exonerees. My case is like Rodney Reed's, because the real killer in our cases was a cop. I got off because the cop who committed the murder that I was charged with found Jesus, and he confessed."

Viewers were treated to a photo display of actions by the

Kids Against the Death Penalty. Since their founding in 2008, the KADP have demonstrated at each annual event and at the governor's mansion and the Texas Capitol, and they have lobbied the legislature. Speaking for them were Gavin Been and Brittany Burts who set up the online event which can be found on their FaceBook page.

Humberto Garza is on death row because of the Law of Parties. His mother, Lydia Garza, spoke from the Rio Grande Valley, saying, "I am not an eloquent speaker, but I just want to thank everybody who has joined this effort, especially the KADP who were so young and small when we first met them. Not having visits all these months has been quite depressing for families. My son is my only son, and he was sentenced under the Law of Parties. He was not the shooter. He wasn't at the place where this happened. This is so unjust. I thank you all from the bottom of my heart, and my son does too."

Delia Perez Meyers spoke on behalf of her brother Luis Perez, whose innocence she has been fighting to prove since he was arrested in 1998. "We are still getting boxes of evidence that were never turned over to Perez's attorney. Several innocence projects are now working on my brother's case. My brother sends his love, even though he is still terribly ill from suffering a few heart attacks."

'Pandemic executions expose lies about public safety'

Liliana Segura writes for the Intercept, which published her excellent article on the recent federal execution of 19-year-old Christopher Vialva. She told us, "When the federal government is carrying out executions during this pandemic, this really exposes the lies that this is about public safety. It is revenge."

After a talk by Lillian Mauldin, of Amnesty International at the University of Texas, the last speaker was a representative of Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement and Workers World Party. She spoke of the six women on Texas death row and gave the good news about Melissa Lucio, whose case was thrown out by the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, and is awaiting either a new trial or release.

Many statistics were given showing that the death penalty is dying. Fewer people are being executed. Fewer death sentences are being given out. Fewer people support executing people.

The emotional event ended with a power point presentation of beautiful death row art, narrated by Perez Meyer.

Organizations sponsoring the event were the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement, Austin Abolitionists, Kids Against the Death Penalty, the Jeff Wood Support Group, the Texas Moratorium Network, Texas Death Penalty Education and Resource Center and the Jude Filler Foundation.

The pandemic may have prevented an in-person march and rally, but this virtual event proved to be just as emotionally taxing, but also as exciting, informational and motivational as the previous 20 in-person events. □

"The death penalty is heartless. It is racist. It is wrong. We will continue to fight for what is right — and that is to end this death penalty now!"

— Sandra Reed, mother of Rodney Reed, on death row since 1998

Millions salute election victory in Bolivia

Millions of people cheer with delight the landslide victory of the Movement toward Socialism (MAS) in the Bolivian elections. We join them.

The rightists who came together for last November's coup are split, squabbling over the spoils of corruption. Their ten-month rule destroyed Bolivia, leaving its population defenseless before the pandemic.

That Bolivia's Indigenous people and workers have resisted the pro-imperialist coup regime and its massacres — and

have handed the MAS this electoral triumph — is a slap in the face to the imperialists, local fascists and oligarchy.

A slap in the face. Not a shot to the heart.

While we heartily join the Bolivian people's celebration, we have to keep in mind the dangers that still exist. The safeguard to victory for the oppressed classes is the possession of their own instruments of power.

U.S. imperialists — whether the hated Trump or the Biden variety — have both

targeted Bolivia's people and its former president, still in exile, Evo Morales. A measure of MAS' success will be Morales' ability to return to Bolivia. The imperialists and the local oligarchy fear his ability to mobilize the masses of people — as only he can at this moment.

The rightist Carlos Mesa, who finished second, speaks softly. Last October and November, Mesa showed he too was dangerous. Fascist Luis Camacho, who finished a distant third, still has a base of power in the eastern city of Santa Cruz

and still has backers among the police and fascist gangs.

The national military, who betrayed Morales last year, remains tied by many strings to the wealthy and especially to U.S. imperialism.

The elections have shown that the vast majority supports the MAS and that they are ready to defend it. We in the imperialist center must give all possible support to whatever steps they take to assure that defense succeeds.

— John Catalinotto

Bolivia's corrupt coup makers fear electoral rebuff

By John Catalinotto

Bulletin, Oct. 19 — Post-election articles from Bolivia report that Lucho Arce Catacora, candidate of former President Evo Morales' party, the MAS (Movement Toward Socialism), won the election with 52.4% of the vote. This was more than 20 percentage points ahead of the rightist Carlos Mesa Gisbert's 31.2% and nearly 40 points ahead of ultrarightist Luis Fernando Camacho, who got 14.1%. (rebellion.org, Oct. 19) The landslide electoral victory vindicated the MAS' popular success in office. The landslide, however, is no guarantee that the Bolivian oligarchy, in conspiracy with U.S. imperialism, won't again attempt to retain power using illegal force.

National elections are scheduled to take place in Bolivia on Oct. 18. They are the first to be held since November 2019, when a Washington-backed coup overthrew the legal government of President Evo Morales. The coup regime, guilty of repression, massive corruption and a mangled response to COVID-19, is facing electoral defeat.

The danger facing Bolivia's workers and Indigenous peoples is that this regime will attempt electoral fraud or another coup to stay in power.

On Oct. 20, 2019, Morales, Bolivia's first elected president from its large Indigenous communities, won in the first round, but with less than 50% of the vote. His other three election victories, starting in 2006, had been by clear majorities. However, Bolivian election law gives the presidency to the leading candidate, as long as they receive more than 40% of the vote and lead the runner-up by more than 10 percentage points.

During last year's election, Morales' right-wing opposition organized fascist-like mobs that assaulted offices of



Supporters of the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) in the streets Oct. 18 to celebrate the landslide victory of their candidate.

his Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) party, government offices, and the homes of MAS leaders. Police units supported the extralegal gangs, who wielded clubs and caused havoc in pro-MAS areas of the country. The coup makers mobilized their gangs based on anti-Indigenous racism.

From abroad, the pro-U.S. Organization of American States and U.S. imperialism conspired with the coup makers and the anti-Morales oligarchy inside Bolivia. Finally, on Nov. 10, 2019, the Bolivian national military pressured Morales to resign, which he did. Police and military repressed mass protests of the coup with lethal force. (workers.org/2019/11/44357/)

The coup regime, led by interim President Jeanine Áñez, kept postponing these presidential elections — starting this May and then twice over the summer — because the coup makers expected MAS candidates to win the elections. Mass protests kept demanding the elections be held.

It appears the elections will take place on Oct. 18. Áñez herself ran so poorly in the polls that she withdrew in September. Polls in mid-September predicted a possible MAS victory in the first round, led by its presidential candidate this time, Lucho Arce. (workers.org/2020/09/51521/)

Not only has Áñez pulled out of the race, but three of her economic ministers resigned on Sept. 28, revealing some of the many differences dividing the pro-coup forces.

Coup regime a nightmare

One of the MAS leaders, Franklin Flores, has said, "Unfortunately, Bolivia has two pandemics: against life and against our economy. The first one, the coronavirus, is killing us. And in the other, it kills us with hunger. There is a lack of government social assistance. With the quarantine the productive apparatus is paralyzed, therefore, the economic situation is bad."

Morales, speaking from his exile in Argentina in July, detailed how the coup regime had wrecked the lives of many Bolivians: "In seven months they have destroyed the economy. It pains me a lot. With much effort and commitment we had built and we had left a dignified, sovereign, productive Bolivia. A Bolivia with much independence, with dignity, with freedom, but also with a lot of diversity. Diversity is the richness of our identity and it is our dignity.

"It is going to be difficult to rebuild, but with Lucho Arce we started together in 2006 and at that time they also left us a beggar state. Now, with so much corruption and nepotism they paralyzed the entire productive apparatus.

"There is no investment from the State, zero investment for public companies, let alone for new productive enterprises. Because what we did was nationalize Entel [the telephone company], nationalize basic services, hydrocarbons, minerals. Nationalize and expand the productive apparatus in the hands of the state." (El Salto, July 6)

In a more recent interview, Morales said that the current government under the administration of Jeanine Áñez is not a transitional government, but "it is a de facto government, it is a coup d'état and therefore a dictatorship." (Hispan TV, Oct. 4)

The MAS leader said there will be surprises in the elections on Oct. 18 because even the people who voted against him last year, and who participated in the coup d'état, are now indignant, disappointed, regretting that the current administration, in 10 months, has destroyed the economy.

Evo Morales once again denounced the U.S. role of intervening in past elections. He says the U.S. goal is to prevent him from returning to Bolivia and keep the MAS from running the government. □

Los ricos se vuelven más ricos, los pobres se vuelven más pobres y más enfermos

Continúa de la página 12

comunidades donde las tarifas son bastante bajas?

No mucho, según los trabajadores de Amazon en Shakopee, Minnesota. Para el 30 de junio, 45 habían dado positivo y la tasa de infección en el almacén era 17 veces mayor que la del condado de Scott.

Si Bezos sacrificara solo el aumento de su riqueza personal e invirtiera en las máximas protecciones para los trabajadores de Amazon, menos trabajadores estarían enfermos. Se podría pagar a los trabajadores mayores vulnerables e inmunodeprimidos para que se queden en casa.

De hecho, se necesitaron huelgas de trabajadores en los almacenes de Amazon y Whole Foods, propiedad de Amazon, para obtener protecciones en el lugar de trabajo o pago por riesgo, que luego se recortó.

Esta es la enfermedad que Amazon y Bezos, que lucharon por publicar las cifras de infección durante meses, ahora creen que pueden ocultar.

Solo la lucha de clases mantiene a los trabajadores seguros

En medio de una trágica pandemia se ha producido una transferencia masiva a los ricos con más riqueza, todo ello producido por el trabajo del pueblo. Esta

injusticia no es solo el resultado de la codicia personal, aunque no hay escasez de eso. El capitalismo mismo, definido por la explotación del trabajo por parte del capital, es la razón por la que una clase sigue enriqueciéndose asquerosamente mientras la gran mayoría sufre.

Los trabajadores, organizados y no organizados, luchan por mantenerse seguros en sus trabajos. Un grupo de sindicatos y organizaciones ambientales ha demandado al gobierno federal para forzar la aplicación de la Ley de Producción de Defensa, para producir más equipo de protección personal que necesitan los trabajadores de primera línea, especialmente en el cuidado de la salud.

"La gente está muriendo y más gente va a morir porque la administración Trump no ha logrado proteger a los estadounidenses que han estado en el trabajo durante la pandemia, manteniendo nuestro país en funcionamiento", dijo el presidente de los Trabajadores de la Comunicación, Chris Shelton.

Esta es una demanda progresiva, pero las condiciones más seguras no se ganarán solo en los tribunales. Se necesitaron huelgas y sentadas hace décadas para obtener protecciones de seguridad básicas en las fábricas, donde la pérdida de una extremidad e incluso la vida era un riesgo diario. □



FOTO: RESUMEN LATINOAMERICANO

Presidente Luis Arce Catara y vicepresidente David Choquehuanca, elegidos el 18 de octubre en Bolivia.

Proveer agua para migrantes y aliados es un crimen para EE.UU.

Por Teresa Gutierrez

Trump no solo continúa llevando a cabo una vil diatriba antiinmigrante casi a diario, sino que los agentes del Servicio de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas llevaron a cabo recientemente un siniestro ataque SWAT en Arizona. Y en la ciudad de Nueva York, los agentes de ICE están arrestando a inmigrantes haciéndose pasar por policías de Nueva York.

Morir de sed es aceptable en los EE.UU.

El 5 de octubre, la Patrulla Fronteriza de Estados Unidos allanó el campo No Más Muertes en Arizona, cerca de la frontera entre Estados Unidos y México. Esta organización humanitaria, un grupo vital de personas heroicas que salvan vidas, informó desde el campamento que los agentes de ICE capturaron a 12 inmigrantes y detuvieron a siete voluntarios. No Más Muertes caracterizó los arrestos y detenciones como “un patrón de criminalización”.

Esta fue la segunda incursión en el campamento del grupo desde este verano. Según el Washington Post, No Más Muertes “es un grupo religioso formado en 2004 en respuesta a una gran cantidad de migrantes que estaban muriendo mientras intentaban cruzar el brutal desierto de Sonora”. (6 de octubre)

Un comunicado de prensa de No Más Muertes decía: “Después del atardecer del 5 de octubre, entró la Patrulla Fronteriza de los Estados Unidos... a Byrd Camp con una orden federal. Los voluntarios estuvieron retenidos durante tres horas mientras las personas que recibían atención médica, alimentos, agua y refugio del calor de más de 100 grados fueron detenidas.”

Según la organización, la invasión estatal fue “una demostración masiva de fuerza



La patrulla fronteriza realiza una redada de estilo militar en el campo No Más Muertes, 31 de julio de 2020.

armada” ya que la BORTAC (Unidad Táctica de la Patrulla Fronteriza) “descendió al campamento con un tanque blindado, un helicóptero y muchos vehículos marcados y sin marcas. Agentes armados con rifles de asalto persiguieron y aterrizaron a quienes estaban recibiendo atención”. Además, rompieron puertas y ventanas y destruyeron la infraestructura y los suministros esenciales.

El comunicado de prensa continuó: “Esta criminalización de la ayuda humanitaria y la atención médica que brindamos es solo un avance de las políticas mortíferas de la agencia. La Patrulla Fronteriza detiene a personas en instalaciones inseguras y mortales donde la negligencia médica es desenfrenada y los abusos a los derechos humanos están bien documentados”.

Para enviar mensajes de solidaridad o una donación monetaria muy necesaria, visite: nomoredeaths.org

ICE y policía, uno y el mismo

Los neoyorquinos tienen todas las razones para sentirse intimidados y recelosos de la policía de Nueva York, después del infame debate de “parar y registrar” que tuvo como objetivo las comunidades negras y morenas y el trágico asesinato en 2014 de Eric Garner, cuyo grito “no puedo respirar” generó protestas masivas.

Entonces, cuando la policía llega a la puerta buscando a alguien y los policías resultan ser agentes de ICE, puede estar seguro de que la comunidad resistirá.

Es por eso que los defensores y los funcionarios de la ciudad se reunieron con las familias de inmigrantes el 10 de octubre para denunciar los informes de “prácticas engañosas de los oficiales de ICE para detener y deportar a las personas”.

Según el concejal de la ciudad Ydanis Rodríguez, uno de los organizadores del mitin, la comunidad pedía la liberación de Fernando Santos-Martínez, secuestrado

por agentes de ICE que afirmaban ser agentes de la policía de Nueva York del Precinto 34.

Según Rodríguez, ICE se presentó de civil en el apartamento de la familia y repetidamente intentó entrar mientras se identificaba como policía. Sin dejar que la resistencia de la familia los detuviera, los agentes de ICE intentaron intimidar al superintendente del edificio para que consiguiera que la esposa de Santos-Martínez, María, abriera la puerta.

Los agentes de ICE dijeron que necesitaban hablar con Santos-Martínez “sobre un incidente anterior”, por lo que el cónyuge “sin saberlo les dio su número de teléfono”, dijo Rodríguez.

Según los informes, el alcalde de Nueva York, Bill de Blasio, dijo el viernes que el había “pedido a ICE que ordenara a sus agentes que no declararan o insinuaran que representan a la policía de Nueva York”.

Pero tanto la policía de Nueva York como la de ICE son agentes deshonestos que protegen a un estado capitalista. Y harán lo que quieran y pondrán en acción sus creencias supremacistas blancas, no lo que ordene de Blasio. La policía y ICE han demostrado una y otra vez que están políticamente alineados con las viles políticas racistas de la administración Trump. De hecho, la policía de Nueva York, a través de su unidad de propaganda de la “Asociación Benevolente de Policía”, salió en agosto por primera vez en un histórico respaldo a Trump para otro mandato como presidente.

Mientras ICE evita que los migrantes obtengan agua en el desierto con tanques blindados, y mientras la policía y el ICE unen fuerzas cada vez más, ya es hora de que el movimiento elimine a la policía y al ICE de una vez por todas. □

Los ricos se vuelven más ricos, los pobres se vuelven más pobres y más enfermos

“Los ricos se vuelven más ricos y los pobres más pobres”. El viejo cliché sigue siendo cierto, obscenamente cierto.

En seis meses, de marzo a septiembre, cuando la clase trabajadora fue golpeada por COVID, el desempleo masivo y un aumento en la supremacía blanca, los ricos se hicieron más ricos.

Específicamente, la riqueza colectiva de los 643 multimillonarios de este país se expandió en \$845 mil millones. Eso es un aumento del 29%. No está mal considerando que estamos en medio de una contracción económica sin precedentes. (americansfortaxfairness.org)

Y hay más.

Casi la mitad de ese crecimiento de la riqueza (401.000 millones de dólares) se destinó a los 15 multimillonarios más ricos. Más de la mitad de esa suma

se destinó a los notorios cinco primeros: Bezos, Gates, Zuckerberg, Musk y Buffett. El mayor aumento porcentual fue para el “pobre” del grupo. El número 15, Dan Gilbert, capitalista inmobiliario y financiero y propietario de los Cleveland Cavaliers, vio crecer su patrimonio neto un 672,1% de \$6,5 a \$50,2 mil millones. (americansfortaxfairness.org)

No a todo el mundo le ha ido tan bien.

No los 30 millones de personas en Estados Unidos que

han pasado hambre ni el mismo número que ha tenido que depender de los beneficios por desempleo. No los 12 millones que perdieron su seguro médico cuando perdieron sus trabajos. Y no los casi 8 millones registrados como portadores de COVID, o los 220.000 de los que han muerto.

El impacto más severo cayó sobre los más oprimidos: trabajadores de color, mujeres y trabajadores que no se ajustan al género, trabajadores LGBTQ2S+, trabajadores con discapacidades y otros.

“En la enfermedad y en la salud”, para tomar prestado otro cliché, los ricos se vuelven más ricos y los pobres se vuelven más pobres. Y más enfermos.

El multimillonario Bezos cambia los números

El 1 de octubre, bajo la presión de los sindicatos para que divulgaran las cifras, Amazon hizo público que 19.816 de sus 1,37 millones de trabajadores de primera línea en EE.UU. habían tenido COVID. Al menos ocho trabajadores han muerto. Sin embargo, la compañía, propiedad del multimillonario más rico del mundo, Jeff Bezos, está tratando de darle un giro positivo a estas cifras.

“Amazon dijo que la tasa de infección

entre los empleados fue un 42% más baja de lo esperado, en comparación con la ‘tasa de población general’ en los EE.UU.”, informó CNBC. “Si las tasas de infección de Amazon estuvieran en consonancia con las de la comunidad, el número total de casos habría llegado a 33.952, dijo la empresa”.

Si las cifras de Amazon son precisas, la tasa de infección de la empresa es de 1.449 por cada 100.000 trabajadores. Eso está cerca de la tasa estatal de Michigan de 1,467 por 100.000. Solo 12 estados tienen tasas por debajo de Michigan. Y aproximadamente el 20% de los almacenes de Amazon se encuentran en Michigan y los 12 estados con las cifras más bajas de infección.

Entonces, Amazon afirma que sus medidas de seguridad están limitando las tasas de infección. Pero, ¿qué tan seguras son las condiciones de trabajo en las

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