Earthquake kills 50,000

End sanctions on Syria!

By Tod Kelly

On Feb. 18, Israeli occupation forces occupying the Syrian Golan region launched missiles at the Syrian capital of Damascus and its surrounding suburbs. At the time of this writing, five people were killed and 15 wounded in this attack. This unprovoked assault on the civilian population and infrastructure of Syria is the second such Israeli missile attack in 2023. The Israelis have launched almost 100 air strikes against Syria since 2020. Meanwhile, ISIS has taken credit for a raid that killed 61 civilians and 7 Syrian Arab Army soldiers in al-Hasakah, a large, multi-national region in northeastern Syria, currently occupied in part by the U.S. and its proxies.

The terrible earthquake that hit a wide area of southeastern Türkiye and neighboring Syria has reportedly killed at least 46,000 people as of Feb. 20, with the total reaching 50,000 since then. This winter the survivors who lost their housing face freezing and wet conditions, without any alternative shelter, without any electricity, without any heating and with inadequate access to food.

While the devastation has taken place in both countries, and Türkiye faces enormous difficulties delivering aid, it does not face the economic warfare that the U.S. and its NATO allies have directed at Syria for over a decade. Even in the midst of this humanitarian crisis, Washington has ordered a halt to any delivery of financial aid to the legitimate government of Syria.

International cargo planes cannot land in Syria; international agencies are blocked. Crowdfunding services, donations and even individual assistance is blocked. In this dire emergency situation, the U.S. has persisted in keeping the sanctions in place and blocked all forms of emergency relief. Millions of people in the United States are sympathetic with those suffering from this catastrophe. They should be aware, however, of the role of U.S. imperialism, which has demonized and targeted the legitimate Syrian government. After over a decade of war with U.S.- and NATO-backed proxies, the Syrian people should have been poised to finally begin the costly process of rebuilding their country. The landslide reelection of President Bashar al-Assad’s National Progressive Front and the historic new agreement between the Syrian Arab Republic and the People’s Republic of China, to induct the country into the Belt and Road Initiative in recent years, both seemed to mark the start of a new chapter for all Syrian peoples.

However, the draconian sanctions imposed on them by the United States have blocked the resources necessary to rebuild. U.S. troops continue to occupy Syria’s principal oil-producing regions. Washington’s theft of Syrian oil and gas resources is exacerbating the economic situation. The U.S. has plundered more than 80% of Syria’s oil production and smuggled and burned Syria’s grain stock.

Ongoing military strikes by both the U.S. and Israel, combined with these harsh economic sanctions, have caused immeasurable civilian casualties and taken away the means of subsistence for the Syrians. U.S. sanctions on other countries in the region — Lebanon, Iraq and Iran — are a further impediment to getting aid to Syria. All this has made Syria’s humanitarian crisis even worse.

To bring the truth on the ground to Workers World’s readers, this reporter spoke on Feb. 12 with Paul Larudee of the Syrian Support Movement, which has been organizing aid for the Syrian people.

Over a decade of war against Syrians

Paul Larudee: Our movement was fortunate enough to meet several Syrians who helped us to form a humanitarian aid program, in addition to the human rights

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Black History Month

National oppression is not secondary!

Black Reconstruction in S. Carolina

Roll the union on!

Tesla union drive

Boston academic workers

Global actions for Mumia

Texas prisoner hunger strike

Train wreck exposes capitalism

Sam Marcy: apostle of class unity

New York Times’ anti-trans bigotry

ADA lawsuit vs killer cops

Editorial: What led to a long war

U.S. out of the Philippines!
Honour Black History Month!

Workers World newspaper commemorates Black History Month because white supremacy pervades life under capitalism. Every struggle—from fighting for living-wage jobs and health care to ending murder-ous police terror, from winning affordable housing to defending the basic right to vote—is rooted in the centuries-long battle to end this country’s horrific history of racism.

We are still dealing with the legacy of enslavement—that heinous violence-driven form of superexploitation that reemerged in new forms with the demise of Black Reckoning. That’s what every month, not just February, this newspaper chronicles the struggles of people of African descent and their allies to eradicate institutionalized, systemic white supremacy in every sphere.

A case in point is our continuing coverage of the movements to free political prisoners—like Mumia Abu-Jamal, Russell Magee and Imam Jamil Al-Amin—and to honor the legacies of trailblazing Black women such as Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks and Fannie Lou Hamer.

WW bases our weekly coverage of the Black struggle here and elsewhere in the African diaspora on breaking imperialist chains and promoting the principles of self-determination and sovereignty. Oppressed nationalities have the right to fight to end all forms of inequality, injustice and white supremacy—by any means necessary!

WW needs your support!

If you appreciate our coverage, it’s time to join the Workers World Supporter Program. WW depends on its readers’ backing. The program was established 46 years ago to help us publish anti-racist, working-class truth and 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 everincreasing quest for ever-greater profits. Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on immigrants, minorities, LGBTQ+ oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means homelessness, 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—if they can’t 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 gummed down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

The ruthless ruling class today seeks to wipe out decades of gains and profits 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 movement against capitalist exploitation and for revolutionary change.

Since the early 1990s, the fund has sponsored work-ers.org, where articles contain news and analysis of global and domestic issues and struggles are posted continually. The website is a resource for political activist-ists. It contains firsthand accounts by writer-activists in many countries, translated by our staff.

Timely articles by worker-organizers keep the news-paper current on unionization drives, along with reports on anti-racist and other progressive movements. While WW’s staff is voluntary, the 12 printed issues each year and the website do incur expenses. Although many online publications require payments to read their articles, WW does not.

Our articles are free to all readers.

Join the WW Supporter Program: Can you donate $50, $100, $200 a year or more? Donating $50 or more will entitle you to receive 12 print issues a year, an email link to every article posted online and upon request, a copy of the book “What road to socialism?” By donating to this fund, you can help get class truth to more readers. Write monthly or annual checks to build Workers World. Mail them with your name, address and email to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd floor, New York, NY 10011.

We are thankful for your support in building Workers World.

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

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End inequality, injustice and white supremacy—by any means necessary!

Join us in the fight for socialism!

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There have been alarming accounts of the air smelling like burning plastic, eyes and skin rashes, and they complain of complications. (Allegheny Front, Feb. 13) Cars and trains, all of which can cause health complications. (Allegheny Front, Feb. 13)

Residents of Wheeling and Moundsville, West Virginia, posted pictures of discoloration in the water. Some individuals have taken video footage of the rainbow-colored film in the water. Following the “controlled release” of the dangerous gases on Feb. 6, which produced a mushroom cloud of poisonous smoke, the public was informed there were more chemicals released than originally revealed. At first, people were only told about vinyl chloride, which is clinically proven to cause cancer. When vinyl chloride combusts, it turns into phosgene, a gas that was used as a weapon during the first imperial war.

The federal Environmental Protection Agency later stated that additional hazardous chemicals, Ohio. The two-mile-long, 150-car train, owned by Norfolk Southern, weighed 18,000 tons and was carrying hazardous material when it jackknifed as a result of an explosion.

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Workers in the union’s organizing committee confirm that a handful of workers fired were committee members. Tesla is likely firing large swaths of workers and not exclusively organizing leaders, which provides the company cover—an excuse to claim that Tesla isn’t discriminating based on union activity, while still being able to strike fear into the workers.

Meanwhile, people are being told by state and local officials that the air and water are “safe,” according to their “tests,” but local residents don’t trust these tests. Many residents of the town are afraid to be in their own homes, but they have nowhere else to go.

People from the community packed a local high school gymnasium Feb. 15 to attend what they thought would be a meeting with Norfolk Southern representatives, where they could ask questions. The company backed out at the last minute and sent an email that read, “After consulting with community leaders, we have become increasingly concerned about the growing physical threat to our employees and members of the community around this event, stemming from the accidental release of toxic chemicals from the facility.”

The company’s failure to show up sent a clear message that they don’t care about the well-being of anyone in that community. Company representatives eventually met with local government officials but still refuse to meet with the people most impacted.

In a disgraceful attempt to save face and prevent lawsuits, Norfolk Southern bosses have offered people from the evacuation zone a meager $1,000 each “as inconvenience pay.” Residents are being advised by local attorneys not to accept the money, as it could jeopardize future lawsuits. The small amount of chump change Norfolk Southern calls “inconvenience pay” is not enough to cover the hospital bills that will be forced upon many East Palestine residents in years to come, let alone enough to cover long-term evacuation needs.

There were low levels of industrial chemicals reported in the Ohio River, 300 miles north of Cincinnati, not long after the accident. A river plume of butyl acrylate was found near the town of New Richmond, Ohio, in a small river community 225 miles south of East Palestine. (WLWT-5, Feb. 16) This discovery prompted residents there and on the West Virginia side to try to find alternative sources of water.

Residents of Wheeling and Moundsville, West Virginia, posted pictures of discoloration in the water. Some individuals have taken video footage of themselves raking sticks in creeks to show how the chemicals form an oily, rainbow-colored film in the water.

Many people who live along the Ohio River—a river lined with coal, chemical and eheane cracker plants—are not surprised that such a disaster occurred, knowing of the combination of the poor infrastructure and deliberately weakened regulation of the railroad industry.

In response to the U.S. government’s slow, and callous reaction, activists in the Ohio Valley have formed a progressive, multinational coalition known as River Valley Organizing. The organization started on social media and has organized community-based teach-ins, information pickets and bottles water distribution stations alongside the Ohio River and will be conducting independent tests, according to their Facebook page.

Workers World spoke with Rich Olivito, an RVO supporter and longtime anti-racist activist from Steubenville, Ohio, who said, “There is a long history of Ohio River communities, on both sides of the river, being subjected to extreme negligence
Comrade Sam put forth his Global Class War thesis 70 years ago; that's quite a period of time. At that time, Comrade Sam was still in the Socialist Workers Party. And he was trying to show the leaders and the ranks of the SWP that there was a new situation for the global class struggle.

It had its contradictions. It had its strengths and its weaknesses. First, he underscored the strengths, on the heels of this tremendous earthshaking Chinese Revolution—a game changer—and the Korean War of Liberation, a stronger Soviet Union, made so by surviving and prevailing in the second imperialist world war designed to destroy it. After the war, the Soviet Union was liberated as a result of the outcome of the Second World War. And of course, there were the tremendous liberation struggles in what's now Latin America and Africa.

That was the strength. In general the weaknesses of the time were in the centers of imperialism in Europe and to a large extent here in the United States—Sam was very clear about this. I think it's probably the most important part of his global war thesis: the need for the class struggle on a global basis to be realized and embraced and owned consciously by everyone.

Sam believed it would be necessary, at the very least, to build a revolutionary energy and fervor that was so, far in the East and the most oppressed parts of the world, for that to move, not leave the East, but move into the imperialist centers, particularly in the United States.

In his 1953 document, Sam called this the “Missing Link.” That is the awakening of the U.S. working class, this powerful sleeping giant, and it understanding that what it does, what it’s prepared to do, matters. Sam's contribution was to show that struggles here in the United States, but because it's the working class at the center, that's the revolution, it is decisive for the entire world.

This was the special role that the workers and the oppressed of this country needed to live up to. They haven’t done it yet, but things are starting, as we see in all these tremendous mobilizations led by young workers of all kinds.

The critical link in the chain

There are many things about Sam’s document that have changed over 70 years, because change is the order of the day. But not about the point about the link, the critical link in the chain being the awakening and the embracing of the struggle by the workers in this country.

Sam died 25 years ago, and that’s a good excuse to review Sam’s main contributions. In my opinion, time has made them more, not less, more important than they were at the time of his death.

You can describe Marcy’s legacy in a lot of ways—the reviving and the rebuilding of the revolutionary forces but also the reviving of a worldwide working-class movement. Sam’s Global Class War has a world socialist revolution perspective.

This was the perspective of the October Revolution: the perspective that the various centers of imperialism at the time for which they may be geographically separated and separated by a lot of things, they are still together and they are still dependent on each other. That was true then. That was true in 1917, and it’s all the more true now.

Today, we define the working class, its strengths and its weaknesses, very differently than the working class that Sam was describing 70 years ago. It’s changed in many, many ways, because of the vast changes in the working class since then: it’s not as continually taking place because of technology.

The global working class is far more centralized in many ways, far more together. This is not a good thing for the capitalist economy, and the working class is far more aware of itself because of communications technology. And there are all the other reasons that it’s becoming more revolutionary and more united.

An apostle of revolutionary class unity

Sam was not interested in politicizing against our opponents in the movement for their mistakes. For Sam, the working class was more interested in what new ground could be broken among revolutionary forces, forces dedicated to socialist revolution and in the struggle, particularly the most oppressed workers.

He wanted to know what’s the best way to bring these forces together? Not to put aside differences but to understand that we’re working toward a higher level of unity. This is what Sam always wanted. We should think there’s anything more central to his legacy than this. Sam always wanted to know what’s going on, always wanted to be well informed. He wanted to be up to date in the most oppressed sections of our class. He wanted to know the situation, because he felt that the working class’s ability to understand this and to intervene in it was decisive for the oppressed and for the goal of world socialist revolution.

Sam saw that a lot of the problems of backwardness, the sectarianism, to a large extent stemmed from years, sometimes decades, of setbacks and defeats. But we should not be weary. As a matter of fact, revolutionaries should be strengthened by the challenge of overcoming these problems. Becoming revolutionary was a world socialist revolution perspective.

Sam was an apostle of revolutionary class unity one way or another. I think that’s a big part of this legacy. To understand this in the context of Sam’s document, the Global Class War, he was also fighting his comrades inside the SWP. He wanted them to be on the picket lines at the court hearings of the leaders of the Communist Party of the United States, who were being tried during the McCarthy era and threatened with jail. Many of them spent many, many years in jail. A few of them died in jail. He wanted the SWP to be stronger in community defense of these individuals, for what reason? Why not? And to get over what he called the differences, that as important as they might be, should not be barriers to showing this kind of solidarity.

A true role model

Sam was a human being, and as such, like all humans, he had his contradictions. We all do. But I’ll tell you, you could never find a better role model for a revolutionary than Sam Marcy. He despised chauvinism and despotism, and he despised chauvinism and all forms of bigotry. His biggest principle was always about what’s in the interest of the working class first.

If you’re arguing a point, if you’re talking about some issue that’s important to you, ask yourself, if you’re talking about some issue that’s important to you, ask yourself: What is it in the interest of these people in front of me?

Capitalism is ultimately responsible

When it comes to toxic train wrecks, residents demand answers

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By Monica Moorehead

Based on a talk given at the Feb. 5 webinar "Global Class War: Lessons from Sam Marcy for workers struggling today," to go to youtu.be/Jg4k3Q8N8to view the webinar.

Comrades and friends, Sam Marcy made the following quote at the end of his 1964 article “Black nationalism and white chauvinism: Marxism and national oppression”:

“We promote and must propagate the right to self-determination, but which road to take for liberation must be decided by the oppressed nation itself. A revolutionary working-class party promotes class struggle in its own interest, but which option an oppressed nation chooses.

“The neutrality of the party in this respect is the strongest pillar of working-class international solidarity in the struggle against capitalism and imperialism. The bourgeoisie denies and does the “neutral” and “benign” integration and deintegration. They neither wish to complete the development of a movement for an independent separate state.”

Sam defended the Rev. Jesse Jackson, who allied himself with former leader of the Nation of Islam, Louis Farrakhan, when Jackson was running for president on the Democratic Party ticket in 1984. Jackson came under vicious attack for accepting Farrakhan’s endorsement.

Both Farrakhan and Jackson were labeled as being anti-Semitic by the ruling class to drive a wedge between Black and Jewish people. This individual attacks were a smokescreen for attacking the NOI, a Black Muslim messianic Mikvah, and the potential of empowering the disenfranchised Black base to move in a more independent, revoluti
doing revolution.

To quote a Dec. 8, 1983, WW article, “Why we support the Jackson campaign”: “Jesse Jackson’s candidacy represents an upsurge in the Black struggle and has taken on an electoral, that is, parliamen
tary, form. Our program, on the other hand, calls for the relentless prosecution of the NOI, a Black Muslim messianic movement, founded on the principle of separatism in response to racist state repression.

“This is an example of self-determination that all revolutionaries and communists should defend, regardless of agreement or not of one’s program, to demonstrate that Black self-empowerment is systemically by the powers that be.

Jackson campaign raised form vs. content

Workers World Party consciously supported the Jackson campaign but not because of his program, which was hobbled in its independent analysis. The Jackson campaign was a mass, grass
troot movement that threatened the rac
ist leadership of the Democratic National Committee and the potential of empowering the disenfranchised Black base to move in a more independent, revolu
tionary direction.

On May 24, 2023, the website workers.org reported: “Continued on page 6”

Black Reconstruction on Carolina’s Gold Coast

By Jim McManah

The March to the Sea, which began in Atlanta in November 1864, was pivotal in the Civil War in crushing the Southern slaveocracy’s plantation system. At the March’s conclusion, which was called the “Grub-Stake” by Black people who had marched from Savannah to Savannah. All those who had marched 275 miles across Georgia had destroyed by root and branch the plantation system in the state.

In January 1865, the Savannah Colloquy was held, at which representatives of the city’s Black community answered questions about their future from Secretory of War Edwin M. Stanton and Union General William T. Sherman. Garrison Frazier, a minister who was formerly enslaved, explained: “The best way we can take care of ourselves is to have land and turn it till it by our labor — and we can soon maintain ourselves and have something to spare.”

During the same month, Gen. Sherman issued Field Order 15, setting aside the southeastern coast from Charleston, South Carolina, across coastal Georgia to the Saint Johns River in northern Florida and for 30 miles inland, including the Sea Islands. The plan was an ambitious project of returning to the Black people the 25% of land that had been seized as part of their slave owners’ plantations. It was settled by 40,000 Black people, who each received 40 acres of farmland.

These two momentous events opened the demand for land as reparations to Black people for hundreds of years of capitalist exploitation and imperialist oppression. These reparations are still owed to Black people for the past years of enslavement and continuing racist discrimination in all areas of economic and political freedom.

Most of the land which Black workers gained during Reconstruction was eventually taken away by former plantation owners who, with the help of the historical forces of liberation after reparations, as yet unfulfilled, still running through the current struggles and organizing for justice by Black people.

Marx’s solidarity with fight for freedom

On Nov. 29, 1864, a solidarity address was sent to the National Labor Union in the U.S. by the newly organized First International (International Workingmen’s Association). The statement, written by Karl Marx, pointed to the role of the British working class in preventing England from entering the Civil War on the side of the Confederacy.

Marx wrote that the successful war “against slavery has indeed inaugurated a new era in the annals of the working class, a new conquest of a million and a half emancipated Black workers was now in struggle, joining the international working class.

Perhaps the most advanced location of this unfolding revolution was in the South Carolina Lowcountry, then known as “Carolina’s Gold Coast,” and the Sea Islands of South Carolina and Georgia. It was greatly aided by the participation of Black troops. Labor in the disease-infected swamps of the Lowcountry was “simple drudgery in its meanest form,” done mostly by newly freed Black people.

Many spoke the Gullah language, and they had a distinct African culture. Rice field hands were highly skilled and worked under a task system, in which the newly emancipated workers could complete work by the afternoon and then had the autonomy to work in their own home gardens.

Rice growing in the Lowcountry in the so-called “golden age of the antebellum South” had been controlled by a rich aristocracy of families: the Manigaults, Izards, Allston’s and Heywards. The Civil War shattered the golden age of their rice kingdom; the Sea Islands were occupied by federal troops early in the Civil War. Union Army raids destroyed buildings, machinery, implements and irrigation systems. Freed people liberated many of their owners’ possessions.

By the end of 1865, reactionary President Andrew Johnson halted Reconstruction for a time. He reversed the Freedmen’s Bureau policy, pardoned the former masters and confiscated the “excess” of “their” lands. But Black people in the Lowcountry had no intention of giving up their claims to “their land.” They rejected the authority of the former landowners to retake the land and directly supervise their labor.

In the early 1870s, some Lowcountry planters succeeded in regaining control of thousands of acres of land employing
Over 1,000 people sign letter hitting New York Times’ anti-trans bias

By Princess Harmony

A letter, dated Feb. 15 and signed by over 1,000 contributors and subscribers to the New York Times, trans people and allies called on the paper to reject the new wave of bigots attempting to stifle trans lives.

“We write to you as a collective of New York Times contributors with serious concerns about editorial bias in the newspaper’s reporting on transgender, non-binary, and gender-nonconforming people,” the letter addressed to Philip B. Corbett, associate managing editor for standards at The New York Times, began.

“Plenty of reporters at the Times cover trans issues fairly. Their work is eclipsed, however, by what one journalist has calculated as over 15,000 words of front-page Times coverage debating the propriety of medical care for trans children published in the last eight months alone.”

A second letter to the Times, initiated by a number of LGBTQ+ civil rights organizations, made similar points.

Just a few days earlier, on Feb. 11, a transgender teen influencer— Brianna Ghey—was found murdered in a park in Warrington, England. Following claims trying to claim her death may not have been an anti-transgender hate crime, and the British state has aligned itself with anti-transgender forces. This may affect the investigation into her death.

The New York Times wrote an article depicting how beloved she was on the internet and in her life. They held nothing back when trying to write about how she lived and died.

But Ghey wasn’t even buried, before the New York Times published a screed defending noted transphobe and trans-misogynist J.K. Rowling.

The Harry Potter book’s author often uses her Twitter site to push anti-trans misinformation and slander. Her allies include some so-called feminists, who maintain that transgender identities reinforce traditional gender roles and that transgender people need to live in their birth genders. Rowling’s cohorts also include far-right reactionaries, who harass trans people online and offline.

On top of this, she still has a legion of fans who wait on her every word, not caring about the written violence she commits toward trans people.

The screed defending Rowling was hardly a lone article. It was one of many the New York Times has published attacking or otherwise criticizing trans activist people. From articles claiming that trans youth are “spreading” a “contagion” to others, who then identify as transgender, to articles saying that transgenders people initiated a culture war, the New York Times finds itself on the same side as far-right-wing reactionaries and hate groups.

Boston education workers roll the union on!

By Steve Gillis

In metropolitan Boston, where 44 institutions of higher education employ over 42,500 workers, unionized workers have announced new union campaigns nearly every week since the new year.

Over 900 Boston University (BU) resident advisers, graduate resident advisers and graduate housing assistants rallied Feb. 8 to demand immediate recognition of their new union, the BU Resident Life Union of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 509.

Accompanied by a tuba, a trombone and a tap-dancing duo of resident-adviser organizers, student workers took the microphone, provided by the Boston School Bus Drivers Union, Steelworkers Local 8751. They told their stories of poverty-level compensation; food insecurity; lack of medical, dental and mental health care; and unaffordable housing at BU, one of Boston’s largest landlords. The workers demanded immediate union recognition, reporting overwhelming support from the campus community.

The BU Resident Life Union joins 3,500 members of BU Graduate Workers United, who electrified the city Dec. 20, with a local unionization with SEIU Local 509 in a National Labor Relations Board-supervised election, (workers.org/2022/12/68283/)

Over 6,000 postdoctoral, research, adjunct and non-tenured faculty at Harvard University rallied Feb. 14 in Harvard Yard on the Cambridge campus and at the Harvard Medical School campus in Boston to announce their campaign to form Harvard Academic Workers, part of the United Auto Workers.

With rousing professions of enduring Valentine’s Day love for their co-workers—most of whom are treated by Harvard bosses as temporary, disposable contractors, with a maximum of eight yearly contract renewals—lecturers, laboratory workers and lifesaving public-health researchers denounced the precariousness of their jobs at the most prestigious and wealthy university in the country. Solidarity from USW Local 8751, Alphabet (Google) workers and local politicians highlighted the rally.

The BU Resident Life Union and Harvard Academic Workers join thousands of other newly organizing workers at Northeastern, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Tufts universities. In recent months they have taken on these plants of Boston’s “nonprofit” educational-military-realt-state-industrial complex.

Monthly young Generation Z workers are teaching these global corporations—which pay no taxes for local social services but charge students upwards of $60,000 per year tuition, leading to their lifetime debt—the class lesson.

Loudly bashing off their centuries-old, hallowed halls at every rally is the slogan, “When We Fight, We Win!”


Black Reconstruction on Carolina’s Gold Coast

Continued from page 5

Hundreds of Black workers. The bosses had imposed a check system, whereby checks compensating the workers were only redeemable at plantation-owned company stores.

Black workers strike!

In May of 1876, workers along the Combahee and Ashepoo Rivers struck against a wage cut from 50 cents to 40 cents a day, payable in cash.

Strikes began on the plantations of J.B. Daniel Henry Chamberlin, a reconstruction supporter, was former Confederate General Wade Hampton, who had been one of the largest holders of land and enslaved people on the South. Closely allied with racist “rifle club” members, his campaign sought “regime change” to return to rule by large plantation owners.

On Aug. 18, 1876, a second round of strikes began on the plantations of J.B. Bissol and trial judge Henry Fuller. The workers demanded $1 to $1.50 a day for harvest labor, payable in cash.

Fuller brought in the Green Pond rifle club heavily armed men to restore order, and he got to strike leaders arrested. But a crowd of Black workers soon appeared and drove the judge away and rifled club members to seek refuge in a threshing mill.

Strike leaders supported, acquitted

Black Congress member Robert Smalls, a reconstruction leader, was in the area where the strikers held their ground. When he came to Fuller’s mill, he found 300 Black workers threatening to attack 40 armed whites. Smalls negotiated a compromise which was agreeable to the strikers. The rifle club members were allowed to depart, avoiding violence. All 10 detained strike leaders were acquitted, due to Smalls’ support and the presence of a crowd of Black workers outside the courthouse in Beaufort, South Carolina.

In September 1876, Hampton invaded the Lowcountry, accompanied by 600 rifle club members. However, he was heckled and forced to retreat. He later returned with 3,000 armed men and gave his speech uninterrupted. When he reached Beaufort, Hampton was surrounded by Black people whose unisonity he felt every step of the way.

With the coming to power of the Hampton regime through a questionable election, there was little possibility of collective action by rural Black workers. In South Carolina, sheriffs and the state militia were employed for the benefit of the big landowners to crush the ongoing organizing and resistance by Black agricultural workers.

But due to the strikes and struggles during Reconstruction, as well as the collapse of the rice plantations, Black ownership of the land persisted for years. Even in 1910, almost 60% of the farms in Beaufort and Charleston counties was owned by Black people. Black workers in struggle during revolts against enslavement and in the Civil War and Reconstruction played an enormous role in the founding of the U.S. labor movement.

Jim McMahan’s great-grandfather, John Evans, proudly participated in the March to the Sea, alongside Black Union Army soldiers.

Mumia Abu-Jamal supporters demand ‘Release the evidence now!’

By Monica Moorehead

There is growing international support for the freedom of U.S. political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, who has been imprisoned in Pennsylvania for over 40 years. Mumia, wrongly accused of killing a white police officer in December 1981 in Philadelphia, was convicted of first-degree murder on July 3, 1982, following a sham trial. Mumia spent years on death row awaiting execution until December 2011, when he was released to a medium security prison. Mass pressure in the streets has stopped the state from executing him twice.

The suppression of important exculpatory evidence, including the racist exclusion of Black jurors during his original trial, has for decades prevented him from being granted a new trial that would eventually lead to his freedom. That could all eventually change now.

A Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas judge ruled on Dec. 16, 2022, that Mumia’s lawyers had the right to examine at least 200 boxes of this critical hidden evidence, which could prove that there was a conspiracy to permanently silence him, because of his revolutionary political beliefs. The judge announced a 60- to 90-day extension to all prosecuting attorneys to provide this evidence.

Actions took place on Feb. 16 inside the U.S. and worldwide, 60 days after the judge’s ruling, to put pressure on the U.S. Department of Justice to release the three boxes to Mumia’s lawyers. Besides activists organizing inside the U.S. to allow this evidence to see the light of day, the General Secretary of the National Union of Metalworkers in South Africa, Irvin Jim, put out a special plea on Twitter and on YouTube to demand that Mumia be set free as a political prisoner due to wrongful arrest. Jim called for an international campaign to win justice for Mumia.

Rep. Cori Bush of St. Louis,-rays Mourning in the union hall, then marched along the San Francisco Embarcadero to an inspiring rally at Harry Bridges Plaza. Bridges was the founder of the ILWU in 1937.

They contend that the over 200 “newly discovered” boxes of evidence — including a handwritten letter from the prosecution’s star witness demanding payment for his false but incriminating testimony at trial — will prove Mumia’s innocence. The boxes, found hidden in the DA’s office, also showed evidence of attempts to exclude Black people from the jury.

At the rally, Clarence Thomas, a third-generation longshore worker and former Local 10 officer, said that during the Black uprising of the 1960s, “we all had our consciousness raised by the movement: Malcolm X, the struggles of Martin Luther King, the Deacons for Defense, Stokely Carmichael, Huey P. Newton, Bobby Seale.”

Thomas himself joined the Black Panther Party at the time.

“Mumia has personally thanked the ILWU for the actions we have taken, including in 1999 when we shut down all 29 ports on the West Coast to stop his execution,” Thomas said.

South Africa connection

In 1984 ILWU dockers refused to unload South African cargo at Pier 80 in San Francisco for 10 days to protest South Africa’s apartheid regime. Nelson Mandela recognized the important role of the ILWU in helping their freedom struggle, when he spoke at the Oakland Coliseum in 1990, soon after his release from prison.

Thomas pointed out that his union sent 14 ILWU members to South Africa this past January “to build the campaign for Mumia’s freedom. What kind of union does something like that?”

“Today,” said Thomas, “our union did not go to work in the ports of Oakland and San Francisco to demand Mumia’s freedom. No cargo moved. Trucking and railroad schedules got disrupted.”

“Can you imagine if the Teamsters, the railroad workers, the pilots, if all the transportation unions had also taken off today? Mumia would be out of prison.”

While they were in South Africa, longshore worker David Newton, nephew of Black Panther Party co-founder Huey Newton, and ILWU retiree Jack Heyman met with Irvin Jim, General-Secretary of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA). They agreed to use the period from Feb. 16 to March 16 to mobilize for Mumia. NUMSA is the largest single union in South Africa and one of the largest in Africa.

Other international protests for Mumia were scheduled for Sao Paulo, Brazil; Pretoria, South Africa; Tokyo; and several cities in Europe.

The Oakland Education Association, with its 3,000 teachers, sent a letter to Judge Lucretia Clemons urging Mumia’s release from prison. Mumia himself sent a letter thanking his labor supporters with the words: “When workers unite, the Earth trembles and the heavens shake.”

ILWU shuts down SF, Oakland docks for Mumia

By Dave Welsh

San Francisco

Members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union shut down the ports of Oakland and San Francisco Feb. 16 to demand that journalist and imprisoned political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal be exonerated and set free.

Local 10 workers began the day with a “stop-work meeting” at the union hall, then marched down Market Street in Francisco Embarcadero to an inspiring rally at Harry Bridges Plaza. Bridges was the founder of the ILWU in 1937.

They contend that the over 200 “newly discovered” boxes of evidence — including a handwritten letter from the prosecution’s star witness demanding payment for his false but incriminating testimony at trial — will prove Mumia’s innocence. The boxes, found hidden in the DA’s office, also showed evidence of attempts to exclude Black people from the jury.

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Hunger strikes and a lawsuit over solitary confinement in Texas

By Gloria Rubac

Houston

Texas prisoners have been organizing for over a year to bring attention to an issue that is worsening and sometimes killing in solitary confinement, which damages incarcerated people both mentally and physically.

Solitary confinement incites suicides and self-inflicted violence among those incarcerated, which damages incarcerated people both mentally and physically.

And when a person is entombed in a cell smaller than a parking place, it diminishes their vision, reduces their muscles and damages their ability to process information.

On Jan. 10, as the Texas legislature began its biennial session, over 300 prisoners at a half dozen prisons around the state began a hunger strike to demand an end to the torture of solitary. The hunger strike lasted for over three weeks.

Prison spokesperson Amanda Hernandez reported to the Texas Tribune that four people required intravenous infusions during the strike. Hernandez also said the authorities denied the prisoners the right to participate in the strike. “By allowing interviews, we feel we are allowing them to organize and further cause disruption,” she said.

Despite this censorship, several strikers managed to write to the Texas Tribune about the strike. Jose Guadalupe Lucio, incarcerated at Texas’ Fergusen Unit, wrote in a letter: “I’ve seen good inmates lose their lives. I’ve seen people kill themselves, and I’ve seen these Correctional Officers have to cut down an inmate that hanged himself. And all these years, those people have done nothing to even try to help . . . this is a psych patient-making factory.” (Texas Tribune, Jan. 30)

There are well over 3,000 prisoners held in solitary in Texas. Every single person on Texas death row is in permanent solitary, in a cell with a solid steel door, not even able to see the sun.

At least eight Texas death row prisoners have died by suicide in the last 20 years, according to the prison’s web page.

The most recent suicide was on Jan. 21, when Terence Andrus, 34, was discovered unresponsive after hanging himself in his cramped cell.

Five days later on Jan. 25, attorneys for four men on death row filed a 45-page lawsuit in federal court in Houston that details that the mandated solitary confinement, lack of medical care and depri- vation of attorney visits are all violations of the U.S. Constitution.

Class action from death row

Four men are named plaintiffs of the lawsuit: Tony Egbuna Ford, 49, who has spent 22 years in solitary; Mark Robertson, 54, 21 years in solitary; Rickey Cummings, 33, nine years; and George Curry, 55, seven years. They are asking the federal court to declare the lawsuit as a class action to represent all of the men on Texas death row.

Medical visits for prisoners sentenced to death are sporadic. Mental and physical health providers are often forced to consult with their patients only on the row, where other prisoners and prison guards can easily overhear conversations regarding private mental and physical health concerns. Legal visits can take weeks to schedule and occur in a public setting, where their conversations are also easily overheard by other visitors, other prisoners and by guards.

Texas Death Penalty Abolition

continued on page 8
Matthew Zadok Williams, 33 years old, was experi- encing a mental health breakdown on April 12, 2021, at his home of five years in Decatur, just east of Atlanta. The police were called to investigate a “harmless-looking person with a knife,” walking around in a wooded yard.

The 911 caller suspected “the stranger was going to break into someone’s house.”

By 10:10 a.m., one of the officers who came to the house on April 12 had been on the March call. He not only knew that Williams owned his home and was not trespassing or attempting to break in, he was heard on his body camera commentating that “he has mental health issues.”

Nevertheless, the video shows at least three offi- cers with their guns out and one with a drawn taser at Williams’ front door, yelling that he should ‘come out.” They then bust the door through, and Williams, hiding behind a piece of furniture, is shot at least twice.

The police closed the door and withdrew to wait for a SWAT team. Then 90 minutes passed before one arrived, and when this crisis squad entered, Williams was found dead, having bled out from his wounds.

Since then his family has been determined to win jus- tice for their son and brother. With the assistance of a large network of young community activists, they have held weekly protests in front of the DeKalb County Courthouse and on the corners of busy intersections throughout the county.

Denied indictments by the DeKalb County District Attorney, who in 2022 found the shooting “justifiable”; on Feb. 17, the fam- ily’s lawyer filed a civil lawsuit in federal court charging the county with violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act, under Section 1983.

People with disabilities are 50% of police victims

Despite mountains of evidence that people with dis- abilities are disproportionately killed or injured by police, including a 2016 report by Ruderman Family Foundation that 50% of people killed by police nationally have a dis- ability, the suit claims DeKalb County delayed provision of necessary medical help to any police force with competent, de-escalation training. Even more damning was their fail- ure to create a full-time, fully staffed physical and mental health unit to respond to issues impacting people with disabilities.

Protests demand U.S. military out of the Philippines

Ten days after President Marcos and Secretary Austin met, activists and allies of the national-democratic movement of the Philippines mobilized for a Call to Action, which was put out by BAYAN USA.

Rallies hit the streets demanding an end to the EDCA, expulsion of all U.S. troops from Philippine territory, the end of all joint U.S.-Philippine military exercises, the end of all joint military forces, and policy of the Philippines and an end to the colonial relationship of the country to the U.S.

This writer spoke to LRT, an organizer with BAYAN Seattle, who shared their thoughts on the U.S. military expansion: “For the Filipinos, these bases serve as a dual purpose of maintaining the semi-colonial system in the Philippines and ensuring its guns remain aimed at China. There is no regard for the people or the environ- ment, as the U.S. Navy has polluted our waters and damaged coral reefs, affecting the marine life and disrupting the livelihood of fisherfolk.”

“Everywhere there has been a U.S. military base, there has also been a red-light district. The tourism of military personnel isn’t just at night clubs and local clubs. The vio- lence against Filipina women intensifies with the presence of military personnel, as evidenced by the 2014 murder of Jennifer Laude by U.S. Marine Joseph Pemberton.”

Although Pemberton was imprisoned first in a Philippine jail, he was ultimately released to U.S. cus- tody. Today he walks free in Hawaii with no justice for the family.

LRT continued: “It is the U.S. Special Forces that train the murderous butchers in the Armed Forces of the Philippines to inflict harm on our communities in the name of ‘counterinsurgency’ and ‘anti-terrorism.’ Who better to teach the AFP to terrorize its own people than the number-one terrorist in the world?”

U.S. increases bases, threats to China

These newly secured bases were the missing link in completing what is referred to as the “first island chain” in the U.S.-military enclosure of China. These bases are situated on the land sites closest to Taiwan. As Washington builds up U.S. forces in the region for war against China, supplies and nuclear weapons could be stored on these bases.

With a U.S./NATO-instigated proxy war in Ukraine in full-swing, justified under the auspices of “protect- ing” Ukraine, and with the U.S. showing no desire to de-escalate, there is no duty for the U.S. to believe joint-access military base expansion would protect the Philippines. U.S. maneuvers in the region have threatened aggression against China. The presence of additional U.S. military personnel only puts the Philippines in the crossfire.

To access BAYAN USA’s press release against the local military adventures in the Philippines, go to facebook.com/bayanusa/page/.

Texas prison fightback

Movement activists have searched for decades for lawyers and legal organi- zations who would sue the prison system to stop the horrors of indefinite solitary confinement. They could not find them. Finally, an international law firm based in London with an office in Houston, Hogan Lovells, has taken on the challenge.

Hogan Lovells partner Pieter Van Tol said: “The conditions on death row in Texas have been characterized as some of the most brutal death row conditions in the country. Legal organizations in this case are seeking relief from conditions that have been described as torture.”

The legal brief states the National Coalition for Correctional Health Care has stated that spans of solitary confinement longer than 15 days are “cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment and harmful to an individual’s health,” and “should be eliminated as a means of punishment.” Additionally, the United Nations has described indefinite or pro- longed solitary confinement as torture.

Hogan Lovells is the same firm that won a court-approved settlement of a class action in September 2021. The set- tlement challenged the rules that place all Louisiana’s incarcerated individuals, who are on death row, in indefinite sol- itary confinement.

Texas Governor Greg Abbott and reaction- ary conservatives running the Texas prison system’s administration have shown absolutely no interest in protect- ing the rights of those incarcerated in prison or in prolonged solitary.

Activists are hoping that those on death row can win this lawsuit. A victory would not only mandate changes, it may grant monetary damages for the prison- ers affected. Such a win would announce a new day for the rights of incarcerated people in Texas.

Until complete abolition of prisons is possible, a victory in this lawsuit would be a good step in the right direction.

Gloria Rubas is a founding member of the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement.

Family of disabled man killed by police files historic ADA lawsuit

By Dianne Mathiowetz

Atlanta

Matthew Zadok Williams, 33 years old, was experi- encing a mental health breakdown on April 12, 2021, at his home of five years in Decatur, just east of Atlanta. The police were called to investigate a “harmless-looking person with a knife,” walking around in a wooded yard.

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No war in Ukraine! No to NATO! No Weapons, No Money for the Ukraine War!

Considering with the 20th anniversary weekend of the criminal U.S.-invaded invasion of Iraq, a major set of actions, including a demonstration at the White House in Washington, D.C., will take place Saturday, March 18, demanding “Peace in Ukraine — Say NO to Endless U.S. Wars” and “Fund People’s Needs, Not the War Machine.”

Since 2003, the U.S. has engaged in sanctions (economic war) on more than 40 countries. These targets of U.S. economic warfare include the people of Cuba, Zimbabwe, Venezuela, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Iran and many other nations. Even in the wake of the war crimes, like the recent deadly earthquake, Washington keeps its cruel sanctions in place against Syria. U.S. sanctions have been implemented to hamstring any country that does not cede to U.S. demands. These sanctions have been imposed on the Syrian people, who are among the most oppressed in the world. It is a global empire.

The Biden administration is determined to escalate the Ukraine war. The real targets of the massive arming and training of Ukrainian forces has nothing to do with the interests of Ukrainian, Russian or U.S. people. The aim is instead to “weaken Pakistan,” as stated by the U.S. Secretary of Defense himself, even at the risk of a catastrophic nuclear war that could end life on Earth.

For example, a U.S. general commanding 50,000 troops in the Pacific also issued a letter to his sub-commanders in recent days informing them that he believes that the United States will be at war with China within two years. The danger of global war is growing. The people must act!

The demonstration will make connections between the human and financial toll of U.S. militarism at home and abroad. Key demands include:

1. Peace in Ukraine — No weapons, no money for the Ukraine War!
2. Abolish NATO — End U.S. militarism and sanctions!
3. Fund people’s needs, not the war machine!
4. End war with China!
5. End U.S. aid to racist apartheid Israel!
6. Fight racism and bigotry at home, not other peoples!
7. U.S. hands off Haiti!
8. End AFRICOM!

Can you possibly believe that after setting up a relationship with Syrian banks, the Mellon Bank in New York or Citibank or Bank National de Paris is going to check every transaction that takes place to see which ones are for earthquake-related aid and equipment and then worry about anything that looks like it may not be earthquake-related? What bank is going to actually step in and risk getting fined? And even if they did, it’s only for 180 days. The bank management will say, “This isn’t worth it. How much money will we make from the fees for this service? Why would we bother?” I don’t expect that the U.S. bank is going to try to step into the gap and get donations and deliver them the hard way, delivering aid directly to Syria.

Wolves in sheep’s clothing

Larudee: There are a number of aid organizations that are saying, “Please give us money to help the people in Syria.” Almost invariably, these are U.S. organizations, and invariably they’re talking about helping the people who live on 3% of Syria’s land in the Idlib province, which is occupied by the Turks, and by their proxies, and the U.S. proxies, the terrorists themselves.

So when the aid organizations say, “We want to help the people of Syria,” that’s who they’re talking about. And they’re doing it without the permission of the Syrian government.

On the other hand, even if these organizations want to operate in the rest of Syria, they can’t, because they’ve been banned by the Syrian government, because they’re enemies. They don’t have a license; they don’t have permission to practice there.

Watch out for those ads by organizations like the Syrian American Medical Society, for example. They’re advertising that they’re collecting money to help the earthquake victims in Syria. In less than 24 hours, they collected almost $900,000.

The earthquake victims the U.S. organizations are helping in Syria are the ones who have the least need. I’m not saying they’re needless, because the occupied areas also have damage there. But they’re going to deliver the aid to people living on 3% of the land in Syria — and not the rest of them.

Workers World: And the sad thing is, the aid groups have a very rich tradition of working hard to hold their class is willing to open their hearts and their wallets and help. They know this is a horrible situation, but they don’t have the information about where the money is going to. I wanted to ask you for a brief comment about a particular organization that got much press here — a movie about them even won an Oscar: the White Helmets.

Larudee: It’s difficult to speak briefly about the White Helmets, but I’ll make it as brief as I can. Basically, they’re a fake organization which was put together by a British mercenary named James Le Mesurier to act as a front for the U.S. to make the case for the need for emergency to evacuate the wounded and provide humanitarian services during the Syrian war.

In the zones of Syria where they operated, they almost invariably worked to protect and provide for the needs of the personnel of the terrifying fighters themselves. And because they, or the terrorists who were their allies, basically killed or made life dangerous for reporters, they became the reporters on the ground.

Workers World: We see that if we want to be helpful to Syrians, we should demand that organizations of all U.S. sanctions! Emergency relief now!

To sign a petition against U.S. sanctions for Syria, go to protestivestrike.org. Workers World will do a protest at 1:30 p.m. today in front of the U.S. Department of State to protest against U.S. sanctions! Emergency relief now!
What led to a long war

Imperialist politicians and media are floating the public with the same lies that they’ve been hyping all year about the U.S.-NATO proxy war in Ukraine. President Joe Biden’s provocative visit to Kiev Feb. 24, bearing gifts of more weapons to expand the war, heightens the danger to the world.

It’s still within the power of the working class in Europe and the U.S. to obstruct the imperialist offensive.

What’s needed is an antidote to the poison from the corporate media. A concise list of events show how Washington forced this war to happen.

On March 12, 1999, NATO initiated the Czech Republic (or Czechia), Hungary and Poland into the U.S.-led alliance. This act exposed as false U.S. Secretary of State James Baker’s 1991 pledge that “NATO would not move its armies one inch closer to the Russia border.” (New York Times, Jan. 9, 2022)

Just 12 days later the U.S., with its major NATO allies, launched bombs and rockets at bridges, schools and hospitals in Serbia and Montenegro. The attack lasted 79 days. The war paved the road to annihilating the multinational Yugoslav socialist state.

U.S. agencies manipulated the so-called “Orange Revolution” in Ukraine in 2004, which replaced a government friendly to Russia with one more dependent on the West. Then from 2013 through 2014, U.S. agencies financed and promoted the so-called Maidan revolution, a fascist-infested revolt that destabilized the elected president and imposed an anti-Russian coup regime in Kiev.

Kiev attacks ethnic Russians

This gang’s first act was to squash the Russian language in Ukraine.

The Crimean peninsula had been part of Russia from 1783 until 1954. In 2014, Crimea’s mostly ethnic Russian population chose in a referendum to rejoin Russia. Using Russia’s recovery of Crimea as a pretext, Washington arm-twisted European Union countries to target Russia with economic sanctions.

People who lived in the two provinces of the Donbas region, also mostly ethnic Russian, established independent republics in Donetsk and Lugansk in 2014. Kiev answered this cry for self-determination by waging war on the two republics.

Cease-fire agreements signed in Minsk, Belarus, in September 2014, failed to stop the fighting in Ukraine. In a Dec. 7, 2022, interview in the German newspaper, Die Zeit, former German Chancellor Angela Merkel admitted that the EU and Kiev used the agreements to buy time to strengthen Ukraine’s military. During the next eight months, the Ukrainian army killed 14,000 people in the Donbas.

NATO expanded from 19 members in 1999 to 30 in 2022, including countries that had been part of the Soviet Union and most of the countries that had been allied with the Soviet Union before 1991. NATO held provocative military exercises that moved ever closer to the Russian borders, while the U.S. started deploying potential first-strike nuclear weapons in Europe.

Faced with what was arguably an existential threat, the Moscow government opened its military intervention in Ukraine a year ago. Washington immediately began waging a proxy war against Russia, arming Ukraine and using its population as cannon fodder, pressuring its NATO allies to spend more money on weapons and to arm Kiev’s troops with weapons available in the allies’ stockpiles.

Last March, the U.S. sabotaged tentative moves toward Ukrainian-Russian negotiations, while demanding Europe break its mutually beneficial trade ties with Russia.

U.S. political and military leaders have said openly that their goal was to extend the war to weaken Russia. Imperialist politicians and media demonized Russian President Vladimir Putin, just as they did to Iraq’s Saddam Hussein, Libya’s Moammar Gadhafi and Yugoslavia’s Slobodan Milosevic – before invading and destroying their countries.

As renowned journalist Seymour Hersh recently revealed, U.S. forces even carried out an act of terror by bombing the Russian-owned Nord Stream pipelines in the Baltic Sea. (tinyurl.com/btbn647) This act prevented German leaders – had any been considering the possibility – from reestablishing Germany’s trade with Russia for its gas and oil. (workers.org/2022/10/66935/)

Until now the European NATO regimes, while sometimes expressing hesitations, have lined up behind Washington’s aggression. The strongest opposition would come mainly from the working class, who pay the social costs of war and who laid down their lives in a major catastrophe. The outbreaks of class struggle in France, Spain, Italy and Portugal are a sign of hope.

This chronological list of events shows that the anti-war movement in Europe and the U.S. has its enemy in Washington and in the Western European capitals. The movement’s rightful demands are clear: U.S. and NATO out! No weapons to Ukraine! End the sanctions! ☐

Puerto Rico: Una historia de resistencia

By Deborah Rodríguez

Para que cualquier organización pueda seguir avanzando en el sistema del imperialismo con su hegemonía occidental, entendiendo que la baza que tiene el imperialismo es el control de nuestras tierras y del control de nuestra economía por parte de invasores extranjeros, el pueblo puertorriqueño, junto con algunos de nuestros propios compradores, han dejado claro que se ha desatado una guerra de clases contra el pueblo puertorriqueño.

Desde el primer día, mi pueblo ha resistido con el firme e inquebrantable entendimiento de que tenemos que controlar nuestro destino como nación. Desde el antillano y abolicionista Ramón Emeterio Betances, pasando por los nacionalistas que asaltaron la capital en 1954 – Lolita Lebrón, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Andrés Figuera e Irving Rodríguez – hasta el liderazgo de Pedro Albizu Campos y el pueblo puertorriqueño.

Juan Antonio Corretjer: la solidaridad de Roberto Clemente con el pueblo nica- ragüense y el amor al pueblo demostrado por los compañeros del Partido de los Jóvenes Lores, que se apoderaron de un hospital para brindar atención médica gratuita en la comunidad.

Entre los presos políticos que se han sacrificado por el amor revolucionario a su pueblo se encuentran Oscar López Rivera, Luis Rosa Pérez y Ana Belén Montes, recientemente liberadas tras años de condena por solidarizarse con el pueblo cubano.

La misma lucha vive hoy en las voces de las masas puertorriqueñas que exigen la restitución de una compañía eléctrica extranjera, LUMA, que sus tituyó puestos de trabajo protegidos por sindicatos para el pueblo puertorriqueño por咨询ores extranjeros y el aumento persistente de las facturas eléctricas, todo ello mientras el pueblo sufre hambre, poniéndose en peligro físico y de salud.

El pueblo ha resistido ante el desafío de la Nacional, apoyados en la lucha de los Médicos sin Fronteras, defendiendo la salud de sus vecinos y vecinas.

La Junta ha promulgado leyes que impiden la salud, las pensiones, los salarios, la salud y que han resultado en el robo de nuestras tierras.

Y nuestras condiciones en EE.UU. no son mejores. Los puertorriqueños en EE.UU. a menudo luchan con condiciones similares a las que se enfrentan en el continente. La tasa de pobreza es ligeramente superior entre los puertorriqueños que viven en Estados Unidos y otros grupos latinos. Los puertorriqueños se encuentran entre el 56% de la población latina que forma parte del injusto sistema de justicia penal. Esto es una prueba más de que ser “ciudadano” de EE.UU. no se transduce en una vida decente y justa.

Lamentablemente, esta situación no es exclusiva de Puerto Rico. Estas condiciones son similares a las que enfrentan el Sur Global y las colonias internas de los EE.UU. La única manera de que este estado colonio blanco-supremacista, patriarcal y genocida sea desmantelado es mediante la construcción de alianzas sólidas y de principios con la clase obrera y las naciones más oprimidas. Su libertad y autodeterminación garantizan la libertad de todos. V.I. Lenin comprendió por qué es necesario que nuestro llamamiento sea: “Trabajadores y pueblos oprimidos del mundo se unen!” ☐

Marcha nocturna en el barrio de Isla Verde en San Juan, Puerto Rico, denunciando el segundo aniversario de la dictadura de la Junta de Control Fiscal impuesta por Estados Unidos, 31 de agosto de 2018.
Preparaérate para la mayor crisis capitalista mundial de la historia

Continúa de página 12
derrumbó casi por completo. Se había derrumbado, si no hubiera sido por las frenéticas reuniones en todo el mundo y los acuer- dos, en su mayoría secretos, entre los bancos centra- nacionales en pánico de Nueva York y Washington, Alemania, Francia, Inglaterra, Japón, Canadá y otros países, pusieron el dinero inyectado en el sistema financiero en suerte vital.

Todos los capitalistas se vieron tan sacudidos por el crack del 2008 que decidieron hacer algo comple- tamente diferente de lo que habían hecho en los años previos. Los bancos centrales del mundo, encabezados por el Banco de la Reserva Federal, acordaron que, para evitar una crisis tan inimag- nable en el futuro, bajarián colec- tivamente los tipos de interés para reactivar los mercados financieros. Pero fueron más allá. Bajo la etiqueta de “flexibilización cuan- titativa”, los bancos imprimieron billones de dólares e inyectaron estos en el sistema financiero. La Reserva Federal inyectó al menos 2 billo- nes de dólares en el sistema financiero, no en la economía real, sino en los grandes bancos para que los utilizaran a su antojo. (Un billón = un millón de millones.)

En los primeros días de la pandemia, con el cierre de la economía mundial, muchos analistas y expertos financieros pensaban que los bancos centrales dirigidos por la Reserva Federal inye- taron billones más en el sistema financiero y en la eco- nomía para evitar una depresión mundial.

En el 2008, lo que todos pensamos fue que los bancos centrales imprimieron para evitar el colapso del sistema financiero, no tenía ninguna relación con nada de real, y por lo tanto, toda esta moneda carecía práctica- mente de valor. Esta es una de las principales razones por las que existe una crisis de deuda tan gigantesca.

El tamaño de las crisis de deuda se oculta hasta que la crisis de la economía real es tan grande. Y cuando muchos acontecimientos que la empujan hacia adelante, el desarrollo que muchos marxistas (así como banqueros y multinacionales dispuestos a pronunciar palabras de verdad) consideran la mayor crisis económica capitalista alrededor de la historia de la humanidad.

¿Es un período revolucionario? Durante la mayor parte de varios siglos, los revolucio- narios han debatido si un país, una región del mundo o el mundo entero se encontraban en una crisis de revolución o trataron de evitar una crisis de revolución. A menudo no es una pregunta fácil de responder. Cuando el movimiento obrero es débil y las fuerzas revolu- cionarias o las fuerzas y organizaciones de vanguardia son débiles, parece que estos hechos responden por sí solos a la pregunta. Sin embargo, los períodos revolucionarios no se producen por acontecimientos o situaciones aisladas, sino que se producen por un largo período de tiempo. La crisis capitalista a la que nos enfrentamos es el tipo de cosa que crea perío- dos revolucionarios.

La clase obrera puede pasar por interminables años y décadas de pasividad, inconsciencia política, desorganización y desesperación antes de que surja un movimiento que pueda tener un valor nominal; sin embargo, eso es engañoso. En realidad, el papel vale mucho menos, o no vale nada, o realmente refleja la frustración de que se acabará saliendo a la luz.

En 2008, lo que más preocupaba a los banqueros era el contagio. Los banqueros comprendieron que sus bancos y su sistema financiero son un capital de naipes. El contagio podría comenzar con el impago de un pró- pietario de una parte de un país o el colapso de un banco en algún lugar, sin que siquiera un gran banco. Esto se debe a que los banqueros saben que, por mucho que mientan, es pro- bable que uno o dos banqueros tengan un “efecto dominó”. La semana pasada, Credit Suisse tuvo que ase- gurar a sus clientes que el banco estaba sólido. Desde enton- ces, una sonrisa de alivio se ha extendido por el vecindario para tranquilizar a los mercados financieros de que algo en Londres no estaba a punto de quebrar.

¿Qué estrategias deben considerarse? Determina quién lleva el tiempo y los trabajadores y revolucio- narios y todas las fuerzas que quieran luchar y no dejar este 861

La lucha contra el racismo no debe ser periférica, sino estar en el centro de esta lucha. Los jóvenes trabajadores deben luchar a la vanguardia de esta lucha, para que la lucha obrera mundial pueda llevar a la “Gran Recesión”. Esta recesión hizo a los pobres aún más pobres, a los sindicatos más débiles y creó más empleos precarios. La lucha más dominante permitió que la primera persona negra llegara a la presidencia, tras la crisis financiera, en parte para asegurarse contra las rebeliones. Una de las principales consecuencias de las disputas políticas de 2008 es que aceleró lo que es un proceso social global. Como predijeron Karl Marx y Frederick Engels en el otoño de 2011, los jóvenes trabajadores inmigrantes de Chicago ocuparon la fábrica de ventanas que la patronal iba a cerrar. La clase dominante estaba tan preocupada de que la idea de ocupar cosas se pusiera de moda, que decidió subir de nuevo al alto nivel a negociar directamente con los trabajadores. A principios de 2011, miles de maestros, trabajadores de la educación y trabajadores públicos ocuparon el edi- ficio del capitalismo en Madrid, y participaron en la lucha que la patronal de Madison debería haber iniciado una ola de ocu- paciones de trabajadores en todo el país; los demás se verían obligados a seguir.

Finalmente, en el otoño de 2011, los jóvenes iniciaron el Movimiento Occupy en la ciudad de Nueva York que se extendió por todo el país. En realidad, el Movimiento Occupy se extendió desde el sur de Europa hasta EE.UU. Los trabajadores estaban intriganados por el Movimiento Occupy. Pero una vez más, los líderes sindicales y los políticos, que alababan las ocupaciones, trabajaron horas extras para asegurarse de que los trabajadores no siguieran su ejemplo. Y así, se perdió la oportunidad de abrir una lucha de clases masiva.

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Un llamado al movimiento

Preparéense para la mayor crisis capitalista mundial de la historia

Por Larry Holmes

El ejercicio es el Primer Secretario de Workers World Party/Partido Mundo Obrero. Escrito el 19 de octubre de 2022.

Según el Fondo Monetario Internacional, la mayor parte del mundo, incluidos los EE.UU., está en recesión o se dirige a una recesión, algo que, en algún momento en 2023, todos los indicadores económicos apuntan a una grave contracción económic a. Las empresas se ven obligadas a alquilar cada vez más espacio de almacen para almacenar todos los ordena dores, televisores, muebles y otras cosas que los trabajadores no pueden permitirse comprar. Esto es una recesión económica normal. Por muy larga y prolongada que sea esta crisis económica y por muchos acontecimientos que la empujen hacia adelante, es el desarrollo que muchos marxistas (así como banc reños y multimillonarios dispuestos a pronunciar palabras de verdad) consideran la mayor crisis económica capitalista mundial de la historia. La crisis capitalista en curso es único en el sentido de que es sintonizante de un sistema moribundo que entra en su fase final.

La Reserva Federal declara la guerra a los trabajadores y oprimidos del mundo

La Reserva Federal está cerrando la economía con medidas más extraordinarias de la historia del sistema capitalista. El plan parece que no tiene un plan real. El argumento de que la Reserva Federal está haciendo por pánico es que algo está haciendo porque se han quedado sin ninguna otra alternativa; y así, en un intento desesperado por salvar el capitalismo estadounidense, están abandonando las puertas del infierno Wall Street piensa que los trabajadores que viven de cheque y que no pueden pagar sus facturas son influenciables.

El Banco de la Reserva Federal, el BRF) el banco al que los demás bancos centrales siguen o por el que se ponen el line, ha declarado la guerra a los trabajado res y a los pobres oprimidos del mundo. El BRF está subiendo los tipos de interés, más rápido en que en cualquier esquema Ponzi, al final sólo puede haber una desaparición económica. Como todas las crisis económicas, la que estamos viviendo es el resultado de la crisis en la economía mundial y por la derecha a una crisis sistémica que acerca al mundo entero a la revolución socialista.

Los aumentos de las tasas de interés fortalecen el dólar frente a cualquier otra moneda, encareciendo los ali mens y los productos básicos en todo el mundo. Los trabajadores pagarán mucho más por una barra de pan en Italia o por un abrigo en España. Pero los más perjudicados serán los más pobres, que viven donde vive el 85% de la población del planeta, en el Sur Global. La Reserva Federal podría exu drar el costo de los alimentos y las medicinas en la mayoría de los países de África o en lugares como Pakistán o Perú. Son zonas del mundo donde el ham bre es ya es una crisis. Esto provocará que los países más pobres dejen de pagar su deuda al FMI, haciendo la vida y la supervivencia mucho más difíciles.

 Esto va a provocar revuel tas sociales, la caída de gobiernos y revoluciones. ¿Qué vivimos en el cen tro del imperialismo mundial, aquí en EE.UU., tenemos la obligación especial de fomen tar el despegue de clase contra los más pobres de nuestra clase global. Este objetivo debe ocu par un lugar muy destacado en la agenda del movimiento obrero en EE.UU. No se basa en la lástima o el paternalismo, sino en el objetivo de realizar el internacionalismo revolucionario. Si la crisis capitalista permite a la clase obrera avanzar en esta línea, acerca al mundo entero a la revolución socialista. Crisis en ciernes desde hace mucho, mucho tiempo

A parte de las razones que la clase capitalista da para cualquier crisis económica capitalista — razones que son superficiales, confusas y rotundamente falsas — las causas fundamentales son tanto históricas como contemporáneas. Las catástrofes económicas capitalistas no sólo se repiten, sino que empeoran. Lo que antes se consideraban crisis cíclicas dan paso a una crisis sistémica que puede retrasarse, incluso ocultarse durante un tiempo, pero que ya no puede detenerse realmente.

A medida que la magnitud de la sobreproducción capita lista crece exponencialmente con los grandes cambios en las fuerzas productivas de la economía, cada crisis capitalista subiguiente se hace más larga, más mala y de más difícil de controlar. La nueva tecnología de la era digital ha convertido la crisis de sobreproducción capitalista en una característica permanente del capitalismo.

Las asombrosas nuevas generaciones de tecnología que hacen que el mundo sea más pequeño, está más conectado, y que deberían hacer que el hacer la vida, la falta de vivienda, la pobreza y la necesidad fueran cosa del pasado, bajo el capitalismo tienden a hacer a los ricos más ricos y a todos los demás más pobres. La pandemia, la crisis en las empresas capitalistas que bloquea el progreso y el desarrollo social y supone una amenaza inmediata y existencial para la vida del planeta. Es una crisis por la que todos los trabajadores están desmoronados y llenos de desesperanza. La inseguridad económica y el armamento climático capitalista han convencido a muchos de que no tienen futuro. Todas nuestras fuerzas se deben alinear para convertir esta desesperanza en una hazaña revolucionaria anticapitalista que alimente la lucha de clases.

¿No debería ser esta crisis la cuestión principal para la clase obrera? Cómo prepararse para esta crisis económica capitalista debería ser el debate principal entre los que se consideran marxistas. Pensar lo contrario sería contrario a la teoría marxista revolucionaria. En la medida en que esta crisis aún no se ha convertido en la principal prioridad de la izquierda es un reflejo de la debilidad ideológica, política y organizativa de la izquierda y del movimiento obrero. Los reveses y las pérdidas durante un largo periodo de tiempo han tenido a debilitar a las fuerzas revolucionarias y a reformar a las fuerzas reformistas y socialdemócratas más numerosas.

En muchos círculos de izquierda, se considera que hablar de crisis capitalista que lleve a la revolución es un error demorado por la historia, y hablar de revolución se considera poco realista en el mejor de los casos. Por desgracia, estas nociones facilitan que un sector de la clase dominante capitalista, como el Partido Demócrata en Estados Unidos, controle a la clase obrera y la mantenga atada a los intereses de la clase capitalista. La crisis económica mundial que se desarrolla ante nosotros es un campanazo. Hoy en día, todos los trabajadores radicales insuflan nueva vida a la clase obrera con campañas de organización que están transformando el viejo movimiento obrero tradicional. El socialismo ya es mucho más popular que nunca, y esta crisis capitalista va a hacer estallar las filas de los militantes anticapitalistas.

¿Por qué toda la economía capitalista está sentada sobre la mayor burbuja de deuda... de la historia

Hoy en día, toda la economía capitalista está sentada sobre la mayor burbuja de deuda de la historia. Algunos creen que la burbuja de la deuda podrá seguir inflada como 100 o incluso 20 veces el tamaño de la econo mia mundial capitalista! En muchos sentidos, es la crisis de la deuda lo que más horroriza a los capitalistas. Lo único que resta a la clase dominante capitalista es la perspectiva de que la clase obrera se levante y haga la revolución socialista. ¿Cómo ha ocurrido esto? A medida que la crisis de sobreproducción capitalista ha ido privando cada vez más a los ricos de sus deseados márgenes de beneficio, el sistema capitalista empezó a dejar de dar prioridad a la fabricación y venta de cosas como única fuente de obtención de beneficios. El capitalismo se ha vuelto cada vez más dependiente de la manipulación del capital financiero para satisfacer su codicia. Por ello, los bancos han pasado a desempeñar el papel dominante en la economía capitalista mundial, junto con los mercados financieros. Para qué producir cosas que la gente pueda usar cuando puedes enriquecerte prestando dinero.

El problema con el capitalismo “casino” es que, como en cualquier esquema Ponzi, el el dinero que se gasta no genera la misma cantidad de dinero en la misma cantidad de tiempo. Antes de que el daño sea irreversible, el capitalismo financiero ha convertido la economía mundial en un gigantesco casino de Las Vegas.

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¿Cómo ha ocurrido esto? A medida que la crisis de sobreproducción capitalista ha ido privando cada vez más a los ricos de sus deseados márgenes de beneficio, el sistema capitalista empezó a dejar de dar prioridad a la fabricación y venta de cosas como única fuente de obtención de beneficios. El capitalismo se ha vuelto cada vez más dependiente de la manipulación del capital financiero para satisfacer su codicia. Por ello, los bancos han pasado a desempeñar el papel dominante en la economía capitalista mundial, junto con los mercados financieros. Para qué producir cosas que la gente pueda usar cuando puedes enriquecerte prestando dinero.

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