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Atlantans vow to 'Stop Cop City'

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

June 4 — In the days leading up to the June 5 Atlanta City Council meeting — where a final vote on the taxpayer share of the cost of building the militarized police training facility, known as “Cop City,” is expected — one shocking revelation after another has come to light.

Each new travesty of justice aids the mobilization of individuals, organizations and communities for Monday’s meeting, which will start with press conferences and a rally outside City Hall, to be followed by hundreds and hundreds of Atlantans determined to speak their outrage and pack the City Council meeting. This will be an historic day of reckoning for Mayor Andre Dickens, each City Council member and the city’s elite.

The Atlanta Press Collective produced evidence on May 24 — the same day that the Finance Committee of the Council was set to approve the 2024 budget allotment needed to finance the construction — that the real cost to the city will double from the estimated \$31 million to about \$67 million. Despite still more opposition to the whole plan from the public at their meeting, the Committee members passed the financing language by a vote of four yeases, one no and one abstention.

For more than two years, two different mayors, the corporate leaders of the private Atlanta Police Foundation and various City Council members repeated false and misleading financial information. It has become clear

that the funding picture the APF has promoted was inaccurate to say the least, and Atlanta working-class families will bear the cost directly and indirectly, as city funds for other social services will be cut to pay for Cop City.

Arrests of activists fuel more anger

Adding to this outrageous situation, early in the morning on May 31, a SWAT team accompanied by Georgia Bureau of Investigation agents and other police, raided the home of Marlon Kautz and Adele MacLean (known as Earthworm) in the historically Black Kirkwood neighborhood of Atlanta and arrested them. Savannah Patterson was also arrested at that address by the cops, who carried long guns. Some might say it was a perfect example of what militarized policing looks like.

All three of them were charged with one count of money laundering and one count of charity fraud!

Kautz and Earthworm, in particular, are well-known activists who have organized CopWatch teams in overpoliced neighborhoods, at demonstrations protesting local and national police killings, and at anti-Klan and anti-Nazi rallies held at Stone Mountain and other Georgia cities.

In response to the high number of arrests during the countrywide outrage over numerous police killings, they established the Atlanta Solidarity Fund in 2016. This fund assisted many young people with bail and legal support, especially during the mass protests following George Floyd’s murder in May 2020.

Continued on page 3

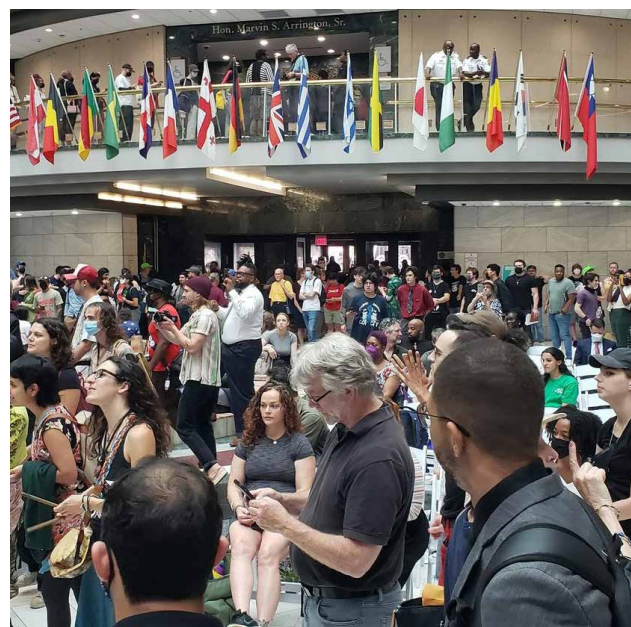


PHOTO: GLORIA TATUM

At 5:30 a.m., June 6, 2023, despite passionate, well-reasoned comments of hundreds of people, the Atlanta City Council voted 11 to 4 to appropriate the now \$67 million to build Cop City. In a packed atrium, a line to sign up to speak circled the space, went up the stairs and down the balcony wall. Outside, the line stretched close to two blocks when no more people were allowed into the building. When the vote was announced, the City Council room erupted into chants, vowing that “Cop City will never be built.”

Cleveland Pride promotes social justice

By Martha Grevatt
Cleveland

Thousands marched through downtown Cleveland June 3 to celebrate “Pride in the CLE,” organized by the LGBT Community Center of Greater Cleveland.

The call to action read: “Pride in the CLE® March adheres to the grassroots ideals of early Pride celebrations that sprung forth following the Stonewall Inn uprisings in 1969. With this in mind we aim to lift up the voices of our community and advocate for social justice by way of a march through our beloved city streets. We also commemorate the thousands who have marched over the last half century demanding the fair and equal treatment of the LGBTQ+ community.”

This is a progressive appeal, considering the increased corporatization of LGBTQIA2S+ Pride events over the decades since Stonewall. Among the social justice issues addressed were the attacks on trans youth by state legislatures around the country, including in Ohio.

Many marchers carried pro-abortion access signs that called on marchers to



Cleveland Pride, June 3, 2023.

WWW PHOTO: MARTHA GREVATT

vote against Issue 1, on the Ohio ballot in an Aug. 8 special election. If passed, Issue 1 would require a 60% supermajority to pass any ballot initiative to amend the state constitution — meaning it would be harder in November to pass an amendment enshrining the right to abortion access.

Unlike the Stonewall Rebellion commemorated throughout June, however, Pride in the CLE had dozens of corporate sponsors and contingents in the march. The list of notorious exploiters who endorsed the event included Amazon, McDonald’s, Target, Sherwin Williams and First Energy.

Many Greater Clevelanders marched with the companies they work for, but the largest contingent was of at least 1,000 unaffiliated individuals. This was the most youthful and multinational section of the march. □

Celebrating Pride Philly style

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

Pride Month kicked off in Philadelphia with a massive march of thousands of people from Washington Park at 6th and Walnut Streets to a festival in the Gayborhood at 13th and Locust Streets on June 4. Turnout was the largest ever for a Philadelphia Pride event. Crowds lined the route to chant and cheer on participants.

A highlight of the event was a 20-by-200-foot-long Pride flag carried by hundreds of participants.

The starting location was just blocks from the Liberty Bell—the site of gay

rights demonstrations held in the 1960s. Philly Pride March 2023 was organized by Galaei, a radical social-justice organization serving “all Queer, Trans, Black, Indigenous and people of color communities.”

While celebrating Pride, rally speakers addressed the continued attacks on LGBTQ2S+ people and their rights by right-wing groups across the country. Rally organizers urged solidarity and attendance at protests denouncing a scheduled gathering of the national bigoted, anti-LGBTQ2S+ group “Moms for Liberty” in Philadelphia at the end of June. □



Philly Pride 2023.

WWW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Editorial: ‘Compromise and consensus’ for whom? 2

Debt ceiling bill worsens hunger 3
NO to rainbow capitalism in Seattle 3
Buffalo Pride 3

‘Compromise and consensus’ – but for whom?

President Joe Biden averted a default on the federal debt June 3 when he signed the Fiscal Responsibility Act. Biden hailed the bipartisan “compromise and consensus” that resulted in the bill being approved by the House and Senate earlier in the week. He even said the Republican negotiators, who wanted cuts in spending — but of course not military spending — “acted responsibly and put the good of the country ahead of politics.” (pbs.org)

One of the bill’s lowlights is the suspension of the freeze on student loan payments — meaning young people struggling to make ends meet, working one or more low-wage jobs, will have another bill to pay.

An estimated 750,000 individuals could lose Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits under the bill, which raises from 50 to 54 the age at which a recipient is required to work at least 80 hours per month to receive food stamps. This would hit very poor, elderly and disabled people the hardest.

In addition the bill “effectively ratchets up requirements on states to show that very low-income parents receiving [Temporary Assistance to Needy Families] income assistance are meeting rigid work requirements that are often ill-suited to the needs of families.” (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, May 31)

Democratic supporters of the bill point to new exemptions to the work requirement for veterans and houseless people, saying the actual total number of SNAP benefit recipients could increase. But why abandon poor families, disproportionately families of color, about to lose a needed benefit?

The bill curtails a number of clean energy-related tax credits for individuals and businesses, while fast-tracking the Mountain Valley Pipeline, which when completed will carry natural gas from West Virginia to Virginia, with a proposed extension into North Carolina. Courts previously held up construction after residents drew attention

to environmental problems caused by deforestation and mountaintop removal to grant pipeline developers the right of way.

No gains for working class

Despite President Biden’s exuberance over the lifting of the debt ceiling, there is nothing in this bill for workers and oppressed people to celebrate. Not one penny of the Pentagon budget — which increased under the Biden administration along with billions in military aid to Ukraine — has been touched.

Not one loophole the billionaires use to get out of paying taxes has been closed. The bill is yet another transfer of wealth — all created by the working class — from the masses of people who pay student loans, taxes and many other bills to the tiny wealthy minority at the top.

While the most rabid right-wingers in Congress opposed the bill because it didn’t cut enough from safety net programs, some of the more progressive Democrats voted against it for the damage it contained. But that’s all they did — voted. They didn’t even lobby against it, let alone mobilize their constituents — the millions who will actually be hurt by the bill — to try to stop it.

After Biden signed the so-called Fiscal Responsibility Act, the stock market gained 700 points. It’s no surprise this law sounds a bit like former House Speaker Newt Gingrich’s Personal Responsibility Act, which then-President Bill Clinton signed in 1996, forcing people on public assistance to work for their measly benefits.

That should clear up any doubts as to which class the celebrated “compromise and consensus” on Capitol Hill was orchestrated to benefit.

It will be up to the multinational working class to build a movement around demands like “Bail out the people, not the banks!” and “Feed the poor, not the Pentagon!” □



PHOTO: JEN LAWHORNE

Demonstration to oppose construction of the Mountain Valley Pipeline, Sept. 8, 2022.

Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

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

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on 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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♦ In the U.S.

- Atlantans vow to ‘Stop Cop City’ 1
- Cleveland Pride promotes social justice 1
- Celebrating Pride Philly style 1
- Debt ceiling bill worsens food crisis 3
- Seattle Pride sells out to Starbucks 3

♦ Editorials

- ‘Compromise and consensus’ for whom? 2

♦ Noticias en Español

- Kissinger sigue siendo un criminal de guerra. . . . 4
- Las contradicciones de Erdogan 4

Online articles

♦ In the U.S.

- Unions to Court: Can’t stop right to strike! .. LINK
- Postal workers on the rise. LINK
- Writers strike expands beyond LA, NYC. LINK
- WWP intersex candidate in Seattle race LINK

♦ Around the World

- U.S. and Taiwanese anti-imperialists meet .. LINK
- Challenges for workers in France. LINK
- Clash in Kosovo with NATO troops LINK
- Haiti, hunger and U.S. prison imperialism. . . LINK
- Erdogan narrowly reelected in Türkiye. LINK

♦ Editorials

- Lesson from 2020: Abolish the police! LINK

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Debt ceiling bill worsens food crisis

By Will Hodgkinson
Boston

Amid ongoing austerity, workers and other marginalized communities in the U.S. are suffering from a crisis of chronic food insecurity. When the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) expired May 11, tens of millions of people lost access to basic nutrition provided by the expanded federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). These cuts, in addition to inflation stoked by corporate price- and rent-gouging, have forced millions of families to go hungry.

In Massachusetts alone, a recent survey found that 1.8 million, one-third of the state's adult residents, struggle with food insecurity, a 13% increase from 2020. The statewide hunger crisis disproportionately affects communities of color, as well as adults who identify as LGBTQIA+. Some 36% of Massachusetts households have reported that their children experience chronic hunger. (tinyurl.com/2xc28bu7)

Many residents report having to choose between a meal and other basic necessities. "When you get to be my age, you worry over questions like: 'are you going to have enough food to eat for the month?' 'Do you have to buy groceries instead of paying for your medicine?' I have to make that choice most of the time," said one of the survey's respondents. (Boston.com, May 30)

Endemic food insecurity in Massachusetts reflects a

nationwide trend. According to an Urban Institute survey, over 25% of adults in the U.S. suffer from regular hunger. (tinyurl.com/2vkdrect)

Workers' wages cannot keep pace with capitalist extortion, which continues to jack up the price of groceries. Black and Latiné adults remain at heightened risk of food insecurity nationally. (urban.org, March 21)

The crisis is overwhelming food pantries across the country. As Laurie Prizel, the Executive Director of Dimitri House, a food bank in Rochester, New York, said in a recent local news interview, "I can tell you on a weekly basis, half of what we have coming in here to our food cupboard are brand new people every week. There's more people coming in that just can't make ends meet anymore." (13wham.com, June 1)

Democratic, Republican Parties — pro-big business

Yet despite this hunger epidemic, bourgeois politicians are imposing new austerity measures, which promise to make the epidemic even worse. Already the Biden administration has slashed much of their \$1.7 trillion in PHE spending. But even these devastating cuts do not suffice for the ruling class.

President Joe Biden and Republican Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy agreed on May 27 to raise the ceiling on the national deficit. Along with a freeze on future social spending, further cuts to remaining COVID-19 relief and a mandate that federal student loan recipients resume debt payments in August, the deal includes a mandated work requirement for

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits.

These new requirements will force adult recipients under the age of 54 to submit to increased exploitation in low-wage jobs for at least 80 hours a month in order to qualify for benefits.

That a majority of Democrats are championing these cuts should come as no surprise. In 1996, President Bill Clinton signed the "Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act," which first imposed the neoliberal workhouse programs Biden and McCarthy are both planning to beef up.

Although the Pentagon budget stands at a record high of \$842 billion, both Democratic and Republican lawmakers have agreed to accept it, taken from budget cuts. The tens of billions recently spent bailing out failing banks such as SVB and First Republic also went unmentioned during the Congressional debate on "fiscal responsibility."

Despite opposition from arch reactionary Republicans, who were clamoring for even more draconian austerity measures, Congress passed the deficit ceiling deal, and Biden signed it into law June 3.

The magnitude of this new round of bipartisan austerity demonstrates the need for full support and solidarity with the worldwide struggle of workers and oppressed communities, who are mobilizing to fight for a socialist society, where housing, health care and food are not commodities but human rights. □

Seattle Pride sells out to Starbucks, blocks anti-union ad



Ad designed by Arthur Pratt, a trans man fired from Starbucks because of his union activism. Small text reads 'A union contract is one of the strongest ways for LGBTQIA+ workers to protect their rights and ensure equity & inclusivity at work — especially as some states actively pass legislation to deny and restrict our humanity.'

By Arjae Red

An ad against union busting submitted by Starbucks Workers United (SBWU) to the Seattle Pride Guide has been rejected, after Seattle Pride made the decision to side with corporations against LGBTQ+ workers. The ad, which was co-signed by 23 labor and community organizations, said, "Workers rights are trans and queer rights" and "Starbucks: you can't be pro-queer and anti-union. It's time to stop union busting!" The ad was designed by Arthur Pratt, a trans man who was fired from Starbucks because of his union activism. Submitted by the deadline, the ad was singled out for an atypical process of review by Seattle Pride and subsequently rejected.

The story on the ad's exclusion was originally published by the Seattle Gay News, which obtained comments from Seattle Pride and Encore Media — the ad agency that manages advertisements for Seattle Pride. Seattle Pride's leaders denied that they deliberately blocked the ad, claiming that it was actually just an "unfortunate series of miscommunications" and that "there was simply no space left for a full page ad."

Comments from Encore Media to the

Service Employees Union (SEIU, which SBWU is affiliated with) however, reveal the real reason the ad was blocked. "My concern is that Starbucks is one of [Seattle Pride's] sponsors," said a representative from Encore. "I do not want to jeopardize our relationship in any way, so I flagged the ad for their approval." (sgn.org)

Starbucks has platinum sponsor status with Seattle Pride, which requires donating at least \$150,000. It's clear that Seattle Pride has been bought off by Starbucks and is throwing working-class LGBTQ+ people under the bus in favor of a multinational coffee behemoth with a reputation for brutal mistreatment of its workers.

Smashing the sham of rainbow capitalism

SBWU, the union representing nearly 8,000 Starbucks workers across more than 300 stores, has made LGBTQ+ struggles a main focus of organizing since the start of the union campaign. Despite Starbucks co-opting rainbow pride imagery as a convenient way of marketing their products to a young audience, the actual conditions for LGBTQ+ workers in the company have pushed many to fight for change.

In addition to the dozens of individual horror stories from queer and trans workers about discrimination and mistreatment from managers, Starbucks has taken a systemic approach to targeting LGBTQ+ workers in the union drive. The company threatened that unionizing could jeopardize the gender-affirming health care coverage for transgender employees — in other words, "if you unionize, Starbucks will take your gender-affirming care away from you, so don't even try it."

This sinister tactic of withholding lifesaving treatment from trans workers fighting for their labor rights is particularly egregious at

a time when rights and care for LGBTQ2S+ people, especially youth, are being stripped away across the country.

This shows that when profits are threatened, even so-called "progressive ally" companies like Starbucks and its former CEO and former Democratic presidential candidate Howard Schultz will stoop to the same level as rabid bigots like presidential candidate and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis when it comes to the rights of LGBTQ2S+ people.

We need to smash through the sham of rainbow capitalism and understand that professed corporate support for LGBTQ2S+ causes is only paper-thin. It is a cynical endorsement of a sanitized version of the struggle, intended to capture and tame queer people's righteous indignation at the capitalist system that oppresses them, and redirect it into a harmless call for representation in advertisements.

Only an anti-capitalist orientation — that treats queer and trans liberation as an essential part of the class struggle — can provide a genuine way forward in fighting for LGBTQ2S+ liberation.

Starbucks threatens and fires workers for organizing; Black and Brown LGBTQ+ workers face the harshest union busting. Starbucks holds hostage lifesaving health care against trans workers. Starbucks bribes LGBTQ+ organizations to silence queer and trans workers. Starbucks is on the front line of gentrification, in its home base of Seattle and across the country, where working-class Black, Brown and LGBTQ2S+ people are forced out of their homes due to the high cost of rent.

Starbucks has no place at Pride!

The author is a bisexual nonbinary former Starbucks worker in Buffalo, New York and an organizer with Starbucks Workers United.

'Stop Cop City'

Continued from page 1

During the COVID-19 crisis, Kautz and Earthworm expanded the free food giveaways that had been part of the community services operated out of their home, known as The TearDown. Volunteers continue to deliver boxes of food to seniors and other low-income families weekly, as inflation increases hardships for poor people.

The nonprofit Network for Strong Communities is the target of the charges jointly brought by Georgia Attorney General Chris Carr and the DeKalb County District Attorney's office. They claim that funds from the NFSC supported the nonprofit Defend the Atlanta Forest, a broad umbrella group that has organized opposition to Cop City.

Here are some of the items described on the receipts being used as evidence: \$37 for building materials; \$228 for adding "jail support" phone lines; \$436 for expenses related to a town hall meeting and then miscellaneous items like "forest clean-up materials and COVID-19 rapid tests." The state is asserting that Defend the Atlanta Forest is "responsible for numerous acts of violence surrounding the training center site. ..."

In a statement about the arrests, Carr goes further and declares: "... we will not rest until

we have held accountable every person who has funded, organized or participated in this violence and intimidation." (Atlanta Journal-Constitution, June 1)

Arrestees have broad support

On the evening of the arrests, hundreds gathered for three hours in front of the DeKalb County Jail, demanding the release of Kautz, Earthworm and Patterson and chanting "Stop Cop City!" — to the approving honks of passing cars.

On June 2, these three individuals were each granted a \$15,000 bond, \$7,500 for each charge.

Awareness of and support for the movement to Stop Cop City is now national and international. This planned militarized police training center will be utilized by various U.S. police forces and, like the notorious School of the Americas located in Columbus, Georgia, will attract trainees from repressive governments around the world.

Uprisings of workers, youth and students, retirees, farmers, women and LGBTQ2S+ people have the global bankers and bosses worried they are losing control of their profit system.

They have reason to worry. **Stop Cop City!** □



People's Pride Bloc marched in the Buffalo, New York, Pride Parade June 4, demanding no more cops or banks at Pride, smash rainbow capitalism and defend trans youth by any means necessary. □

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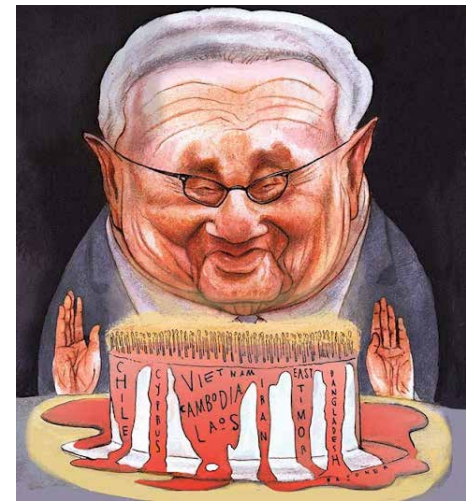


ILUSTRACIÓN: STEVE BRODNER

Kissinger a los 100 años: sigue siendo un criminal de guerra

Henry Kissinger ha cumplido 100 años hoy, 27 de mayo de 2023, ofreciendo la prueba de que los criminales de guerra de talla mundial pueden escapar al castigo si cometen sus crímenes al servicio del imperialismo estadounidense.

Kissinger fue Asesor de Seguridad Nacional del Presidente Richard

Nixon y luego Secretario de Estado bajo Nixon y el Presidente Gerald Ford. Muchos de sus bienquerientes en la clase dominante y sus medios de comunicación aprovechan este cumpleaños para señalar su papel en la "diplomacia" estadounidense durante ese período, 1969-77.

Al igual que el difunto Zbigniew Brzezinski, el estratega global que sirvió a los presidentes del Partido Demócrata, Kissinger fue un emigrante europeo a Estados Unidos que proporcionó el marco intelectual para las políticas imperialistas durante la Guerra Fría. Kissinger proporcionó la justificación para los asesinatos en masa cometidos bajo los presidentes republicanos; Brzezinski para los demócratas.

La mayoría de los medios de comunicación de la clase dominante lo elogiarán. Algunos pueden señalar defectos. Para

aqueellos, como Workers World, que evalúan su papel desde el punto de vista de los pueblos trabajadores y explotados del mundo, lo que destaca son sus crímenes y que el objetivo de estos crímenes era conti-

nuar la dominación de gran parte del mundo por un pequeño grupo de capitalistas y banqueros superricos.

Sus mayores crímenes, aunque no los únicos, los cometió contra los pueblos del sudeste asiático, concretamente contra los vietnamitas y los camboyanos.

Sí, fueron los demócratas del gobierno de Lyndon Johnson quienes intensificaron la guerra y enviaron más de medio millón de soldados estadounidenses a Vietnam en 1968. Pero la Ofensiva del Tet de enero-febrero de ese año demostró la debilidad de la intervención estadounidense. A finales de 1969, asediada por las protestas, la administración Nixon ya había empezado a retirar las tropas; las negociaciones se hicieron inevitables.

Kissinger y Nixon iniciaron las negociaciones, pero su política incluía intensificar los bombardeos contra el pueblo vietnamita. En un intento de impedir que los vietnamitas liberaran su país, Kissinger amenazó

incluso con utilizar armas nucleares contra ellos. Al final, Estados Unidos arrojó más toneladas de bombas sobre Vietnam que todos los bombarderos aliados sobre Alemania en la Segunda Guerra Mundial, lo que costó millones de vidas vietnamitas.

Kissinger impulsó el bombardeo de Camboya, derrocando al gobierno neutral y matando a cientos de miles de camboyanos en el campo. Esta política dejó una situación caótica que acabó provocando la muerte de muchos más camboyanos.

En un insulto al pueblo vietnamita que luchaba por su liberación, en 1973 el Comité Nobel intentó ofrecer el Premio de la Paz a Kissinger y al patriota vietnamita Le Duc Tho, ya que ambos habían firmado el tratado de paz. Le Duc Tho, entonces portavoz de la delegación norvietnamita en las conversaciones de paz de París, se negó a aceptarlo conjuntamente con el criminal de guerra. Los comunistas vietnamitas no sólo eran heroicos; tenían principios.

Como Secretario de Estado, Kissinger supervisó el derrocamiento por la CIA del gobierno electo del presidente Salvador Allende en septiembre de 1973 en Chile. En su lugar se instauró la dictadura militar del general Augusto Pinochet, que asesinó a decenas de miles de chilenos y abrió el

país a los bancos y empresas imperialistas.

La política de Kissinger dio luz verde a los generales argentinos para torturar, asesinar y detener a decenas de miles de argentinos. A pesar de su amor por los generales argentinos, Washington apoyó a su socio menor, el imperialismo británico, en la guerra para reconquistar las islas Malvinas de Argentina en 1982.

Esa lista omite muchos de los crímenes de Kissinger. Pero es suficiente para una conclusión.

La cuestión importante no es si Kissinger fue un estratega eficaz para los intereses imperialistas de Estados Unidos. Esa es una cuestión que sólo interesa a la clase dominante.

La cuestión importante es qué ocurrió como resultado de su conducta. Nuestra conclusión: Para ampliar los intereses de una minúscula clase de multimillonarios, Kissinger proporcionó la estrategia para llevar a cabo crímenes de guerra y crímenes contra la humanidad.

Quienes lucharon contra esos crímenes hicieron lo correcto. Quienes defienden esos crímenes y celebran los cumpleaños de sus centenarios perpetradores son los enemigos de la inmensa mayoría de los pueblos del mundo. □

MUNDO OBRERO editorial

Erdogan: Un barco navegando en un mar de contradicciones

Por Sergio Rodríguez Gelfenstein

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La coalición que apoyó al presidente Recep Tayyip Erdogan obtuvo la victoria en las elecciones presidenciales de Türkiye (Turquía) realizadas el pasado domingo 28 de mayo. Aunque en esta segunda vuelta el triunfo de Erdogan era esperado, resultó una sorpresa el amplio apoyo que recibió su coalición en las elecciones parlamentarias que acompañaron la primera vuelta el 14 de mayo.

El sistema presidencialista establecido en la Constitución del país tras el referéndum celebrado en abril de 2017, garantiza que el jefe de Estado posea una recia fuerza para la conducción y el control del país, no obstante un parlamento de mayoría opositora podría jugar un papel de contrapeso a la autoridad presidencial. Sin embargo, eso no ocurrió.

En política exterior, Erdogan continuará su manejo del "balance" entre Occidente y sus instituciones por un lado y Rusia, China y las suyas, por el otro. Su objetivo es obtener beneficios de las contradicciones.

En cualquier caso, un análisis sensato deberá considerar que en su nuevo mandato el presidente turco enfrentará una situación económica crítica signada por un abultado déficit en la balanza comercial y una deuda que sin ser muy alta se verá afectada por las gigantescas necesidades de la población. La tasa de riesgo del país es muy elevada, lo cual unido al ya mencionado déficit en el intercambio comercial producen un efecto que podría generar un tsunami en la economía.

Habría que sumar a esto que, cálculos realizados por expertos han determinado que se necesitan 108 mil millones de dólares para restablecer el desastre producido por el terremoto del 6 de febrero de 2023.

Así mismo, durante la campaña electoral, Erdogan y su coalición gastaron elevadas sumas de dinero que deberán reponer a la brevedad. Todo esto coloca bajo presión al reelegido presidente turco porque necesariamente tendrá que recurrir a buscar apoyo en el extranjero. Esta situación va a ser aprovechada por Estados Unidos y Europa para forzarlo a hacer concesiones en varios asuntos, pero sobre todo en lo relacionado al conflicto en Ucrania en el que Erdogan ha mantenido una aparente neutralidad.

Los Dardanelos y el Bósforo

De igual forma, es posible que la OTAN ejerza presión para que Türkiye asuma una posición más firme en cuanto al uso por parte de Rusia del paso por los estrechos de los Dardanelos y el Bósforo que comunican al mar Negro con el Mediterráneo y sobre el cual Türkiye posee una total soberanía. Occidente tratará incluso que Ankara transgreda la convención de Montreux de 1936 que también concede derechos plenos a Rusia para el tránsito de sus buques civiles por ser país ribereño del mar Negro. De esa manera, se intentará afectar y/o impedir el comercio de Rusia a través de esa importante ruta marítima.

Por otro lado, es probable que se incrementen las acciones de funcionarios del gobierno de Erdogan para dar apoyo a los musulmanes tártaros de Crimea, una de cuyas organizaciones, el batallón Noman Çelebicihan ha sido declarada como terrorista por Rusia. A Estados Unidos le interesa que Erdogan juegue un papel más

relevante en este ámbito porque cumple simultáneamente dos objetivos: generar conflicto al interior de Crimea y debilitar la relación de Rusia con Türkiye.

Otro tema que Erdogan deberá resolver si se quiere ganar el favor de Occidente es tomar una decisión definitiva respecto de su veto al ingreso de Suecia a la OTAN. Lo más probable es que termine aceptándolo a cambio de alguna contraprestación que está por determinarse.

En el plano del conflicto en Siria, Türkiye ha mantenido su participación en el mecanismo cuatripartito auspiciado por Rusia y del que también forma parte Irán. Estados Unidos no ha manifestado total objeción a esta negociación, aspiraría a participar aunque sea de forma indirecta para manejarlo de acuerdo a sus intereses.

Los intereses de Washington

A Washington le interesaría que Ankara ejerciera presión sobre Damasco a favor de una reforma constitucional que conduzca a un gobierno de transición y a nuevas elecciones. En este sentido, Estados Unidos pretende que Türkiye le haga el trabajo. Esta por verse si Erdogan acepta este papel o se limita a buscar sus propios objetivos en esta negociación que dicen relación al enfrentamiento del "problema kurdo" considerado de importancia trascendente en sus objetivos políticos.

Para el presidente turco, el manejo de las contradicciones está presente en el día a día de su gestión. Su ideología se orienta a reconstruir la Gran Türkiye, es decir un poder que ejerza gran influencia regional y que obligue a las potencias a considerarlo un actor de primer orden en la toma de decisiones en Asia y en el mundo. Esto lo podría llevar a discordancias con China

dado su apoyo al Movimiento Islámico del Turquestán Oriental (MITO), organización uigur que opera en la provincia china de Xinjiang y que es considerada como terrorista por Beijing. Los uigures son una etnia túrquica musulmana que tiene grandes vínculos con Türkiye.

Es un verdadero dilema saber cómo se manejará a futuro el presidente Erdogan en este marco de contradicciones que configura la identidad política internacional de Türkiye pero es probable que se oriente a perseverar en lo que ha sido hasta ahora la práctica de su quehacer. Por una parte miembro de la OTAN junto a Estados Unidos y el Reino Unido y por otra "asociado en el diálogo" de la Organización de Cooperación de Shanghai (OCS) junto a China y Rusia. En fecha reciente ha solicitado su ingreso al grupo BRICS contraviniendo el deseo de Washington de mantenerla bajo su control. Así mismo, es el único país de la OTAN que tiene relaciones con Afganistán y una embajada en Kabul.

Hasta ahora Erdogan ha podido sortear todo este entresijo de incompatibilidades incluso llegando a actuar exitosamente como mediador junto a la ONU para lograr el acuerdo de los granos entre Rusia y Ucrania que permitió la exportación de cereales, vitales productos alimenticios cuya carencia podría incrementar los niveles de pobreza y hambruna en varias lugares del planeta, en particular en África.

De otro lado, Türkiye es un exportador seguro de armas a Ucrania, teniendo un protagonismo en el envío de drones a Kiev.

Habrà que observar si su capacidad de "equilibrio milagroso" puede sostenerse en el tiempo. Dadas las grandes implicaciones que ello tiene, el mundo estará muy pendiente de su "performance". □