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Movement 'not afraid'

'Stop Cop City' activists face felony charges

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

Bulletin: As of Sept. 11, Atlanta City officials refused to verify signatures in time for the November election in a memo issued by the City Clerk office. This development followed a dramatic and exuberant delivery of 16 cardboard boxes holding petitions of 116,000 registered Atlanta voters to have the issue of stopping the construction on the upcoming ballot.

Despite days of discussion over the verification method the Clerk's office would use with the hiring of staff, the City now claims nothing can happen until a final decision comes from the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals, not expected at the earliest until October. Mass pressure was applied immediately on the City Council which can decide to accept that the required number of signatures had been met and placed on the ballot. The struggle continues!

The office of Georgia Attorney General Chris Carr held a news conference on Sept. 5, announcing that 61 people, previously arrested for activities opposing the construction of a massive militarized police training facility known as "Cop



Kamau Franklin from Community Movement Builders speaks in front of Atlanta City Hall, Sept. 11, 2023.

City," have been charged with violating the state's Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO).

People may be more familiar with the federal RICO Act which originally targeted the Mafia and other organized crime enterprises. Georgia passed a more far-reaching version in 1980, which most recently has been employed by Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis to indict former President Donald Trump and 18 others for illegally attempting to

overturn Georgia's 2020 presidential election results.

Carr, a Trump supporter who has said he would seek the governorship in 2024, had previously charged some of the same defendants with "domestic terrorism." Among those charged with terrorism are three people who distributed a leaflet that named the Georgia State Patrol officer involved in the killing of Forest Defender Manuel "Tortuguita" Teran in January.

Another 23 activists were arrested on

the grounds of a family-friendly music concert on March 5, far from the site where construction equipment was damaged. The 23 were terrorized by heavily-armed police and then selectively arrested, especially targeted if they were from out of state. Organizers of a bail fund, whose home was raided in May by a SWAT team, were arrested around that time for "money laundering."

People who received reimbursements of \$11.91 for glue and other office supplies are facing a mandatory five years in prison if convicted on the RICO charges.

Solidarity growing

Statements of solidarity and outrage at the threat to civil liberties — including the right to protest and free speech — have poured in from across the country. Lawyers are volunteering to defend those indicted. Other bail funds are stepping up to secure the release of protesters, including five faith leaders and community members who chained themselves to construction equipment at the contested training site on Sept. 7. They were arrested with supporters surrounding them, chanting "Cop City will never be built!" and carrying signs saying "We are not afraid!"

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Autoworkers prepare for big strike

By Martha Grevatt
Brookpark, Ohio

The contracts between the United Auto Workers and General Motors, Ford and Stellantis (which absorbed Chrysler) expire September 14. UAW President Shawn Fain has stated that date is "a

deadline not a reference point" — meaning there will be a strike at any of the three companies that do not deliver an acceptable contract by then. (uaw.org)

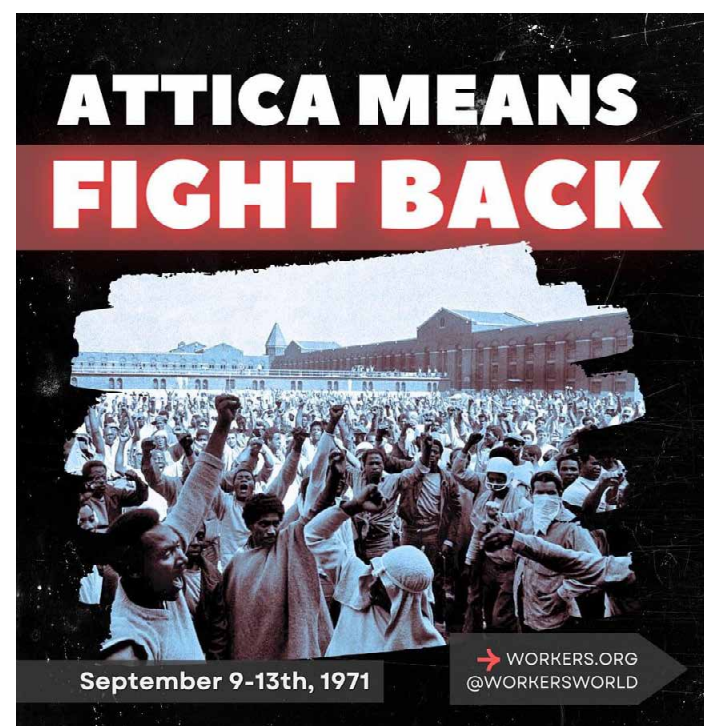
Practice pickets have been held at or near auto plants around the country, including at the Ford engine plant in Brookpark, Ohio, a suburb of Cleveland on Sept. 10. Members of UAW Local 1250 carried signs and chanted, "We are the union, mighty, mighty union!" Many wore red shirts for solidarity, and some had the slogan, "Will strike if provoked."

The most recent contract offers from the Detroit Three have been deemed "insulting" by the UAW, as the offers fail to properly address union demands for pay increases that match the increase in CEO pay, restoration of the cost-of-living allowance, elimination of unequal pay and benefit tiers, job security, a shorter work week and more. □



UAW practice picket, Brookpark, Ohio, Sept. 10, 2023.

WW PHOTO: MARTHA GREVATT



September 9-13th, 1971

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Free Tiffany Gardner!



Cleveland — Family, friends and community supporters of Tiffany Gardner gathered outside the “Justice Center” in downtown Cleveland Sept. 11.

In 2021, Gardner called 911 to report that her wallet was stolen at a store in East Cleveland, a suburb of Cleveland. After Gardner left the scene, the man who stole her wallet was beaten to death by two men. Although she was not familiar with the two men, Gardner was charged with and convicted of murder and is serving a 15 years to life sentence at the Dayton, Ohio, Correctional Facility.

Gardner’s supporters are demanding this mother, daughter and sister — whose youngest son is shown in the photo on the left — be immediately released.

— Report and photo by Martha Grevatt

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‘Stop Cop City’ activists face charges

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The spirit of resistance to this attack on the right to dissent was evidenced again Sept. 8, as a multinational, multigenerational demonstration gathered outside Carr’s office across the street from the State Capitol.

The Movement to Stop Cop City is fueled by the unabated deaths at the hands of police, including 62-year-old church deacon John Hollman, who was tased to death following a minor traffic accident on Aug. 11, and six deaths in six weeks at the Fulton County Detention Center, the latest being 24-year-old Shawndre Delmore from cardiac arrest (!) on Sept. 3.

These tragedies converged with the continuing pollution of the South River by the clearing of thousands of trees at the Cop City site and the ongoing media lies and

political attacks from the Atlanta Police Foundation, intended to whitewash the reactionary and racist purpose of the police-training facility.

Multipronged resistance

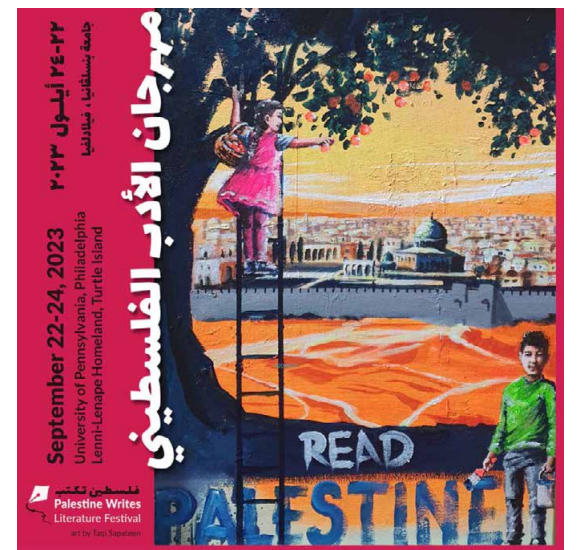
On another front in the Stop Cop City campaign, on Sept. 11 petitions containing over 120,000 signatures of registered Atlanta voters to put canceling the lease and all agreements concerning Cop City on the ballot were delivered to the Atlanta City Clerk’s office. There were more than twice the number of signatures required to get the ballot initiative approved, leaving no question of the people’s opposition to Cop City. However, the method of verifying the signatures as those of valid voters has come under scrutiny as the term “exact match” has been raised by city

officials. Handwriting can change as people age or under varying conditions. For example, most signatures were gotten in outdoor settings on a clipboard during some of the hottest days of the summer.

CopCityVote.com will be monitoring the signature checking closely, given the history of this method being used to deny the right to vote to communities of color and in poor and working-class neighborhoods.

This remarkable, sustained opposition to Cop City over more than two years reflects the capacity of a broad-based, politically defined grassroots movement to alter the relations of power between the elite and the people.

For more information, go to stopcopcity.org, Community Movement Builders on instagram, or southriverga.org. □



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Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

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

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on 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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MO FOTO: SHERRY FINKELMAN

Union Square, Nueva York, 11 de septiembre de 2023. Solidaridad con la lucha en Chile.

¡Justicia para Junito!

Por D.R.
Filadelfia

Comunicado: El 8 de septiembre, el agente de policía de Filadelfia Mark Dial fue acusado de asesinato, homicidio voluntario, agresión con agravantes, agresión simple, imprudencia temeraria contra otra persona y opresión oficial.

Sólo pasaron cinco segundos entre el momento en que el agente de policía Mark Dial salió de su coche y el momento en que disparó y asesinó a Eddie Irizarry Jr. la tarde del 14 de agosto, en el barrio de East Kensington de Filadelfia. Otro asesinato sancionado por el Estado que deja a una familia sumida en la ira y la confusión y a la comunidad de Filadelfia en busca de respuestas.

No son circunstancias irregulares. Este es el papel de la policía: proteger la propiedad y a la élite mientras reprime a la clase trabajadora y los movimientos revolucionarios y el asesinato sin sentido de personas colonizadas en todo el mundo.

Eddie Irizarry Jr. era un puertorriqueño de 27 años que llegó a Estados Unidos hace siete años. Su familia, que lo llamaba cariñosamente Junito, lo describe como un joven al que le gustaba el reggaeton, arreglar coches y las motos de cross. Según su padre y su hermana, hablaba y entendía poco inglés y sufría problemas de salud mental, como esquizofrenia y trastorno bipolar. Su familia señaló que era una buena persona, protector con su hermana y servicial con su familia. (Inquirer.com,

24 de agosto)

Según los informes policiales, Dial y un segundo agente de policía detuvieron a Irizarry Jr. por “conducir de forma errática” y contra el tráfico. En su informe inicial a la prensa, los agentes afirmaron que Irizarry había aparcado el coche y se había bajado, abalanzándose sobre Dial con una navaja de 7 cm, pero luego se retractaron cuando los testigos y las grabaciones de las cámaras corporales demostraron que Irizarry nunca había salido del coche.

La cámara corporal muestra que estaba sentado en su coche con las ventanillas subidas cuando Dial se acercó a la parte delantera del coche y disparó rápida-



MO FOTO: JOE PIETTE

Miembros de la familia de Eddie Irizarry Jr. frente al Taller Puertorriqueño, Filadelfia, 31 de agosto de 2023.

mente seis tiros a través del parabrisas y la ventanilla lateral, matando a Irizarry. (Inquirer.com, 17 de agosto)

En la grabación se oye a la policía buscando el cuchillo en el coche. Dial ha sido suspendido durante 30 días, a la espera de su despido, por no cooperar con la investigación y no acatar las órdenes, no por el asesinato de Irizarry. Pero, como

era de esperar, cuenta con el pleno apoyo de la Orden Fraternal de la Policía (FOP).

La familia Irizarry y múltiples grupos de la comunidad se reunieron en el Taller Puertorriqueño en North Fifth Street, el 31 de agosto, con alrededor de 90 personas pidiendo ‘Justicia para Junito’. Exigieron transparencia en el manejo del caso; la publicación inmediata de todas las grabaciones de las cámaras corporales de todos los oficiales involucrados en el asesinato de Irizarry; y una investigación independiente para responsabilizar a todos los oficiales involucrados.

Los oradores pidieron que la policía se enfrente a todo el peso de la ley por su asesinato y que se ponga fin a la violencia policial ejercida sobre todo contra las personas de raza negra y parda, los miembros más vulnerables de nuestra comunidad.

Robert Saleem Holbrook, director ejecutivo del Abolitionist Law Center, criticó a la FOP por no haber respondido a los llamamientos realizados durante años para que la policía rindiera cuentas y se hiciera justicia: “La razón por la que no podemos exigir responsabilidades es porque la FOP lo impide. La FOP demanda a los políticos que intentan que la policía rinda cuentas”. (Kensington Voice, 2 de septiembre)

La marcha que siguió a través de la comunidad Latiné contó con unos 200 participantes, muchos de ellos portando flores blancas y banderas puertorriqueñas. Se detuvieron en East Willard Street, donde Irizarry Jr. fue asesinado. El pastor que presidió su funeral dirigió una

oración, y los participantes en la manifestación presentaron sus respetos a la familia. Los participantes depositaron rosas blancas en un monumento provisional instalado en el lugar.

Al grito de “Sin justicia no hay paz” y “El pueblo unido jamás será vencido”, los manifestantes marcharon hasta la comisaría del distrito 24, donde celebraron una concentración final, coreando, levantando los puños y expresando sus reivindicaciones ante un grupo de policías alineados. Sólo les separaban los postes del carril para bicicletas.

La comunidad exige respuestas

Los familiares de Irizarry tomaron el micrófono para dirigirse directamente a los policías. “Para que tengan el respeto de la comunidad, como agentes de policía, tienen que ganárselo”, dijo Eddie Irizarry padre. Otro de los oradores, Alfredo Santiesteban, relató conmovedora y emotivamente cómo presenció el asesinato.

La comunidad exige respuestas por el asesinato de Eddie “Junito” Irizarry Jr. La violencia del Estado contra los más oprimidos y marginados es algo habitual en este país. La violencia que los EE.UU., sus militares y la policía ejercen sobre la clase obrera y los pueblos colonizados del mundo es parte de la fibra de este país capitalista. La militarización en el extranjero es la misma que se utiliza contra nosotros aquí, y la gente está exigiendo un cambio.

Betsey Piette contribuyó a este artículo.

Lessons from Chile, 1973

WORKERS WORLD editorial

Fifty years ago, on Sept. 11, 1973, the generals and admirals in the Chilean armed forces led a coup against the elected Popular Unity government. They murdered President Salvador Allende and the world-famous Chilean poet Pablo Neruda and songwriter Victor Jara. In the following months, the coup makers massacred 3,000 organizers and supporters of the Allende government.

In the 17 years the dictatorship of Gen. Augusto Pinochet lasted, it imprisoned and often tortured tens of thousands of other people, while driving thousands more into exile. Pinochet’s regime opened Chile to neoliberal exploitation.

As has been admitted in many of the histories of that period, including those published on this 50th anniversary, the U.S. government, transnational corporations, CIA and Armed Forces helped plan and gave full support to the Chilean coup makers. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger coordinated U.S. economic and political sabotage directed at the Allende government throughout its existence. (workers.org/2023/05/71210/)

The working-class movement worldwide has through the years expressed their solidarity and sympathy with the Chilean workers, farmers, Indigenous peoples and organizers who have suffered

the consequences of crimes of U.S. imperialism and its Chilean military and capitalist agents.

Revolutionaries have paid close attention to the political lessons of the Popular Unity government’s attempt to bring socialism to Chile through electoral means. It is important to review these lessons, which, despite the enormous changes in the world since that time, are as relevant today as they were in 1973.

One key lesson involves the difference between a pro-socialist president being in **office** in a capitalist society, and a pro-socialist party or coalition being in **power**.

Workers must take power

Where the capitalists are the ruling class of a society, they control the banks, the big corporations, the corporate media — and they control the state apparatus: police, courts and army, through a bureaucracy that has existed for centuries connecting officials to the rich.

Allende had enough popular electoral support to form a government in 1970 and again in the spring of 1973. The state power, however, especially the army and police, remained in the hands of the capitalists. In addition, U.S. imperialism could nurture the most reactionary elements in the Chilean military for future use.

Only by dissolving the old capitalist state and replacing it with a workers or a people’s armed force, can a pro-socialist government safely carry out its program. Karl Marx drew that lesson from the 1871 Paris Commune; the revolutionary V. I. Lenin underlined that point before and during the 1917 Russian Revolution.

Another essential lesson for revolutionaries in the United States is that the U.S. government is the board of directors of worldwide state-organized crime. It defends and expands imperialist theft. Washington will commit any crime necessary to protect the property of the imperialist monopolies operating in a country like Chile.

Once Allende nationalized the U.S. copper companies that plundered Chile’s mines and the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation monopoly in 1970, the U.S. government targeted him for elimination.

Washington sabotaged Chile’s economy then to make the Chilean workers suffer and to goad privileged Chilean strata toward counterrevolution. U.S. Navy ships patrolled the sea near Chile to stiffen the will of the reactionary Chilean admirals.

A Sept. 10 article on NPR admitted the U.S. role behind the 1973 Chile massacre. But in a strange turn, its author somehow concluded that revulsion against the murderous coup then softened U.S. foreign policy. Did they forget that Washington soon carried out variations of the Chile murders in Argentina, waged contra wars in El Salvador and Nicaragua, armed the genocide of Indigenous Guatemalans in the 1980s and managed a coup in Honduras in 2009? And that’s just in the Western Hemisphere.

Today the U.S. punishes its “enemies” with sanctions, whether the country is socialist like Cuba or simply defending its sovereignty like Russia, while the Pentagon surrounds them with warships and military bases.

To defend even the most modest moves toward socialism, the workers and farmers need their own state, their own armed defense. That was true in 1973 Chile and it is true today.

(Workers World first published this analysis one month after the 1973 coup. You can read a copy of “Chile 1970-1973” online at tinyurl.com/chile7073.)

