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 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.

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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

‘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, multigendered demonstration gathered outside Carr’s office across the street from the State Capitol. The Movement to Stop Cop City is fueled by the unjust deaths at the hands of police, including 62-year-old church deacon John Holliman, who was taken down 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 Shandré 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.

— Report and photo by Martha Grevatt

Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

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

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on immigrants, 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 gassed down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

The ruthless ruling class today seeks to wipe out decent jobs 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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¡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 perjura oficial.

Sólo pasaron cinco segundos entre el momento en que el agente de policía Mark Dial disparó y asesinó a Eddie ‘Junito’ Irizarry Jr. al tiempo que este último fue atacado por dos individuos armados en el barrio de East Kensington de Filadelfia. El asesinato sancionado por el Estado que deja a una familia sumida en la ira y la confusión y a la comunidad de Filadelfia en la angustia y la esperanza.

No son circunstancias irregulares. Este es el papel de la policía: proteger la propiedad y el poder de los ricos y acentuar el control del Estado en la comunidad capitalista. La militarización en el exterior y el interior se agrava para proteger los intereses de los capitales concentrados en el Acción Mundial por la Libertad y Justicia.

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 sufria 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, 17 de agosto)

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

Los familiares de Irizarry tomaron el miércoles para dirigirse directamente a los policías. “Para que tengan el respeto de la comunidad y como agentes de policía, tienen que ganárselo”, dijo Eddie Irizarry padre. Otro de los oradores, Alfredo Santesteban, recordó a Junito como una joven que sabía que la policía se enfrenta a todo el peso de la ley pero que no se dejaba por la vio-

Lessons from Chile, 1973

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 mas-sacred 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 collaborative exploitation.

As has been admitted in many of the histories of that period, including those published on his 50th anniversary, the U.S. government, transnational corpo-rations, 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 World, 14 de septiembre de 2023)

The working-class movement world-wide 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 capital-ist agents.

Revolutionaries have paid close atten-

Workers must take power

Workers need their own state, their people’s armed force, can a pro-socialist state and replacing it with a workers or a socialist like Cuba or simply defending the property and to goad privileged Chilean strata toward counterrevolu-

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 mur-

Solidaridad con la lucha en Chile.

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