

End all coup attempts

Defend Bolivarian Venezuela!

By WW Editorial Staff

April 30 — Anti-imperialists in the United States must unite once more, just as we did in February, March and April, to stop the coup that U.S. imperialism is attempting to carry out against the Bolivarian government of Venezuela and against all the workers, farmers, Indigenous and poor people of that country.

At dawn, from a highway near a military base in the rich, right-wing section of Caracas, the nominal coup leaders — convicted plotter Leopoldo López and self-nominated leader Juan Guaidó — announced a military coup. López and Guaidó have already disgraced themselves as traitors to Venezuelan sovereignty. They stand still unless someone in Washington pulls their strings.

U.S. officials Elliott Abrams, Mike Pompeo and John Bolton, impatient with the lack of success of their “interim” puppet, push every move aimed at “regime change” in Venezuela. The three are ruthless. They stop at nothing — starving the masses, bombing their opponents, mass murder — in their effort to expand the power of the imperialist banks and corporations.

Their weakness, and that of Donald Trump and Mike Pence, is that they consistently underestimate the determination and will of the masses of people to defend their own interests. Up to now the right wing have demonstrated this weakness in Venezuela in every battle.

In January, when Guaidó first appointed himself “interim president,” only imperialist and rightist foreign governments subservient to the U.S. recognized this arrogant act. In Venezuela the masses rejected him.

In February, when Guaidó tried to bring an invasion force into Venezuela on the backs of so-called “humanitarian aid,” the mobilized people and their militia, along with the Bolivarian Armed Forces (FANB), stopped the invasion at the border.

In March, when U.S.-directed sabotage disrupted electric power for days, cutting off food and water supplies, the people mobilized to deliver emergency supplies while power was being restored.

Realizing Guaidó’s lack of support, even the most right-wing regimes in the region — in Colombia and Brazil — refused to offer their troops as cannon fodder for a U.S.-led intervention.

At the present time — noon EDT on April 30 — the coup attempt appears to have very little support inside the country. The Venezuelan defense secretary and the president of the Constituent National Assembly have said the FANB and the population are with the Maduro government. Tens of thousands of people have answered the call to defend the presidential residence at Miraflores in Caracas.

There remains the possibility of a U.S. military intervention. Despite the dangers to U.S. troops invading against an intact military with massive popular support — and 2 million people with access to arms in the militia — there is no guarantee that the Abrams-Pompeo-Bolton gang will concede.



Venezuelan masses at rally supporting the Maduro government.

In the U.S., the forces that have demonstrated support for the Bolivarian Revolution since January are again in action. In New York, community and religious leaders held a news conference today calling on the U.S. population to protest the new threat. Meanwhile, in Washington, D.C., anti-imperialists occupying the otherwise empty Venezuelan Embassy are continuing to defend the right of Maduro government representatives to the office.

Everyone who defends the sovereignty of nations against imperialism should defend the government of Nicolás Maduro against this latest coup attempt and defend the workers and poor of Venezuela against U.S. imperialism and its local agents. And we should continue that defense, whatever measures the Bolivarian government, the real government of Venezuela, decides are necessary to suppress the imperialist-inspired coup and its leaders. □



April 27, Philadelphia.

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DPRK says 'No Pompeo'5

Sanctions Are an Act of War!

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Federal court blocks TPS termination for Haitians

The following excerpted article was published by *Haiti Liberté* on April 16. (tinyurl.com/y583q98m)

By the National Immigration Project

Saget vs. Trump is a lawsuit brought in January 2019 by Haïti Liberté, Family Action Network Movement (FANM), and nine Haitians who hold TPS status. The National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild (NIPNLG) was one of the plaintiffs’ lawyer groups arguing the case. They wrote the following summary of Judge Kuntz’s decision.

In a victory for due process and a blow to Trump’s racially biased, anti-immigrant policies, on April 11, 2019, Federal District Judge William F. Kuntz II issued a preliminary injunction blocking the Trump administration’s decision to end Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haiti.

The Trump Administration had terminated TPS for more than 50,000 Haitians who have lived lawfully and contributed to the U.S. for nearly a decade. This decision is the result of a four-day trial in early January 2019 that heard testimony from experts, former government officials, and plaintiffs about the impact of the TPS termination, and the ways in which the government’s decision-making process violated long-established agency practices.

In making the decision, Judge Kuntz reviewed evidence submitted by the government, by the plaintiffs, and “privileged” evidence (evidence only available to him). He then issued a nationwide injunction prohibiting the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) from terminating TPS for Haiti pending the outcome of the litigation, effective immediately.

There is also a preliminary injunction for Haitian TPS holders in a parallel case, *Ramos v. Nielsen*, which is currently on appeal. This injunction will continue until a further order from Judge Kuntz, even if the one in *Ramos* is terminated upon a decision on appeal.

Specifically, Judge Kuntz ruled that the plaintiffs are likely to succeed on the merits of their claim because DHS did not conduct a good-faith, evidence-based review of facts on the ground to determine whether to extend Haiti’s

TPS. Instead the agency was improperly influenced by White House officials’ political motivations to terminate TPS, in violation of the Administrative Procedures Act, the judge found. The court also ruled that plaintiffs were likely to succeed on their claims that DHS had changed the standard for determining how TPS decisions are made, without notice or explanation, and that the Trump Administration terminated TPS for Haiti based on racial animus.

Sejal Zota, legal director at the National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild (NIPNLG) and attorney for the plaintiffs, said: “This 150-page decision is a long and thorough missive on government manipulation. It exposes at the highest levels the government’s unlawful dismantling of the TPS program, and its discriminatory purposes in doing so. It also vindicates the brave struggle of Haitian TPS holders who challenged Trump, because the law was on their side.”

NIPNLG’s co-counsels in the case were the law firms Kurzban, Kurzban, Tetzeli and Pratt, and Mayer Brown. Providing significant support was the Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti (IJDH), a Boston-based human rights nonprofit.

In sum: Judge Kuntz’s findings indicate that the White House pressured federal agencies to change their long-standing practices to reach a decision sought by the administration for its own purposes, and that these same federal agencies manipulated facts and processes to justify a predetermined decision to end Haiti’s TPS status.

“The evidence shows the White House exerted significant influence” over Elaine Duke, then the DHS acting secretary, Kuntz wrote.

NIPNLG is enormously grateful for the support and tireless efforts of all of our partners in this important decision, as well as to our brilliant co-counsel. We are thrilled to share this victory with them, and with the over 50,000 impacted U.S. Haitians who will benefit from the decision.

More information about the lawsuit, links to the court filings and decisions are available at nipnlg.org. The complete article is posted on workers.org.



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, LGBTQ 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. □

Contact a Workers World Party branch near you:

National Office

147 W. 24th St., 2nd floor
New York, NY 10011
212.627.2994
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta

PO Box 18123
Atlanta, GA 30316
404.627.0185
atlanta@workers.org

Austin

austin@workers.org

Boston

284 Amory St.
Boston, MA 02130
617.522.6626
boston@workers.org

Bay Area

P.O. Box 22947
Oakland, CA 94609
bayarea@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.

335 Richmond Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14222
716.883.2534
buffalo@workers.org

Charlotte

charlotte@workers.org

Cleveland

P.O. Box 5963
Cleveland, OH 44101
216.738.0320
cleveland@workers.org

Durham, N.C.

804 Old Fayetteville St.
Durham, NC 27701
919.322.9970
durham@workers.org

Houston

P.O. Box 3454
Houston, TX 77253-3454
713.503.2633
houston@workers.org

Knoxville, Tenn.

knoxville@workers.org

Minneapolis

minneapolis@workers.org

Pensacola, Fla.

pensacola@workers.org

Portland, Ore.

portland@workers.org

workers.org/wwp

Philadelphia

P.O. Box 34249
Philadelphia, PA 19101
610.931.2615
phila@workers.org

Salt Lake City

801.750.0248
slc@workers.org

San Antonio

sanantonio@workers.org

San Diego

sandiego@workers.org

Tucson, Ariz.

tucson@workers.org

Washington, D.C.

dc@workers.org

West Virginia

WestVirginia@workers.org

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Workers World
147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl.
New York, NY 10011
Phone: 212.627.2994
E-mail: ww@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org



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Editor: Deirdre Griswold

Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell,
Martha Grevatt, Monica Moorehead, Minnie Bruce Pratt

Web Editors: Ben Carroll, John Steffin

Production & Design Editors: Gery Armsby, Sasha Mazumder, Scott Williams

Copyediting and Proofreading: Paddy Colligan,
Sue Davis, S. Hedgecoke

Contributing Editors: G. Dunkel, K. Durkin, Fred Goldstein, Teresa Gutierrez, Betsey Piette, Gloria Rubac

Mundo Obero: Alberto García, Teresa Gutierrez,
Carlos Vargas

Supporter Program: Coordinator Sue Davis

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Philadelphia

Hundreds march to ‘Free Mumia Now!’

By Workers World Philadelphia bureau

On the heels of a favorable court decision that will allow Mumia Abu-Jamal to reopen his appeals, hundreds of people marched in the streets in the historically African-American Germantown section of Philadelphia April 27, days after the imprisoned activist/journalist’s 65th birthday.

The event kicked off with a rally at Vernon Park. Speakers included Ralph Poynter, longtime activist against mass incarceration and partner of the late Lynne Stewart, and Rachel Wolkenstein, activist lawyer and decades-long supporter of Abu-Jamal. Younger activist Megan Malachi, with Philly REAL Justice, spoke on abolishing the police, while Philadelphia activist and radio host Gabriel Bryant chaired the event.

Expressions of international solidarity came from Palestinian author and activist Susan Abulhawa, who spoke on solidarity between prisoners in Palestine and the U.S., including Mumia. Marcos Rezende, of Black Entities and the Workers Party of Brazil, raised the struggle to free imprisoned Brazilian Workers Party leader Lula da Silva and noted that Abu-Jamal had sent a message of solidarity to Lula.

Rally participants came from Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey and Maryland. The action, celebrating both Abu-Jamal’s birthday on April 24 and his recent court win, was one of several in the U.S. and London, Berlin and Mexico. Abu-Jamal called activists in Mexico to thank them for their international solidarity.

The Philly march took to the streets with chants, signs and banners calling for freedom for Mumia and all political prisoners. Volunteers passed out “Release Mumia Now” fliers to bystanders as the crowd of 200 or more, including several carloads of supporters following behind, eventually halted in front of Marc Lamont Hill’s Uncle Bobbie’s bookstore.

The People’s Sanctuary next door was the venue for the day’s Peoples Forum, where Abu-Jamal’s 10th and newest

book, “Murder Inc., Volume 2” was released. Noelle Hanrahan of Prison Radio organized the book launch with the support of Uncle Bobbie’s. International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal leader Pam Africa opened the program.

Parts of the book, a groundbreaking, anti-imperialist history lesson for the people, were read by Abu-Jamal supporters, including longtime Philadelphia activist Fatirah Aziz; Abu-Jamal’s nephew, Wayne Cook; Basym Hasan with the Pennsylvania Prison Society; and Mike Africa Jr., son of MOVE 9 members Debbie Africa and Mike Africa Sr. Debbie and Mike were each recently released from prison after 40 years.

Other readers included Dr. Suzanne Ross, longtime Mumia activist who has organized much of the international support for Mumia; Barbara Easley-Cox, Black Panther Party Alumni member; and Johanna Fernandez, Baruch College history professor and coordinator of Educators for Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Ten books penned from prison

Before closing the program with an update on Abu-Jamal’s legal situation, Fernandez paid tribute to his contributions of thousands of political essays and 10 books to date, all penned from his prison cell. She reminded the audience: “Mumia was part of the Black Panther Party that made teaching Black children and youth to read a part of their program.

“The Panthers fearlessly challenged the power of the police by arming themselves. These descendents of enslaved Africans took up arms to defend their communities. It was during this post-Civil Rights America that police began to use the term ‘cop killer’ to denigrate Black movement activists.”

Concerning the new legal developments, Fernandez said, “Because the movement held him accountable, Judge Leon Tucker did something phenomenal. He granted Mumia’s appeal right, in part because of the U.S. Supreme



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Court decision in Williams v. Pennsylvania. Ron Castille, as a former prosecutor in the case, should have recused himself as a judge. But Tucker took it further.

“Tucker cited Castille’s targeting of Pennsylvania capital cases involving ‘cop-killers’ as one example of Castille’s obvious bias and grounds for why he should have recused himself in Mumia’s case. There were only three such cases at the time — Mumia’s and two others.”

Next up in the courts

Fernandez explained that a three-judge panel from the Pennsylvania Superior Court will now decide whether to review Abu-Jamal’s appeals or send them to the higher Pennsylvania Supreme Court. “It’s a hot potato case, with the courts saying, ‘You take it.’ ‘No, you take it.’ Legal briefs are due by June 3, but the lawyers may ask for extensions. In any case, there will not be public hearings.

“In the same press release where [District Attorney Larry] Krasner said he wasn’t going to challenge Tucker’s order, he also said he would oppose all of Mumia’s legal appeals. All prosecutors, regardless of their political party, represent the state. Krasner needs to be put on trial, along with the system he will now defend.”

Fernandez concluded: “We need to bring this case into the court of public opinion and be in the streets to say, ‘No more delays. Release him now!’” □

Iowa mobile home residents fight rent hikes

By Mike Kühlenbeck

More than 22 million people in the U.S. live in mobile homes, according to the Manufactured Housing Institute. In Iowa, a state where housing is becoming increasingly expensive, mobile homes have been one of the few options for those with limited or fixed incomes.

Now, due to an out-of-state company, hundreds of mobile park residents are at risk of losing their homes. Residents in four Iowa mobile home communities have been targeted with predatory rent hikes after the properties were bought by Havenpark Capital in early 2019.

The Utah-based property investment and management firm buys mobile home communities to turn a profit at the expense of tenants. They own 5,000 home sites in Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma and Texas.

In Iowa, Havenpark recently took control of Golfview Mobile Home Court (North Liberty), Midwest Country Estates (Waukee), North American Mobile Home Park (Indianola), Sunrise Mobile Home Village (Iowa City) and West Branch Mobile Home Village (West Branch).

The new landlords greeted residents by placing notices on their doors informing them of drastic rent hikes to take place in 60 days. Rent would go up by 50 percent, 60 percent or nearly 70 percent throughout the communities of Golfview, Sunrise, West Branch and Midwest.

If the hike goes into effect, many residents would be forced out of their homes. In some cases, residents would have to leave behind “the mobile homes they owned, or for which they were still paying the mortgage,” according to an April 6

press release from the newly formed Golfview Residents Association.

North American Mobile residents have expressed concern that Havenpark’s rent hikes will also come to Indianola.

Johnson County Affordable Housing Coalition Executive Director Sara Barron told Workers World, “This kind of large-scale purchase of mobile home communities and the dramatic raising of the rent is new for our community. JCAHC was alerted to the situation by the son of a Golfview resident.

“It’s difficult for me to understand how a company like Havenpark Capital can justify making money for out-of-state investors by taking money from folks who don’t have enough to meet their basic needs,” Barron said.

The decision has been called “heartless” by residents, many of whom are elderly or disabled. While Havenpark’s actions are callous, they are legal under state law.

The Iowa Code is restrictive when it comes to the rights of mobile home owners. Mobile park landlords can increase tenants’ rent with short notice and evict them “without good cause.”

Barron said affordable housing is scarce in Johnson County (where three of the communities are located). “To rent a modest two-bedroom apartment, someone earning the current minimum wage would have to work two-and-a-half full-time jobs.”

Golfview residents take a stand

Instead of waiting for the laws to change, Golfview residents decided to act.

On April 5, more than 100 outraged Golfview residents and community allies gathered at the North Liberty Library. The meeting resulted in the formation of

the Golfview Residents Association.

Similar organizing efforts at the Sunrise and West Branch communities are underway, with the hope of creating a network of mobile home associations to make a stand for the rights of residents.

GRA allies include The Center for Worker Justice of Eastern Iowa, Teamsters Local 238 and TeamCAN.

Teamsters Local 238 Secretary-Treasurer Jesse Case said, “This is a moral issue and TeamCAN and the Teamsters are ready to fight alongside the Golfview Residents Association (GRA) against Havenpark.” (April 6 press release)

North Liberty Leader sports reporter Don Lund, who was elected to the GRA board, is among the Golfview residents affected by the rent hikes. Lund was born without arms below his elbows and without lower legs and feet. Unable to work 40-hour weeks, disability payments supplement his income.

Lund has lived in the community for 20 years, and isn’t willing to give up without a fight. “I don’t have any money, any resources,” Lund said at the meeting. “I’m just a guy on Social Security who can be a part of a group and fight back, and this is what I’m gonna do.”

The GRA is demanding a meeting with the new owners, a request Havenpark has yet to accept.

Silencing critics in Waukee

Waukee resident Matt Chapman, an outspoken critic of Havenpark, has tried to rally tenants of Midwest Country Estates and others against the rent hikes. He is worried that Havenpark’s long-term plan is to evict all park residents.

Chapman contacted elected representatives, wrote online posts and went



PHOTO: CENTER FOR WORKER JUSTICE OF EASTERN IOWA

Golfview Residents Association meeting, April 5.

door-to-door raising these issues with neighbors. For his actions, he received a “cease & desist” letter from Havenpark’s attorneys.

The letter, dated April 16, accused Chapman of spreading rumors and requesting confidential information from Midwest residents, which he has denied. In an interview with the Des Moines Register, Chapman said, “I made myself a bull’s eye.”

“I think it was just intimidation,” Chapman added. “I was just trying to help folks.” A response letter by Iowa Legal Aid was sent to Havenpark on Chapman’s behalf.

After an avalanche of negative publicity, Havenpark announced it would delay the rent increase until July 1. This does not change the fact that many residents would still be unable to pay, forcing them to move with nowhere to go.

For the residents of these communities, the fight is just beginning.

As Golfview resident Brittany Clowers said, “Just because low-income people live here does not mean we are ‘less than.’ ... [We] deserve to be able to have a home we can afford.” □

On the picket line

By Alex Bolchi and Sue Davis

UAW files for third vote at Volkswagen Tenn. plant

United Auto Workers Local 42 filed its third election petition for representation of 1,709 workers at the Volkswagen plant in Chattanooga, Tenn., on April 9. The petition, based on at least 30 percent of workers turning in cards seeking representation, asked for an election on April 29-30. Though the UAW’s last petition in 2015 was voted down by a 43 percent margin, the UAW cited “outside interference” from local anti-union politicians for the loss. The major issue driving this vote is workers’ anger over VW’s arbitrary shift changes.

Despite VW’s early hint about remaining neutral, it delivered a legal brief to the National Labor Relations Board April 25, requesting a delay of the election on a technicality until 2020. (Chattanooga Times Free Press) This would give anti-union forces more time to conspire against the union. Already the so-called Center for Union Facts has taken out full-page attack ads in Chattanooga area papers. Anti-union billboards have been posted. (Payday Report, April 26)

Volkswagen is unionized at 43 of its 45 factories worldwide. “Volkswagen might think that if they stall and delay, we will give up. But we will continue to work for a seat at the table, the same as every other Volkswagen worker around the world,” read a UAW statement. “After all these years, we know the issues and have all the information we need to make a decision.” This time, we will “Organize the South!”

RWDSU organizes poultry workers in the South

The 1,800 poultry workers at the Equity/Tyson plant in Camilla, Ga., overwhelmingly ratified a 3-year contract with the Department Store Union (RWDSU) April 12. The agreement set new standards for poultry workers in the South: a large cut in health care costs; annual general wage increases; overtime for working on personal days, and strengthened rights covering seniority, job bidding, layoffs and recalls.

“The people of Georgia are fighters,” said Edgar Fields, president of RWDSU’s Southeast Council. This contract is “going to impact so many workers not just at this facility, but for years to come at so many others.” RWDSU represents more than 10,000 poultry workers in four Southern states. It’s one of the few unions that has been successful at organizing in right-to-work-for-less states. (rwdsu.org, April 13)

NCOSH cites McDonald’s in “Dirty Dozen” list

The National Council for Occupational Safety and Health, a federation of labor union, health and tech professionals, and community coalitions, just added McDonald’s to its annual “Dirty Dozen” list of employers whose unsafe practices put communities at risk. McDonald’s was cited for dismissing pervasive sexual harassment at its restaurants. The NCOSH report is released in observance of Workers’ Memorial Week, which began April 22, to honor workers who lost their lives on the job as well as those who suffered workplace injuries and illnesses.

More than two dozen McDonald’s workers have filed sexual-harassment complaints with the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission. (ACLU.org, Jan. 19) “It’s hard for me to even talk about what happened at my job,” says Tanya Harrell. “A co-worker locked me in the bathroom, exposed himself and tried to rape me. I’m not the only one. A big company like McDonald’s — they have the resources to prevent this horrible behavior. What are they waiting for?” (coshnetwork.org, April 24)

With sales of more than \$37.6 billion in 2017 and the ability to employ more than 1 million, Mickey D’s certainly has the resources to end sexual harassment on the job. Time’s up, McDonald’s!

What drives teachers to strike? Low pay

A study by the Economic Policy Institute, released April 24, shows that from 1996 to 2018 the average weekly wages of public school teachers, when adjusted for inflation and summers off, have decreased by \$21, while weekly wages of other college graduates have risen by \$323. The analysis, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics, shows the teachers’ weekly wage penalty reached a record 21.4 percent in 2018. When teachers’ better benefits were factored in, the final penalty was 13.1 percent in 2018.

Noting that low pay is a prime reason for education workers’ strikes and walkouts since 2018, report co-author Lawrence Mishel summarized that low wages are “making it harder to attract people into teaching and to retain teachers, and this is bad for students and our nation.”

EPI analysis shows the teachers’ weekly wage penalty is greater than 20 percent in 21 states and the District of Columbia, including states with recent teacher strikes and activism: Arizona, Colorado, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Virginia and Washington. □

Mississippi

Historic education worker union forms

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

Education workers at the University of Mississippi have struck an effective blow at the anti-union laws of that “right-to-work-for-less” state. In November they formed the United Campus Workers of Mississippi and affiliated with the Communication Workers (CWA), an international union that serves as its parent organization.

This historic step, taken at UM-Oxford, established the first higher education union in Mississippi. Significantly, UCW was launched at the flagship campus of the state system. UM-Oxford is the school still called “Ole Miss” by some who cling to the past—a sexist and racist reference to a white plantation owner’s wife and her relation to enslaved workers of African descent.



The union’s mission statement reads: “United Campus Workers of Mississippi unites Mississippi’s diverse workforce — including part-time and full-time staff, faculty and student laborers — to address the critical issues we all face. Our mission is to champion and defend the interests and well-being of all University labor, as well as to build and sustain social and economic justice in our workplaces and in our communities.” (UCW MS Bylaws, March 2019)

In Mississippi, state statutes bar public institutions from entering into collective bargaining agreements with public employee unions. The statutes also ban strikes by public employees. UCW was created as an innovative strategy to counter such hindrances to worker organizing.

The UCW is a “wall-to-wall” union. That means any one who receives a paycheck from the state of Mississippi as a worker at a state college or university is eligible to join the UCW — from groundskeepers, student workers, graduate teaching assistants to full professors.

Most colleges divide workers into many categories within which workers have extremely varied job security and unequal benefits. Wall-to-wall membership is a powerful, effective tactic to build worker solidarity to counter these divisions. It’s also a very effective organizing strategy in the anti-union South.

The big issues

UCW organizer Jessica Wilkerson noted that one key issue for workers is low pay. Many employees make only \$16,000 to \$20,000 annually, less than the cost of living for families in the surrounding community. Some university workers also report that they are not treated with respect or afforded dignity on their jobs.

In a Nov. 29 interview with the Daily Mississippian, Wilkerson said: “People hear ‘union,’ and they think wages and benefits, but we have a broader mission than that. We want to build and sustain social and economic justice in our workplaces and in our communities. If you come to work and feel unsafe because of racism, sexism or homophobia, that’s a labor issue. That would be something, as a union, we would want to address.” Wilkerson is an assistant professor of history, researching Southern labor and working issues.

The UM campus has been the site of many struggles against injustice. In the 1940s, when segregation was still legal,

Black women who were laundry workers at UM struck to protest brutal working conditions and low pay. Though without a formal union, they won a raise and better hours, along with fans and improved ventilation in stiflingly hot laundry rooms. (Sally Palmer Thomason, “Delta Rainbow,” 2016)

As UCW was forming last November, a student-led mobilization worked to remove a Confederate statue from a featured campus location. The statue has served recently and historically as a rallying point for white supremacist groups, including during the desegregation of UM by Black U.S. veteran James Meredith in 1962. The student campaign succeeded in uniting all four UM governing entities — undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff — in voting a resounding “No!” to the statue. (Workers World, March 11)

UCW organizer Wilkerson commented in an email to WW that, with all the stepped-up organizing, there are “more connections across campus, allowing campus groups committed to fairness and justice to become stronger, as we build networks and communicate more effectively across campus ‘silos.’”

Southern education worker organizing

Beginning in West Virginia in 2017, history-making massive worker education actions began to take place in K-12 public schools — strikes, sickouts, walkouts, walk-ins and stay-aways — in states that also prohibit public employee collective bargaining.

Thousands of teachers and staff who rallied behind the slogan “Red for Ed” also engaged in what were essentially strikes in Oklahoma and Arizona. The energy and tactics of these worker actions have spread beyond the South from California to Colorado and beyond.

All these actions first began with educators building worker solidarity, engaging in local organizing that involved their communities and embracing different kinds of social justice issues as well — including defending the right to a public education for children of color, disabled children, rural children and LGBTQ children.

Now UM education workers are taking up the challenge to build an effective wall-to-wall union in Mississippi to bring equity and justice to workers in the state’s higher education institutions.

Organizer Wilkerson first became acquainted with the UCW strategy for mobilizing education workers in higher education in Southern right-to-work states when she was teaching at a community college in Tennessee. UCW-CWA was initially founded at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville as the result of a living wage campaign.

CWA organizer Karly Safar provided this background to the Daily Mississippian: “Custodians that worked in the dorms, in alliance with professors and students, launched a campaign for the university to pay all employees a living wage. From there, they expanded to community colleges and most of the public higher educations in Tennessee.” (thedmonline.org, Nov. 29, 2018)

UCW-CWA presently claims 1,800 members across 16 campuses in the state of Tennessee, with branches in Georgia and now Mississippi. Its work has centered on social and economic justice

Continued on page 5

Koreans say no to Pompeo

By Deirdre Griswold

The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea has told the U.S. government there will be no more summit meetings this year if Mike Pompeo, Trump’s Secretary of State, is part of them.

The DPRK has also reaffirmed its policy of self-reliance and independence in building a strong socialist society. DPRK leader Kim Jong Un gave a speech April 12 to the Supreme People’s Assembly on “Socialist Construction and the Internal and External Policies of the Government of the Republic at the Present Stage.”

The Korean leader spoke of how the DPRK’s development of strong nuclear defense had led the U.S. to raise the idea that there could be talks between the two countries to improve relations. This led to negotiations and two summit meetings between Kim and Trump.

But in those, he said, the U.S. used the threat of even greater sanctions to try to force the DPRK to discard its weapons, with the intent of toppling its social system.

Kim described the U.S. conditions for lifting the sanctions as “running counter to the fundamental interests of our country.” He went on to affirm that the “strategic policy” of the DPRK was to continue socialist construction “to put the national economy on a Juche, modern, IT and scientific basis.” Juche is the Korean term for self-reliance and independence.

Kim also spoke about “open hostile moves” by the U.S. that are now “running counter to the June 12th [2018] DPRK-U.S. Joint Statement.” Examples he cited included a recent U.S. test “simulating the interception of [an] ICBM from the DPRK and the resumption of the U.S. military exercises, whose suspension was directly committed to by the U.S. president.”

Kim Jong Un’s talk was corroborated April 17 in an interview given by Kwon Jong Gun, head of the American Affairs department of the DPRK’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He mentioned Pompeo by name and affirmed that “the U.S. cannot move us one iota by its current way of thinking.” He characterized remarks

Pompeo had made about the DPRK at recent hearings of the U.S. Congress as “mean” and “reckless.”

U.S. can’t break the DPRK

The U.S. imperialist government and media have been uniformly hostile to the DPRK ever since U.S. troops occupied the southern half of the Korean peninsula at the end of World War II and Washington created a puppet regime there.

This hostility reached a fever pitch during the Korean War of 1950-53, when almost 6 million U.S. armed forces were sent to Korea to prevent a popular revolution, led by Kim Il Sung, from reuniting all the peninsula on a socialist basis.

This was at the height of the Cold War of the U.S. against the USSR. The brutality of the U.S. hot war on Korea, against a people just emerging from 35 years of Japanese colonial oppression, was ghastly. U.S. planes laid waste to every building over two stories high in the north, and many times threatened the DPRK with atomic bombs. At the same

time, a puppet regime led by Syngman Rhee carried out a bloodbath of the progressive forces in the southern part of Korea.

The people of the DPRK, like those in Vietnam a generation later, refused to bow down to U.S. imperialism and fought the U.S. to a stalemate, aided by China and the Soviet Union. It was the first defeat in war for the Pentagon, and that has never been forgiven by the war makers.

Inside the U.S. at that time, the FBI, under J. Edgar Hoover, and the Congress, led by Sen. Joseph McCarthy, carried out a sweeping purge of progressives. Anyone who openly opposed the war in Korea was branded as a “red,” subject to public humiliation, firing and possible imprisonment.

Even today, the corporate media march in lockstep to demonize the DPRK for its courage in standing up to the U.S. as self-proclaimed “leader of the free world.” □

Int'l meeting in Italy denounces NATO

By G. Dunkel

Anti-war organizations and individuals from Europe and Canada met in Florence, Italy, 600-strong, for a day-long conference on April 7 to discuss the current role of the NATO military bloc following the 70th anniversary of NATO’s creation under U.S. aegis. The following are the statement and the link to the petition, slightly edited by Workers World staff, of those meeting as they continue to work for their individual countries to exit from the pact. The petition is published in 14 languages at nowarnonato.blogspot.com.

The risk of a vast war, which, with the use of nuclear weapons, could mean the end of humanity, is real and growing, even though it is not noticed by the general public, which is purposely kept

ignorant of this imminent danger.

A strong commitment to find a way out of the system driving toward war is of vital importance. This raises the question of the membership of Italy and other European countries in NATO.

NATO is not an Alliance [of equals]. It is an organization under the command of the Pentagon, and its objective is the military control of both Western and Eastern Europe.

U.S. bases in the member countries of NATO serve to occupy these countries by maintaining a permanent military presence that enables Washington to influence and control their policies and prevent genuine democratic choices.

NATO is a war machine that operates in the interest of the United States, with the complicity of the major European power groups, which has made these groups guilty of crimes against humanity.

NATO’s war of aggression in 1999 against Yugoslavia paved the way for the globalization of military interventions, with wars against Afghanistan, Libya, Syria and other countries, in complete violation of international law.

These wars are financed by the member countries, whose military budgets are increasing continually, to the detriment of spending for social programs, in order to support colossal military programs like that of the U.S. nuclear program which costs \$1.2 trillion.

In violation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the USA is deploying nuclear weapons in five nonnuclear NATO states, under the false pretext of the “Russian menace.” By doing so, it is risking the security of Europe.

To exit the war system, which is causing more and more damage and exposing Europeans to increasing dangers, we

must leave NATO, affirming our rights as sovereign and neutral States.

In this way, it is possible to contribute to the dismantling of NATO and all other military alliances, to reconfigure the structures of the entire European region, and to form a multipolar world where it is possible to realize the aspirations of the people for liberty and social justice.

We propose the creation of a NATO EXIT International Front in all the European member countries of NATO, by building an organizational network at a basic level strong enough to support the very difficult struggle needed to attain this objective, which is vital for our future.

No War No NATO Committee/
Global Research

Sign the petition to support No War No NATO at nowarnonato.blogspot.com.

Historic education worker union forms

Continued from page 4

issues, like fighting privatization of campus services and lobbying legislatures for pay raises, expanded health insurance and pension reform. (ms.policy.org)

U. of Miss. education union advances

Ellie Campbell, who is public services law librarian at the university’s Grisham Law Library, updated WW on developments in UCW since it was chartered at the end of 2018. She noted a steady growth in membership to its current total of 84.

UCW has also been doing outreach to bring in more members and to research the most pressing issues for education workers in Mississippi, specifically on the UM-Oxford campus.

The Campaign Committee is scheduling campus lunches, which coincide with clock-out time for the facilities maintenance staff, to hear from them about work issues and problems. The UM-Oxford “local” of UCW was started mainly by faculty and white-collar workers, so current efforts are devoted to reaching groundskeepers, facilities staff, and janitorial and housekeeping staff. These workers are in jobs that are the

most precarious and lowest paid, with the fewest benefits.

Campbell noted that so far key issues include low wages — the biggest problem for everybody — as well as a bad leave structure, with no paid maternity leave and sick leave that must be “earned” instead of being automatic upon hiring. There are limited grievance procedures on campus. If anything goes wrong at work, the only help is hard to access and inadequate through Human Resources.

All these issues, as well as the continuing input from campus workers, are being considered as the UCW plans its first campaign.

Campbell said of her own USW membership: “I’m originally from Anniston, Ala., and that’s not exactly union country; it started as a company town [for an iron works]. I’ve never been part of a union before. It’s really exciting to work together with people across campus to make this place better for everyone. There are a lot of problems here, but there are a lot of people who want to change that. It’s heartening to see the support [for UCW] as people find out about the union, come out to meetings and workshops, and join.” □

Build Workers World! Defend workers’ rights

Established to honor the historic 1886 struggle of Chicago workers for the 8-hour day, May Day marks the worldwide fight for workers’ rights on May 1. There’s lots of good news this year: Education workers all over the U.S., from K-12 schools to universities, started a strike wave to organize for higher wages and better working conditions. Well-paid Amazon and Google workers have joined low-wage McDonald’s workers in staging walkouts.

While Trump and the global ruling class are waging war on the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela, his administration is making war on Central American im/migrants and refugees seeking entry into the U.S. Workers are threatened with deportation after escaping horrific conditions caused by U.S. intervention in their home countries. Neo-fascist U.S. policies separate infants and children from their parents

at the border and jail underage migrants crossing the border alone.

If you want to fight against capitalist reaction and for socialist change, we invite you to join the WW Supporter Program. The program was founded in 1977. Ever since, our subscribers and friends have helped build the only revolutionary socialist weekly in the U.S. that’s in print as well as on the web.

For a donation of at least \$75 a year — and much more if you’re able — members receive a year’s subscription to WW, a monthly letter about timely issues and five free subscriptions to give to friends. Write checks (either monthly or once a year) to Workers World and mail them, with your name and address, to WWSP, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. Or sign up to donate online at workers.org/donate/ — it’s easy to set up monthly deductions. We’re grateful for your help in building Workers World — sign up today! □

WORKERS WORLD

editorial

No walls in the workers' struggle!

"This is not the end but only the beginning of the struggle."

These words were spoken on May Day. The year was 1890. The speaker was none other than Eleanor Marx. Seven years after her father's death, she was carrying the torch passed on to her by the beloved leader of the working class, Karl Marx.

May 1, 2019, has to be seen in the same light by the torch bearers of today: as the beginning of the next phase of the class struggle.

That is the view of the International Workers' Solidarity Network, which has put forth the call for monthly Workers' Solidarity Days. This call has already been endorsed by hundreds of signers from around the country and throughout the world.

The appeal for monthly action states in part: "Among the many challenges to global working-class solidarity is a vile campaign by billionaire politicians like Donald Trump to divide workers on the basis of racism, sexism, xenophobia, ableism and anti-LGBTQ2S oppression.

"Trump's war on immigrant workers is a war on the entire working class. The wall he wants to build on the border is a

wall to divide workers.

"But we know there are no walls in the workers struggle! We must say this to the 'Trumps' playing the same game on every continent in the world.

"The message must be spread: Every struggle is a workers' struggle. That includes students striking against climate change, young activists marching against racist police terror, women and gender-oppressed people rising up and saying, 'Me too,' and people with disabilities fighting for their rights."

The network has proposed June 1 as the first Workers' Solidarity Day, while urging we take any opportunity for solidarity that comes up before then. There's no break in the class struggle even though May Day is over!

For instance, a Solidarity Day could be organized on May 8 in the eight U.S. cities where drivers working for Uber and Lyft will stage job actions. RideShare Drivers United has called for "Apps off" from midnight to midnight.

Wherever the drivers rally, the Solidarity Network will be there. The network has also called a demonstration on Wall St. May 8, the day that Uber begins

to sell its shares on the New York Stock Exchange. Drivers are facing pay cuts, but in the eyes of potential stockholders that just means more profits.

These exploited workers can't wait — and aren't waiting — for entrenched labor bureaucrats to figure out how to organize new workers in the gig economy. This courageous job action follows walkouts by Amazon and McDonald's workers and the global walkout against sexual harassment and racism by Google workers.

This is not to say that labor unions are outmoded or no longer have a role in the class struggle. Militant strikes by education workers, hotel service workers, retail and grocery workers demonstrate just the opposite.

But what is needed right now is a global movement of the entire working class, organized and "unorganized" labor encompassing the most oppressed and exploited workers.

This is the perspective behind holding monthly Solidarity Days. Solidarity with im/migrant workers will be a major theme, with "No walls in the workers' struggle" the rallying point. Actions will also honor LGBTQ2S Pride month in

June, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion.

Workers' Solidarity Day is about tearing down all the walls that divide workers — from the physical border wall Trump is demanding to the walls of racism, misogyny and all forms of bigotry.

The working-class movement must discard the notion that the growing numbers of precarious workers are "too hard to organize." That was not Marx's view when he wrote in 1848: "The increasing improvement of machinery, ever more rapidly developing, makes [workers'] livelihood more and more precarious."

Marx saw the working class as the only class that could put an end to class exploitation and lay the foundation for a new society where human needs come first.

We need to turn our face to the billions who comprise our class. Regular monthly Solidarity Days — and showing solidarity whenever and wherever it's needed — can move us forward.

As Eleanor Marx said, "We must speak for the cause daily, and [so] make the men, and especially the women that we meet, come into the ranks to help us." □

Cleveland horrified by jail deaths, conditions

By Martha Grevatt
Cleveland

The Cleveland Plain Dealer released a horrifying video to the public April 25. A guard at the Cuyahoga County jail is seen dragging an inmate, whom he has in a chokehold, from one room to another on Nov. 3. The guard, Christopher Perdue, then slams the inmate, who is not named, onto the hard floor.

The inmate was apparently in a cell that was not his, although no one else was in the cell at the time. A Muslim, he had struggled to find a quiet place to pray that allowed him to face east. He was praying when he was dragged out of the cell. The prisoner believes that guards retaliated against him because he had spoken to U.S. federal marshals, who were conducting an investigation for the Department of Justice last year about the deplorable conditions in the jail.

Perdue was merely suspended without pay for five days. His actions are the latest of a series of atrocities that have taken place in the Cuyahoga County Correctional Center (CCCC), which houses inmates from Cleveland and the metropolitan area.

The federal investigation was prompted by the deaths of six inmates within a few months in 2018. A guard reportedly kicked the mat that one of the dying men was lying on and made no effort to check his medical condition. A seventh inmate died while the investigation was underway. The marshals issued a scathing 52-page report in November.

The conditions described have been front-page news for months and have become a scandal for the county administration and, by extension, the local Democratic Party. All but three of the 11 county council members are Democrats, as is Cuyahoga County Executive Armond Budish.

An eighth person died, reportedly committing suicide, in December.

An unsafe, unsanitary, unhealthy environment

The November report indicates that the jail is designed for 1,765 people, but at the time housed 2,420 inmates. Cells built for two cellmates held as many as 12 people. Many, including pregnant women, lacked beds and slept on mats on the floor. This can be seen in the video of the Nov. 3 incident, in which people are seen lying on mats in the cafeteria.

Juveniles were being housed with adults. Their particular needs, from nutrition to counseling, were ignored.

Food service overall was rated "Unsatisfactory," the lowest possible rating. "Mice/Vermin are present and were observed running ... throughout the food service area," according to the report. Investigators observed general unsanitary conditions in these areas. Special medical and religious diets were not provided.

The jail operates below federal fire safety standards, with inadequate inspection of fire extinguishers, fire drills held on an irregular basis, and one of two buildings lacks an automatic sprinkler system, among other violations.

Inmates placed in Restricted Housing Units, for disciplinary reasons or in some cases for their own safety, were subject to "the intentional and deliberate use of food as a punitive measure." Food was nutritionally inadequate and at times spoiled or maliciously withheld.

Placement in RHU can be for less-than-major rules violations, and the warden can approve isolation for up to 30 days without a hearing. Juveniles and inmates with mental health challenges can be placed in isolation without consideration of their special circumstances. Inmates "have no access to an impartial hearing process." While in RHU, they are denied mail and phone access. Cells are often cold there, but guards reportedly denied requests for blankets.

Throughout the CCCC, investigators found broken sinks, toilets and showers. Toilet paper and menstrual supplies were

not always made available. There was a general lack of proper sanitation conditions and procedures.

The report's section on health care gave CCCC a less-than-satisfactory rating of "Marginal." There were problems with dispensing medication, biohazard disposal, lack of recordkeeping for special needs, etc. On the third floor, "Medical is made aware of an inmate's health need only when the need, issue, or situation digresses to urgent or emergency."

Suicide prevention protocols are inadequate, and suicide-prone inmates are not properly screened or attended to. "For nearly a month, medical officials at the Cuyahoga County Jail pleaded with County Executive Armond Budish's administration to make changes aimed, in part, at decreasing suicides at the jail," according to the April 12 Plain Dealer.

Changes were finally implemented after the December death. However, suicide attempts continue: In March a man jumped off a balcony, but survived.

Abusive 'use of force'

Additional documented outrages involved "use of force." The Special Response Team, informally referred to as the "men in black" because of SRT's black paramilitary attire, have become notorious for violence and intimidation. More

than 100 inmates testified about "cruel treatment."

Further evidence of abuse, beyond the marshals' report, has come to light recently in the media. Chantelle Glass was brought to CCCC last July after her parents called police over a fight between her and her sister. Held in jail for an unpaid traffic ticket, Glass was restrained to a chair, punched and pepper sprayed.

Some two dozen current and former inmates have filed lawsuits over conduct that includes denial of medication, physical assault, lack of mental health counseling, inability to contact attorneys while in isolation, and what the civil rights law firm Friedman and Gilbert terms, "[A] multitude of constitutional rights violations suffered by people in the custody of the County Jail." (Plain Dealer, Dec. 20) Budish and several jail officials are named in the suit.

Other problems detainees face include lack of Spanish-speaking staff and the absence of a Muslim imam. While no inmates are forced to work, those who choose to participate in the work program are considered "volunteers" and receive no compensation for their labor.

Bail system keeps poor in jail

Most of the people locked up in CCCC are not there for serious or violent crimes.

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Clevelanders protest jail conditions.

PHOTO: COALITION TO STOP THE INHUMANITY AT CUYAHOGA COUNTY JAIL

WW Commentary

Biden and the bankruptcy of the Democratic Party

By Teresa Gutierrez

Many revolutionaries want to ignore the 2020 U.S. presidential elections. The elections are sickening, corrupt — they suck up all the air closer to November. They are almost meaningless.

But ignore we cannot. Every political development must be studied. Revolutionaries are in a war against the capitalist class. And in a war, the enemy must always be studied.

The announcement of the candidacy of Joe Biden is one of those developments that should be quickly examined.

In a period where there is mass discontent with Donald Trump, the liberal ruling class will likely aim to divert all that discontent into the Democratic Party. From here until the election, the only song they will be playing will be (drum roll please) “Anybody Who Can Beat Trump.”

Is the Democratic Party changing?

A Slate article recently asserted: “The Democratic Party ... has moved to the left.” (tinyurl.com/yxu74drw)

And yes, there are rumblings of change. Alexandra Ocasio Cortez. Ilhan Omar. Some talk about reparations, increased taxes on the ultra-rich, eliminating the Electoral College. These and other issues ignored for decades by the Democrats are all suddenly being raised.

But these whispers of change are an attempt to stay relevant and to keep a large section of the masses confined to Democratic Party ideology.

The election of Trump has ushered in a real shift to the left. Talk about socialism is increasing. Younger people have more progressive, revolutionary ideas. There is fear about the rise of the alt-right and open white supremacy. There is genuine concern for migrants. Issues such as job insecurity, climate change, inadequate wages and access to affordable health care are contributing to dissatisfaction with capitalism.

It is the people — not the Democratic Party — who have moved to the left.

If the Democratic establishment goes with Joe, it will be a “f--- you” to those progressives fighting for change. It will especially be a “f--- you” to the #MeToo movement.

Joe Biden is a sexist and a racist

Many people must have hoped that Biden’s sexual conduct — exposed earlier this year — would have put him out of the running.

It did not. One of the brave women who came out to expose Biden was Lucy Flores, a former state assemblyperson from Nevada.

Flores wrote in an April 29 New York Times op-ed: “The #MeToo movement wasn’t just a flash in the pan. It marked a profound tectonic shift toward continued female empowerment ... and the ongoing rumbling continues to cause all kinds of discomfort.

“After centuries of oppression ... and dehumanization, women finally began finding their individual voices. ... The worst of the worst were forced out of their systemic fortresses. Rapists, sexual assaulters, sexual harassers—villains who refused to acknowledge their actions, much less atone. Powerful, rich and famous men who acted with impunity ... were finally brought to some version of justice.

“And then there was Joe Biden. “Not a villain. Not an unlikable person. Not a sexual harasser or assaulter. But also, as Anita Hill recently found out, not exactly sorry, either.”

Biden has been accused of touching women inappropriately and without their permission — placing his hands on their shoulders, rubbing against their faces, hugging women he just met or hardly knew. He has yet to acknowledge that he has done anything wrong.

Criticism of Biden is not just about his sexism. Early in the 1970s, Biden opposed school integration. Like the Clintons, he was a big “law and order advocate” — a stance that led to the mass incarceration of Black and Brown folk, as he helped to pass the draconian Clinton crime bill. He voted to invade Iraq. But, above all, Biden had a major, insidious role in attacking a people’s hero, Anita Hill — a role he has yet to apologize for.

Biden’s betrayal of Anita Hill continues

When Hill bravely accused Clarence Thomas of egregious sexual harassment when he served as her supervisor at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Biden led the degradation

that ensued. Biden chaired the 1991 Senate hearings to confirm Thomas as Supreme Court Justice.

The hearings turned into a shocking display of “blame the victim” as Hill’s character, credibility and impressive qualifications were challenged. She was accused of being a liar, a fraud and worse — “an erotomaniac.”

Other women who had been harassed by Thomas were never called to testify, leaving Hill alone in opposing Thomas’ sexual harassment.

Thomas had the weight of the Republicans behind him, particularly the George H.W. Bush White House, while Hill supposedly had the Democrats on her side — in the person of Biden. Yet all the men who ran these hearings set out to destroy her.

Twenty-eight years after those hearings, just before Biden announced his candidacy on April 25, he called Hill and, according to a statement from his campaign, conveyed “his regret for what she endured.” (New York Times, April 26)

Hill declined to characterize his words in that call as an apology: “I cannot be satisfied [by him] simply saying, ‘I’m sorry for what happened to you.’ I will be satisfied when I know that there is real change and real accountability and real purpose to correct the issues that are still there.” (Jezebel, April 27)

Whoopi Goldberg, hosting the daytime talk show “The View,” interviewed Biden on April 26. She asked several times if he would give Hill a real apology. Instead, Biden continued to show his white male privilege and arrogance, saying, “I did everything in my power to do what I thought was within the rules.”

In a 1994 national best-seller, “Strange Justice,” several Democrats are quoted as saying that Biden was “outmaneuvered by the Republicans” as “he bent over backwards to be fair to all sides.”

But recently a congressional adviser exposed Biden’s role, saying, “Biden agreed to the terms of the people who were out to disembowel Hill.” (New Yorker, April 27)

In that interview, Hill drew “a connection between her experience and that of Christine Blasey Ford, whose credibility was similarly assailed... during the Senate confirmation hearings of... Brett

Kavanaugh.” In the Times, Hill stated that Biden helped “set the stage” for the Kavanaugh hearings: “There are women and men now who have just really lost confidence in our government to respond to the problem of gender violence.”

The outrage of Black women

The Anita Hill hearings had nuanced components on both the woman question and the national question.

Katherine Tate, an African-American professor at Brown University, said in “Invisible Woman” in 1992: “When Clarence Thomas called the Senate hearings a ‘high-tech lynching,’ he turned his confirmation into a race-loyalty test for Blacks. Once again, the concerns of Black women were obscured.”

In “The Proclamation,” an important statement at the time of the hearings by African-American Women in Defense of Ourselves, the women wrote: “As women of African descent, we are deeply troubled by the recent nomination, confirmation and seating of Clarence Thomas. ... The seating is an affront not only to African-American women and men, but to all people concerned with social justice.

“We are particularly outraged by the racist and sexist treatment of Professor Anita Hill ... who was maligned and castigated for daring to speak publicly. ... The malicious defamation ... sent a dangerous message to any woman who might contemplate a sexual harassment complaint. ... We pledge ourselves to continue to speak out ... in defense of the African-American community and against those ... hostile to social justice, no matter what color they are. No one will speak for us but ourselves.” (tinyurl.com/y3nm2aj2)

After Biden’s campaign announcement on April 25, many media publications noted that elected officials do not want to speak “negatively” about Biden, in the belief this would undermine the candidate who they think is the best to beat Trump.

These are the best? Not Trump! Not Biden! Not Bernie!

To humbly paraphrase “The Proclamation,” the theme for the 2020 election should be: “No one can speak for the workers and the oppressed but ourselves.” □

Cleveland horrified by jail deaths, conditions

Continued from page 6

What keeps them in jail for lesser offenses is a system in which money bail is set at an amount that poor arrestees cannot pay. This was the case with 27-year-old Brenden Kiekisz, who was arrested last Christmas “on suspicion of violating the terms of his court-ordered drug intervention program.” He was found hanging in his cell two days later.

The Coalition to Stop the Inhumanity at Cuyahoga County Jail (SICCJ), formed in December to protest the outrageous situation at CCCC, recently held a teach-in on the nefarious way the bail system operates. According to the presenters, 75 percent of jail inmates would be out if they had bail money. People of color suffer disproportionately from the bail extortion racket.

In Cleveland, not having bail money means having to suffer the most demeaning, abusive, unhealthy and potentially life-threatening conditions one can imagine. These conditions have met resistance, however. SICCJ has been out in the community multiple times with a petition demanding bail reform. The coalition has held a number of pickets, and members attend and speak at County Council meetings.

Public outrage has led to the arrest, firing and resignation of a number of jail officials. Now is the time to elevate the slogan, “Tear down the walls.” □

Buffalo

Activists protest threatened seizure of Venezuela's embassy



WW PHOTO: THOMAS ANSWEENEY

The International Action Center's Buffalo members and friends demonstrated April 27 in solidarity with anti-war, progressive activists who are conducting a sit-in at the Venezuelan Embassy in Washington, D.C. Their action is in response to the U.S. government’s expressed intent to illegally arrest those presently occupying the embassy and to install

diplomats representing Juan Guaidó, the self-appointed president, there.

Diplomats of the legitimate Venezuelan government were expelled in January by the Trump administration. Anti-war, peace and progressive activists inside the embassy are lawfully present as the invited guests of the legitimate Venezuelan government of

Nicolás Maduro. Their presence has prevented the U.S. administration from carrying out a brazen act of piracy.

Buffalo activists also demanded “No U.S. coup!” and demonstrated against U.S. sanctions on Venezuela, which have caused so many people to struggle with shortages, especially of medicine.

— Report by Ellie Dorritie



FOTO: TELESUR

Caracas, el pueblo apoya al Presidente Maduro.

Editorial

¡Alto a las sanciones estadounidenses!

La pandilla que anuncia las políticas de Washington ha establecido un programa de castigo, dirigido a poblaciones de países en tres continentes. Cualquier tribunal internacional honesto los acusaría de crímenes contra la humanidad.

El secretario de Estado Mike Pompeo, el asesor de seguridad nacional John Bolton y el presidente Donald Trump declararon en diferentes momentos en marzo y abril que habrá nuevas sanciones aun más severas para Venezuela, Cuba y Nicaragua. Las sanciones contra Zimbabue se extenderán un año más e Irán no podrá exportar petróleo.

Las sanciones existentes dirigidas a Rusia traen a un cuarto continente, Europa. Además, las empresas en países de la Unión Europea que han comenzado a hacer negocios normales con, por ejemplo, Cuba o Irán, enfrentan el castigo económico de los EE. UU.

Para imponer su dominación decadente y ahora en descenso sobre el resto del mundo, el imperialismo estadounidense utiliza su poder militar destructor todavía preeminente, con 800 bases en todos los continentes, junto con su máquina de propaganda y su poder económico decadente pero aún impresionante.

Recuerde que las sanciones contra Irak que comenzaron en 1990, continuaron bajo las administraciones republicana y demócrata, y terminaron solo con la invasión de Estados Unidos en 2003. En ese período, las sanciones fueron responsables de la muerte de 1,5 millones de iraquíes, incluidos 500.000 niños pequeños.

La máquina de guerra mata rápidamente. Las sanciones, aunque sean más lentas, son tan mortales como las invasiones.

En este hemisferio, las armas económicas del imperialismo apuntan a Venezuela, Cuba y Nicaragua con el objetivo de derrocar a sus gobiernos soberanos. En el caso de Cuba, el gobierno socialista ha desafiado las sanciones, el bloqueo y la agresión directa de los Estados Unidos durante 60 años. El objetivo de Bolton, Pompeo y Trump es hacer que las poblaciones de esos países sufran tanto que se rebelan y derrocan a sus gobiernos.

Pero las sanciones no siempre cambian las políticas gubernamentales ni eliminan a los gobiernos. Políticos imperialistas reaccionarios como Bolton y Pompeo a menudo subestiman la determinación de las masas o sus gobiernos de resistir la subyugación. Los planes de los criminales estadounidenses pueden fallar.

Las sanciones, sin embargo, casi siempre hacen sufrir a la población, y los más pobres y vulnerables son los que más sufren, a menos que estén protegidos por un gobierno socialista popular como el de Cuba.

Parte de la actual nueva ola de sanciones, dijo Bolton, tiene como objetivo detener la entrega de petróleo de Venezuela a Cuba, afectando a la población de ambos países. Bolton no dijo si estaba involucrando a la Marina de los Estados Unidos en este tipo de bloqueo, que es un acto de guerra.

Los gobiernos de todos los países involucrados han declarado su determinación de enfrentar las sanciones de los Estados Unidos sin cambiar sus políticas de principios. El presidente cubano, Miguel Díaz-Canel, lo dijo bien en Twitter: “Los que sostienen una espada contra nosotros no cambiarán nuestra actitud. Los cubanos no nos rendimos. ... En Cuba, los cubanos gobiernan”.

Con ese mismo espíritu, los antiimperialistas en los EE. UU. tienen que tratar las sanciones impuestas por los EE. UU. De la misma manera que tratamos las guerras y amenazas de guerra en los EE. UU. Debemos movilizarnos para resistirlos. Y sobre la base de las sanciones penales de la administración, nuestro objetivo puede ser acusar a esta banda de asesinos con crímenes de contra la humanidad.

¡Alto a las sanciones contra Zimbabue, Irán, Rusia, la República Popular Democrática de Corea, Cuba, Venezuela y Nicaragua!

¡Fin a todas las sanciones por los Estados Unidos! □

Venezuela

Movilización a Miraflores en rechazo al nuevo intento de golpe

Por Marco Teruggi
Caracas

Original: pagina12.com.ar. Teruggi es sociólogo y periodista argentino que vive en Caracas.

A las 4 de la madrugada del 30 de abril un grupo reducido de miembros de la Fuerza Armada Nacional Bolivariana (Fanb), estimado en 100, identificado con una bandera azul encabezó el inicio de un intento de golpe de Estado. El movimiento tuvo dos elementos principales: la aparición de Leopoldo López, dirigente del partido Voluntad Popular que estaba en prisión domiciliaria, en la base militar de La Carlota junto a Juan Guaidó, así como el movimiento de un grupo de integrantes de la Fanb con cintas azules a Altamira, zona principal de movilizaciones de la derecha en Caracas.

El ministro de comunicación, Jorge Rodríguez, el comandante de la Fanb, Vladimir Padrino López, así como el presidente de la Asamblea Nacional Constituyente, Diosdado Cabello, entre otros, afirmaron en las primeras horas que la base de La Carlota no estaba tomada, y que los cuarteles del país se

mantenían en respaldo al presidente Nicolás Maduro.

Guaidó afirmó que se trataba de la fase definitiva de lo que ha denominado la “operación libertad”. El intento militar contó con el respaldo público internacional del gobierno norteamericano, a través de Mike Pompeo, del presidente de Colombia Iván Duque, del gobierno de Argentina a través del canciller Jorge Faurie, el secretario de la Organización de Estados Americanos, Luis Almagro, el presidente del Parlamento Europeo, Antonio Tajani, entre otros.

El gobierno de España, por su parte, rechazó el intento violento: “Debe quedar claro que España no respalda ningún golpe militar”.

El nuevo asalto apareció con una fuerza mediática que no tiene su correlato en la capacidad militar en el terreno. Tampoco ha existido, hasta el momento, una respuesta de apoyo de la población opositora en las calles para respaldar a los militares.

La situación en Caracas, a excepción de los dos epicentros y de las redes sociales, presenta una tensa tranquilidad. El chavismo por su parte ha comenzado a movilizarse al Palacio de Miraflores para respaldar al presidente Nicolás Maduro, la democracia, rechazar el nuevo momento del intento de golpe de Estado. □

Editorial

El humo, los espejos y el viejo juego de conchas

La política capitalista ha sido durante mucho tiempo un juego de conchas.

Mientras que a las masas se les dice que acudan a las elecciones para abordar sus innumerables reclamos: los verdaderos problemas de la pobreza, el racismo, la falta de empleos permanentes bien remunerados y la atención médica asequible, la lucha por los derechos de las mujeres y LGBTQ, todos son puestos en el estante de espera en los programas de los principales partidos capitalistas.

Lo mismo ocurre con los medios corporativos, especialmente con el ala supuestamente “liberal”, que en este momento se está enfocando intensamente en el informe Mueller y los esfuerzos de la campaña Trump para obtener la ayuda de Rusia para piratear los correos electrónicos de Hillary Clinton antes de las elecciones presidenciales de 2016.

¿Por qué esto recibe tanta atención? Hay muchas otras razones para exponer y oponerse al carácter horrible de la administración Trump.

Demuestra abiertamente sus crímenes contra personas de color e inmigrantes, alejando a los niños de sus padres y encerrándolos por intentar escapar de los horrores creados en sus países de origen, especialmente en América Central, por los golpes de derecha instigados por los Estados Unidos.

Ha creado un clima en el que Klan y los tipos nazis y otros neofascistas se sienten libres para difundir sus viles llamados al nacionalismo blanco, atendiendo a aquellos que temen el resurgimiento de una clase obrera multicultural y multiétnica unida en solidaridad contra los patrones.

Está tratando de matar de hambre y desmoralizar a la gente de Venezuela con sanciones aplastantes para instalar un gobierno más a gusto de los intereses petroleros de los Estados Unidos.

Está calentando a todo el planeta como recompensa a sus adinerados patrocinadores en la industria de los combustibles fósiles, que se benefician de la destrucción del medio ambiente.

En cuanto a las elecciones de 2016, ¿dónde está el alboroto, día tras día, en los medios de comunicación acerca de cómo millones de votantes, tantos de ellos de raza Negra y Latinx, fueron excluidos de votar por restricciones de voto reaccionarias? Estos errores sin duda inclinaron el voto hacia el Partido Republicano y Trump.

Pero en lugar de enojarse justificadamente por estas violaciones de los derechos de los trabajadores y oprimidos, los medios de comunicación y el Partido Demócrata se centran en lo que hizo la administración para obtener el apoyo de Rusia para Trump. Es el viejo juego de la concha, mira aquí, no a mis manos.

Esta, por cierto, no es la primera vez que uno de los principales partidos capitalistas en los Estados Unidos, nuevamente el Partido Republicano, utilizó la “influencia extranjera” para inclinar una elección presidencial en su beneficio.

La guerra de Vietnam, iniciada en 1963 bajo el demócrata John F. Kennedy, continuó bajo su sucesor, Lyndon Johnson. En 1968, cuando la población se oponía cada vez más a la guerra y millones habían estado en las calles pidiendo que los Estados Unidos salieran, la administración de Johnson presentó una “sorpresa de octubre” justo antes de la elección. Anunció que las conversaciones de paz estaban a punto de comenzar, involucrando a Vietnam del Norte, Vietnam del Sur y los Estados Unidos.

Se suponía que esto iba a cimentar el voto a favor de los demócratas, después de años de marchas en contra de la guerra donde el eslogan popular era “Hey, hey, LBJ, ¿a cuántos niños mataste hoy?”

Pero el Partido Republicano privó a los demócratas de parte del “voto de paz” al reclutar secretamente el apoyo de un rico partidario chino del presidente de Taiwan, Chiang Kai-shek, para persuadir al presidente de Vietnam del Sur, Nguyen Van Thieu, a que se negara a participar en las conversaciones. Las conversaciones de paz nunca sucedieron. (Consulte “Los gobiernos extranjeros han estado manipulando las elecciones de Estados Unidos durante décadas”, revista Politico, 27 de julio de 2016 — una pieza no muy progresiva pero interesante).

Así que Richard Nixon ganó las elecciones, y la guerra continuó, ahora bajo los republicanos durante siete años más. No se debió a ningún voto en los Estados Unidos por los partidos republicanos o demócratas, que compartieron los crímenes de la guerra, sino solo después de que los vietnamitas pudieron llevar a las fuerzas estadounidenses a la mar y recuperar a su país.

Nada ha cambiado fundamentalmente hoy en día con la política capitalista, a excepción de los nombres y rostros de quienes defienden este sistema corrupto y vil. □