

EL MUNDO CONTRA EL BLOQUEO

votación 2015

A favor	191	En contra	2
Abstenciones	0		
Países en contra EE.UU. e Israel			

AGENCIA CUBANA DE NOTICIAS FUENCUBA

CUBA 8, 11

No U.S. troops

LET SYRIA LIVE

By Chris Fry

Just a month after the Pentagon admitted that its \$500 million program to arm and train “Arab opposition forces” in Syria has failed, with only four or five so-called fighters trained, the Obama administration announced that some 50 U.S. Special Forces “advisers” are being sent to Syria.

This escalation represents a new attempt by U.S. imperialism to restart another proxy war in the Middle East. Clearly Russia’s assistance to the Syrian government in fighting the Islamic State forces (also called ISIS) has complicated U.S. imperialism’s plans. Aaron Miller, a vice president at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, describes the U.S. strategy behind sending troops into Syria: “Keep your eye on ISIS, keep your forces out of Russia’s way and yet enhance your profile after Moscow has raised theirs.” (New York Times, Oct. 30)

Along with the Special Forces troops, the Obama administration announced that the Pentagon is deploying A-10 and F-15 warplanes to Incirlik Air Base in Turkey. These planes are specially designed to provide “support” for ground troops.

And thousands of U.S. soldiers are now “redeployed” to Iraq, in what the Pentagon blithely calls a “training and advisory role.” (theguardian.com, Oct. 30)

The U.S. sees the brutal civil war in Syria as an opportunity to rid itself of the government led by President Bashar al-Assad, which has consistently stood up for Syrian sovereignty. The fact that this war has cost the lives of tens of thousands of people and displaced millions from their homes means nothing to the Pentagon, Wall Street and Washington.

Sending in U.S. troops clearly breaks a pledge that Obama made in 2013, when during a speech he said, “I will not put American boots on the ground in Syria.” (USA Today, Oct. 31) This echoes the pledge made by Lyndon Johnson during his 1964 election campaign to not send regular U.S. troops to Vietnam at a time when Special Forces were already deployed.

That broken promise cost the lives of tens of thousands of U.S. troops and millions of Vietnamese. For decades people in the U.S. were painfully aware that any initial use of “advisers” might easily lead

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BUILDING SOLIDARITY AGAINST OPPRESSION

6-7



Durham, N.C., demonstration, Oct. 30.

WWPHOTO: L.T. PHAM

WWP National Conference

Why we need socialist revolution

By WW Editors

Workers World Party is holding its national conference at the Shabazz Center in New York City on the Nov. 7-8 weekend. We spoke with Teresa Gutierrez, Scott Williams and Monica Moorehead — some of the conference agenda organizers — to see what WWP has planned for this annual event.

First, they extended a welcome to the hundreds of members, candidate members, allies and interested friends who are coming from all over the United States to attend the conference. They say the growing resistance to deepening economic inequality, and especially to racist police attacks, has awakened not only struggle in the streets but a desire to understand what is behind the growing crisis of the capitalist system.

The main theme of the conference is “Putting Socialist Revolution on the Table.” The opening session — at 9 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 7 — directly addresses that topic. It should offer a real alternative for any worker, oppressed person or activist wanting to combat the institutionalized racism, poverty and war that is plaguing the globe. What will be discussed is nothing like the kinds of “solutions” offered by the candidates of the big business parties, be they Democrats or Republicans.

The second plenary panel gets right into what WWP can do to build solidarity with some of the major struggles going on in the United States and in the world. It is called “Building Worldwide Solidarity with Black Lives Matter and Migrants” and will begin after the first panel ends. Following this, a special announcement

will be made about WWP’s intervention in the 2016 national elections.

Lunch is available inside the hall for those who want to remain there. If they choose, they can participate in a special interactive panel on “An Historic View of Socialist Movements.”

This is followed by a third plenary session called “Capitalism at a Dead End: The Decline and Dangers of Imperialism.” From the end of World War II to 2007, the capitalist class of ruthless billionaire bankers and corporate bosses counted on the boom part of the business cycle to rescue their system from the bust crisis of overproduction. Those days are over, for reasons to be discussed.

Next comes an analysis of the crisis confronting us, with emphasis on its

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Anti-immigrant law protested

By BlackGirlRedStar
Raleigh, N.C.

Activists gathered in front of North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory's mansion on Oct. 29 to protest the signing of anti-immigrant House Bill 318. This bill has several provisions which all act to harm immigrants and workers, such as prohibiting the use of consular documents as identification and proof of residency. Additionally, it would prevent cities and counties from choosing to become "sanctuary" cities, where local governments could determine the extent to which local law enforcement collaborates with federal immigration agencies and procedures.

Speakers highlighted the issues facing immigrant families, students, youth and others who were present at the action, decrying the deportation of undocumented people and reminding the crowd of the contributions that immigrants have made to the community and the state of North Carolina.

Six brave immigrant activists from various organizations and backgrounds took the streets, linked together with handcuffs covered by polyvinyl chloride tubes that read "Black + Brown Power" and "Stop Hate!" Ivanna Gonzales, one of these protestors, said, "HB 318 is an attack on immigrant workers and a distraction from the indignities that all North Carolinian workers suffer every day. I won't stand for it."

For several hours, police and other officials cut through

Raleigh, N.C.



Six brave immigrant activists take the streets.

the PVC tubes to separate these determined activists, as they and the crowd demanded an end to HB 318.

This powerful action succeeded in sending a message to those in power that the community is watching. This community will continue to interrupt their comfort, at their front doors if necessary, until they put an end to these hateful, unnecessary laws that deliberately attack immigrants in North Carolina and across the country. □

Help build a Workers World!

- ▶ If you're sick, sick, sick of endless wars and oppose the U.S. invasion of Iraq and Syria,
- ▶ If you are in solidarity with the dynamic Black Lives Matter struggle in the forefront of fighting police terror and structural racism,
- ▶ If you detest the bankers and bosses making the workers pay for the economic crisis they didn't create,
- ▶ If you know from reading WW that capitalism is at a dead end,
- ▶ If you want to fight for a better way of life based on economic planning and the equitable distribution of wealth the workers create,
- ▶ If you're lucky enough to still have a job —

Then put some of your hard-earned dollars in Workers World and help us put out one of the only remaining progressive weeklies in the U.S. that's still printed as well as on the Web. We plan to keep issuing a printed edition to hand it out to people on demonstrations, picket lines and street corners.

For the past 38 years, WW subscribers have helped maintain the paper by joining the WW Supporter Program. We invite you to sign up today!

Please join the Workers World Supporter Program and make a regular donation, no matter how modest. Go to workers.org/donate/ or send checks to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd floor, New York, NY 10011, with your name and address; write "For WWSP." □

MUNDO OBRERO WORKERS WORLD

Who we are & what we're fighting for

Hate capitalism? Workers World Party fights for a socialist society — where the wealth is socially owned and production is planned to satisfy human need. This outmoded capitalist system is dragging down workers' living standards while throwing millions out of their jobs. If you're young, you know they're stealing your future. And capitalism is threatening the entire planet with its unplanned, profit-driven stranglehold over the means of production.

Workers built it all — it belongs to society, not to a handful of billionaires! But we need a revolution to make that change. That's why for 56 years WWP has been building a revolutionary party of the working class inside the belly of the beast.

We fight every kind of oppression. Racism, sexism,

degrading people because of their nationality, sexual or gender identity or disabilities — all are tools the ruling class uses to keep us apart. They ruthlessly super-exploit some in order to better exploit us all. WWP builds unity among all workers while supporting the right of self-determination. Fighting oppression is a working-class issue, which is confirmed by the many labor struggles led today by people of color, immigrants and women.

WWP has a long history of militant opposition to imperialist wars. The billionaire rulers are bent on turning back the clock to the bad old days before socialist revolutions and national liberation struggles liberated territory from their grip. We've been in the streets to oppose every one of imperialism's wars and aggressions. □

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Boston school bus drivers ride the bus to WW conference

By Workers World Boston Bureau

On Nov. 7, Team Solidarity — the Voice of United School Bus Union Workers — will send a busload of activist leaders from United Steelworkers Local 8751 and supporters in Boston to participate in the Workers World Party National Conference in New York City.

At its October membership meeting, Local 8751 voted to pay part of the cost of the bus, acknowledging the support Workers World has given to the bus drivers for decades. “Workers World is doing a good job altogether,” said President Andre François, one of the four union leaders fired by Veolia/Transdev two years ago. “The union has benefitted from Workers World. One of the founders is a Workers World member. I look forward to going to the conference every year and we always have a great time. We learn a lot.”

This will be the third year in a row that François has attended and the third that the union has sent a bus. Last year, Team Solidarity gave a detailed update to the

party, appealing for solidarity in their struggle. The drivers joined conference participants in a march on Veolia’s Manhattan offices to “Say No to Veolia’s union busting” and to demand the immediate reinstatement of the fired union leaders!

“We met with activist leaders from cities across the country as well as international guests, including an impressive delegation from revolutionary Cuba,” said vice president and fired union leader Steve Kirschbaum. “The conference provided a unique opportunity to learn, discuss, deliberate and formulate strategy for fighting back against the ravages of capitalism and the union-busting, racism, sexism, LGBTQ oppression, discrimination against people with disabilities, immigrants and youth and other evils that it breeds.”

Much has developed in the union’s ongoing struggle since last year’s conference. Local 8751 has successfully beat



back the Veolia/Transdev/Boston Police, anti-union, felony frame-up of Vice President Kirschbaum with a militant worker/community defense.

Last April, Team Solidarity, led by the four fired leaders, swept every position in the union’s Executive Board election in a historic landslide victory. The new board has brought rank-and-file activist unionism into every bus yard every day of the year. The union continues to demand a just contract with no concessions, the

reinstatement of the illegally fired leaders and an end to the racist austerity cutbacks to public education.

“This past year, the fighting rank and file of USW 8751 have been visited by countless ‘Solidarity Boots on the Ground’ contingents from Workers World branches throughout the country, standing shoulder to shoulder with us in the finest tradition of union solidarity, marching in pickets, rallies, packing the court-

room and the 101 organizational tasks required to successfully carry out the struggle,” the team stated in a leaflet about the bus trip.

“We will be forever indebted and grateful for this exemplary solidarity in action! We know that we will win! Our contingent this year will be looking forward to meeting with old friends and comrades in battle as well as meeting new ones and preparing the continuing struggle to build a better world — a Workers World!”

Prison harassment, cut off from telephone

Political prisoner Rev. Pinkney in danger

By David Sole
Lansing, Mich.

Michigan political prisoner, the Rev. Edward Pinkney, was transferred on Oct. 6 from a prison close to his spouse and attorney to Marquette Branch Prison, 483 miles north. Pinkney, a victim of a frame-up trial and conviction by an all-white jury in Berrien County in western Michigan, was also deprived on Oct. 22 of access to making telephone calls.

On Nov. 2, supporters from around Michigan rallied at the doors to the Michigan Department of Corrections in Lansing, the state capital, to demand an end to the harassment of Rev. Pinkney. They ask supporters to send letters and call prison officials.

At the rally, Workers World talked to Dr. James Anderson, who made the long trip upstate to visit Rev. Pinkney on Oct. 30 and 31 at Marquette Branch Prison. According to Dr. Anderson, “Rev. Pinkney doesn’t know why he was rushed to Marquette Prison. He noticed the transfer document carried in the MDOC van



Second from left Dr. James Anderson addresses Nov. 2 protest outside the Michigan Department of Corrections in Lansing.

said ‘Expedite’ in large bold letters.

“He feels extremely unsafe. Prison officials tolerate, if not encourage, fights among prisoners. He felt much safer in Lakeland [downstate prison].

“His phone service was cut off without a hearing. He has received four ‘tickets’ but flatly denies the charges, saying they are trumped up. He can lose his phone privileges for up to 6 months!

“Rev. Pinkney reported prison misconduct and harassment against him. Mail from his lawyer has been opened before it reaches him. A fellow prisoner recommended that he conduct church services, but the assignment was suddenly withdrawn without explanation.

“He reports that he is being subject-

ed to name calling by prison staff, with guards telling other prisoners that he is a ‘scammer’ and cannot be trusted. Clothes sent to the prison laundry for washing were never returned to him. He has only one set of clothes to wear.

“The first location in the prison where he was housed had extensive black mold which made him ill. One guard, noting his weakness early in the week, told him ‘Well, you won’t be around here very long.’ Over and over again, sometimes 20 times a day, he is summoned over the public address system. When he reports as ordered, they tell him simply to return to his cell.

“Rev. Pinkney said that at Lakeland [a higher security facility] there were five

prisoner headcounts per day. Marquette prison is doing 18 counts per day, including hourly counts through most of the night. [The guards] shine flashlights on the inmates trying to sleep. Rev. Pinkney says he is often awakened by the flashlights and is getting little sleep. This process is known to be destructive to one’s health.

“Rev. Pinkney expressed how grateful he was for the large number of birthday cards sent to him. [His 67th birthday was on Oct. 27.] He urges people to keep sending him cards and letters.”

Readers can write to Rev. Edward Pinkney, NE-93 #294671, Marquette Branch Prison, 1960 U.S. Hwy. 41 South, Marquette, MI 49855. They can call Michigan Department of Corrections Director Heidi Washington at 517-241-7238 to urge that phone privileges be restored to Rev. Pinkney and that he be transferred downstate to Lakeland Prison.

Readers can also call Marquette Branch Prison to urge that Rev. Edward Pinkney’s phone privileges be restored and that harassment of this political prisoner stop. Ask for the Deputy Warden’s office 906-226-6531. □

WWP National Conference

Why we need socialist revolution

Continued from page 1

solution — for the workers and oppressed peoples — in the fourth plenary panel: “The New Global Working Class and Its Revolutionary Potential.”

Breakout sessions follow, where conference participants can gather in small groups and have an opportunity to interact and contribute to the discussion until 6 p.m. They include:

- ▶ Lessons of Greece, Detroit and Puerto Rico: Global struggle against austerity
- ▶ What it means to be revolutionary
- ▶ Socialism & China: Dispelling the myths
- ▶ Black Lives Matter: The leadership role of women and LGBTQ people
- ▶ Fighting imperialism means building internationalism

During Saturday dinner, youth and

student organizers will discuss the Million Student March, nationally coordinated actions scheduled for Nov. 12.

A social event is scheduled for Saturday evening. The conference resumes on Sunday morning at 9:30 a.m.

With the election year coming up, it is no surprise that the fifth plenary panel, “Marxist Ideology, the Elections and Socialism,” will not only review the reactionary impact of the campaigns waged by the capitalist party candidates, but will consider WWP putting forward its own program through the elections.

The closing plenary panel on Sunday, set to end at 2 p.m., features a summation of the conference given by Larry Holmes, WWP First Secretary, and the singing of the Internationale by all conference participants. □

No U.S. troops

LET SYRIA LIVE

Continued from page 1

to a full-scale intervention.

Of course, the U.S. government says that this new campaign is directed solely against the Islamic State forces. But by sending in U.S. troops to assist so-called moderate forces that are fighting the Syrian government, the U.S. is clearly still targeting the elected government of Syria.

That makes this war move an extremely dangerous escalation. The Russian government is conducting what appears to be an effective air campaign in Syria in alliance with the Syrian army against the ISIS forces. Thus, the Pentagon is clearly using these few U.S. Special Forces as a “trip wire,” signaling to Russia that it is ready to drastically widen the war even so far as a global conflict in order to overturn the Syrian government.

“The Pentagon wants to build a firewall behind forces allied with the United States — both the Kurds and the Syrian-Arab coalition backed by Mr. Obama — to allow these fighters to hold territory they have captured.” (nytimes.com, Oct. 31)

And what is the Obama administration using as legal justification for its military campaign? “The Constitution requires Congress to declare wars, but in this case, Obama said he doesn’t need lawmakers’ sign-off because a sweeping (Bush-era) 2001 ‘Authorization for Use of Military Force’ covers his actions.” (huffingtonpost.com, June 3)

Since Congress is unable and Obama unwilling to stand up against a new Pentagon war adventure, then it’s clearly up to the anti-war movement and the people to do so — in the streets! □

Nov. 15: Say No to Capitalism & Racism Day

“You can’t have racism without capitalism! To end racism and all the evils that come with it, we must end capitalism.” — Malcolm X

Activist organizations in New York City have called for “A People’s Response to the G20 Summit,” meeting in Istanbul, Turkey, to take place at CNN headquarters at 59 Street and Columbus Circle on 4 p.m. on Nov. 15. The following are excerpts from a release sent out by the organizers:

On Nov. 15 and 16 the heads of governments of the G20 — the world’s 20 largest economies — along with the heads of their central banks, as well as the top bankers of the world, will be holding their annual summit meeting, which is taking place this year in Turkey.

Please support this call to make Nov. 15, the first day of the G20 Summit — A SAY NO TO CAPITALISM AND RACISM DAY. Endorse this call and help to build the protest in NYC (and elsewhere).

The next G20 summit will be the most important G20 meeting since the global financial crash of 2008. The current volatility in global financial markets is a sign that the world capitalist system



is entering a new, more intractable and more violent crisis.

No matter what the official G20 meeting agenda says, the question on the next G20 summit’s agenda (which in reality is dominated by the super-rich of the U.S. and the West) will be: What must be done to rescue world capitalism and the 1% that profit from its perpetuation?

Ultimately, this means that the

people of the world will be subjected to more unbearable inequality, poverty, hunger, homelessness, gentrification, neoliberalism, austerity, more joblessness, more low wages, more war and occupation, and the even greater prospect of a planet that is rapidly exhausting its capacity to sustain life.

Just as ominous and dangerous, the deepening world economic and

political crisis will create an even greater opportunity for the manifestation of racism and fascism.

The police war against Black people in the United States that has given rise to the powerful Black Lives Matter movement, as well as the war against Arab, African, Asian, Muslim, Indigenous and Latino/a migrants from the borders of Europe to the U.S.-Mexican border are examples of the intersection between capitalism and racism.

The time has come for progressive forces across the world to stand up and say that capitalism can’t be reformed and should not be saved.

We will no longer tolerate the system killing, oppressing, marginalizing, or scapegoating people of Color, migrants, poor people, women, lesbian, gay, bi, trans and queer people, people with disabilities, young people and all working people.

Sponsors Include: Peoples Power Assembly; May 1st Coalition for Worker and Immigrant Rights; International Working Women’s Coalition.

Click tinyurl.com/pooprpdf to endorse. Facebook Event Page: tinyurl.com/p4l8tzw

□

Federal Budget plans billions for war, cuts to services

By Peter Gilbert

Congress is expected to vote on Oct. 29 on a federal budget “compromise” between Republican congressional leaders and the Obama administration. The budget is expected to pass quickly and avoid a repeat of the 2013 government shutdown, when hundreds of thousands of federal employees were laid off without pay and vital government programs were suspended. The U.S. Treasury Department reports that without this deal the debt ceiling limit would be reached by Nov. 3.

The basic deal increases the federal budget by \$80 billion for the next two years, \$50 billion in the first year and \$30 billion in the second year. About half of the increase is earmarked only for the Pentagon, the remainder for unspecified “discretionary spending.” Those increases come at the cost of massive cuts to Medicare and Social Security payments

to workers with disabilities (SSDI). The deal also includes additional funding of \$32 billion dollars in the “Overseas Contingency Operations Fund” (OCO), to fund the ongoing U.S. imperialist aggression against Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. (Huffington Post, Oct. 26)

Increased funding to expand imperialist war

The Military Times, which caters directly to the U.S. Armed Forces, reports on Oct. 27 even larger increases to the Pentagon under the new deal. It projects that the 2016 and 2017 Pentagon budgets would each be increased by \$25 billion, to a total of \$548 billion in 2016 and \$551 billion in 2017, not counting the OCO funding specifically for the ongoing U.S. wars. The Military Times reports an additional \$59 billion a year for the next two years to fund the attacks on Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq.

At the same time as the budget announcement of massive increases in military funding, the Pentagon is recommending increasing the deployment of U.S. soldiers on the ground in Iraq and Syria. The Oct. 27 Washington Post reports that the plan would put U.S. Special Operation forces, commandos, on the ground in Syria and increase the role of U.S. troops in Iraq, a serious escalation. Simultaneously, the secretary of defense seeks to expand U.S. attacks in Afghanistan.

The increased U.S. force in the region comes as Russian forces have reportedly had widespread success in pushing back the Islamic State in Syria and assisting the Syrian government against U.S.-backed insurgents.

Austerity for people with disabilities and elderly

The increases to Pentagon spending for imperialist wars will be paid for directly

by slashing needed support for elderly workers and those with disabilities. The money comes from two main cuts, one to Social Security disability benefits, which provide monthly payments of a modest income to workers who can no longer work; the other to Medicare, which provides health insurance to elderly and retired workers, as well as some workers with disabilities.

Another major cut to workers’ benefits in the proposed budget is to extend a reduction in the amount that Medicare will pay to doctors and medical providers for their services. The 2 percent cut to doctors and medical providers will result in drastically limiting access to health care, especially in poor and rural areas. In these areas, especially in parts of the U.S. South, where there are greater percentages of older workers and those with disabilities hospitals have been closing rather than accept cuts to their profits. □

On the picket line

By Matty Starrdust and Sue Davis

Justice for L.A. port drivers, warehouse workers

The latest strike by truck drivers and warehouse workers at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach ended after five days on Oct. 30. Both groups of workers, mostly immigrants who are classified as “independent contractors” rather than employees, have been fighting wage theft, hostile bosses and unsafe working conditions for years. The Warehouse Workers Resource Center noted Oct. 29 that the number of workers participating in the unfair labor practices strike at the California Cartage warehouse, which services Amazon, Lowe’s, Kmart, Sears and other large retailers — and handles 40 percent of U.S. imports processed through these ports — has doubled since they struck Sept. 22-24 for the first time. Fourteen drivers filed wage and hour claims valued at \$3.5 million with the California Division of Labor Standards Enforcement on Oct. 30. One claim presented wage-theft evidence of \$450,000 over three years.

Teamsters President James Hoffa joined the picket line Oct. 29, and the Los Angeles City Council on Oct. 30 passed a resolution unanimously supporting the workers. The public is urged to sign the following petition: “We demand that Amazon respect the supply chain workers that bring us Amazon’s goods. End the wage theft, the disrespect and misclassification of your supply chain workers!” (tinyurl.com/qh74g5e)

A deciding factor in this struggle could be the Aug. 27 National Labor Relations Board ruling that companies can be held responsible for labor violations committed by their contractors. These truck drivers and warehouse workers are in the front lines of this important battle, which will benefit all low-wage workers. (For current information, follow “Justice for Port Drivers” on Facebook.)

UPS pilots vote to strike; Teamsters vow support

After four years of failed negotiations and no contract, the Independent Pilots Association, representing 2,500 United Parcel Service pilots, voted Oct. 23 to authorize a strike. The vote, a resounding 99.6 percent in favor, means the IPA executive board can pull out of deadlocked federal mediation and call a strike. (ipapilot.org, Oct. 23)

In a bold display of class solidarity, Teamsters President James Hoffa and Secretary-Treasurer Ken Hall pledged the union’s full support: “If a strike is necessary, we will not cross your lines, but will stand with you on them.” The Teamsters represent more than 250,000 UPS workers; a strike by both unions would bring UPS to a grinding halt. “The Teamsters have not forgotten the solidarity that your members showed us in 1997, when not one single IPA member crossed our picket lines.” (ipapilot.org, Oct. 22)

Kaiser health care workers ratify national contract

One of the largest private sector contracts — the Kaiser Permanente national collective bargaining agreement covering 105,000 health care workers in 28 union locals in eight states and the District of Columbia — was ratified Oct. 21. It increases the wages of registered nurses, maintenance and service workers, technicians, lab scientists, optometrists and others. It also sets standards to improve the quality and safety of health care. Lavis Harris, secretary-treasurer of Food and Commercial Workers Local 400, representing more than 1,000 Kaiser workers in D.C., said the negotiation process “galvanized member activism. There is great energy and a wonderful spirit of participation. That will serve us well in implementing the contract and in improving working conditions for our members.” (dclabor.org, Oct. 21) □

Markets gluttoned, layoffs and hunger grow

Tremors before a capitalist earthquake?

By Sara Flounders

Tremors anticipating another earthquake are sending shivers through the capitalist markets. Recent articles in the New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg Report and other major corporate media are warning of an impending crash.

In the U.S., basic commodity prices have collapsed, and there is a huge glut of oil, iron, coal, copper, zinc, heavy equipment and machine parts. There is also a rash of mergers and drastic reorganization. Major crops such as corn — used in biofuels, food and animal feed — along with soy and wheat are selling at half of last year's price. Banks are suddenly less willing to lend to giant energy and mining corporations.

Most ominous for the working class are announcements of big layoffs, in the tens of thousands of workers in key industries like Alcoa, Caterpillar, John Deere, DuPont and Hewlett-Packard.

An article in the Oct. 25 New York Times titled "A Global Chill Hits Home" described the collapsing markets and interlinked industries. As crude oil has fallen from over \$100 a barrel a year ago to \$45 today, more than two-thirds of the 1,500 operating oil rigs in the U.S. have been decommissioned. The billions that had poured into the environmentally ruinous oil-fracking industry and Arctic drilling are suddenly on hold.

Adding to investors' unease was an earlier soft report on the U.S. housing market and the release of internal economic forecasts by the Federal Reserve Bank, explained the July 24 Wall Street Journal. "A Global Recession" was the ominous headline of a Washington Post article on Sept. 29.

Too big a surplus to sell

Steel production is collapsing. U.S. Steel is now operating at 58 percent of capacity. The largest part of its production has been used for steel tubing in oil pipelines and the lining of oil wells. While typically the company accumulates four months' inventory of steel tubing, it is now 10 to 12 months. This is a global glut. Much of the market now is for steel from south Korea and China.

Banks are nervous about further lending because their portfolios are at risk. Oil and energy stocks held as collateral by banks to underpin loans they have advanced have lost half their value. As prices fall, so does the value of the stocks guaranteeing the loans.

Investments in 22 raw materials tracked by Bloomberg News on Sept. 30 posted their worst quarter since the 2008 global financial crisis. More ominous are forecasts for the slowest economic growth since 1990. Morgan Stanley has warned that more losses may be ahead.

As sales of John Deere heavy equipment dropped by 30 percent in the last

quarter, its earnings sank by 40 percent, and 1,500 workers were laid off. Hewlett-Packard laid off 30,000 workers. Caterpillar just announced a layoff of 10,000 workers.

Fortune magazine's listing on Oct. 2 of the 10 biggest layoffs of the year so far declared: "This year is already uglier than last, and it's only October." According to outplacement firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas, employers have announced 493,431 planned layoffs so far this year — a 36 percent increase over the same period last year.

Blaming China for capitalism's woes

Almost every article on the collapse in commodity prices or the possibility of a new global crash blames the capitalist crisis on a slowing of China's growth. As Bloomberg Report explained: "China is the biggest user of energy, metals and grains."

But Edward L. Morse, the head of Citigroup's global commodities research, also took note of that country's historic achievement that had driven up world markets: "Between 1993 and 2013, China built 200 cities of 1 million people or more. This was incredibly intensive in terms of steel, copper and other commodities." (New York Times, Oct. 23)

In fact, for 300 years, since long before China's spectacular rise, crises of overproduction have upended capitalist economies every 7 to 10 years. The boom-and-bust, expansion-and-contraction cycles leading to capitalist overproduction were described by Karl Marx over 165 years ago. They make capitalism an unstable, crisis-ridden, self-destructive system of production.

This crisis of too much capacity results in masses of unsold and unsalable products and increasing capitalist competition in ruthless and unpredictable ways. Capitalists don't produce goods just to satisfy a social use or need. Can this commodity be sold at a profit is their overriding motivation.

Now technology has developed industry and agriculture on a global scale to the point where each time the capitalist economy starts up again, the market more quickly reaches a point of saturation.

Old tricks don't work

Traditional capitalist methods used since the Great Depression of 1929 to pull the economy back up and ensure profits to a small handful of corporate owners



Union workers protest impending layoffs at the Exploratorium in San Francisco, Oct. 1.

have already been employed. For years the Federal Reserve has been holding interest rates at close to zero in a desperate attempt to spur business activity.

Government bailouts of the banks and corporations also have a limit. Forbes Magazine of Sept. 20, 2011, reported that \$16 trillion had been allocated in the U.S. and internationally after the 2008 crisis to keep the capitalist system afloat and profitable. Since that report, the federal government has continued pumping in additional billions.

A trillion dollars in annual U.S. military spending, direct and indirect, is a continuing subsidy to the largest oil and military firms and another form of corporate bailout. This deadly subsidy puts the entire planet at risk and nurtures a viciously repressive war machine.

But none of this solves the problem of overproduction; it just temporarily absorbs some of the surplus. And the money for these bailouts is stolen directly from the workers as budgets for education, health care and government assistance are cut just as need for them increases.

No recovery for workers

What makes a new capitalist crisis most dangerous for the working class is that there has been no real recovery for the workers since the crisis of 2007. While the crisis was declared over in 2009, millions of workers were never rehired. Millions have given up looking for work, and are not counted in the unemployment statistics.

A far more accurate measure than the official unemployment figure is the number of people participating in the work-

force, which is now at the lowest level in 38 years, despite population growth. This is the longest period of job loss since the Great Depression of 1929, and the capitalists have no solution.

Wages are no better than what they were in the 1990s. According to the Economic Policy Institute, "In the past 12 years wages fell for 70 percent of workers."

High rates of home foreclosures, unemployment and stagnant wages have continued relentlessly. Four out of five U.S. adults struggle with joblessness, near-poverty or reliance on welfare for at least part of their lives, a sign of deteriorating economic security.

Poverty rates are now the highest in the 52 years they have been recorded. Poverty among Black and Latino/a workers has been nearly three times the rate of whites, reported the Associated Press of Dec. 17, 2013.

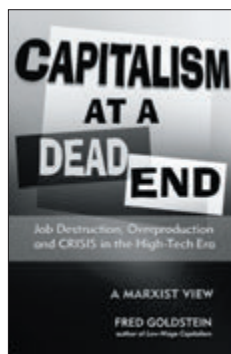
Unsolvable problems

These are the unsolvable problems that can grow far worse as a new capitalist downturn rips through the global economy. Every effort to save corporate profits will be made, including drastic cutbacks in social services, monstrous austerity programs and bone-deep cuts in pensions.

As capitalist economists and bankers conspire to seize hold of every source of wealth to guarantee their profits, it is essential for the workers' movement to anticipate what is coming and not be taken by surprise.

The upheaval and massive insecurity of the capitalist system in crisis can propel workers in a revolutionary direction. Understanding why the capitalists cannot solve the enormous problems of plenty alongside desperate poverty is essential for the struggles ahead.

For a detailed analysis of the impact of the rapid changes in productive forces under capitalism, see the book "Capitalism at a Dead End" by Workers World contributing editor Fred Goldstein.

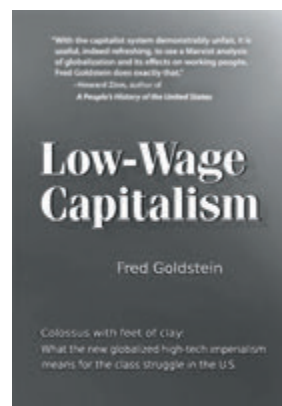


Capitalism at a Dead End

Job destruction, overproduction and crisis in the high-tech era

For more information on these books and other writings by the author, Fred Goldstein, go to LowWageCapitalism.com

Available at all major online booksellers.



Low-Wage Capitalism

describes in sweeping detail the drastic effect on the working class in the United States of new technology and the restructuring of global capitalism in the post-Soviet era. It uses Karl Marx's law of wages and other findings to show that these developments are not only continuing to drive down wages but are creating the material basis for future social upheaval.



El capitalismo en un callejón sin salida

Fred Goldstein utiliza las leyes de la acumulación capitalista de Marx, y la tasa decreciente de ganancia, para demostrar por qué el capitalismo global ha llegado finalmente a un punto de inflexión.



High Tech, Low Pay

A Marxist Analysis of the Changing Character of the Working Class

By Sam Marcy with an updated introduction by Fred Goldstein author of *Low Wage Capitalism*.

As long as cops' aggression exists Black Lives Matter struggle won't go away

By Monica Moorehead

The ongoing racist war against Black and Brown people, especially youth, continues to take center stage across the U.S. Even the upcoming presidential campaign cannot escape the justified widespread anger of young people who are the main targets of police terror.

Hillary Rodham Clinton, Democratic presidential candidate, was prevented from speaking for at least 10 minutes during a campaign rally on Oct. 30 in Atlanta, when several demonstrators disrupted her speech with chants of "Black Lives Matter! Black Lives Matter!" Clinton was forced to interject, "Yes, Black Lives do matter" during her talk. Bernie Sanders, another Democratic candidate, has also been confronted by BLM protesters on his campaign trail.

The disruption in Atlanta came four days after a horrific development that made national and international news. That is the violent attack on an African-American teenage woman by a white male deputy in a Spring Valley High School classroom in Columbia, S.C.

Video footage of this attack, captured by students with camera cell phones, went viral on Twitter and other forms of social media. Ben Fields, the police officer, is shown grabbing the young woman



Black Lives Matter activists protest Hillary Clinton, Atlanta.

around her neck, flipping her backwards out of her seat, throwing her on the floor and then tossing her across the room. She had to be hospitalized. The "excuse" for attacking this teenager was that she was being "defiant" in not putting away her cell phone when the teacher asked her to.

The footage also shows some of her predominantly Black classmates covering their eyes, indicating that they did not escape the trauma of seeing their classmate being physically assaulted.

Rockland Sheriff Leon Lott fired Fields on Oct. 28 for "violating department policy." The firing of the deputy, while substantiating the criminality of this act, is not enough. Fields should have been immediately arrested, charged and indicted for this heinous act. However, this particular assault cannot be viewed

within a vacuum.

These kinds of assaults on young people — including those as young as 4 years old — by armed police are occurring on a daily basis, as is mass incarceration. The militarization of the schools, especially in oppressed and working-class areas, is an extension of the police occupation of whole communities.

There is a growing chorus in the Black Lives Matter movement and among their supporters to demand that police get out of the schools and that they be disarmed. The police are the criminals, not youth of color.

Thabo Sefolosha sues NYPD

Thabo Sefolosha, the 31-year-old professional basketball forward with the Atlanta Hawks, announced on Oct. 26 his

plans to file a \$50 million lawsuit against the New York Police Department. Sefolosha was recently acquitted of all charges by the NYPD following a vicious attack on him and former Hawks player, Pero Antic, outside of a Manhattan night club last April.

Sefolosha, a Black man of South African descent, was charged with disorderly conduct for trying to defend himself against several white police officers, who broke his leg. He missed participating in the playoffs due to the injury. The attack on Sefolosha was caught on video camera.

New York City prosecutors attempted to convince Sefolosha to take a plea bargain in order to settle out of court, as they tried to play down the NYPD's sordid role and force Sefolosha to admit some semblance of guilt. Sefolosha, to his credit, decided to have a jury trial. The jurors quickly acquitted him of all phony charges, totally clearing his name. The charges against Antic, who is white, were also dropped.

Sefolosha has made clear that the motivation for his lawsuit is to make a strong statement that no one should have to go through what he experienced — which millions of people of color do — when he was subjected to police misconduct and brutality. □

Labor Council says: 'Save Mumia's life!'

The following resolution (lightly edited) was initiated by 17 members of the San Francisco Labor Council and adopted by that body on Oct. 26.

Whereas:

Mumia Abu-Jamal, award-winning journalist and former member of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, who headed the Philadelphia chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists, was railroaded to prison in the early 1980s — and languished on death row for years — for supposedly killing a white policeman while on duty as a taxi driver. Abu-Jamal's conviction was based on fraudulent court proceedings, including a court-appointed lawyer who neglected evidence showing his innocence; a nearly all-white jury; bought-and-paid-for witnesses; and a demonstrably biased judge. His death sentence was later overturned.

In 1999, a San Francisco Labor Council resolution demanded a new trial for Mumia and endorsed the April 24 national protests in Philadelphia and San Francisco calling for a new trial and a halt to the pending execution of this clearly innocent man and political prisoner. At the time of the 1999 Millions for Mumia marches, labor organizations representing more than 4 million workers in the U.S. and around the world had officially joined the call for a new trial for Mumia.

The SFLC resolution, adopted Jan. 11, 1999, stated that Mumia's "struggle for justice, freedom and a new trial has been supported by a broad range of labor unions, city governments, religious and social organizations and others who seek ... human rights." The resolution further stated that Mumia's "1982 trial was characterized by reliance on contradictory evidence from the police, coercion, intim-



Mumia Abu-Jamal

idation, suppression of critical evidence and illegal exclusion of African-American jurors."

In recent months the world became aware that Abu-Jamal had suffered a medical emergency in March 2015, when he was on the verge of slipping into a diabetic coma and renal failure. He was also suffering from a severe skin disease, fever, body rash and open sores, itching and bleeding on his arms and legs, all of which went undiagnosed and untreated for months by the State Correctional Institution at Mahanoy, Pa.

Mumia Watch Committee to be established

Recently prison medical officials informed Mumia that he had active hepatitis C virus, although they have denied him treatment for this and his other medical conditions. Mumia's lawyers have filed suit charging that prison authorities are withholding administration of an antiviral oral treatment proven to be highly successful in curing HCV, called "a silent epidemic" in the nation's prisons.

Supporters of Abu-Jamal believe the

Albany, N.Y. Protesters: 'Arrest cops that killed Donald Ivy'

By Chris Fry

Oct. 30 — After an Albany, N.Y., grand jury refused to indict any cops for killing Donald "Dontay" Ivy, more than 100 people marched through the streets of downtown Albany. Shouting "Let us in!" they demanded to be allowed into Albany police headquarters to register their demands, including the arrest of the cops involved and the firing of the county prosecutor.

The rally and march were organized by the group Capital Area Against Mass Incarceration. Ivy's aunt, Celinda Okwuosa, spoke at the rally, pointing out that the cops had no reason to stop him. He had committed no crime, she said, and the cops were not investigating any

particular crime in the neighborhood. (timesunion.com, Oct. 31)

Ivy, a 39-year-old Black man who suffered from schizophrenia and a heart condition, was coming home from a nearby convenience store on April 2, when he was confronted by several Albany police. Unarmed, he tried to flee, but he was run down by the cops, tased repeatedly and clubbed. Writhing in pain and fear, Ivy died as he lay shackled in the street.

Protesters blocked a main street for exactly 13 minutes, the time that Ivy lay in the street before he died.

Another protest is planned at the Albany Common Council meeting on Nov. 2. The council's president, Carolyn McLaughlin, participated in the rally and march demanding justice for Ivy. □

Pennsylvania prison system is guilty of "medical neglect," which could possibly lead to his death. All efforts are needed to provide him with medical specialists and a treatment regimen required to restore him to full health.

Therefore be it resolved, that the San Francisco Labor Council write letters to (1) SCI Mahanoy, (2) Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and (3) Gov. Tom Wolf demanding that since these authorities have not complied with health care standards recommended by the World Health Organization, the American Medical Association and the Department of Justice, and are showing no signs of ending the medical neglect that threatens the life of Abu-Jamal, that ... Mumia be released to the care of doctors and medical facilities of his choice

so he can get the treatment he needs and is entitled to. Pennsylvania's prison system must not be allowed to succeed in killing Abu-Jamal by medical neglect.

Be it further resolved, that given the extensive evidence of Abu-Jamal's innocence, wrongful incarceration and now the exposure of his severe and untreated illnesses and the prison-medical system's failure to diagnose or treat him properly for more than six months, we add our voices to the international call for the immediate release of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Be it finally resolved, that the San Francisco Labor Council will establish an Abu-Jamal Watch Committee to monitor his health situation and suggest further support actions that may become necessary. □

North Carolina

Rally in solidarity with Black liberation, Palestine

By Ben Carroll
Durham, N.C.

People marched and rallied here on Oct. 30 to show solidarity with the uprising in Palestine. The demonstration also centrally connected the struggle against racist police terror and the prison-industrial complex, and for Black liberation at home, to the Palestinian struggle against the state of Israel and U.S. imperialism.

The march gathered at a park near downtown, where solidarity statements were read by representatives of Black Workers for Justice, the Duke University chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine, Workers World Party and the Green Party. A statement prepared by march organizers and read prior to the start of the march asserted:

“We stand in solidarity with the #BlackLivesMatter Uprising. We want an end to occupation, racist violence and displacement, at home and abroad. ...

“The United States spends billions of dollars funding Israeli occupation and the genocide of Palestinians while denying Black and Brown communities

basic access to wages, health care and adequate housing. With just 5 percent of the world’s population, U.S. prisons hold 25 percent of the incarcerated people on the globe — many of them working-class Black and Brown people.”

With chants of “Free, free Palestine!” and “From Durham to Gaza, globalize the Intifada!” the march stepped off and passed by crowded downtown bars and restaurants.

As the march passed City Hall, the protesters stopped and heard statements from Muslims for Social Justice and Jewish Voice for Peace. The Durham JVP chapter announced the launch of a new campaign, as part of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, to demand that the city of Durham divest completely from Israel.

The demonstration continued on to the Durham County Jail to join a protest by the Inside-Outside Alliance. The Alliance has held demonstrations at the jail every Friday for several months now to protest conditions at the jail, and recently won a major victory when a seven-month lockback — a virtual lockdown for all the in-



WW PHOTO: ELENA EVERETT

Protest in Durham, N.C., joins anti-racists and those in solidarity with Palestine.

mates in the prison — was ended.

Passing cars gave honks of support as people chanted and danced to the beat of drums outside the jail, and imprisoned people inside banged on the windows in response to the demonstration below. It was a powerful conclusion to the demonstration that expressed solidarity with the resistance of the Palestinian people while squarely pointing to the role of U.S. imperialism in the Israeli occupation and the occupation of Black and Brown communities here at home.

Two days later, the Durham branch of Workers World Party showed “Road-

map to Apartheid” as part of its monthly “Liberation Sunday” film series. Narrated by Alice Walker, the film outlines how the occupation of Palestine by the state of Israel is, in many ways, identical to the apartheid system in South Africa. Discussion following the film pointed to the need to expose the role of the U.S. in economically, politically and militarily supporting the occupation, to support the self-determination of the Palestinian people to resist the occupation and to connect the Black freedom struggle to the struggle of the Palestinians also fighting for liberation. □

Iran hosts international anti-racist conference

PHOTO: MEHRNEWS.COM



Special to Workers World

Tehran — From Oct. 27 to Oct. 29, a group of anti-racist activists from the United States came to the Islamic Republic of Iran for a conference on police brutality and racism. The conference was launched at the headquarters of the Islamic Republic’s broadcasting media corporation and hosted by famous Iranian filmmaker Nader Talebzadeh. After the first day, the conference continued at the Eteghlal Hotel, which was the Tehran Hilton before being nationalized after Iran’s 1979 revolution.

Political scientist and radio talk show host Dr. Wilmer Leon described the experience of African Americans in the United States, living with racism and repression on a daily basis. Minister Akbar Muhammed from the Nation of Islam also addressed the conference, as did Sultan Muhammed, an NOI minister from Chicago.

Kemi Seba, a Pan-Africanist essayist and media commentator from France, described the psychological impact of oppression on Black people in Western societies, saying that African Americans have been taught to hate themselves. Dr. Vernellia R. Randall, a law professor at the University of Dayton [Ohio], who manages the website racism.org, explained the

school-to-prison pipeline and how racial injustice is perpetuated by U.S. law.

Pier Jules, a revolutionary leader of Cameroon who spent many years living in exile in the Soviet Union, called out capitalism. He charged that the imperialists and Zionists are fomenting chaos and terrorism around the world and called for global revolution.

Between the presentations of African-American guests, various Iranian intellectuals and clerics gave remarks. Often they quoted from Supreme Leader of Iran, Grand Ayatollah Ali Seyed Khamenei, who has said, “We oppose both the crimes of Daesh (ISIS) and the federal police of the United States. They are both the same.”

The conference was the third in a series of international gatherings called “New Horizon Conferences.” This year’s event was focused exclusively on the Black freedom struggle. The conference hall was decorated with images of Malcolm X, Kwame Nkrumah, Fred Hampton and other leaders of the Black Liberation struggle. The conference was presented by its hosts, who also included Zeina Mehanna and Iranian Press TV’s Marzieh Hashemi, as part of the Islamic Republic’s tradition of standing with the oppressed. □

Justice for Palestine!



WW PHOTOS: JOE PIETTE

Philadelphia



Buffalo, N.Y.

WW PHOTO: ELLIE DORRITIE

Students and community activists rallied at Philadelphia’s City Hall in support of justice for Palestine on Oct. 30. Led by Palestinian youth chanting, “No more deaths! No more lies! Israel out of Palestine!” the gathering took the streets and marched through rush-hour traffic. Many pedestrians, especially immigrants and people of color, took cellphone photos and videos, and some joined the march. A significant portion of the demonstrators were from the Black community, including members of the Coalition for Racial, Economic and Legal Justice. The protest ended with a speakout at the Israeli Consulate. The energetic event was organized by Philly Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions; the International Action Center; and Temple Students for Justice in Palestine.

The same day in Buffalo, N.Y., a pro-

test opposing the U.S./Israeli occupation of Palestine connected global U.S. wars to the war on Black and Brown youth in the U.S. by police. The demonstration, called by Students for Revolution, demanded an end to the illegal, U.S.-sponsored Israeli occupation of Palestine along with all U.S. wars, including in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Yemen. Speakers made it clear that the struggle and resistance shown by Palestinian youth in the West Bank and Gaza against Israel’s genocidal occupation are strongly connected with the Black Lives Matter movement in the U.S. as it stands up against racist police brutality and occupation. Solidarity between these movements builds important anti-racist unity in confronting U.S. wars both here and around the world.

Reports from Joe Piette and Ellie Dorritie.

China moves decisively on global warming

By Deirdre Griswold

China is the most populous country in the world, with 1.3 billion people. In little more than a generation, its rapid industrial development has made it the world's second-largest economy. Over the past three decades, this has made it possible to lift 500 million Chinese out of extreme poverty.

This transformation in the lives of the people took place as China became the factory of the world, producing everything from clothing and digital devices to machine tools, giant construction cranes and merchant ships. But to power that factory required a tremendous increase in its ability to generate electricity.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, by 2012, China had surpassed the U.S. in total electricity generation — 4,768 terawatt hours versus 4,048 TWh for the U.S. By 2014, China's electric output had risen even further, to 5,523 TWh.

China has little oil or gas, but it has a lot of coal. In 2014, about three-quarters of China's electric power still came from burning coal, even though the country had risen to first place in the world in installed wind power and second place in solar power.

Thus, the tremendous increase in China's productive capacity came at a great price to the environment. Burning coal resulted in serious air pollution, especially in China's eastern cities, where the majority of the people live. It also released CO₂ gases into the atmosphere.

Around 2007, China surpassed the U.S. as the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases. However, historically and also per capita, the U.S. remains by far the biggest contributor to global warming.

These are some of the factors that have made the leaders of China commit to the most ambitious program of developing nuclear power of any country in the world today.

Nuclear power produces zero greenhouse gases. Unlike solar and wind — which only generate power when the sun is shining or the wind is blowing — nuclear energy is a constant, not intermittent, producer of power around the clock.

In November of last year, China's

State Council published an "Energy Development Strategy Action Plan" for the period 2014 to 2020. The plan aims to cut the country's reliance on coal and promote the use of clean energy. It calls for the "timely launch" of new nuclear power projects on the east coast and for feasibility studies for the construction of inland plants. It also calls for substantially increasing the installed generating capacity of hydro, wind and solar power.

Among the various agencies in the world that monitor economic activity, this action plan is not seen as a mere wish list, subject to the whims of elected officials. It is taken seriously, since the Chinese government has consistently carried through with its previously published plans for development, often exceeding its goals.

China goes further for COP21

For 12 days, beginning this Nov. 30, the 21st United Nations climate change conference — known as COP21 — will convene in Paris. So far, 140 countries have submitted their national climate change commitments. It is China's pledge that has the environmental movement buzzing.

Wrote one news source that focuses on renewable energy: "China, a major powerhouse for renewables, has pledged to reduce the carbon intensity of its economy by 60 percent, peak its emissions and generate a fifth of its electricity from clean sources by 2030.

"Clean energy investment in China already marked a 32 percent jump last year to hit the staggering USD 89 billion (EUR 78 billion), more than any other country in the world, according to estimates of Bloomberg New Energy Finance.

"China plans to boost installed capacity of wind power to 200 gigawatt and solar power to around 150 GW by 2020, up from around 100 GW and 35 GW respectively, last reported in June." (SeeNews, Oct. 15)

This very specific pledge was received with much enthusiasm by climate scientists around the world, as it showed that China, a huge country that is trying to entirely eradicate poverty, is building protection of the environment into its plans for development.

Even as China invests billions of dollars in hydroelectric, wind and so-

lar power, and improving the grid that brings electricity from areas with more wind and dams to areas with more people, it still finds it necessary to greatly expand its nuclear capacity if it is to reduce its reliance on fossil fuels.

U.S. nuclear plants: old and profit-driven

In the United States, more than two-thirds of the electric power is produced by burning fossil fuels — mainly coal and natural gas. For years, the energy giants financed campaigns to belittle and even deny that climate change exists. Nevertheless, popular awareness of the dangers of global warming has grown. In September 2014, hundreds of thousands of people participated in the People's Climate March in New York City, calling for phasing out fossil fuels.

At the same time, there has been much popular opposition to nuclear power. Unlike in the rest of the world, nearly all the nuclear plants in the U.S. are privately owned by for-profit corporations, and there is the justifiable fear that they will skimp on safety costs in order to boost their profits.

No new nuclear power plants have come online in the U.S. for almost 20 years. The last one was Watts Bar 1 in Tennessee in 1996. Some, like Shoreham on Long Island and Vermont Yankee, have been forced to shut down after large protests.

The average age of a U.S. nuclear power plant is now 36 years. Many of these old plants have dubious safety records; all use earlier and more dangerous types of nuclear technology than what is now available in the world.

After 40 years, the owners of these plants are required by law to seek a new license from the federal government or shut down. However, at least one such reactor at Indian Point, within 35 miles of New York City and close to a geological fault, is now more than 40 years old, yet is still operating, even as a political struggle goes on between state and federal officials over whether a new 20-year license should be issued.

Climate catastrophes worsen

Meanwhile, the terrible dangers to the world resulting from global warming

continue to multiply. Many more lives have already been lost to hyperstorms, floods, landslides, drought and extreme heat than to all the nuclear accidents. Species are going extinct. Oceans are warming and fish are disappearing. The Greenland ice cap is melting — and could add many meters to existing sea levels in a relatively short period of time.

Many scientists are looking to newer third — and fourth-generation nuclear power as an indispensable part of the answer to global warming. One of them is James Hansen, who began warning Congress about climate change in 1988, when he was head of NASA and had access to satellite data showing the melting of the polar ice caps and mountain glaciers. Hansen ultimately resigned his NASA position in order to campaign for safer technologies.

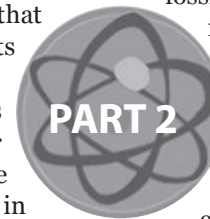
In November 2013, Hansen and three other scientists wrote an open letter calling for sharply reducing the burning of fossil fuels. In it they said: "Global demand for energy is growing rapidly and must continue to grow to provide the needs of developing economies. At the same time, the need to sharply reduce greenhouse gas emissions is becoming ever clearer. ... We understand that today's nuclear plants are far from perfect. Fortunately, passive safety systems and other advances can make new plants much safer ... and solve the waste disposal problem by burning current waste and using fuel more efficiently."

They concluded, "With the planet warming and carbon dioxide emissions rising faster than ever, we cannot afford to turn away from any technology that has the potential to displace a large fraction of our carbon emissions."

Ironically, the new technology these scientists refer to was first developed in the U.S. at the Argonne National Laboratory between 1984 and 1994. But the Integral Fast Reactor program was shut down by the U.S. Congress just two years before completion.

Today, China has made this fourth-generation nuclear reactor a reality.

Next: Why China can do what the U.S. couldn't.



U.N. vote on Cuban resolution

World to U.S.: End the blockade now!

By Cheryl LaBash

On Oct. 27, for the 24th time, the Republic of Cuba presented a resolution to the United Nations General Assembly calling for the United States to end its economic, commercial and financial blockade of Cuba. In an unambiguous vote, U.N. member countries delivered a stunning rebuke to U.S. imperialism: 191 voted to end the blockade. Only the U.S. and Israel voted to maintain it. It is noteworthy that Israel cited its "special relationship" with the U.S. to excuse its vote.

For 23 years, the vote for Cuba's resolution had steadily increased while abstentions waned. But much had changed since the 2014 vote. Last Dec. 17, Cuba's heroic state security agents known as the Cuban 5 flew out of U.S. prisons and returned to Cuba. Then, both President Raúl Castro and President Barack Obama expressed their intention to resume diplomatic relations broken by the U.S. in 1961.

Embassy flags were raised at former Interests Sections. Presidential handshakes and bilateral talks made news headlines. How would all parties react to the resolution this year?

The morning of Oct. 27 began with international organizations and alliances speaking in favor of Cuba's resolution. Iran spoke for the Non-Aligned Movement, Ecuador for the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, and South Africa for Group of 77 plus China. Sierra Leone spoke on behalf of the African Group. Kuwait for the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Jamaica spoke for Caricom, Paraguay for MERCOSUR (Mercado Común del Sur) and finally Malaysia for ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations).

Then, country after country from every global region — except the European Union and North America — stressed how the extraterritorial reach of the U.S. blockade had a negative impact on in-

ternational trade and increased climate change. They praised Cuba's outstanding and selfless contribution to international health and education as they rejected the U.S.'s continued anti-Cuba measures.

Countries themselves blockaded and sanctioned by U.S. imperialism spoke for the resolution: Sudan, Zimbabwe and later the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela denounced U.S. interference in the internal affairs of Venezuela and Cuba. The representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia ended his remarks after highlighting the case of a seven-year-old Cuban girl whose life expectancy plunged from a 70 percent survival chance to 20 percent without cancer medication unavailable because of the U.S. blockade. This embargo is synonymous with death.

Blockade still in force

Next, Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parilla introduced the reso-

lution acknowledging the positive steps achieved since Dec. 17. "But the measures adopted by the U.S. administration, which came into force on Jan. 16 this year and were later on expanded on Sept. 18, although positive, only modify, in a very limited way, some elements related to the implementation of the blockade.

"Many of them could not be implemented unless others are adopted that would finally allow Cuba to freely export and import products and services to and from the United States," use U.S. dollars for international financial transactions and "have access to credits and financing from private entities and international financial institutions.

"The problem is not that the Cuban order hampers the implementation of these measures and therefore it needs to be modified in order to facilitate this process, as has been stated by some U.S. officials. The problem is the implacable

Puerto Rico's crisis made in USA

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Puerto Rico's urgent and growing economic and financial crisis has been the subject of editorials and analysis in the U.S. news media in recent weeks. With a debt of \$73 billion – four times greater than that of Detroit – and the real possibility of default to Wall Street creditors, Puerto Rico has become a rather “hot” topic.

On Oct. 22, the U.S. Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy held hearings on Puerto Rico's economic and fiscal condition. Almost a month earlier, on Sept. 29, the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance held other hearings.

And on Oct. 21, the day before the latest hearings, President Barack Obama finally broke his long silence on the Puerto Rican crisis. He issued a statement recommending that the U.S. Congress approve the extension of the federal bankruptcy law to Puerto Rico. The island currently has no access to this protection, which would allow Puerto Rico to restructure its debt.

It shouldn't surprise anyone that the presidential statement would not respond to the real needs of the Puerto Rican people, but instead to the urgency of ensuring the Puerto Rican vote for the Democratic Party. The Puerto Rican community in the United States now exceeds 5 million.

On Oct. 13 and 14, Puerto Rican political leaders, agency directors and other personalities in the Puerto Rican diaspora aligned with the Democratic Party held a conference in Orlando, Fla. This city hosts 1 million new Puerto Rican immigrants. Under the title “United for Puerto Rico,” conference organizers tried to exert pressure so that both the Obama administration and Congress would approve the bankruptcy law for PR and grant the necessary financial support to get the island out of this huge crisis.

Who is supporting whom?

This article addresses an aspect of the crisis that is little understood in the United States. It is the issue of “federal assis-

tance.” Much more is said than known about the “immense help” that the U.S. government is allegedly giving the island. Those who want to blame Puerto Rico for the crisis use words like “mantengo” (a pejorative term for economic support) and spread the idea that we Puerto Ricans – and I include myself because I am Puerto Rican – are lazy and do not want to work.

Now that Obama has finally raised the issue, it is important to clarify this notion, as many U.S. citizens are wondering why this aid should be available to Puerto Rico when there are so many needs here.

First, it is essential to make clear the nature of Puerto Rico: It is a U.S. colony! In a nutshell, this means that Puerto Rico has no sovereignty – neither economic, nor social, nor territorial, nor even legal. Any law that the Puerto Rican legislature approves may be revoked by the United States. The most recent example was the Creole Bankruptcy Act that Puerto Rico's Gov. Alejandro García Padilla – himself a lackey of Yankee imperialism – tried to secure to restructure the debt of the state agencies. It was overturned in federal courts.

Many economists in Puerto Rico have addressed the debt situation. The majority of those who are not in the service of imperialism and its voracious transnationals conclude that the transfer of money from Puerto Rico to the USA is much larger than that flowing in the other direction.

Rosario Rivera, an economist and professor at the University of Puerto Rico, has lectured widely on this. See a video with a clear explanation in Spanish at Telemundo (tinyurl.com/oafx7hx).

Rivera states that transfers from the U.S. to Puerto Rico vary year to year between \$13 billion and \$16 billion. This includes two categories. “Unilaterals” are awarded as grants, food stamps and other assistance, amounting to \$1.9 billion to \$2 billion a year. In addition, workers in Puerto Rico pay taxes to the U.S. and receive “vested” benefits such as unem-



Puerto Rico's great coffee names now owned by Coca Cola.

ployment, Social Security and Medicare payments. Note that the same percentage is subtracted for Medicare and Social Security benefits from Puerto Rican workers' wages as in the United States, although the benefits they receive are less.

Transfers from Puerto Rico to the United States amount to about \$58 billion – much more than the \$13 billion to \$16 billion received.

Rivera divided this \$58 billion in transfers into three categories.

One is for imports from the United States. Remember that the U.S. has been destroying Puerto Rican agriculture and manufacturing since it invaded the island in 1898. More than 85 percent of food products are imported, mainly from the United States. Almost everything consumed on the island, including raw materials, is imported. This represents \$22 billion to \$25 billion annually.

A second, even greater figure is the \$34 billion in annual profits generated in Puerto Rico for U.S. firms. Megastores like Walmart and Home Depot have a wide margin of profit, considering the paltry tax rate the colonial government grants them.

Rivera describes all these transfers as a “revolving door,” through which whatever money that comes from the U.S.

goes right back to it. The corporate profits fly to the home office; they do not stay in Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico's government also subsidizes U.S. agriculture, and not Puerto Rico's. Consider coffee. Although Puerto Rico's coffee is of especially high quality, the government subsidizes PR Coffee Roasters, which belongs to Coca Cola. This transnational bought up the brand names of the most popular coffees grown on the island, including Yaucono, Rico and Crema. Even worse, the beans used are not necessarily grown in Puerto Rico, but imported and at best mixed with lesser-quality beans grown on the island. Puerto Rican coffee growers have had to lay off workers because their costs have increased, and coffee is very expensive to produce.

The last category that Rivera includes is the estimated cost of the shipping laws known as “Cabotaje.” These require that all products transported between Puerto Rico and the U.S. are sent only in U.S. ships with U.S. personnel, the most expensive in the world. This represents \$800 million to \$1.5 billion.

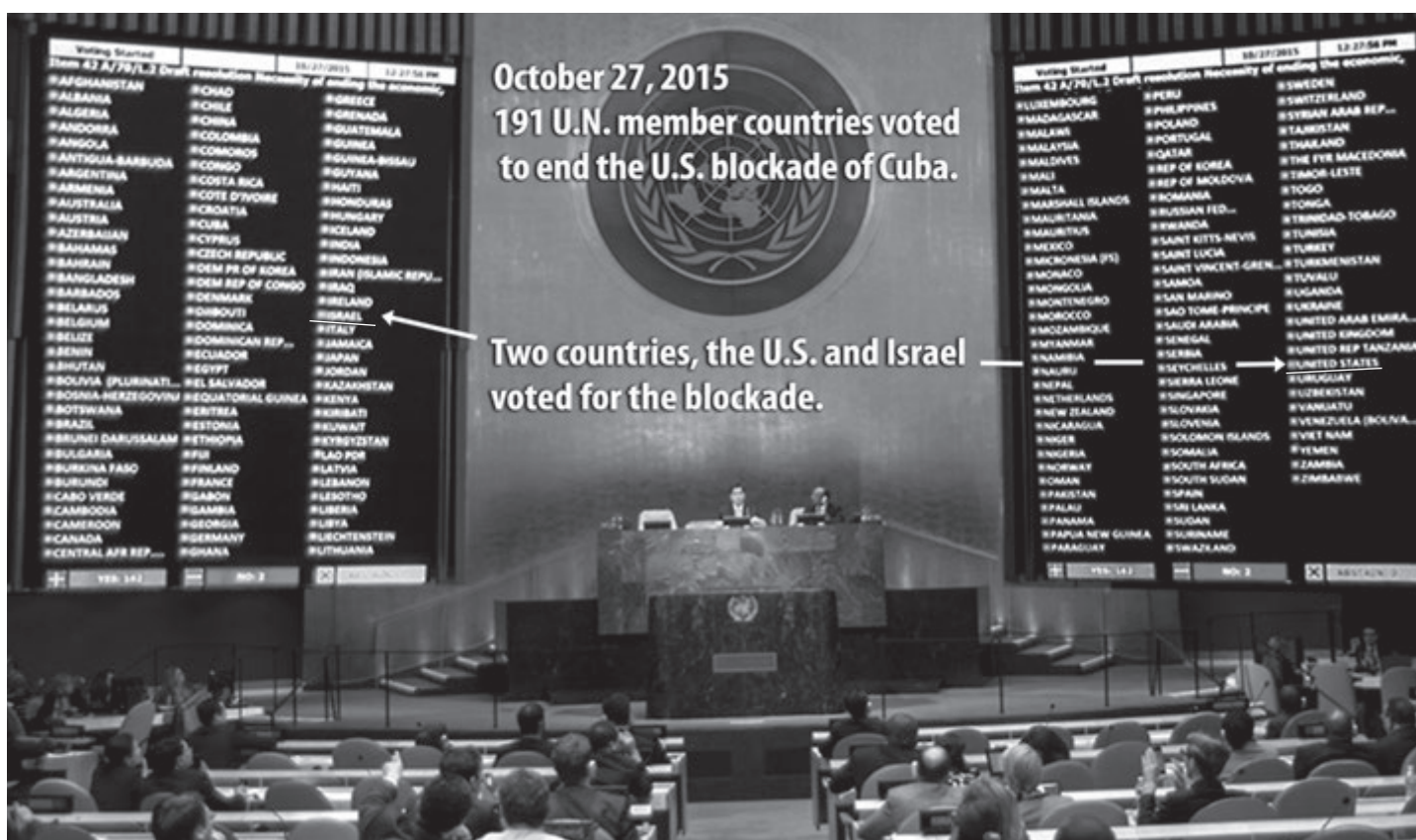
Rivera proves conclusively that Puerto Rico's workers are subsidizing the U.S. capitalist economy, not the other way around. □

and systematic existence of the blockade.

“The Cuban people will never renounce its sovereignty or the path that it has freely chosen to build a more just, efficient, prosperous and sustainable socialism. Neither will it give up in its quest for a more equitable and democratic international order.” (Full talk at tinyurl.com/o6ph87z.)

Exercising the opportunity to explain its vote before the actual count, Ambassador Ronald D. Godard, U.S. senior area advisor for Western Hemisphere Affairs, tried to fault Cuba for raising the annual resolution and made the usual unsubstantiated U.S. attack on Cuba for alleged human rights violations.

Washington is on the defensive this year, especially for U.S. violations of human rights for mass incarceration, racist police killings, illiteracy, unemployment, homelessness, disproportionate infant mortality, notably in Black communities, and rampant exploitation by banks.



The representative of Nicaragua explained its vote supporting Cuba and criticizing the U.S. statement, saying that country “had hoped to hear something different this time. Regrettably we hear the same rhetoric of previous years. The same arrogance trying to justify what is unjusti-

fiable, arguing for the continuity of a situation against the people of Cuba. ... The entire world rejects this.” She also called for the Guantánamo prison to be closed and the land returned to Cuba, as did others.

About 12:30 p.m. the recorded vote was tallied visibly on an electronic board

that turned totally green, except for two stark red “no” votes.

In after-vote explanations, Luxembourg, representing the European Union, cited the extraterritorial nature of the blockade and other matters for its unanimous vote against the U.S. blockade. □

WORKERS WORLD editorial

EU Parliament supports Snowden

Good news is hard to find, especially since the U.S. capitalist media try to bury a lot of it. Here's a recent example:

The European Parliament, a body that is directly elected by the people of all 28 European Union member states and is more reflective of their opinions than many governments, voted on Oct. 29 that each EU country should "drop any criminal charges against Edward Snowden, grant him protection and consequently prevent extradition or rendition by third parties, in recognition of his status as whistleblower and international human rights defender." (theguardian.com, Oct. 29)

While not directly enforceable, the resolution expresses the anger of many in Europe against the worldwide electronic "surveillance" campaign conducted by the National Security Agency, a massive U.S. spying organization. And it expresses the strong popular support for heroic whistleblowers like Snowden and Chelsea Manning, who have faced exile or imprisonment for exposing U.S. crimes, both here and abroad.

This vote reveals how unpopular U.S. imperialism and its political leaders have become, even in so-called allied countries.

The response by the U.S. government was not surprising. "Our position has not

changed," Ned Price, spokesperson for the National Security Council, said in a statement emailed to the Guardian. "Mr. Snowden is accused of leaking classified information and faces felony charges here in the United States. As such, he should be returned to the U.S. as soon as possible, where he will be accorded full due process."

The "due process" that Price is talking about is prosecution under the draconian Espionage Act of 1917, which would even forbid Snowden from arguing in his defense that his disclosures benefited the public.

That same law was used to jail courageous unionist and socialist Eugene Debs for years because he spoke out against U.S. entry into World War I. Later, it was used to execute both Julius and Ethel Rosenberg on falsified Cold War espionage charges. It was used to sentence Chelsea Manning to prison for decades for exposing U.S. war crimes in Iraq.

This law is not justice. It is simply a grotesque blueprint for retribution against those with the courage to expose the atrocities of imperialism. Stop the persecution of Edward Snowden! Free Chelsea Manning! □

Free Dr. Aafia Siddiqui!

Shahid Comrade, with cap, secretary general of Pakistan USA Freedom Forum, and Dr. Maha Hilal, executive director of National Coalition to Protect Civil Freedoms, stand in front of the White House as Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif met with President Barack Obama on Oct. 22.

The demonstrators' signs call for freedom or repatriation for political prisoner Dr. Aafia Siddiqui, who was kidnapped with her three children in Pakistan, held

in secret detention and tortured by U.S. forces. She was finally sentenced in 2010 to 86 years in U.S. prisons. Other demands included "Account for missing and disappeared in Pakistan" and "No secret deals on Afghanistan."

— Special to
Workers World

PHOTO: PUFF



WORKERS WORLD MUNDO OBRERO

Ataque naval UE contra migrantes

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de las guerras en Afganistán y luego Irak. Las fotografías y videos de migrantes que mueren en el Mediterráneo representan una extensión de las invasiones por fuerzas del Pentágono y de la OTAN aliadas con sus suplentes políticos en las regiones geopolíticas afectadas.

La administración del presidente Barack Obama sigue tratando de justificar su papel en la destrucción de grandes extensiones de territorio en el estado de

Siria, que una vez fue estable y próspero. La campaña aérea de la Federación Rusia contra los grupos armados de oposición en Siria es un desafío directo a las guerras imperialistas para cambiar régimen que han caracterizado la política estadounidense en el Medio Oriente, África y Asia.

Reportes de prensa indican que más de \$500 millones de los impuestos de trabajadoras/es EUA han sido despreciados en un intento fallido por crear el llamado

Turkey

Erdogan regime wins election by waging war

By John Catalinotto

The government of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's Justice and Progress Party (AKP) has re-won a majority in the Turkish parliament. Its election campaign included renewed war on the Kurdish people and violent attacks across the country on the headquarters of the leftist People's Democratic Party (HDP), along with arrests and intimidation of many journalists and hundreds of political activists.

The government and army reopened the war against the Workers Party of Kurdistan (PKK), a political and guerrilla movement based in the Kurdish population that had a truce and was negotiating with the government party to end the 21-year conflict.

During the election campaign, the regime raided 200 HDP headquarters around the country, using military and paramilitary forces, and also arrested 500 members of the leftist party. Adding to the atmosphere of intimidation, two attacks on mass gatherings of HDP sympathizers, apparently by suicide bombers, killed up to 150 people and injured many more. Under those threats, the HDP called off any mass gatherings for the last month of the election campaign.

Despite the difficult conditions, the HDP still managed to win more than 10.7 percent of the votes, giving the party 60

seats. The HDP, a coalition of leftist and Kurdish-based organizations, won handily in many Kurdish-majority districts in the southeast. In June it won 13.2 percent of the vote and 79 seats.

With 49 percent of the vote, up from 41 percent in June, the AKP won 313 of 550 seats. This gives the AKP a majority, but not the two-thirds Erdogan needed to change the Turkish Constitution and increase his power as president.

The secular, centrist Republican People's Party came in second, with about the same vote and seats as in June. It was significant that the vote for the pro-fascist Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) fell from 16 to 12 percent, reducing its seats from 80 to 42 — fewer than the HDP. The shift in the right-wing vote indicates that reactionary nationalists who usually vote MHP found the AKP to be sufficiently anti-Kurd to give Erdogan their vote.

HDP co-chair Selahattin Demirtas told the media after the vote: "We had no election campaign. We tried only to protect our people from massacres." Still, given the difficulties, he called the result "a great victory." (Junge Welt, Nov. 3)

Hypocrisy of imperialists

Despite the massacres, the arrests of journalists and the attacks on party offices, the German, European Union and U.S. governments congratulated Erdogan and called it a fair and clean election. These are the same imperialist bodies that rant against Venezuela's Bolivarian government for jailing one or two opposition leaders — who themselves organize violent anti-government actions.

The U.S. and EU imperialists want Erdogan and the Turkish state as a partner in the war against the Syrian government and in general to control Western Asia. That's why they praised this rotten election.

Like so many repressive regimes, the AKP won votes posturing as a force for peace and stability. In reality, Turkey is entering the war in Syria, especially against Kurdish forces, and the state is violently targeting the left and minorities at home. Workers and oppressed minorities inside Turkey will need international solidarity in addition to taking self-defense measures. □

"ejército moderado anti-sirio". Después de años de esfuerzo, solo cinco combatientes individuales han podido permanecer dentro del marco establecido por EUA. A pesar de estas afirmaciones es evidente que hay otros grupos que luchan contra el gobierno sirio con armas suministradas por EUA.

Todo lo que estos otros grupos armados han sido capaces de hacer es causar muertes, destrucción y desplazamiento monumentales. Muchas personas en el Medio Oriente y en todo el mundo han acogido con satisfacción la intervención de Moscú e Irán para defender al estado sirio.

Las divisiones entre los estados miembros de la UE no protegerán ni a Francia ni Alemania del inevitable malestar social. Washington ha anunciado que dará la bienvenida a unas/os 10.000 a 100.000 sirios a EUA — un número totalmente inadecuado teniendo en cuenta que la política militar y política de Washington y Wall Street es la base de la crisis en Siria, Asia Central, Libia, Yemen e Irak.

La crisis migratoria es un resultado

directo del militarismo imperialista encabezado por EUA en diversas regiones geopolíticas, así como la continua crisis capitalista mundial. Turquía, un estado de la OTAN, está muy involucrado en la desestabilización de Siria, planteando preguntas sobre el origen del atentado en Ankara el 10 de octubre que mató a casi 100 personas.

La única esperanza real de revertir la situación en el Mediterráneo, la devastación de estados afectados por la guerra en tres continentes, y el sufrimiento de las/os trabajadoras y oprimidos en los países imperialistas debido al drenaje de recursos nacionales por las guerras y desestabilizaciones, es unir a los pueblos de estas naciones oprimidas, junto con las/os trabajadoras y oprimidos en los países industrializados, con el fin de sacar a las fuerzas del Pentágono, la CIA y la OTAN fuera del Medio Oriente, África y Asia Central. Entonces, la gente de estas regiones será capaz de resolver sus propios problemas internos y tener verdadera paz y seguridad. □



WAR WITHOUT VICTORY

by Sara Flounders

"By revealing the underbelly of the empire, Flounders sheds insight on how to stand up to the imperialist war machine and, in so doing, save ourselves and humanity."

— Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President, U.N. General Assembly, 2008-2009; Foreign Minister of Nicaragua's Sandinista government.

Available at all major online booksellers and bookstores around the country. PentagonAchillesHeel.com

African forces conduct military exercises

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

A military exercise by 5,400 troops from various African Union member states in South Africa is aimed at creating a continent-wide African Standby Force for engagement in peacekeeping and stabilization projects. Preparation began in late October and continued through the first week of November in the Northern Cape at Lohatla.

The AU mandated the ASF to deploy troops in states during civil wars and other kinds of instability in order to eliminate the rationale for Western intervention into Africa's internal affairs.

The Namibia-published Southern Times on Oct. 26 described the military exercise as Amani Africa II, which last year involved numerous countries, along with the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) and other NATO troops: "The troops are being drilled to be part of the new 25,000-strong multinational force, which will be mandated to intervene in African countries rocked by genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes. It is expected to be fully operational by early 2016." The force will be comprised of "five brigades formed by Africa's economic groupings including the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS), East African Community (EAC), North African Regional Capability (NARC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and Southern African Development Community (SADC)." Douala, Cameroon, will be its logistics headquarters.

The report notes, "Africa's evolving security challenges have further inspired the urgency for the operational readiness of the ASF and Rapid Deployment Capacity (RDC). Although the continent has witnessed a steady decline in ... armed conflicts and intrastate conflicts, transnational security threats such as terrorist attacks from militant groups like Boko Haram have persisted in some parts of the continent."

These efforts require tremendous financial and material resources. Moreover, defining which states need intervention and under what circumstances will doubtlessly become a highly politicized process.

Post-independence intervention

Such stabilization and peacekeeping efforts have taken place in Africa since 1960 with mixed results. Many armed forces sent into troubled states have originated from the same regions in the continent, while others have been more broad based.

After the former Belgian Congo's independence on June 30, 1960, the colonial-led and -trained paramilitary Force Publique mutinied, leading to a breakdown in social order. Newly elected Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba appealed to the United Nations to deploy a peacekeeping force. That proved to be a disaster for the country and its revolutionary leader.

With the U.N. forces' assistance, Lumumba was overthrown, placed under house arrest and denied access to the media, resulting in his kidnapping and assassination, with the backing of imperialist governments, including Belgium, Britain and the U.S. Congo was plunged into decades of division and instability, while multinational corporations reaped billions of dollars in profits from exploiting the country's mineral resources.

Other peacekeeping efforts have enjoyed success, such as ECOWAS interventions in Liberia and Sierra Leone during the late 1990s and early 2000s, which, after years of setbacks, brought about some semblance of stability in these states.

From 1998 to 2003, the SADC sent thousands of troops from Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia to the Democratic Republic of Congo, halting a U.S.-backed invasion by Ugandan and Rwandan armed forces, which was aimed at overthrowing the governments of Laurent Kabila and later, his son, Joseph.

Nonetheless, there are political problems associated with plans to establish an ASF because the most serious interventions today revolve around AFRICOM. It was AFRICOM that led the destabilization and bombing campaign that destroyed Libya, fostering instability throughout North and West Africa.

Imperialism's role in 'peacekeeping' operations

Since the war of regime change against Libya, the imperialist scheme to institute a neocolonial client regime there has created the major source of global human trafficking. Hundreds of thousands of people are smuggled through Libya and across the Mediterranean Sea, which has resulted in more than 2,000 deaths so far this year — with no end in sight.

Acquiring and budgeting financial resources for the ASF is also a major issue, as declining prices for Africa's export commodities have caused a myriad of economic, political and social problems. Even Nigeria and Ghana, hailed in recent years for their phenomenal growth, are now facing industrial workers' actions over nonpayment of salaries, inflation partially due to declining currency val-

ues, and growing class divisions.

Funding and logistical support from the imperialist states would immediately compromise the ASF's political character, creating the potential for military units to become a surrogate army for the Pentagon and NATO. Numerous Western research centers, think tanks and periodicals have highlighted the central role of former colonial and neocolonial countries as primary funders of the continental military command.

"Since 2004, the European Union has committed more than 1.3 billion euros to African peace operations, including [for] missions to Somalia, the Central African Republic and Mali," reported Reuters. The EU and U.S. fund "more than 90 percent of AU peace and security efforts ... although AU member states have pledged to provide a quarter of the funding for operations by 2020." (Oct. 29)

Reuters stressed, "[T]he EU is even bankrolling this month's exercises, casting a shadow over the 'African solutions for African problems' mantra espoused by politicians in national capitals and the AU headquarters."

Consequently, these funding sources would automatically have a determining role about which countries are targeted for intervention. With Pentagon, NATO and EU funding, would these entities support an ASF effort to assist a state or group being attacked by imperialist interests, such

as in Libya and Ivory Coast in 2011?

In the Reuters article, David Anderson, African history professor at Britain's University of Warwick, warned, "The external support for defense spending ... is a major foreign policy handicap. African states will truly own their defense and security when they pay for it themselves. There is no greater marker of sovereignty and independence than security and defense."

This approach to continental military cooperation is a departure from what Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the Republic of Ghana's first president, envisioned when he advanced the idea in 1960 amid the Congo crisis. In his 1963 book, "Africa Must Unite," Nkrumah emphasized that any African military force must be independent of NATO and its allies.

This idea was supported by Libya's former leader, Col. Muammar Gadhafi, who hosted the 1999 Sirte conference of the Organization of African Unity, the AU's predecessor. The Sirte Declaration called for the ASF's formation when the AU was formally initiated in 2002.

Both Nkrumah and Gadhafi were overthrown at the instigation of and due to coordination by the Central Intelligence Agency, working at imperialism's behest. Nonetheless, their formulations were correct. Only when Africa can establish its own independent military force will there be any hope for genuine peace and stability on the continent. □

CUBA

The CDRs at 55

By **Ildefonso Gustavo Díaz Sandoval**
Artemisa, Cuba

On Jan. 1, 1959, a very important event took place in Cuba: the triumph of the Cuban Revolution. From that moment on many revolutionary measures were taken by the new government to better the economic and social life of the people who had suffered many years of oppression, discrimination and exploitation.

As a reaction to those measures, U.S. imperialism tried to frustrate the newborn revolution. It carried out intense subversive work: sabotage, counterrevolutionary acts, ideological campaigns against the main leaders, and military and economic aggression. Why? Because the new measures taken by the revolutionary government did not coincide with U.S. interests, and the U.S. could not maintain the system of exploitation and oppression that guaranteed its domination of the country.

The leader of the Revolution, Fidel Castro Ruz, realized that the unity of the people was a decisive factor for the victorious advance of the Revolution. This unity materialized from the very beginning of the victory because of the support of the measures taken to defend the revolutionary process from internal and external enemies.

Quickly, mass and social organizations were created without distinctions as to race, sex, religious beliefs or ideological trends. The people were called forth and educated.

The Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, known as the CDRs, are an example of the organization and unity of the people. They are a valuable contribution of the Cuban Revolution to the experience of the world's socialist revolutions. The CDRs were created on Sept. 28, 1960, by Fidel. At that moment he said, "We are going to set up a system of revolutionary

collective surveillance." The purpose of these committees was to keep an eye on the terrorist actions of the enemies of the Revolution — the U.S. government, CIA and the Pentagon. The CDRs' responsibilities were increased, and the Committees started to be a powerful assistant to the Revolution on every front.

Since then, the CDRs constitute the largest mass organization. They were created in every block of all cities and in every rural zone of the country, grouping citizens at the early age of 14 regardless of their occupations, ideas, sex, race or any other characteristic.

In addition to the CDRs' main mission — to be watchful for any possible subversive activities of the enemies of the Revolution in the small area of each committee — the CDRs contribute to the cleaning and hygiene of cities and communities, collaborate with the Ministry of Public Health in any mass vaccination campaigns, promote the donation of blood voluntarily and help to control epidemics. They also worry about students' attendance in school and organize the recovery of raw materials useful for industry. They help with the housing and population census, the electoral process and, with the police force, control delinquency. They act to guarantee the democratic discussion of the main measures the government is going to take.

The CDRs periodically convoke meetings with their members to discuss the main problems which affect the neighborhood and the people in general. The main leaders of the organization are selected democratically by the members of the community.

In this way, the CDRs have been powerful organizations which have fulfilled numerous activities, roles and tasks that allow the Revolution to go on triumphantly.

The writer is a Workers World reader in Cuba.

Prisiones sureñas llenas de deudores

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de Pelican Bay de California lanzaron una huelga de hambre contra las sentencias de aislamiento que habitualmente duraban más de 10 años. Para el 2013, más de 30.000 prisioneros de California se habían sumado a la huelga, la más grande en la historia. Bajo la tremenda presión de los confinados, sus familias y sus comunidades, el gobernador Jerry Brown llegó a un acuerdo para eliminar el régimen de aislamiento indefinido.

En marzo, las madres en el centro Karnes, un campo de detención de familias inmigrantes en Texas, iniciaron una huelga de trabajo y de hambre, exigiendo ser liberadas con sus hijas/os. En junio, las madres en el Campo de Detención de la Familia en el Condado de Berks-Pen-

silvania, iniciaron una huelga similar. Un juez federal falló a su favor el 21 de agosto, ordenando al gobierno de Obama liberar a todas las madres y las/os niños detenidos para el 23 de octubre. (End-FamilyDetention.com)

El 1 de enero de 2014, el Movimiento de Liberación de Alabama anunció "una acción multirracial colectiva... por los Derechos Humanos y Civiles, en la forma de un paro laboral" que se extendió a las cárceles del condado de St. Clair y al condado de Elmore. MLA es una organización de base fundada por hombres encarcelados en Alabama.

El MLA es claro sobre la base de su estrategia de resistencia: "Las cárceles no funcionan sin el trabajo de los reclusos. Y cada día que la prisión no funcione, el margen de sus ganancias cae". □



FOTO: FREE ALABAMA MOVEMENT
Free Alabama Movement marcha a la Prisión de Mujeres a Tutwiler, agosto 2014.

Prisiones sureñas llenas de deudores

Por Minnie Bruce Pratt

En todo EUA, las cárceles locales se han convertido en "cárceles de deudores" ya que las ciudades y los condados encarcelan a personas pobres que no pueden pagar las multas por violaciones de tráfico, delitos menores o "costos de la corte". En ninguna parte es esto más dramático que en el 'Sur Profundo' [n.t.: sur de EUA] donde las personas encarceladas son desproporcionadamente jóvenes negras/os, inmigrantes, personas de color y lesbianas, homosexuales, bisexuales, transexuales y gente queer. (blackandpink.org)

El 17 de septiembre en Alabama, el juez de circuito del condado de Perry, Marvin Wiggins, dijo a una corte llena de gente durante una audiencia sobre multas sin pagar: "Si usted no tiene dinero y no quiere ir a la cárcel, considere donar sangre hoy y traer su recibo, o el alguacil tiene suficientes esposas para los que no tienen dinero". (Equal Justice Initiative)

Debra Shoemaker Ford del condado de Shelby, fue encarcelada allí durante siete semanas sin audiencia judicial. ¿Cuál fue su delito? Ella no había pagado las cuotas mensuales cobradas por una empresa privada de libertad condicional, Servicios de Corrección Judicial (JCS por sus siglas en inglés). La compañía con sede en Georgia había proporcionado su fianza por una violación de tráfico. (themarshallproject.org)

En el condado de Chilton, el obrero

metalúrgico jubilado y enfermo Richard Garrett, fue encarcelado durante dos años debiendo \$10.000 sólo por violaciones de tráfico y de licencia, además de las cuotas y multas devengadas durante 10 años. (New York Times, 2 de julio de 2012)

Encarcelar a alguien que no puede pagar las deudas porque es demasiado pobre es una violación a los derechos civiles bajo el Pacto Internacional de Derechos Civiles y Políticos de 1966. También es ilegal en virtud del veredicto dictado en el caso *Bearden v. Georgia* de 1982 por la Corte Suprema de EUA.

Pero a pesar de que el encarcelamiento de deudores no está permitido por ley, de hecho va en aumento. Como parte del aumento de prisiones con fines de lucro de los últimos 20 años, iniciativas "financiadas por las/os infractores" en todo el sistema de "justicia" estadounidense han transferido gran parte del costo del sistema a las/os mismos presos. Ciudades y condados empobrecidos han adoptado activamente este enfoque para agregar a su "fuente de ingresos".

Los gobiernos locales también han aumentado los ingresos mediante la contratación de la Agencia de Inmigración y Aduanas para arrestar y encarcelar inmigrantes indocumentadas/os a fin de cumplir con las cuotas para mantener "las camas llenas" en centros de detención con fines de lucro operados por gigantes corporativos como Corrections Corporation of America y GEO Group. Inmigrantes en-

carceladas/os entonces incurren en costos en estos locales (Grassrootsleadership.org)

Empresas depredadoras como JCS son contratadas por ciudades y condados para cobrar multas, restitución y cargos de las personas condenadas o encarceladas. Subrayando que están "ahorrando el dinero de los contribuyentes," estas empresas con fines de lucro atosigan a las/os pobres tratando de cobrar todo tipo de honorarios, incluyendo registro en la cárcel, solicitudes de defensores públicos, pruebas de drogas, pruebas de ADN, rehabilitación por adicción a drogas, vigilancia electrónica, así como costos diarios de encarcelación preventiva antes del juicio, etc. (globalresearch.ca)

Las empresas privadas no le cobran nada a los gobiernos locales; hacen sus ganancias mediante la adición de cargos extras a las/os acusados.

Las empresas son cobradores con el poder de decidir si alguien va a la cárcel por no pagar. Las/os acusados pobres tienen derecho a la asistencia judicial en los casos penales, pero no en los civiles – como el endeudamiento. Eso deja a las/os acusados pobres a merced de las empresas especulativas como la JCS.

Un estudio de 2010 por el Centro Brennan para la Justicia examinó las estructuras de tarifas en 15 estados de EUA con las poblaciones carcelarias más grandes, incluyendo California, Florida y Texas. El estudio encontró que las cuotas "crean nuevas rutas de encarcelamiento para

aquellos que no pueden pagar sus deudas y hacen más difícil encontrar empleo y vivienda, así como cumplir con las obligaciones de manutención de niños". La deuda por procesos penales también afecta la elegibilidad para la licencia de conducir y obtener crédito.

Prisioneras/os luchan

Una campaña nacional contra el encarcelamiento de deudores está tomado velocidad. El 21 de octubre la Unión Americana de Libertades Civiles presentó una demanda federal contra JCS, la ciudad de Biloxi-Mississippi, su jefe de policía y un juez municipal, culpándoles de que operan "una prisión moderna de deudores ... [que] arresta y encarcela personas empobrecidas en un esquema para generar ingresos municipales".

En enero pasado, la ACLU presentó una demanda similar en Georgia contra el condado de DeKalb y rápidamente llegó a un acuerdo en marzo, logrando una limitada reforma sistémica. Bajo esta presión, el día antes de que la ACLU presentara la demanda en Mississippi, la JCS anunció que cerraba sus negocios en Alabama.

Acciones militantes de prisioneros por todo el país precedieron estos desafíos legales y siguen alimentando la creciente lucha nacional contra las prisiones con fines de lucro y el encarcelamiento en masa. En 2011, los prisioneros en la Prisión Estatal

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Consejo de Seguridad ONU autoriza ataque naval UE contra buques de migrantes en Mediterráneo

Por Abayomi Azikiwe

Más militarización en el Mediterráneo ha sido aprobada por una resolución del Consejo de Seguridad de la ONU el 9 de octubre. Con una votación de 14 a 1, se facultaron las fuerzas navales de la Unión Europea para supuestamente detener y hacer retroceder a buques que transporten inmigrantes hacia el sur Europa a través del Mediterráneo. Sólo la República Bolivariana de Venezuela se abstuvo de votar. Millones de personas han sido desplazadas de África, Medio Oriente y Asia en la peor crisis de refugiados desde el fin de la Segunda Guerra Mundial.

Este renovado esfuerzo denominado "Operación Sofía", consiste de seis buques de guerra de la UE en constante patrullaje por la costa de Libia. A estos barcos se les ha dado la capacidad de detener, confiscar, detener y destruir los barcos utilizados por los traficantes de personas que llevan miles a Europa cada semana.

Un comunicado emitido por la operación naval de la UE decía que, "Los activos abordarán, registrarán, confiscarán y desviarán, en alta mar, los buques sospechosos de ser utilizados para el contrabando o la trata de personas". (eas.europa.eu) Un portaaviones italiano, una fragata francesa y otra británica, junto a un barco español y dos alemanes, encabezarán la misión, que sigue el mismo patrón que las expediciones antipiratería de la UE por el Cuerno de África.

La agencia de noticias Francia 24 reportó el 7 de octubre: "Se espera que al menos otros tres buques suministrados por las armadas belga, británica y eslovena llegue a la zona a finales de octubre para completar la fuerza, que también incluye cuatro aviones y 1.318 personas. Pero la operación es una gota en el océano comparado con la inmensa magnitud del problema que ha visto 630.000 inmigrantes entrar ilegalmente a la UE este año mientras la gente huye de conflictos en Siria, Afganistán e Irak".

Imperialistas tratan de mantener unidad en medio de crisis

La crisis migratoria ha dividido profundamente a los estados miembros de la UE, lo que llevó a los líderes de Francia y Alemania a emitir una declaración conjunta llamando a la unidad.

Otros países como Hungría, han erigido vallas para mantener a las/os migrantes fuera de su territorio, mientras que abusan de las/os que ya han entrado, forzándoles a centros de detención y golpeándoles y echándoles gases a personas de la 3ra edad, hombres, mujeres y niños.

Los estados europeos se afectaron mucho por la crisis capitalista mundial de 2007-09. Las tasas de desempleo y pobreza aumentaron incluso en países relativamente ricos como Francia, Alemania y Bretaña. Las tensiones raciales entre comunidades oprimidas y gobiernos en estos estados se han intensificado

en la última década.

No obstante, las principales economías de Europa reconocen que a menos que presenten una postura más liberal hacia la comunidad internacional, resultará aún más difícil hacer valer su derecho a mantener su presencia militar en África, Oriente Medio y Asia. Mientras que Alemania y Francia enmarcan su respuesta a la crisis de migrantes y refugiados – que en realidad está diseñada para continuar su papel neocolonialista – como una "misión humanitaria", los europeos están tratando de apaciguar una potencial calamidad o ruptura dentro de las estructuras de la UE.

El escritor Mustapha Karkouti de Gulf News señaló el 10 de octubre que "Los dos gigantes europeos, Alemania y Francia, han advertido recientemente que Europa se enfrenta a una seria división sobre Siria, ya que tanto la canciller alemana Angela Merkel y el presidente francés François Hollande, han pedido unidad a los 28 países que integran la UE. Juntos, hablándoles al parlamento de la UE el miércoles pasado [7 de octubre] en Estrasburgo, trataron conjuntamente de persuadir a los estados miembros que están orientados hacia el interior, que van a estar mejor si permanecen en el bloque europeo".

La rivalidad inter-imperialista entre los estados miembros de la UE y EUA y Canadá, hace necesario fomentar la ilusión de unidad en relación a la crisis migratoria. Sin embargo, los miembros más recientes que eran estados de orient-

ación socialista en alianza con la Unión Soviética como Hungría, están en una posición más débil económica y políticamente, particularmente a la luz de los partidos políticos derechistas que están en el poder en varios de estos países.

El artículo de Gulf News continuó: "La aparición de ambos líderes en el parlamento europeo es la primera vez desde que el ex canciller Helmut Kohl, el arquitecto de la reunificación de Alemania, y el ex presidente francés François Mitterrand, los arquitectos del Tratado de Maastricht que estableció la Unión Europea, aparecieron juntos en la misma plataforma en 1989, también subrayando la importancia estratégica de Europa . . . El proceso de ampliación en sí ha tenido sus propias consecuencias en la política de Europa y en la vida europea, particularmente, el aumento gradual de las tendencias derechistas y nacionalistas".

Implicaciones a largo plazo de la crisis migratoria

Cientos de miles de inmigrantes, muchas/os de ellos procedentes de Siria y otros estados del Medio Oriente, Asia y África, han presentado una crisis humanitaria y política, con más de 3.000 muertes hasta la fecha.

Imágenes de cuerpos flotando y arrastrados a las playas son un símbolo profundo de la política imperialista fallida en los últimos 13 años desde el comienzo

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