



U.S. Out of Syria

No fake 'humanitarian' interventions!

By Deirdre Griswold

The city of Aleppo in Syria has been liberated from reactionary fighters — those supported by the U.S., Qatar, Saudi Arabia and others — who had taken over the city by deadly violence some four years ago.

Most of the forces the Syrian Army was up against, like the al-Nusra Front, had been characterized as “terrorist” by the U.S. itself just a couple of years ago. Yet somehow, the powerful Western media have now managed to convince a lot of people that the liberation of Aleppo from these forces of extreme reaction was a terrible thing and that the government of Syria should be hated for it.

This issue of Workers World has several articles rebutting that false conception. Our view is based, first and foremost, on the recognition that the United States is an imperialist country that has used violence for more than a century to grab and exploit huge areas of the world.

Most of those oppressed in this

way have been people of color. White supremacy has always played a big part in “justifying” colonial and imperial expansion.

When the U.S. CIA, as early as 1979, first supplied and trained what would become the Taliban to fight a secular revolutionary government in Afghanistan, the excuse was anti-communism. The excuses for the costly and destructive wars the U.S. has waged since then in Iraq, Yemen, Libya and Syria have varied from needing to eliminate “weapons of mass destruction” to their leaders being “brutal dictators” whose overthrow would be a “humanitarian” intervention. Those excuses have all been lies.

The suffering now in Aleppo has its roots in U.S. imperialist machination and destabilization. It’s time to end the phony “humanitarian” interventions conceived by Wall Street and executed by the military-industrial complex. Peace for Syria means U.S. hands off!

Turn to pages 6-7 for some historical reality and accuracy on the present situation in Syria. □

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War hero dies Stopped My Lai massacre

By John Catalinotto

On Dec. 13, Larry Colburn died. He was the last survivor of a U.S. helicopter crew who were among the best of the heroes of the Vietnam War — on the U.S. side. This is their story.

It was March 16, 1968. A U.S. helicopter gunship was ready to do battle with Vietnamese guerrillas. It hovered over My Lai that morning. Its task was to draw enemy fire and expose their positions.

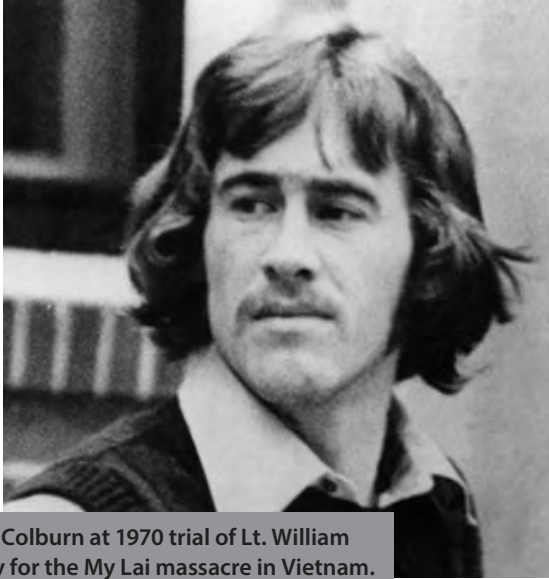
What the three members of that helicopter crew observed — and it took a while for them to realize what was going on — was one of the worst massacres of a U.S. war of aggression and occupation filled with atrocities and massacres. The officer in charge of the company attacking a Vietnamese village, Lt. William Calley, had ordered his troops to set fire to the homes and to kill everyone in the village.

In the course of the day, more than 500 Vietnamese civilians were killed, almost all elders, women and children, with few or no guerrillas. This carnage became known as the My Lai massacre.

When the helicopter crew — Colburn, Chief Warrant Officer Hugh Thompson and copter crew chief Glenn Andreotta — realized what was going on, they did their best to stop it. Thompson seized the initiative, landed the copter, jumped out and confronted Calley and the platoon he commanded. Thompson threatened that his gunner would fire on them if they continued to kill Vietnamese civilians.

Colburn was handling the machine gun pointed at Calley and his troops. He never had to fire. Calley backed down.

This action rescued the surviving Vietnamese villagers. Up to that point the helicopter crew were not war resisters or committed radicals. They were just decent hu-



Larry Colburn at 1970 trial of Lt. William Calley for the My Lai massacre in Vietnam.

man beings. But to act on that was enough to require real bravery. In the best tradition of soldier-resisters, they turned their guns around on the real enemy.

Calley was convicted of premeditated murder and sentenced to life, but President Richard Nixon moved him to house arrest, and he only served 3.5 years of his sentence. He lives in Miami now.

The bravery of the helicopter crew that stopped Calley's mass murder was mirrored and multiplied by thousands of U.S. soldiers, sailors, Air Force members and Marines who began to resist the war from 1968 until the last U.S. troops were withdrawn in 1973. They avoided combat with the Vietnamese troops, refused orders to fight and, even in extreme cases, killed their own racist or too-aggressive officers and sergeants.

Catalinotto is the author of "Turn the Guns Around: Mutinies, Soldier Revolts and Revolutions," available in January.

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We're taking a break!

Workers World publishes 51 issues a year and takes one week off. Next week's the week! We'll see you again with our issue of Jan. 5. We'll also be changing the way we date the paper. For now-outmoded reasons, the paper has been dated one week ahead for the last 58 years. Beginning next issue, it will be dated the day it comes from the printer. While we're on our short vacation, we'll also be watching the news. So if something big breaks, check out our website, workers.org.

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 57 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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#J20: The working class must unite

All out for J20 Counter-Inaugural!

The working class must unite!

DON'T GIVE RACIST, FASCIST, UNION-HATING TRUMP "A CHANCE"

The presidential election is over. Trump captured the Electoral College even though a majority of people in this country voted — if they voted at all — against Trump. The big business media immediately ran headlines blaming the struggling, so-called “white working class” for Trump’s victory. It is sadly true that millions of working-class whites embraced or accepted Trump’s hateful rhetoric attacking Black people, all people of color, immigrants, Muslims, women, people with disabilities, Jewish people and the LGBTQ community. Many workers and small businesspeople, including those who lost everything after the 2007-2008 recession, fell for his empty promises to fix the economy. But the polls acknowledge that the strongest base of support for Trump’s fascist campaign was white people making over \$70,000 a year.

There is only one multinational, global working class. Media “experts” don’t acknowledge that Black, Brown or Indigenous voters are also part of the working class. Workers who can’t vote, including prisoners, undocumented workers and those under 18 years of age are part of the working class. In fact, these are the most exploited and oppressed sectors of the working class.

There is nothing in Trump’s program for any of us. Truly, not just some, but all

workers and oppressed people are hurt, threatened, and divided by bigotry and scapegoating.

Now, unfortunately, leaders of the AFL-CIO as well as the Auto Workers, Steelworkers and Building Trades unions have adopted the posture of “give Trump a chance.” This is a betrayal of our class interests.

What does the working class need?

Workers need jobs — a full employment agenda that includes a massive public works program and a shorter workweek with no cut in pay. A national health program that leaves no one choosing between paying costly premiums and going without insurance. A moratorium on evictions, foreclosures and utility shutoffs. Quality public education and free college tuition.

Restore and expand the social safety net, which has seen heartless cuts in food stamps, welfare, unemployment benefits and more. End so-called trade agreements like NAFTA and the TPP that hurt workers worldwide — not just here. Stop union-busting by the bosses. Reverse the dozens of anti-union bills passed by state legislatures across the country, including Jim Crow “right-to-work” (for less!) laws. Labor laws should not be written by people like the Koch brothers and the DeVos family.

Workers need money to rebuild the



infrastructure of our cities, not for the prison-industrial complex, the military budget or wars against oppressed people around the world. We need reparations for our communities — from Detroit and Flint to Puerto Rico — suffering from racist austerity.

Forcibly stop hate crimes against people of color, Muslims, women, the LGBTQ community and immigrants — crimes that have been on the rise since the Trump election — along with the hateful rhetoric that encourages them. Plug the school-to-prison pipeline. Stop short-term projects like DAPL that poison the waterways, create no permanent jobs and ultimately only help Big Oil and the banks.

The epidemic of police murders of Black, Brown and Indigenous people must come to an end! Jail killer cops! Black lives matter!

The appointment of fast food CEO Andrew Puzder is a declaration of war against Fight for \$15. **We need a \$15 minimum wage and a union** — not as a ceiling but a foundation to build upon. All workers deserve at least \$15 and the right to organize and collectively bargain. This includes workers in the U.S. South, farm laborers, domestic workers, workers with disabilities, pris-

oners, vulnerable undocumented workers often subjected to wage theft, and superexploited precarious workers (often mislabeled self-employed).

Workers and oppressed people are powerful! Our movement was growing even before the election. The number of strikes was up after years of decline. Verizon workers, Minnesota nurses and the Harvard dining hall workers were victorious. Prisoners struck on the anniversary of the Attica Rebellion. Rebellions have broken out in Ferguson, Baltimore, Milwaukee and Charlotte. The Black Lives Matter movement is showing the world what a fightback looks like. The DREAMers, Fight for \$15 and Standing Rock are other inspiring examples. Mass youth-led protests erupted as soon as the presidential election results were known.

All of the working class must unite. Organized labor, the first line of defense for the workers and oppressed, must see itself as part of the broader working-class movement. Low-wage and precarious workers are a part of this movement. Unemployed and underemployed workers are a part. Prisoners are a part. Workers around the globe — superexploited, often by the same bosses we work for — are a part. Migrant workers, risking their lives to escape war or austerity, are a part. All of us, together, are unstoppable!

We must show Trump, all the politicians and the one-percenters they serve: **We refuse to be divided!**

Build a united front and make January 20 a sea of working-class unity! J20Resist.org #J20Resist

Teachers' unions push back right-wing attack

By Martha Grevatt
Detroit

Right-wing Michigan lawmakers introduced several bills attacking teacher unions during the final weeks of the 2016 state legislature. The bills died, however, after the Senate declined to take them up for a vote. The statewide chapter of the American Federation of Teachers credits the victory to a mass member mobilization, carried out in concert with the Michigan Education Association and the state AFL-CIO.

One of the bills would have forced teachers hired after July 1, 2017, off the traditional pension plan — the Michigan Public School Employees Retirement System — and into a 401k savings plan. Another would have cut funding for MPERS by not contributing for the hours teacher union representatives spend conducting union business.

Senate Bill 280 would have prevented unions and school administrators from negotiating to pay teachers for time in labor-management conferences. The AFT pointed out that this would hurt children, as many of these meetings focus on improving educational quality.

State Rep. Gary Glenn — who also leads the state chapter of the anti-LGBTQ American Family Association — had the bill amended to prohibit community colleges from deducting union dues from employee paychecks. As the AFT points out, “The cost to employers for deduction of union dues is negligible. This legislation is merely an attempt to limit the ability of local unions to function.”

The AFT also warned that legislators were talking about amending the tax code to let the state raid the School Aid Fund to finance income tax refunds — which cur-



Detroit community members support their teachers at a February rally in Michigan.

Iowa

Workers unionize at military-industrial PAE

By Mike Kuhlenbeck
Urbandale, Iowa

Workers at Pacific Architects and Engineers Inc. will begin contract negotiations on Jan. 21 after winning a “landslide victory” in their fight to join the American Postal Workers Union Local 44.

A four-month organizing drive at PAE conducted by Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement (Iowa CCI) and the Des Moines, Iowa, APWU Local 44 resulted in a vote of 18-8 on Oct. 21 in favor of a union at the Urbandale location, which is a subcontractor of the U.S. Postal Service. The organizing drive started in July when a group of 18 PAE workers, mostly Latinas, met with Iowa CCI orga-

nizers Emily Schott and Madeline Cano.

Schott told WW: “The most moving thing to me when the workers first came to us was how long they had been working there and how horribly the management was treating them after so many loyal years to the company.”

Despite working for PAE for over 10 years, and some for as long as 17 years, workers were harassed and subjected to unreasonable production quotas. Nearly all the workers had injuries from the repetitive nature of the work, and the company was doing nothing to make the work safer. Along with company plans for cutting benefits and freezing wages, management circulated memos pressuring workers to switch to temporary

positions, which would mean “abysmal health insurance and ridiculous hours” for the workers, according to Schott.

PAE is a major recipient of U.S. government money as a subcontractor for the Pentagon. According to military-industrialcomplex.com, PAE has been awarded more than \$562 million in military contracts since 2007, making its top investors very wealthy even as it tries to nickel and dime its workers.

APWU Local 44 President Mike Bates has been a union steward for 14 years and president for the past four years. He became involved with the union drive after Iowa CCI organizer Matthew Covington reached out to him for help in organizing

Continued on page 7

Freedom fighters converge in Mississippi

By Dante Strobino
Jackson, Miss.

The Southern Human Rights Organizing Conference celebrated 20 years of convergences Dec. 9-11 in Jackson, Miss. Organized by Jaribu Hill from the Mississippi Workers Center for Human Rights, and held at Tougaloo College, a historically Black college rooted in the Civil Rights Movement, this SHROC was dedicated to “Local Human Rights and Social Justice Activists and Martyrs” such as Mayor Chokwe Lumumba, Fannie Lou Hamer, Medgar Evers, Annie Devine, Nubia Lumumba, Victoria Gray Adams, Dr. L.C. Dorsey and other freedom fighters from the South, and those from beyond such as Fidel Castro.

The conference theme, “Forward Ever, Backward Never: 20 Years of Advancing a Global South Agenda for Human Rights,” focused on many struggles across the Southern region including panels on “Smashing Patriarchy: From Black Power to Black Lives Matter and Beyond” and “Strike Back Against Empire: Building International Solidarity.”

“In 2016, SHROC continues to be uncompromising in its values and its commitment in uplifting a radical, multi-generational human rights agenda that is rooted in anti-capitalism, anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism and anti-white supremacy,” stated Atlanta-based conference organizing committee member, Yolande Tomlinson.

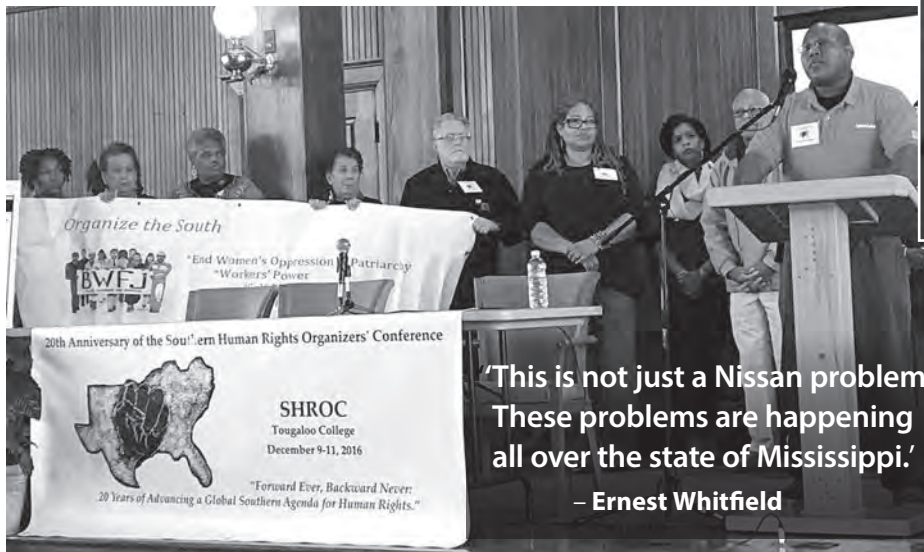
She continued, “The need is not just to lift up needs of women, but to explicitly name patriarchy, the system of the male supremacy and domination that sits at the root of gender domination.”

Over the last 20 years, SHROC has helped Southern organizers to understand their work within an international human rights framework. Participants were reminded of the role that the Black freedom struggle has played to elevate all struggles for social and economic justice within the United States.

The conference has always been a place where Southern labor organizers come together to share their strategies and support each other’s campaigns. The Southern Workers Assembly hosted a meeting to continue to build a Southernwide social movement to organize labor in the South, along with supporting a proposal to build a National Assembly for Black Liberation.



A main feature of the conference was support for 5,200 autoworkers at Nissan in Canton, Miss.



This is not just a Nissan problem. These problems are happening all over the state of Mississippi.

— Ernest Whitfield

The conference raised the issues of supporting the freedom of political prisoners and going to the United Nations to demand reparations for descendants of slaves. Standing Rock and other important struggles were given attention.

Solidarity with Nissan workers

One of the main features of the conference was support for 5,200 autoworkers at a plant in Canton, Miss., who manufacture Nissan cars. A large majority of the workers are Black. There has been a 13-year effort to organize a union at this plant. Over 40 percent of the workers there are part-time workers, making it very difficult to organize. The workers have reported two deaths in recent years. They are still fighting for justice.

The campaign is picking up steam after support from 35 French and European policymakers, who signed a letter asking Nissan to adopt a position of neutrality toward union organizing efforts in Canton.

The French government owns 20 percent of shares of Renault-Nissan, which in

turn is the largest shareholder of Nissan. In June, Christian Hutin, a member of the French National Assembly, visited Mississippi on a fact-finding mission, but Renault-Nissan declined to meet with him.

The conference held a solidarity rally Dec. 10 in front of the plant where Nissan workers Morris Mock and Ernest Whitfield reported that Nissan has received \$1.3 billion in tax incentives to operate the plant in Mississippi — money that could have gone to schools, hospitals, levees, roads and other needs, not corporate profits.

Whitfield stated earlier in the day: “We need auction block redemption. This is not just a Nissan problem. These problems are happening all over the state of Mississippi with employers.”

Monica Moorehead spoke on behalf of Workers World Party at the rally, stating: “Nissan made over \$4 billion in profits last year off of the low wages of workers in Mississippi. Workers’ struggles should have no borders because the exploitation by capital knows no borders. Wouldn’t it

‘In 2016, SHROC continues to be uncompromising in its values and its commitment in uplifting a radical, multi-generational human rights agenda that is rooted in anti-capitalism, anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism and anti-white supremacy.’

— Yolande Tomlinson, below.



WW PHOTOS: DANTE STROBINO.

be great if the French workers in Nissan could hold a solidarity picket for Nissan workers in Mississippi fighting for a union? That is concrete solidarity that would scare the bosses.”

Members of Cooperation Jackson and the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement shared throughout the conference the lessons they are learning in building self-determined cooperative economic systems, such as the recently established Freedom Farms.

Sunday panels focused on “Building a Safe Black Society for a Black Future” and “Pathways to Liberation: Revolution, Reform and Movement Building.” Featured on the latter panel were U.S. vice presidential candidates Lamont Lilly from Workers World Party and Ajamu Baraka from the Green Party.

The conference also hosted many international guests such as Ambassador Jesús “Chucho” García of Venezuela (U.S. Consulate) who spoke on the historical links between Black Liberation, South America and the Caribbean, especially Haiti.

Also present was “Maria,” from the Donbass region in Ukraine, who talked about the U.S. role in violating human rights there, contrary to media lies. Charo Mina-Rojas, from the Black Communities’ Process in Colombia, was also present via Skype, speaking about the struggles in her country.

Free the land! Organize the South!

‘Days of Action’ all December for Standing Rock

By Kris Hamel

Dec. 19 — Indigenous peoples and supporters continue their encampment in brutally cold and

harsh winter conditions at Cannonball, N.D., to stop the Dakota Access Pipeline from being built under the Missouri River. The Oceti Sakowin (Seven Council Fires of the Great Sioux Nation) rightfully fear the pipeline could rupture, as others have recently across the U.S., and poison the river for at least the 17 million people who rely on it for their drinking water or livelihood.

The camps at Standing Rock remain despite the Dec. 4 announcement by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers that it had denied the easement permit for Energy Transfer Partners, co-owner of the pipeline, to start drilling underneath Lake Oahe on the Missouri River. The camp members are staying vigilant against governmental, law enforcement and cor-



porate goons who have attacked peaceful water protectors many times in unsuccessful attempts to get them to leave so drilling can proceed.

The Oceti Sakowin camp is now called the All Nations camp. “We wanted to let the world know our status and to address the many rumors that have been causing confusion and fear on the internet,” Chase Iron Eyes stated live in a Facebook video Dec. 10. “Our numbers are around 1,000 in the newly named All Nations camp, with 300 in the Rosebud Sicangu Camp and well over 1,000 in the Sacred Stone Camp.” (nativenewsonline.net, Dec. 11) Iron Eyes is an activist attorney, a member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and co-founder of the Native-American news website Last Real Indians.

Movement hits banks funding DAPL

Meanwhile, every day in December is a #DefundDAPL day of action. As of

this writing, defunddapl.org reports that nearly \$27 million had already been divested from banks and financial institutions financing the pipeline project. The four biggest (“primary leaders of the key DAPL loan”) are Citibank (Citigroup), TD Securities, Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ and Mizuho Bank. Others funding the DAPL include Wells Fargo, Comerica, PNC, Barclays, JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America and Goldman Sachs.

Organizers emphasize the importance of the divestment campaign: “The financial footing of the Dakota Access Pipeline is in jeopardy if they do not complete the project by Jan. 1. If this deadline is missed, a majority of the stakeholders with contracts to ship oil through the pipeline will be able to renegotiate or cancel their contracts.”

(See defunddapl.org for a complete list of banks and lenders as well as information and ideas on what to do to show solidarity with the Standing Rock encampment.)

First jury trials of water protectors

The first jury trials of water protectors who have been arrested are scheduled to begin today. According to the Morton County Sheriff’s office, 571 protesters have been arrested in the last four months. (bismarcktribune.com, Dec. 15)

On Dec. 14 a court petition was filed by 10 North Dakota and Minnesota lawyers and organizations requesting that out-of-state attorneys be allowed to help handle the cases in order to guarantee defendants’ constitutional rights to counsel of their choice.

The petition states that 79 North Dakota attorneys are assigned as public defenders for 265 cases, while another 264 people have no attorneys. The state has only 1,800 lawyers, while the criminal defense bar has just 70. The petition also seeks to cover the cost of additional public defenders and contract attorneys.

Mni Wiconi! Water is life! #noDAPL

Rape culture, sports and profits

By Monica Moorehead

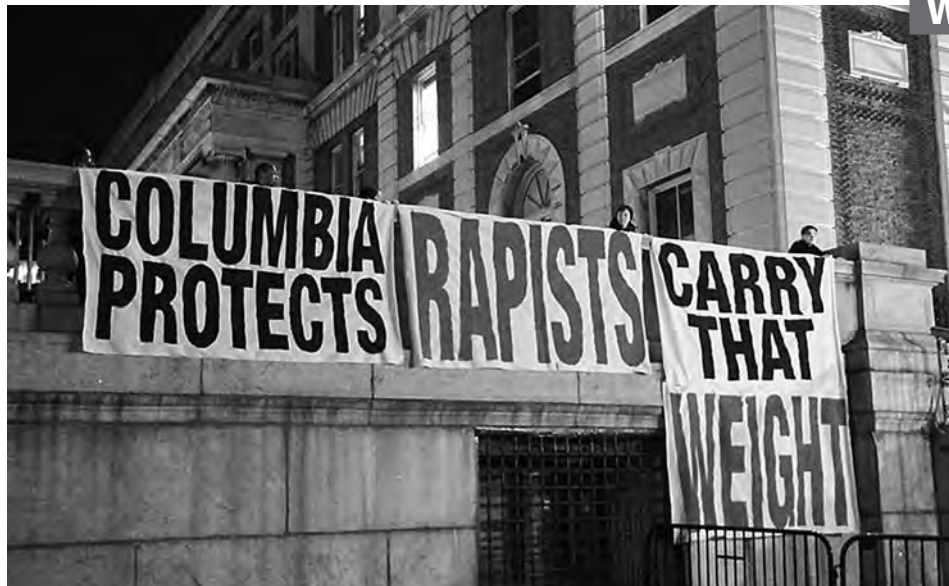
Bulletin: On Dec. 19, Judge Aaron Persky, who had sentenced rapist Brock Turner to only six months in jail after Turner was found guilty on three counts of sexual assault, was cleared of “misconduct” by the California Commission on Judicial Performance. Turner is a white Stanford U. swimmer and Persky a Stanford alumnus. Turner is out on three years probation after only three months in jail.

The oppression of women impacts every institution under capitalism. This has been true since the evolution of class divisions — the haves and have nots — thousands of years ago. It was class society that gave birth to patriarchal ideas and attitudes, including the objectification and dehumanization of women from birth to death.

This oppression manifests itself in many ways, transcending nationality, sexual identity, age and class. Even prior to the campaign of the openly misogynist, racist, xenophobic president-elect, sexual assaults, including rape, were on the rise in disturbing numbers, especially on college campuses.

It is no accident that there is a direct correlation between sports and rape on campuses. The sexual assault of women by male athletes is part of a sickening culture shielded by college administrations, including presidents and booster clubs, in order to maintain the “integrity” of sports. What is actually being maintained are the obscene millions of dollars that college sports garner annually from ticket sales and TV revenue.

For example, during the two-week “March Madness” tournament, which crowns the winner of men’s basketball in the Division I National Collegiate Athletic Association, at least \$1 billion annually will be shared among participating schools. The lion’s share goes to those that reach the Final Four. Not one penny of this revenue goes to the unpaid players.



Five college football conferences — the ACC, Big 12, PAC-12, Big Ten and SEC — raise a combined hundreds of millions of dollars during year-end bowl games, including the Rose Bowl, Sugar Bowl, Orange Bowl and championship playoff games. Protecting these sports events comes down to defending profits — not women as full human beings.

Assailants don’t act in isolation

When women are assaulted by athletes, they have to confront not only the assailant if they choose to, but also powerful forces backing these assailants.

Take the Minnesota Gophers football team that had threatened to boycott the Holiday Bowl game on Dec. 27 to protest the suspension of 10 teammates accused of gang-raping an inebriated woman on Sept. 2.

The Gophers’ coach supported the players’ actions without mentioning one word about the victim’s accusations. A Title IX investigation is now underway. Title IX is an extension of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, a federal law stating: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

(TitleX.info)

If the survivor of this heinous crime decides to bring charges against the Minnesota players, she will have to face not only her accused assailants but their influential supporters — not to mention the biased, anti-woman nature of the capitalist courts. For many survivors, the choice is either to suffer in silence or to be shamed and humiliated in public.

And then there is Joe Mixon, a star running back with the powerful Oklahoma Sooners, suspended for one year for punching a fellow woman student so hard she suffered four facial fractures. The incident took place in 2014, but the videotape was released Dec. 16, 2016 — two years later.

The Sooners’ coach, Bob Stoops, along with the athletic director and university president, saw the videotape in 2014 but decided behind closed doors that a one-year suspension was enough for Mixon, in his first year of eligibility as a player.

Mixon, who is Black, accused Amelia Molitor, who is white, of hurling racist epithets at him and initiating the assault. Whether true or not, the responsibility was on Mixon to immediately walk away — period, end of story — not to viciously punch a woman who, by physical comparison, was diminutive to him.

Why didn’t the Oklahoma coach and ad-

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ministration permanently suspend Mixon? Could it be they were more concerned about protecting a sports program ranked eighth in a list of the most profitable college football teams during the 2014-15 season? (kickoutthecoverage.com)

Baylor University was forced to fire its football coach, Art Briles, for covering up a 2014 sexual assault by one of his football players. Baylor defensive end Sam Ukwuachu, eventually found guilty of two counts of sexual assault, was allowed to stay with the team right after the incident. Ukwuachu had a history of abuse against women when he was at Boise State in 2013.

According to Sports Illustrated, “ESPN’s Outside the Lines reports several instances in which Baylor ‘either failed to investigate, or adequately investigate, allegations of sexual violence.’ School officials at times ‘did not provide support to those who reported assaults.’ In one instance, Baylor took more than three years to comply with a federal directive to hire a full-time Title IX coordinator, receiving the directive in April 2011 and not hiring a coordinator until fall 2014.” (si.com, May 26)

The violence against women is not just physical, but also psychological and emotional. Princeton University suspended its swimming and diving team Dec. 15 after officials found sexist and racist online comments. Washington University at St. Louis suspended its soccer team for similar reasons. Harvard University’s cross country team was put on probation and its soccer team was suspended for degrading comments about women on their group email lists. Columbia University suspended its male wrestling team. All of these examples are just the tip of the iceberg.

Protests against rape culture are spreading on campuses. It will be a major focus of the upcoming women’s march, J21, against Trump on Jan. 21 in Washington, D.C., and an important national step forward for women of all nationalities to unite and resist misogyny in all its forms. □

Dylann Roof and the U.S. injustice system

By Gene Clancy

On Dec. 15, a federal jury convicted white supremacist Dylann Roof of the heinous massacre of nine Black parishioners of the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C.

Roof had chillingly commented on his crime in a blatantly racist manifesto that he published online. He had scouted the church half a dozen times, and also researched a festival and other Black churches in South Carolina before settling on Charleston because, he wrote, it is the “most historic city in my state.” (New York Times, Dec. 15)

Four African-American pastors, including Democratic state Sen. Clementa Pinckney, were among the six women and three men shot dead at the church known as “Mother Emanuel.” The historic church, burned to the ground in the late 1820s after a rebellion of enslaved people led by one of the congregation’s founders, Denmark Vesey, was rebuilt and has been in use ever since.

Dylann Roof most certainly deserved to be convicted of both murder and terrorism. But there is more to the U.S. injustice system than judges and juries. The

capitalist state includes the entire repressive apparatus serving the class interests of the ruling class.

On a daily basis, perhaps most important for poor and working people are the cops. For people of color and of oppressed nationalities, the police are often judge, jury and executioner.

On Dec. 12, three days before Roof’s conviction, cops in Bakersfield, Calif., found 73-year-old Francisco Serna, a grandfather suffering from sleeplessness and signs of dementia, wandering in his neighborhood just after midnight. Serna did not make any hostile movements, but a police officer fatally shot him seven times anyway.

The next day, the Bakersfield Police Department admitted that Serna was holding not a gun, but a brown wooden crucifix. In 2015, Kern County, where Serna was killed, was identified as having the highest per capita police shooting rate in the U.S. (theguardian.com, Dec. 8, 2015)

Vigils and protests followed this police killing. “Our dad was murdered by BPD,” read part of a statement by Serna’s family. “Our dad was treated like a criminal. ... Our family was questioned and restricted from comforting our mother



Francisco Serna, killed by Bakersfield, Calif., police on Dec. 12.

for about 14 hours. ... Family who asked to see their mother was told by BPD that if they crossed the police line they would be arrested.” It is unknown if the cop who fired the fatal shots will face any charges. (latinousa.org, Dec. 14)

What police did to Serna and his family sharply contrasts with the police arrest of Dylann Roof 18 months ago. Armed and on the run, Roof was allowed by cops to surrender with absolutely no harm to him. The cops even bought him a Burger King meal, causing outrage. Observers

at street demonstrations against Roof’s crime noted that at the same time “[even the] protesters arrested in Baltimore had to endure horrid conditions hours on end.” (Huffington Post as quoted in the charlotteobserver.com, June 24, 2015)

Cops who kill in oppressed communities have virtual immunity from legal penalties. Even on the rare occasion a cop is indicted and charged with murder, the final outcome is far from certain. One week before the shooting of Francisco Serna, a former South Carolina police officer, Michael Slager, was being tried for killing Walter Scott, an unarmed African American. The incident, caught on cell-phone video, showed that Slager opened fire as Scott turned his back, ran away and was shot five times from behind. The video also showed Slager planting a Taser near Scott’s lifeless body in an attempt to cover up his crime.

But this cop’s trial ended in a mistrial. A jury of eleven white people and one Black person could not reach a unanimous decision on the murder and manslaughter charges based on eyewitness video evidence. The cop walked free.

This is “justice” in a racist, capitalist injustice system. □

A century of lies about Russia

By Stephen Millies

“Documents prove Lenine and Trotzky hired by Germans” was the New York Times’ front-page headline, on Sept. 15, 1918.

The sensational article — first of a series — claimed Bolshevik leaders V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky were “German agents” and “the Bolshevik revolution was arranged for by the German Great General Staff.”

According to the Times, the socialist revolution, and its millions of people from many nationalities who rose up, was just a conspiracy hatched by the German Kaiser.

That was “fake news” 98 years ago.

Today’s version — just as phony — claims the current capitalist Russian government threw the U.S. presidential election to super-bigot Donald Trump.

The 1918 big lie was based on 70 documents provided by U.S. government official Edgar Sisson. The “Sisson Documents,” supposedly originating from different locations, were almost all typed on the same typewriter. In the 1950s, retired U.S. Ambassador George Kennan — himself a Cold War architect — pronounced them forgeries.

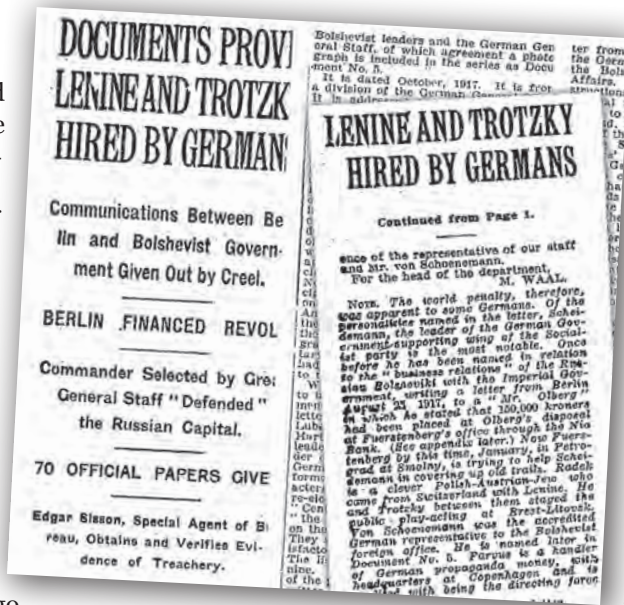
Decades before the documents were exposed as a fraud, the “fake news” about them was used by President Woodrow Wilson to justify sending troops to occupy revolutionary Russia.

But that didn’t stop Seattle dockwork-

ers from smashing crates of rifles going to former Czarist Admiral Kolchak, who threw suspected Bolsheviks into boilers in steam locomotives. And less than two months after the “Sisson Documents” were published, German workers and sailors — inspired by the Russian Revolution — overthrew the Kaiser.

Years of Soviet struggle

The Russian Revolution gave birth to the Soviet Union which included more than 100 nationalities. The country’s socialist five-year plans industrialized the country and pioneered spaceflight. Before the revolution, the majority of people were illiterate. After, millions of students attended tuition-free universities with courses in dozens of languages.



Nearly 27 million Soviet people died defeating Adolf Hitler. It was Soviet soldiers, belonging to what used to be known as the “Red Army,” who liberated Auschwitz. Black Liberation fighters in the U.S. such as Claude McKay, Langston Hughes, W.E.B. Du Bois, Paul Robeson and Claudia Jones were inspired by the Russian Revolution.

Wall Street continued Hitler’s crusade to destroy the socialist system. The Pentagon spent at least \$5.5 trillion on nuclear weapons aimed at the Soviet state, according to the Nuclear Threat Initiative.

After 73 years of attacks from world capitalism, Soviet leaders capitulated in 1991. Socialist economic planning was overturned and capitalism was restored. The Soviet Union was broken up into 15 countries.

Fake news today

Today Russia is a capitalist state with dozens of billionaires. But Russia continues to be independent politically, unlike several former Soviet republics that are neocolonies of U.S. imperialism. The Pentagon looks at Russia as 6 million square miles to be occupied like Afghanistan and Iraq.

Now, in the aftermath of Trump’s victory, and a century after the Sisson Documents fiasco, the New York Times and Washington Post are claiming that Russian computer hackers intervened in the U.S. elections.

What’s the real story? As Rev. Jesse Jackson Sr. wrote recently: “Left out of this brouhaha is the systematic and purposeful voter suppression that certainly cost Clinton the election. The Russians didn’t do it. It was done by right-wing partisan state officials eager to suppress the vote of people of color, the young, and the working poor.” (Chicago Sun-Times, Dec. 12)

A majority on the U.S. Supreme Court gutted the Voting Rights Act — not Russia.

Russia did not set up the Electoral College that’s sending Donald Trump to the White House, even though Hillary Clinton received over 2.8 million more popular votes. James Madison, in the 1787 constitutional convention, devised the Electoral College to protect slavery. (PBS News Hour, Nov. 6)

It was not Russia but the capitalist media that gave Trump nearly \$3 billion of free publicity. It was NBC that made Trump a nationally known figure by giving this racist clown his own TV show. (Market Watch, May 6)

The CIA claims that Russian government operatives hacked the files of the Democratic National Committee and of John Podesta, Hillary Clinton’s campaign manager, and gave embarrassing information to WikiLeaks. But even the Washington Post and New York Times admit only circumstantial evidence is pointing the finger at Russia. Actually, it’s the CIA saying, “Believe us.”

Don’t forget that former CIA Director George Tenet said it was a “slam dunk”

COMMENTARY

A young worker’s take on Syria

Editor’s note: The following edited commentary was posted on Facebook by WW contributor Mattie Stardust on Dec. 14 after the liberation of East Aleppo. Stardust, a young white trans worker in the U.S., explains why activists should not be fooled by the U.S. propaganda machine.

By Mattie Stardust

Syria is a democratic republic, meaning they elect their political representatives by a popular vote. The last presidential election was in June 2014. Bashar al-Assad won 88.7 percent of the votes; his next closest contender won 4.3 percent. Some 73.42 percent of eligible voters cast ballots, including hundreds of thousands of Syrians displaced by the U.S.-sponsored insurgency who voted in Syrian embassies. Election observers from more than 30 countries, including the United States, Venezuela, Bolivia, Cuba, South Africa and India called the elections “free, fair and transparent.”

Assad is a capitalist, meaning he exploits Syrian workers. He’s also a nationalist, meaning he opposes Western intervention and invasion and supports Arab control of Arab lands. The Assad administration supports Palestine and Hezbollah, is allied with Iran, and is secular and opposed to the far-right monarchies or theocracies like Saudi Arabia and Qatar. For these policies, the Assad administration enjoys broad popular support, far more popular support than any U.S. president is able to drum up in the U.S.

There are communist parties in Syria. They want to overthrow the capitalists and build socialism. But the majority of Syrian workers and masses do not identify with the communists. They have grievances with their leaders and with life under capitalism, but in general they don’t believe that overthrowing the government will fix their grievances. The same is true of most workers in the U.S.

The Syrian masses don’t want to see

their country invaded and taken over by foreign forces. They’re willing to fight against foreign invaders to defend the sovereignty of their country, even though they still have grievances with capitalism and their ruling class. We refer to this willingness as a component of nationalism, which, as Marxists, we believe is progressive among oppressed nationalities. Palestinian nationalism and Black Liberation are considered by many to be examples of progressive nationalisms.

Imperialism must expand or die

The U.S., the chief purveyor of white supremacy worldwide, does not like to see Arab peoples stand up for themselves. They’re very concerned by growing partnerships among Syria, Iran, Russia, China, North Korea, Cuba, Venezuela and others because these countries have been able to carve out a piece of the global economy away from U.S. control. These are all peoples and countries that U.S. imperialism is either unable to exploit or is very limited in its ability to exploit.

The U.S. doesn’t only hate this; it’s threatened to its core by it. It’ll suffocate if it can’t constantly expand. U.S. imperialism isn’t only willing to commit atrocities to break up the nonaligned movement; it’s obliged to. It can’t avoid it, and no presidents can stop it regardless of what campaign promises they make.

So in the case of Syria, the U.S. has to take out the Assad government and weaken the Syrian people’s Arab nationalism in order to pry it away from the non-aligned countries and into U.S. domination. (And if there’s any question about whether life for Syrians might be better

under U.S. domination, just look to Libya before and after the U.S. got involved.)

In order to attack the Assad government, the U.S. seized upon a relatively small group of protesters in Syria in 2010-11. These protesters, some of them, probably did have legitimate grievances against their government. They may have been workers exploited by capitalists, or they may have been petty bourgeois, protesting aspects of capitalism they find unfavorable. And the Assad government likely did respond with overt force to suppress them. This was unfortunate.

But the U.S. used this movement to peddle its own agenda. All activists in the U.S. know that when the government expresses an interest in your movement, it is never a good thing. It’s no different when the U.S. government took an interest in a movement of some Syrian people.

The enormous war propaganda machine was redeployed in the service of war against Arab nationalism in Syria. Stories about Assad dropping barrel bombs on his own people were churned out by the dozens.

The quality of the stories didn’t matter. They could even openly say their reports were unconfirmed. It didn’t matter, because for many people steeped in white supremacy the slightest white chauvinist spark is enough to trigger a wildfire. Hence the image of Assad as the evil, mindlessly brutal dictator who bombs “his own” people just for the hell of it.

U.S. funds and trains ‘rebels’

In reality, the U.S. was funneling millions of dollars in training and weaponry, not to mention air support, to what it called “moderate rebels,” but who are in fact composed of groups like the Islamic State group, Al-Nusra and al-Qaida. Their stated ideology is Salafism, which is

a reactionary interpretation of Islam. But their actual existence is due to their usefulness to U.S. imperialism.

So the Salafists, under the banner of “moderate(!) rebellion,” were armed with sophisticated weaponry and allowed to wreak havoc in Syria, to destroy its infrastructure and weaken its ability to fight to keep its own independence. These groups were found to have blocked off civilian access to safe zones created by the Syrian and Russian governments in order to inflate the body count so that the U.S. could more effectively sell intervention to the U.S. people and the United Nations: “Look at how bad it is over there! We have to get this guy Assad out of power!” The corporate-run media know that most U.S. residents don’t need much convincing when the target is a person of color or oppressed people’s nationalism.

The Syrian government, still with broad support from its people, called on its ally Russia to help get rid of the terrorists wreaking havoc on Syria. They had a right to do this, under both international law and common moral standards. And if the U.S. actually wanted to “rid the world of terrorism,” they’d have been delighted to see Russian involvement. But they raised such an outcry because (a) it signaled increased cooperation within the non-aligned movement and (b) the Russians were killing the U.S.-sponsored terrorists.

Cause for celebration

We fast forward to now, when the Syrian Arab Army, still with the broad support of the Syrian people, has retaken East Aleppo from the U.S.-backed ultra-conservative terrorists. In response to the defeat, the U.S. has kicked its propaganda machine into full gear, churning out stories designed to make people in the U.S. agree to even more drastic military action

case that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction — a claim eventually debunked as another U.S. lie. (Bob Woodward, “Plan of Attack”)

Julian Assange, editor-in-chief of WikiLeaks, denies Russia was the source of the leaks. Craig Murray, a former British ambassador to Uzbekistan now working with WikiLeaks, says the material came from a “disgusted” Democratic Party whistleblower. (London Daily Mail, Dec. 14)

The leak revealed the truth about how the DNC sabotaged Bernie Sanders’ campaign and about Hillary Clinton’s secret speeches to Goldman Sachs bankers. That’s whistleblowing, just like the truth-telling carried out by courageous Chelsea Manning who was sent to prison for it.

The “fake news” targeting Russia is a diversion from the struggle against Donald Trump’s bigotry. It’s an attack on the billionaire Klansman from the right, with the claim he’s “soft on Russia.” This, despite Trump nominating “Mad Dog” Gen. James Mattis, who sees Russia as a “world threat,” to head up the Pentagon.

The onslaught of anti-Russia “news” comes from a capitalist class that wants to deflect the hatred people have for a system whose racist cops kill children, people of color, people with disabilities and, most recently in Bakersfield, Calif., an elderly Latino man carrying a crucifix.

Don’t fall for the fake news! Our enemies are in the Pentagon and in corporate boardrooms — not in Moscow! □

against Syrian nationalism.

The displacement and loss of life as part of this conflict have taken place on an unimaginable scale. Good people who are interested in peace and justice, liberation and socialism have been stirred to speak out against the carnage. But many of these people have been fooled by the U.S. propaganda machine — the largest, most well-funded and farthest-reaching ever to exist — into believing that another people who are fighting to be free from U.S. domination are the enemy and the source of the bloodshed.

The Syrian people and the government they elected are not our enemies. They’re not monsters who are either killers or victims by their nature. They’re not slaughtering their own people for no reason. They’re human beings who’ve mounted an incredible struggle against the biggest Goliath ever. They’ve acted in defense of their country and their sovereignty throughout this entire conflict. And they’ve just liberated East Aleppo.

This IS cause for celebration. But our celebration absolutely cannot give anybody a reason to believe we’re rejoicing in death and suffering. We’re rejoicing in a small but meaningful win by the oppressed, who’ve been brutalized, deprived and slandered to no end by a power exponentially bigger than they are. □

Workers unionize at military-industrial PAE

Continued from page 3

the Urbandale PAE workers.

“The union wanted them to know the importance to stay together and in solidarity because companies do not want to be unionized,” Bates said.

APWU Local 44 is described by Bates as “progressive” in its efforts to organize the private sector, with 784 members rep-



By Jim Carey

Independent Canadian journalist Eva Bartlett has continued her U.S. speaking tour representing the Hands Off Syria Coalition.

Before a packed house in Detroit on Dec. 12, Bartlett spoke of her experiences in Syria and the time she spent embedded with government officials and members of the Syrian Arab Army. This allowed her to see first hand the destruction caused by Western-backed proxies in Aleppo.

Countering a renewed corporate media blitz, Bartlett dispelled many of the “humanitarian concerns” peddled to people in the U.S. to encourage support for more imperialist intervention and destruction in Syria.

Bartlett also dispelled many of the Western lies about rebel groups such as the allegedly “neutral” Syrian Civil Defense, known as the White Helmets. She also exposed the so-called “moderate rebels,” who have been used as a media prop to showcase the alleged brutality of the Syrian government in Aleppo.

Her discussion on the situation in Syria emphasized the disdain that civilians in cities like Aleppo have for the rebel groups, such as Jabhat Al-Nusra, an Al-Qaida affiliate which had essentially been holding them hostage for several years now.

Bartlett said many of the civilians in Aleppo felt hate for the rebels who had subjected them to this war they never asked for. The people told her the rebels have been hoarding aid, which the West said the population desperately needed, and selling it at vastly inflated prices.

Exposing more U.S. lies

Bartlett said many of the civilians in the areas of Aleppo liberated by the Syrian government hadn’t even heard of the White Helmets. In the West, however, the White Helmets have gained fame, despite their close ties to Al-Qaida and the time



WW PHOTO: TERRI KAY

San Francisco

they spend training in Turkey — which was funded by the U.S. and the European Union.

Joe Mchahwar, a local Syrian-American activist, also spoke on conditions in Syria and the U.S. scorched-earth policy there. He addressed the hypocrisy of the West’s portrayal of Russia’s actions in Syria, given that Russia was invited to aid its Syrian ally by President Bashar al-Assad.

Mchahwar also talked about the “rebels,” armed and funded by the U.S., Turkey and the Gulf States. And he described U.S. leaders’ willingness to allow the Islamic State group to make key advances as long as they harmed Syria’s legitimate government.

Abayomi Azikiwe, editor of Pan-African News Wire, spoke on the important conflicts in Yemen and Libya and across the Horn of Africa. He showed the connections between these conflicts and the wars in Syria and Iraq and how they relate to the interests of U.S. imperialism.

Next truth stop: California

Bartlett’s California speaking tour included three meetings in the Bay Area — in Santa Cruz, Oakland and San Francisco, Dec. 14-16. Each meeting was packed with people eager to hear an eyewitness view of the situation in Syria, untarnished by U.S. imperialism’s official line spoon fed to the mainstream media.

Bartlett strongly reiterated, “What you hear in the corporate media is the opposite of reality.” She explained that the “majority of people in Syria support their government and army, while outside jihadist forces, in alliance with domestic fundamentalists and a coalition of foreign governments led by the U.S., have imposed an inhumane reign of terror on the country.”

In Los Angeles, more than 100 people attended a Dec. 17 forum co-sponsored by Arab Americans for Syria and the International Action Center.



WW PHOTO: SCOTT SCHEFFER

Los Angeles

Besides Bartlett, the main speakers were Paul Larudee, journalist and member of the Syria Solidarity Movement, and Johnny Achi, from Arab Americans for Syria.

Bartlett gave very well-documented facts, including video, exposing U.S.-manufactured lies about the Syrian army and government. She exposed the corporate media’s lies and also those of Amy Goodman of “Democracy Now.” Bartlett said Goodman continues to interview discredited voices and spread U.S. lies, with no investigation of her own, while actively refusing to interview voices countering the lies.

Separating fact from fiction

Larudee exposed the White Helmets, their creator and the funding that went into making the Netflix movie, which he said may be nominated for an Academy Award as a documentary. He said it should instead have been nominated in the “fiction” category.

Achi thanked the IAC “for being the only organization that responded to our initial calls for solidarity in Los Angeles.” He spoke about the solidarity between Christians and Muslims who see each other as sisters and brothers. Achi said the attempts by the U.S. for regime change would destroy that unity and punish the majority of Syrians, over 70 percent of whom support President Assad. He substantiated that by citing polls from the Guardian and other news sources.

The meeting was chaired by Rebecka Jackson, of the IAC and Workers World Party. Before the question-and-answer period, she explained that a “progressive stack” would ensure all voices are heard, especially those of women and oppressed peoples. Then she introduced IAC member Ramiro Fúnez who emceed the informative and lively Q&A.

Terri Kay and John Parker contributed to this article.

excluding managers, supervisors, guards and members of the temporary workforce.

Schott said of the vote: “While the [presidential] election results across the country and particularly in Iowa might mean a big blow to workers’ rights, this recent victory proves that people are ready and willing to stand up for themselves when their dignity is under attack.”

The union vote in October was a major step on the road ahead, but there are still obstacles in the future. After being blindsided by the vote, the company retaliated by firing three workers.

“The union feels this is coercion on the part of the company to get employees out of the bargaining unit,” Bates said. Refusing to back down, the union will file a labor charge with the NLRB if the workers are not reinstated.

Bates wants WW readers to know that if they are unhappy with the level of respect, pay and benefits on the job, they should reach out to the proper union and organize their workforce. “If you work in the mailing industry in America, contact the American Postal Workers Union and let us help you!” □

To live like Fidel, to fight like Fidel

Excerpted from a speech at the Dec. 1 Workers World Party meeting in New York City.

By Teresa Gutierrez

There are as many positive adjectives to describe Fidel as there are patterns of snowflakes: Revolutionary. Marxist/Leninist. Internationalist. Communist. Environmentalist. Father. Spouse. Leader. Statesperson. Strategist. Anti-imperialist. Scientist. Unifier. Comandante.

To all those adjectives you could add “brilliant” and it would be no exaggeration whatsoever.

But one word stands out as we witnessed the Cuban masses in the millions come out to say their final farewell to Fidel: Beloved. Fidel was beloved by the Cuban people. And not just by the Cubans, but by all of us around the world who yearn and struggle for our liberation.

But let me clarify: Fidel was not loved because “Love trumps hate.”

Fidel was loved because he built a revolution. Fidel was loved because his skills and talent not only brought socialism to an island 90 miles from imperialism, but also because he was able to build the foundation that would make the revolution last long after he no longer walked the earth.

Fidel was loved because, above all, his priorities and sacrifices were for the good of humanity, never for himself.

Born August 13, 1926, in Birán in the southeast part of Cuba, Fidel came of age during the brutal rule of Fulgencio Batista. Becoming president of Cuba in 1940, Batista governed until 1944 and returned to power in 1952 through a coup. He ruled Cuba with an iron fist in one of the most bloody and repressive dictatorships in Latin America.

Batista, of course, had the complete support of the U.S. government. As with the rest of Latin America and the Caribbean, the U.S. considered Cuba a place to rob by extracting its resources for the profits of the multinational corporations.

But on January 1, 1959, all that came to an end, when Fidel and the Revolutionary Army entered Havana, in victory.

Fidel's pillar of unity

Several important meanings are emerging from the death of our beloved comrade.



Teresa Gutierrez at a memorial rally in New York on Dec 4.

‘Revolution means to have a sense of history; it is changing everything that must be changed; it is full equality and freedom; it is being treated and treating others like human beings; it is achieving emancipation by ourselves and through our own efforts; it is challenging powerful dominant forces from within and without the social and national milieu.’ – Fidel Castro

One of those is unity.

First and foremost, the Cuban people are declaring that they will remain united to continue Fidel’s obra (his work). And President Nicolás Maduro of Venezuela and President Evo Morales of Bolivia affirm that they will continue to unite Latin

America to defend Cuba’s sovereignty.

This does not come as a surprise as, indeed, one of the important pillars of Fidel’s work was unity.

To achieve victory against the brutal Batista dictatorship, the task for Fidel was to unite as many social forces as possible. Before the triumph of the Revolution, the Latin American movement had argued that the U.S. would never tolerate a socialist revolution in the region, and that it was impossible to defeat Batista’s regular army, even with guerrilla tactics.

Fidel proved them wrong. But to Fidel, there was more than guns. He built a political coalition instead of solely focusing on the armed struggle. No one fought for unity like Fidel. He sometimes had to retreat. But he never ceded on his fundamental principles.

This is how Fidel was able to begin a political process that transformed the island of Cuba from one terrorized by torture and killings, dispossession, extreme poverty and exploitation, to one where the workers rule, where wealth is redistributed not to the banks or corporations, but back to the people.

And this is why the Cuban people love Fidel.

Fidel is loved for Cuba’s agrarian reform, for establishing one of the world’s most ambitious literacy campaigns and educational systems, for developing a free world-class health care system that even bourgeois organizations commend.

Fidel is loved because the peasants, who had been starved and beaten, the

African Cubans, who had been the brutal victims of colonial and imperialist racism, for the first time in history came to the forefront as actors in history.

The people were with Fidel’s revolution, and, for the first time in Cuba, the workers were the agents of change, not the bourgeoisie. In fact, the revolution got rid of the bourgeoisie altogether!

This is why the imperialists hate Fidel, this is what earned him forever the ire of imperialism. For ousting the ruling class from Cuba, the imperialists would never forgive Fidel.

Fidel's exemplary leadership

Fidel is loved not only for his dedication to unity, but also for his exemplary leadership that brought Cuba through many perilous times.

His leadership guided Cuba through the special period of the 1990s, after the defeat of the Soviet Union, a mainstay of Cuba’s trade and international support. The resulting shortages made life extremely hard for the Cuban people, who were hungry, tired, exhausted. Any other developing nation would have seen rebellions, chaos and uprisings, would have seen repression. But not Cuba. Because of Fidel and revolutionary socialist leadership, because the Revolution has the support of the masses, because the Revolution and the people are one, Cuba survived this dire period.

Fidel’s leadership was central to Cuba’s struggle for the return of the child Elián González. In 1999, Elián’s mother misguidedly took her child with her on the seas in an attempt to get to Florida. She sadly died in that voyage. But Elián survived and was kidnapped by hostile counterrevolutionary forces and taken to Miami. All of Cuba mobilized to make the U.S. return Elián home to his father — and to the Revolution. And Cuba won!

The Cuban people and their leadership focused on freeing the Cuban Five, anti-terrorists who sacrificed much to monitor hostile military actions conducted in Florida against Cuba. The U.S. impris-

oned the Five in 2001 for a decade and a half. But free them the Revolution did. And home they went.

Under Fidel’s leadership, Cuba’s role in support for Haiti, in liberation struggles in Africa, more recently in fighting Ebola, are only a few stellar examples of Cuba’s internationalism. As Cuba’s president, Fidel’s call for cancellation of capitalist debts owed by oppressed nations, and his constant attention to climate change, are more examples of his exemplary leadership.

We must study Fidel so that we can live like Fidel. These words from his May Day 2000 speech, words Fidel lived every moment of his life, tell us why:

“Revolution means to have a sense of history; it is changing everything that must be changed; it is full equality and freedom; it is being treated and treating others like human beings; it is achieving emancipation by ourselves and through our own efforts; it is challenging powerful dominant forces from within and without the social and national milieu; it is defending the values in which we believe at the cost of any sacrifice; it is modesty, selflessness, altruism, solidarity and heroism; it is fighting with courage, intelligence and realism; it is never lying or violating ethical principles; it is a profound conviction that there is no power in the world that can crush the power of truth and ideas. Revolution means unity; it is independence, it is fighting for our dreams of justice for Cuba and for the world, which is the foundation of our patriotism, our socialism and our internationalism.”

We have been so fortunate to be alive at the same time as Fidel. To have lived in the same time as Fidel is the same as the honor to have lived in the time of Lenin.

Let us take the responsibility right now, from now on, and commit ourselves to be like Fidel, live like Fidel, fight like Fidel!

Long Live The Cuban Revolution!
Viva Fidel! Viva Raúl!
We Are All Fidel!
Socialism Or Death!
¡Fidel Presente! ¡Fidel Presente!
¡Hasta la victoria siempre Fidel!

Fidel's 'battle of ideas' comes to Twitter

By Cheryl LaBash

It is now two years since the last three of the Cuban 5 heroes, unjustly held in U.S. prisons for 16 years, touched down in Havana on Dec. 17, 2014. Gerardo Hernández, who had originally been sentenced to two life terms plus 15 years, returned with Ramón Labañino and Antonio Guerrero to join their two comrades, Fernando González and René González, who were released earlier after serving their full sentences.

On the same day, U.S. President Barack Obama formally agreed to establish direct, country-to-country negotiations with Cuba and diplomatic recognition of the sovereignty of its socialist island neighbor.

Cuba is a symbol of Latin American and Caribbean self-determination after centuries of European colonialism and slavery, followed by U.S. expansion and intervention with the Monroe Doctrine of 1823 and the 1898 war with Spain.

U.S. airlines can now offer direct commercial flights to Cuba, but U.S. citizens are still forbidden to “vacation” there by U.S. law. While the rest of the world con-

tinues to expand commercial and political relations with Cuba, the U.S. continues to exercise its global economic dominance by imposing a unilateral economic, commercial and financial blockade. Last year that cost the small Cuban economy more than \$4 billion, depriving it of funds for Cuba’s human development programs.

This year, the U.N. General Assembly voted for the 25th time that the U.S. should end its blockade of Cuba. The vote was 191 to 0. U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Samantha Power announced that, for the first time, the United States would abstain rather than cast its lone “no” vote.

The Revolution sowed ideas

On Dec. 5, 2004, Fidel Castro, the late historic leader of the Cuban Revolution, described the future struggle between these two irreconcilable social systems as a battle of ideas:

“I say ideas because the struggle we are speaking about will not, in essence, be a war, but rather a battle of ideas. The world’s problems shall not be solved through the use of nuclear weapons — this is impossible — nor through wars.

What’s more, they shall not be solved through isolated revolutions that, within the order installed by neo-liberal globalization, can be crushed within a matter of days, weeks at the most. ...

“The Revolution was able to hold out because it sowed ideas.

“The world is rapidly being globalized; an unsustainable and intolerable world economic order is rapidly being established. Ideas are the raw material from which consciousness is forged; they are the raw material of ideology par excellence. I prefer to call them the raw material of consciousness to emphasize that it is not a question of strict and rigid ideology, but rather of an advanced consciousness, that is to say, a conviction that hundreds of millions and billions of people on this planet will inevitably arrive at, and that it will constitute, without a doubt, the best instrument to secure the victory of those ideas throughout the world.”

This Dec. 10 the battle of ideas was engaged in a small way through Twitter on the occasion of International Human Rights Day. Although now free, the Cuban 5 have not forgotten their experience with

U.S. injustice in the courts and prisons and the people they met behind the walls.

When Ambassador Power initiated a Twitter remembrance of alleged political prisoners held outside the U.S., René González issued a call to remember the political prisoners held by the U.S. on that day.

Other tweets followed, calling for freedom for Puerto Rican independence advocate Oscar López Rivera, Indigenous leader Leonard Peltier, Colombian Simon Trinidad, noted African-American journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal, truth-telling whistleblower Chelsea Manning, Ana Belén Montes, Julian Assange and Mutulu Shakur.

Some tweets reminded Power about the men still held in the notorious U.S. torture prison at Guantánamo — Cuban national territory illegally occupied by the U.S. (More information can be found on telesurtv.net.)

This year, to celebrate the second anniversary of Dec. 17, the New York Cuba Solidarity Project’s twitter storm informed the president-elect that we “support lifting the blockade against Cuba.” □

Ultra-right parties take anti-EU stance

By G. Dunkel

The European Union faces challenges to its existence.

At least three major countries in the EU — France, the Netherlands and Germany — have national elections scheduled for 2017.

In France, the National Front (FN) is a far-right party that may well reach the second round of next year's elections. While the FN's openly fascist appeals have been muted, it still actively takes on the issue of rejecting refugees and other far right initiatives. It has made it clear that if its candidate — most likely Marine Le Pen — becomes president, she will call a referendum on France remaining in the EU.

The Alternative for Germany (AfD), a burgeoning new right-wing party in Germany, is also calling for departure from the EU. AfD is not as strong in Germany as the FN is in France. Netherlands Islamophobic Party of Freedom leader Geert Wilders says he wants to leave the EU. Polls say his party will come in first in the March election.

In forming today's EU, the rulers of 28 distinct states with 24 official languages agreed to follow EU rules, which might limit local sovereignty, to allow the free exchange of goods, services and capital. In doing so, they created the world's second largest internal market and added significant profits for all the national

bourgeoisies involved in this project. The EU bureaucracy also strengthens the role of German and French-based banks.

Since the early 1990s, workers have moved freely in the EU countries. Currently, 14 million people in the EU work in countries other than their own, and there has been a substantial movement of workers from low-wage countries, for example, Poland, Bulgaria and Romania, to countries like Britain, France and Germany. Some EU citizens live in one country and work in another.

UKIP also anti-EU

The racist, xenophobic, UK Independence Party exploited xenophobic hostility to this movement of workers to promote the "yes" vote on the Brexit referendum. This happened even though the expanded workforce aids the English bourgeoisie to keep their tourist and construction industries going with millions of hires from Eastern Europe.

UKIP and the other European right-wing parties that oppose the EU also focus on attacking refugees. Over a million people came to Europe in 2015, claiming refugee status. From January to September 2016, 303,000 people came to Europe, according to the U.N.'s High Commissioner on Refugees. Of them, 60 percent were men, while 17 percent were women and 24 percent children.

The reason for the big drop in num-

bers between 2015 and 2016 is that in 2015, hundreds of thousands of people used the shorter, less expensive, much safer route between Turkey and the Greek islands, such as Lesbos. In March 2016, the EU and Turkey agreed to a deal that made crossing between Turkey and Greece much less attractive.

U.S. imperialism's support for the overthrow of Bashar al-Assad in Syria, its interventions in Libya, Iraq and Afghanistan, and the ensuing violence are all driving refugees to Europe. So too have been the famines that have followed drought in the Sahel, the area of Africa immediately to the south of the Sahara, a crisis exacerbated by climate warming.

The desperation to reach Europe can be seen in an incident Dec. 9 in Ceuta, on the Moroccan-Spanish border. Ceuta is an enclave that is legally Spanish — and thus EU territory — located on the Moroccan coast on the African continent. Migrants who reach Ceuta (or nearby Melilla) can appeal for asylum in Spain.

About 800 people suddenly began climbing the 12-foot-high barbed and bladed wire fence surrounding Ceuta. Some 438 succeeded, climbing over the bodies of those who lay across the top of the fence. Some 49 were treated in a Ceuta hospital for injuries. None died this time.

Solidarity from workers in France

Meanwhile, throughout France the

FN held protests in towns and small villages where the French authorities had resettled refugees who had gathered earlier in an area called "The Jungle" near Calais in northern France near the tunnel to England. These protests were obviously part of the FN's presidential campaign.

Nearly all these FN protests were confronted by counter demonstrations expressing the solidarity of French workers with these refugees seeking asylum in France.

One of these confrontations well covered in the French media involved Marion Maréchal Le Pen, an FN delegate in the National Assembly. This delegate is the niece of the FN's leader Marine Le Pen and a leader in the right wing of the FN. She called for a demonstration in her election district at the Tour d'Aigues to oppose the resettlement of refugees from Calais.

This racist protest drew 150 people, according to a local paper, *Vaucluse Matin* (Oct. 25), but a local progressive coalition was able to draw 300 to 400 anti-racists. The gendarmerie, France's national police force, was called out to keep the two groups separated.

France's presidential election will pit workers who support solidarity with refugees against racist, xenophobic, right-wing demagogues attacking refugees. □

PA rallies on International Day for Migrants



December 18 is recognized by the United Nations as International Migrants Day to spotlight the need for safe, orderly and protected movement of refugees and migrants in an era of global war and economic crisis.

Despite rain, over 30 people rallied and marched on Dec. 18 in Norristown, Pa., a city of 34,000 people, of whom 26 percent are Latinx. (city-data.com) According to Carmen Guerrero of the Coalición Fortaleza Latina Pennsylvania, the "Celebración el Día Internacional del Migrante" was taking place in Norristown because this Philadelphia suburb had the "second highest number of deportations in the U.S. in 2015."

Norristown is a 287(g) city, the opposite of a sanctuary city. Instead of refusing to use municipal funds or resources to enforce unjust national immigration laws, Norristown police and officials work as if they themselves were official Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents. The 287(g) program instituted by ICE allows state and local law enforce-

ment entities to enter into a partnership with ICE under a joint memorandum of agreement. (www.ice.gov/287g)

One of the speakers at today's rally gave an example of how ICE and Norristown cops work together. She reported an incident in which, just eight minutes after being picked up by local police, a migrant worker who had not committed any crime was being threatened with deportation by ICE agents. Norristown is an example of why the movement to declare universities, towns and other locations as sanctuaries for immigrants is so important.

With many wearing raincoats and carrying umbrellas as well as signs, the crowd of immigrants and their supporters included eight children. They marched from the Norristown Municipal Building to the Montgomery County Courthouse, chanting "¡Sí, se puede!" A final rally there ended the event, but not before everyone gathered together for a group photograph.

— Photo and article by Joe Piette

Revolted by Trump? Ready to fight back?

Workers World exposed Trump's racist, bigoted agenda throughout his 18-month campaign — and was part of militant protests against both him and Clinton all across the country. Now he's won and is putting together an anti-working class administration: a die-hard white supremacist for attorney general, a Wall Street billionaire for the Treasury, an adversary of Medicare and the Affordable Care Act for Health and Human Services, a gung-ho ex-general for Defense Secretary.

U.S. workers and oppressed people need a fighting voice for the big strug-

gles ahead!

Workers World is ready for that challenge. We believe Marxism is now more needed than ever to pinpoint where capitalist reaction comes from. And Leninism shows that fighting oppression of all kinds is absolutely necessary to unify the working class and abolish this decaying profit system.

We need your financial help!

You know our politics. We rely on the financial support of our members, friends, allies and subscribers.

For the past 39 years — during spring and fall special fund drives and regular donations to the Workers World Supporter Program — we've welcomed your contributions that help put WW's revolutionary socialist outlook into action.

We asking you to contribute now to help counter Trump with a people's agenda. Write one-time checks to Workers World, or join the Workers World Supporter Program with either a yearly lump sum or monthly donations. Members receive a year's subscription to WW, a monthly letter

about timely issues and five free trial subscriptions to give to friends — all for a donation of \$75 a year. For \$100 you also get any book from World View Forum. For \$300 a year (only \$25 a month) you get your pick of five books or PVN videos.

And you can always contribute more. We won't complain.

We invite you — sign up today! Write checks to Workers World and mail them, with your name and address, to 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. Or donate online at workers.org/donate/.

WORKERS WORLD

editorial

Domestic ‘hacking’ distorted election

Clamor against the Russian Federation has reached a crescendo, with the corporate media blaming Russia for “interfering with the U.S. election.” Commentators, pundits of every stripe and Hillary Clinton have called for investigations, more sanctions and even “cyber warfare” attacks against Russia, blaming that country for the election of racist demagogue Donald Trump.

The New York Times and Washington Post have led the charge, citing CIA sources that say Russia released hacked emails from the Democratic National Committee and its head, John Podesta, to WikiLeaks, to support Trump’s candidacy. But no evidence of this has been presented. WikiLeaks denies the leaked emails came from Russian hackers.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson pointed to the true cause of this electoral catastrophe: “The Russians didn’t do it. It was done by right-wing partisan state officials eager to suppress the vote of people of color, the young and the working poor. These efforts were open, systematic and widespread. And this domestic hacking at our elections was far more destructive than the hacking Russia is said to have done.” (rainbowpush.org, Dec. 12)

Every gain for the workers and oppressed won since the New Deal and the Civil Rights struggle is on Trump’s chopping block. His speeches and tweets have targeted unions, the minimum wage, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, voting rights, anti-discrimination regulations for housing and education, environmental protections and a lot more. His billionaire and racist militarist appointees make the same threats.

With the righteous outrage over Trump winning the presidency, despite losing to Clinton by nearly 3 million votes, it is

understandable that many workers and poor people desperately hope that by blaming Russia for the election results, Trump will be stopped from inflicting great suffering on their lives.

But it was not the publication of DNC or Podesta emails that weakened Clinton’s campaign. It was their content. They confirmed what many people, including Bernie Sanders’ supporters, suspected — that the DNC “tipped the scales” of the primaries in favor of Clinton, assisted by some members of the establishment media.

These emails also exposed Clinton’s cozy relations and warm words to Wall Street financiers during her highly paid, secret speeches to them, as well as friendly interchanges with the top bosses of Goldman Sachs investment bankers. She and Bill Clinton raked in \$120 million since 2001 by giving these talks.

Goldman Sachs financiers were identified with the bubble that burst to initiate the Great Recession that cost 6 million families their homes and 9 million workers their jobs. Trump is rewarding Goldman Sachs by appointing four of its current and former bankers to top positions in his administration. Meanwhile, Trump arrogantly scoffs at the idea of divesting his holdings.

Backing stepped-up police terror, more anti-immigrant raids and deportations, vast increases in warships and weapons, and anti-Islam registries: These are on Trump’s agenda.

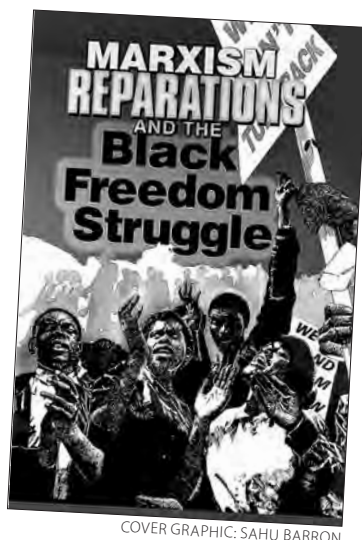
Ranting and raving against the Russian government will not stop Trump. Only a united struggle by masses of people in the streets can push back his reactionary program. The Jan. 20 Counter-Inaugural is the first step.

Shut it down!

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper.
Edited by Monica Moorehead.

Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination Larry Holmes •
Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery Sam Marcy • **Black Youth: Repression & Resistance** LeiLani Dowell • **The Struggle for Socialism Is Key** Monica Moorehead •
Domestic Workers United Demand Passage of a Bill of Rights Imani Henry •
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COVER GRAPHIC: SAHU BARRON

Available at all major online booksellers.

Political crisis in South Korea What’s behind the president’s impeachment

By Deirdre Griswold

A major political crisis is shaking south Korea, but you would barely know it if you depend on the corporate media for your news.

The president, Park Geun-hye, was impeached by an overwhelming majority of the south Korean legislature on Dec. 9. The vote came after two months of demonstrations calling for her resignation, with an estimated 2.1 million people turning out the Saturday before the vote. Since the impeachment of Park, the demonstrations have continued, with a reported 300,000 rallying in Seoul alone on Dec. 17.

The president and her right-wing backers are contesting the impeachment. The forces behind her — including some of the biggest corporations in south Korea — are dragging out the process with appeals that could take a year and a half.

The U.S. government has not publicly acknowledged the impeachment. The U.S. media, taking their cue from the billionaire ruling class here, are saying very little about it, but the strategists for imperialism are deeply concerned.

U.S. military occupation of south Korea

The U.S. military has occupied south Korea since the end of World War II. Since the Korean Revolution, which began during Japanese colonial rule and liberated the north in 1945, followed by the victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949, the imperialists have focused on militarizing south Korea. They installed a string of dictators, including Gen. Park Chung-hee, father of the now-impeached president, who led a military coup in 1961 and ruled with an iron hand until 1979.

Gen. Park showed his allegiance to the Pentagon by sending 300,000 Korean soldiers to fight in Vietnam in the 1960s. He became so hated that he was assassinated by the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, to be replaced by another general, Chun Doo-hwan.

With such a deep military investment in south Korea, one can be sure that the current turmoil there is of great concern to the Pentagon and Wall Street. Indeed, one of the few newspapers to devote any space to the impeachment is the Wall Street Journal, whose headline on a Dec. 9 article read: “South Korea Impeachment of President Park Is Latest Hit to Global Political Order; Likely successors to President Park take different views on ties with Washington, free trade and big business.”

The article says that the impeachment “brings the prospect of a new government for one of the U.S.’s closest allies that could have a skeptical stance toward Washington, a softer line on Pyongyang and a friendlier approach to China.”

So the leading newspaper for the U.S. ruling class is warning its well-heeled readers that their domination over south Korea is being challenged by this immensely popular political movement.

The immediate reasons for the impeachment center on corruption on a grand scale. Park and a friend, Choi Soon-sil, control foundations that received big donations from corporate heads who were pardoned by the president while facing jail for economic crimes.

According to the Dec. 5 Wall Street Journal, “Park has pardoned top executives convicted of crimes, for example,

Chung Mong-koo, chair of Hyundai Motor Group, sentenced to three years for embezzlement, pardoned without serving any time. One of the foundations allegedly controlled by Choi was funded by 15 of South Korea’s largest conglomerates. The chairmen of Samsung, SK, Hanwha, Hyundai Motor and CJ groups have all been pardoned in the past decade.”

Attacks on working class

This scandal comes on top of huge attacks on the working class and other policies extremely offensive to the Korean people.

During a more liberal period starting in the 1990s, workers in south Korea had the world’s highest rate of unionization. Today, after years of anti-labor measures and physical attacks on the union movement, along with the implementation of part-time and precarious labor, only one-tenth of the workforce is organized.

In 2014, thousands of workers struck for three weeks in the longest strike in the history of Korail, the national railroad operator. The strike was provoked by a government restructuring plan that threatened privatization of the railroads, with loss of jobs, benefits and services. It quickly developed into one of the sharpest recent worker-government conflicts and was supported by the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions.

Korail fired more than 4,000 workers on Dec. 9, 2014, and announced a plan to hire 660 strikebreakers. President Park ordered an attack by hundreds of police on the rail union’s headquarters and arrested 10 union leaders on Dec. 16.

On July 4 of this year, Han Sang-gyun, president of the KCTU, was sentenced to five years in jail for leading protests against Park’s repressive labor policies.

Park banned opposition party

At the same time as the 2014 railroad strike, the Park regime banned the only real opposition party, the United Progressive Party, arresting some of its leading members and ejecting its five elected deputies from the national legislature. The party was reported to have around 100,000 members and supported the reunification of the divided Korean nation.

Like her father, Park used the National Security Law to suppress freedom of speech and send to jail those demonstrating for reunification and against U.S. occupation and repressive government policies.

This July, the Park regime announced it would let the Pentagon deploy a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense battery in the country’s southeast, aimed at both China and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea in the north. Farmers at the proposed THAAD site have continued protests every night since then.

Also unpopular is the Park government’s push to sign a military intelligence pact with Japan, the country’s former colonial ruler, again at the instigation of the U.S., which has invited Japan into its military “exercises,” aimed in recent years at the DPRK.

The U.S. government is acting low-key about the current turmoil in south Korea, but there can be no question that it is working feverishly behind the scenes trying to shore up both the military and the ruling class there against the popular masses. □

U.S. threats in South China Sea

By Sara Flounders

Does the People's Republic of China have the right to defend its sovereignty in the waters surrounding China?

What are U.S. aircraft carriers, destroyers, nuclear submarines, bombers and underwater drones doing in the South China Sea? China has no such force in the Gulf of Mexico; yet China is depicted here as the aggressor.

For more than 100 years, the imperialists invoked the "freedom of navigation" to dominate Chinese trade. U.S. and British gunboats controlled China's Yangtze, Yellow and Pearl rivers and coastal waters, where they patrolled up to 1,300 miles inland. Finally, in 1949 with the successful Chinese Revolution, the People's Liberation Army kicked out all foreign forces and their hated battleships from its rivers.

"Freedom of navigation" is a despised term in China, reeking of past colonial domination.

A Chinese 'slingshot'

Almost daily we hear that China is "militarizing" the South China Sea by building air bases on seven small islands.

President-elect Donald Trump has tweeted that "China is building a massive fortress in the middle of the South China Sea." These expanded mini-islands are described in the U.S. media as a great threat to world peace and regional stability.

China's Defense Ministry announced on Dec. 16 that it would arm the islands with defensive anti-ship missiles: "They are primarily for defense and self-protection and this is proper and legitimate. For instance, if someone was at the door of your home, cocky and swaggering, how could it be that you wouldn't prepare a slingshot?"

Washington has demanded that China stop this island construction. It carried out several highly threatening "freedom of navigation operations" close to these mini-islands last May.

The Chinese military responded by scrambling J-11 fighter jets. Chinese pilots reportedly issued warnings to an American destroyer, the USS William P. Lawrence, to leave Chinese territorial waters or face engagement. The Chinese Navy dispatched three warships and again officially opposed the repeated intrusions by air and ships in Chinese waters.

Then, on Dec. 17, China snatched an underwater drone operated from the USNS Bowditch, which was carrying out reconnaissance to detect Chinese submarine routes and construction on the seven islands. After objecting to U.S. intrusion in its waters, China returned the drone.

'Pivot to Asia'

A new documentary by filmmaker John Pilger, "The Coming War on China," describes the U.S. military presence in Asia in the film's opening moments: "Today, more than 400 American military bases encircle China with missiles, bombers, warships and, above all, nuclear weapons. From Australia north through the Pacific to Japan, Korea and across Eurasia to Afghanistan and India, the bases form, as one U.S. strategist puts it, 'the perfect noose.'"

"The greatest build-up of NATO military forces since the Second World War is under way on the western borders of Russia. On the other side of the world, the rise of China as the world's second economic power is viewed in Washington as another 'threat' to American dominance."

President Barack Obama announced this provocative U.S. military offensive, called the "pivot to Asia," in 2011. It includes a plan to move two-thirds of the U.S. Navy to Asia and the Pacific. The weapons are aimed at China.

Conveniently, the latest confrontations in the South China Sea come at a time when the U.S. Navy needs to justify its biggest expansion in 35 years.

It presently has 273 war ships. Obama's Asia Pivot would increase it to 308. Trump pledged to increase it to 350. The U.S. Navy immediately put forward a plan for 355 ships.

Building this fabulously expensive new fleet means guaranteed long-term profits and decades of cost overruns for the largest U.S. corporations, including General Dynamics, Raytheon, Lockheed Martin, BAE Systems, Boeing, Northrop Grumman and L3; power suppliers General Electric and Babcock and Wilcox; and shipbuilders such as Huntington Ingalls Industries.

This costly new fleet to threaten the world will rob from every U.S. social program not already gutted by past military expenditures.

South China Sea, a chokehold

China has claimed the majority of the South China Sea for centuries. Now the People's Republic of China, with 1.3 billion people, is determined not to relinquish its sovereign right to protect and defend this Chinese territory.

Its claim is based on a 1947 map made by the prerevolutionary Kuomintang government and recognized by the U.S. at the time, defining what is called the "nine-dash line." It encompasses about 90 percent of the South China Sea, including areas claimed by Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam.

U.S. imperialism has attempted to strike deals and exert enormous pressure on these countries to force alliances against China by claiming to be a protector of small nations and their rights.

The decision of President Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines to open relations with China during a state visit in late October and step back from being a



U.S. Navy drone.

U.S. pawn has sent shockwaves through Pentagon planners.

The area holds the richest fisheries in the world and possibly rich deposits of oil and natural gas.

The location of the South China Sea, which links the Indian and Pacific oceans, makes it strategically important. About half the world's merchant ships pass through it. Keeping the South China Sea open for commercial navigation is a top priority for China.

Eighty percent of China's oil imports pass through the narrow Malacca Straits, where ship traffic is three times greater than through the Suez Canal and five times more than through the Panama

Canal. A blockade by the U.S. Navy could strangle China's economy and devastate all the countries in the region.

The region surrounding the South China Sea accounts for over 60 percent of U.S. exports. It was the focus of the recently failed U.S. effort to create a Trans-Pacific Partnership — a regional trade alliance of 11 Pacific-rim countries that would have excluded China.

The setbacks for U.S. imperialism's arrogant plans for the TPP, as well as a realignment of the Philippines, may bring more reckless threats.

China is determined to keep the South China Sea open to all commercial ships. But not to uninvited military ships. □

Letter to WW

Aid Indigenous struggle in New Jersey

There is an Indigenous struggle ongoing at Split Rock in Mahwah, Bergen County, N.J. The Ramapough Lenape Nation is facing threats of eviction from local officials and police, who are attempting to seize the land for private development.

These threats intensified after the Nation expressed solidarity with the struggle at Standing Rock. The Nation is asking for support to sustain their presence — whether that be in the form of supplies or bodies to act as a deterrent to possible eviction and the brutalization associated with it.

We've witnessed solidarity and class consciousness solidify in the past few months at Standing Rock, N.D., as the agents of U.S. capital continue their long-standing "tradition" of violating treaties and brutalizing Indigenous people for the profit of corporations. This time, it's for Energy Transfer Partners, a multibillion-dollar fossil fuel extraction corporation.



With a fascist Trump administration promising to privatize remaining Indigenous lands for big oil and gas corporations, we are about to be in the throes of renewed assaults on Indigenous sovereignty as well as the safety and well-being of the entire U.S. working class.

Since first contact between the foot soldiers of euro capitalism and the Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island, there has been violent displacement and genocide perpetrated by the former.

With the subsequent expropriation of Indigenous lands and the forced cultivation of those lands by enslaved African peoples, U.S. capitalism was able to enter and compete in the world capitalist market, making the U.S. the current imperial behemoth that it is today.

As communists, we recognize the importance of the national liberation of oppressed peoples from the yoke of colonialism and imperialism and the right of

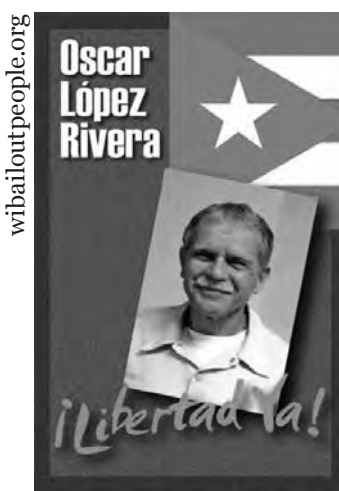
nations to self-determination. We cannot talk about a revolution in the U.S. without the inclusion of and leadership of revolutionary elements within the Indigenous movement, whether that be at Standing Rock or at Split Rock.

Now is our chance to let the ruling class know that continued brutalization, mistreatment and displacement of Indigenous people will not happen without formidable opposition, and that this opposition will be channeled toward the goal of overthrowing the rule of the capitalist-imperialist bourgeoisie that has perpetrated crimes against Indigenous people the world over.

The Ramapough Lenape need supplies: food, winterization materials and all of the fixings necessary to create a sustained presence at Split Rock.

For more on the struggle of the Ramapough Lenape Nation, contact them at ramapoughlenapenation.org/ and Facebook.com/RamapoughLunaapeNation/

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El capitalismo en crisis ¿Qué hay detrás de las opciones del gabinete de Trump

Por Sara Flounders

Desde la elección, los medios corporativos se han centrado en el gabinete del presidente electo y en los nombramientos del personal de la Casa Blanca, a menudo anunciados por tweets y filtraciones. La disputa entre las facciones de la clase gobernante por la coordinación de vastos ministerios gubernamentales sigue siendo una lucha viciosa, con subterfugios, filtraciones, escándalos repentinos y exposiciones personales de hechos sucios del pasado.

Enormes balances cuelgan en el equilibrio. Los individuos nominados son abrumadoramente reaccionarios y multimillonarios. Sus nombramientos confirman una nueva etapa de guerra total contra la gente pobre y trabajadora. Esta superación puede provocar desde abajo una nueva fase de lucha de clases militante.

Los departamentos que supervisan la educación pública, la atención de la salud, la vivienda y la protección del medio ambiente están en manos de los administradores que buscan el desmantelamiento y destrucción de estos logros. Los nombramientos confirman que ninguna sección de la clase obrera pertenece a la base real de Donald Trump. Sus compinches son abrumadoramente millonarios corporativos y operadores de fondos de cobertura, todas las personas de su estrato estrecho y privilegiado.

Su gabinete será el más rico en la historia de los Estados Unidos. Preservación de sus posiciones y beneficios personales a pesar de sus muchos ataques durante la campaña contra Goldman Sachs y sobre las conexiones de Hillary Clinton a Wall Street, los nombramientos de Trump incluyen tres banqueros actuales o antiguos de Goldman Sachs y otros inversionistas multimillonarios, además de directores generales de grandes corporaciones.

Cada uno de los nombramientos de Trump se ocupará de los servicios gubernamentales que dispensan miles de millones de dólares en ingresos de impuestos para las empresas privadas.

El gabinete de Trump y el capitalismo

¿Qué dicen las designaciones de Trump sobre el propio sistema capitalista? Durante tres generaciones, la clase dominante estadounidense ha comprado la paz social en su país para hacer las guerras en el extranjero. Pero la decadencia del capitalismo, la desindustrialización, una economía globalizada y la fuga de capitales que persiguen los salarios más bajos posibles ha socavado las ganancias pasadas de la clase obrera de los Estados Unidos.

Incluso antes de la elección de Trump, los Estados Unidos habían quedado rezagados con respecto a todos los demás países industrializados sobre los estándares mensurables de expectativa de vida, mortalidad infantil y niveles educativos. El impulso para maximizar los beneficios es cada vez más despiadado. Cada ganancia social ganada a través de décadas de lucha de clases en los Estados Unidos está siendo atacada.

Durante la campaña electoral, Trump repetidamente

acusó a Goldman Sachs explotar a la clase trabajadora. No obstante, eligió al presidente de Goldman Sachs, Gary Cohn, para dirigir el poderoso Consejo Económico Nacional de la Casa Blanca. Nombró a Steven Mnuchin, que trabajó en Goldman Sachs durante 17 años, como secretario del Tesoro. Wilbur Ross, CEO de la empresa de banca de inversión Rothschild Inc. y con un valor de \$2,5 mil millones, fue nominado para dirigir el Departamento de Comercio.

Un titular del New York Times del 10 de diciembre aplaudió estas opciones de gabinete como "obstinadas". Tales decisiones "difíciles" incluyen a la multimillonaria Betty DeVos como secretaria del Departamento de Educación. Su objetivo es socavar la educación pública y dar vales escolares para financiar escuelas privadas y religiosas.

Tom Price como secretario de Salud y Servicios Humanos quiere desentrañar la Ley del Cuidado de Salud a Bajo Precio. Es co-patrocinador de un proyecto de ley para otorgar a los fetos igual protección bajo la Enmienda 14 y es para prohibir la cobertura de salud y todos los fondos federales para el aborto.

Jeff Sessions, nombrado como fiscal general, es un senador republicano de Alabama cuyo enfoque está en las políticas de inmigración despiadadas. Es un defensor racista del encarcelamiento masivo, con la excusa de combatir las drogas adictivas.

Andrew Puzder como Secretario del Trabajo quien es un Presidente Ejecutivo (P.E.) en la industria de la comida rápida que se opone a un aumento en el salario mínimo federal.

El congresista republicano Mike Pompeo, quien instó al Congreso a restablecer la recolección a granel de registros de llamadas domésticas, fue nombrado director de la CIA. Las elecciones militares de Trump deberían ser una alarma para aquellos que tenían la ilusión de que Trump tendría un enfoque menos amenazante que Clinton, quien habló de una "zona de no vuelos" en Siria, la expansión de la OTAN y el circunvalación de Rusia y China.

Él nombró al General de la Marina, James "Mad Dog" Mattis como Secretario de Defensa, al General, John Kelly, jubilado de la Marina como Secretario de Homeland Security y el general jubilado, Michael Flynn como su consejero de seguridad nacional. Todos estos generales son considerados militaristas extremistas, aún por los estándares del Pentágono.

La incredulidad en el cambio climático y una fuerte alianza con las industrias del petróleo y del carbón son las calificaciones de Cathy McMorris Rodgers, para dirigir el Departamento del Interior. Ella apoya la perforación en tierras del tratado del nativo americano y la apertura de tierras federales intactas.

Scott Pruitt como administrador de la Agencia de Protección Ambiental pide "libertad para las empresas estadounidenses" y el fin de las regulaciones.

Para cualquier persona preocupada por el medio ambiente, el cambio climático y la guerra, la nominación prevista de Rex Tillerson, el CEO de ExxonMobil - "gran petróleo" - como secretario de Estado es especialmente ominoso. ExxonMobil es la fuerza más poderosa en la negación del cambio climático y tiene inversiones multimillonarias en Oriente Medio, Rusia, China, Venezuela y más allá.

El camino a seguir

La feroz lucha en la clase dominante que está surgiendo entre los intereses corporativos contendientes desestabilizará aún más el proceso político y reducirá la confianza en el orden capitalista. El Partido Demócrata hará todo lo posible para guiarlo hacia canales electorales seguros y controlados. La escala del asalto a la clase obrera proyectada por estas nominaciones despertará una resistencia sin precedentes de los más oprimidos. El papel del liderazgo revolucionario es ayudar a despertar una resistencia de la clase obrera que lucha por sus propios intereses. □

Editorial

Rusia no lo hizo

La acusación de la CIA de que Rusia intervino en las elecciones presidenciales de Estados Unidos para ayudar a Donald Trump es "una falsa noticia" siendo vendida por el Washington Post y el New York Times. ¿Sabían los rusos sabotear las máquinas de votación en el Medio Oeste? Ese es el tipo de cosas que las agencias de espionaje estadounidenses se vanagloriaban de descubrir.

Pero no. Rusia es acusada de piratear la computadora del director de campaña de Hillary Clinton, John Podesta, y de dar información embarazosa a WikiLeaks. Pero Julian Assange, editor en jefe de WikiLeaks, negó que Rusia fuera la fuente. (Político, 3 de noviembre)

El Senador Lindsey Graham de Carolina del Sur, sin embargo, declaró: "Voy por Rusia en todos los sentidos que se pueda. (Washington Post, 10 de diciembre)

No fue Rusia la que creó el Colegio Electoral que está enviando a Trump a la Casa Blanca, aunque obtuvo 2,8 millones de votos menos que Clinton. Como ha señalado el profesor de derecho de Yale Akhil Reed Amar, el Colegio Electoral se estableció para proteger la esclavitud. (Vox, 12 de noviembre)

Y no fue Rusia la que suprimió los votos afroamericanos y latinoamericanos.

Las demandas de la CIA contra Rusia son viejas noticias. "No hemos trazado ningún vínculo probatorio con entre el servicio de inteligencia ruso y WikiLeaks", dijo un funcionario estadounidense, "Eso es lo que informó el Washington Post el 27 de julio. Entonces, ¿por qué el clamor ahora?"

Probablemente tiene algo que ver con la mayor parte de Aleppo que está siendo liberado por el gobierno electo de Siria, que es ayudado por Rusia e Irán. Es una gran derrota para la CIA. Atacar a Rusia por supuestamente ayudar a Trump es también una manera de atacar a este súper-fanático desde la derecha.

Millones de personas pueden venir a Washington, D.C., el 20 de enero para protestar la inauguración de Trump.

Culpar a Rusia es un intento de desviar la lucha. Es más fácil golpear al CEO de Exxon Mobil, Rex Tillerson, el aparente secretario de estado de Trump, por sus tratados con Rusia que atacar al gigante petrolero por explotar a Yemen. Demócratas como el senador de Nueva York Charles Schumer están gritando más fuerte contra Rusia, mientras capitulan ante la candidatura de Trump de una junta virtual de generales en su gabinete.

Durante la campaña electoral, la clase dominante y su estado capitalista se dividieron. Los bancos más grandes y la CIA apoyaron a Clinton. La mayor parte de los bancos pequeños, los frackers del petróleo como Harold Hamm - el tipo de fuerzas que apoyaron Barry Goldwater en 1964 - eran para Trump.

El FBI también respaldó a Trump, y el director de la FBI, James Comey, pudo haber ayudado a inclinar las elecciones al elevar los correos electrónicos de Clinton a finales de la campaña. La división entre estas dos agencias tipo Gestapo -la CIA y el FBI- ha continuado, con el FBI descontando las reclamaciones de la CIA sobre Rusia. (CNN, 11 de diciembre)

Lo irónico de las "falsas noticias" de la CIA es que los consultores electorales estadounidenses se jactaron de cómo ayudaron a reelegir al presidente ruso Boris Yeltsin en 1996. (Los Angeles Times, 9 de julio 1996.)

Wall Street usó a Yeltsin para ayudar a derrocar a la Unión Soviética, una trágica derrota para los pobres y los trabajadores de todo el mundo. Rusia tiene hoy un gobierno capitalista, pero no es un estado siervo como Arabia Saudita. Para generales estadounidenses como "Mad Dog" James Mattis - a quien Trump ha elegido para Secretario de Defensa - Rusia es un blanco de 15539886.6 de kilómetros cuadrados para atacar y ocupar. Nuestros enemigos están en las salas corporativas y en el Pentágono, no en Moscú. □



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.