

## Rebellion in Hong Kong spreads

by Bob McGuire

On New Year’s Day, a million people took to the streets in Hong Kong in what began as a legal march that police shortly thereafter banned and attacked, arresting over 400. Marchers called for Hong Kong to “resist tyranny, join a union” as a weapon against the Beijing-controlled Legislative Council and the capitalists dominating Hong Kong’s economy who are dependent upon China’s private capitalist production under Communist Party rule.

### ‘FIVE DEMANDS, NOT ONE LESS’

The Hong Kong workers’ general strikes, initiated during the eight months of mass resistance to Beijing’s attacks on Hong Kong’s autonomy, were carried out in spite of the obstruction of the Beijing-linked Federation of Trade Unions. Marchers insisted: “Five demands, not one less.” Millions in the streets finally secured withdrawal of the extradition bill that could hand “enemies of the state” over to the injustice system in China, the issue that began the uprising.

**But government intransigence and 7,000 arrests along with police brutality forced demands for withdrawing the label of “riot,” which triggers draconian punishments under an old British colonial law. Demonstrators demanded amnesty for marchers and investigation of the police for its beating, maiming and shooting protesters.**

The fifth demand, for universal suffrage, is spotlighted by the September 2020 elections for the Legislative Council. Beijing controls the Council because so many seats are indirectly selected by

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## VOICES FROM THE INSIDE OUT

### A ‘free world’ view

by Faruq

I have been on parole in San Francisco for the past nine months after 40 years in prison, of which 20 were in solitary confinement. While in prison I figured out how to become truly myself, what it might mean to become a human being. Before, I didn’t think much about being human. It was in prison that the desire to think about it arose in me. Above all, I had time to think. I want the adjustment to life outside to be a continuation of this process.

#### COLOR OF SAN FRANCISCO’S HOMELESS

For me the beauty of San Francisco does not come through its many tourist attractions, like the Golden Gate Bridge, Fisherman’s Wharf or the new arena for the Warriors of basketball fame. Its beauty has a rather personal aspect to me. I have been able to utilize resources for the formerly incarcerated. In reality San Francisco is not different from many cities in the U.S. It is a dirty place to live. Upon release from prison, I could not miss the homeless and the general lack of concern for them.

**Pervasive homelessness, whether because of alcohol or drug addiction, mental illness or just because of a recent job loss, constitutes a population not wanted but clearly visible. It is a population that has taken residence in many of the city’s parks. Homelessness in San Francisco also has a color. While New Afrikans are only 5% of the city’s population, the latest study found they constitute 37% of the homeless.**

My first job was as a park bathroom monitor through an agency, Urban Alchemy, run and staffed by former long-term prisoners. There are about 40 to

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## A changed world spurs wars and decimates the earth

### The death of counter-revolutionary Qassem Soleimani

At around 1:00 a.m. Baghdad time on Jan. 3, in an illegal act of war authorized by Donald Trump, a U.S. drone strike killed Iranian General Qassem Soleimani, along with his allied Iraqi militia leader Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis and a number of his aides, at Baghdad International airport. Trump’s unilateral

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action was shocking, no matter what one thought of Soleimani—and Marxist-Humanists regarded him as a genocidal war criminal. This event indicates a truly changed world.

It shows, for one, the freer hand U.S. imperialism has gained by not being dependent on Middle Eastern oil, as does the follow-up threat issued by Sen. Lindsey Graham to Iran’s oil fields.

In the wake of Soleimani’s demise, both states indulged in further threats. Their rhetoric reflected an utter lack of humanity. This inhumanity was horrifically manifest in the Iranian regime’s downing of a Ukrainian civilian airliner, resulting in the murder of 176 innocent civilians. The regime at first denied responsibility, and Trump cared little about it, either.

**It was the Iranian people who cared, showing it by pouring into the streets of Tehran, Isfahan, Shiraz, and a dozen other cities. They chanted “Death to the dictator,” “Soleimani is a murderer,” and “The Supreme Leader is a murderer! His regime is obsolete!” Hundreds of thousands risked everything to protest, completely overshadowing the obscene spectacle of Soleimani’s totalitarian memorial and its pathetic echo in the clueless bourgeois press.**

In opposing imperialist war and counter-revolution, as principles, it is important to grasp the concrete specifics of this changed world. This can begin with the question: Who was Soleimani?

#### FROM REPRESSION TO IMPERIALISM

Soleimani rose to prominence as a counter-revolutionary Iranian hardliner. His early career included a role in suppressing Iran’s Kurds following the 1979 Revolution. In the wake of student protests for freedom in 1999, he and other military officials signed a letter threatening then-President Khatami if he didn’t destroy that movement. He also supported hardline President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in crushing the Green Movement for democracy following the stolen Iranian election in 2009.

**The recent protests in Iran, criticizing the government’s imperialist adventures at the expense of the people’s living standards, have implicitly been directed against Soleimani, as have anti-sectarian and revolutionary protests in Iraq and Lebanon. The counter-revolutionary murderousness of world and regional imperialisms, whether Trump’s or**

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### Australia’s megafires lay bare capitalism’s climate death march

by Franklin Dmitryev

Ever more of Australia’s terrain has been ravaged by fire since October, with no end in sight for weeks. The conflagration’s impact is unprecedented, leading to scenes such as the navy’s evacuation of hundreds of residents and tourists who had taken refuge on the beach of Mallacoota. Elsewhere, tens of thousands trying to evacuate were stranded for hours on gridlocked highways, while lines grew long at supermarkets and gas stations. The fires moved so fast that many people could not evacuate. There have been multiple waves of evacuations, one of



Australian firefighter’s photo of a backfire lit to prevent a fire from escaping control lines on Kangaroo Island on Jan. 3, 2020.

which encompassed 250,000 people.

**By mid-January, 28 people had died—not counting heart attacks and other deaths triggered by the toxic smoke choking cities like Sydney<sup>1</sup> and darkening skies and glaciers 1,000 miles away in New Zealand. Thousands of homes were destroyed, and 17 million acres burned. More than one billion mammals, birds and reptiles were killed or affected, and uncounted species at risk of extinction. So immense are the fires that they create their own weather, including fire tornados that killed some of the volunteer firefighters.**

Scientists warn that burned forests have reached a tipping point much earlier than expected, meaning they will turn into shrubland, savanna or grassland, intensifying the fire cycle. At the same time, this marks the opening of an era where megafires will be common.

Climate crisis is not a threat in the far future, or even near. The disaster is upon us. The questions remain: will human society act to keep the disaster from spiraling into the collapse of civilization?

1. See “Governments must act on public health emergency from bushfire smoke, medical groups say,” *The Guardian*, Dec. 15, 2019.

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## Revolution and genocide in Idlib, Syria

If there are any two realities that absolutely compel human solidarity, it is the two that are manifest in Syria today—*revolution*, the human struggle for freedom against oppression—and *genocide*, the absolute negation of humanity.

Yet for nine years the world has largely remained silent, if not insensate, to these realities that have been the basic matters of life and death for millions of Syrians. This unacceptable silence, in a world of mass communication and social media that boasts a “United Nations,” is arguably one of the most nihilistic moments in all history.

#### THE DEVASTATION OF HUMANITY

The great Syrian anarchist, Omar Aziz, who died in the fascist Assad regime’s prison system in 2013, once said: “We are no less than the Paris Commune workers; they resisted for 70 days and we are still going on for a year and a half.”

**Resistance still continues. On Jan. 17, beneath the flag of the Revolution, hundreds of**

**people in Idlib city called for the overthrow of the Assad regime and demanded an end to Russian and regime bombing. Despite one more “ceasefire,” dozens of civilians—mainly women and children—have been killed in attacks on markets and shops.**

In the last month, 350,000 civilians in Idlib province have been displaced by bombings and ground assaults by Russian and Iran-allied troops. Families have had to seek shelter in fields, or crowded refugee camps, without adequate food or shelter. Around four million are at risk. Only 40% of refugees are able to receive aid from humanitarian organizations.

The U.S. isn’t innocent here, either. U.S. allies have cut fuel supplies, putting prices beyond the reach of most people.

In the face of this genocide, the cry continues to ring out: “The people want the overthrow of the regime.” Here is the human spirit at its most

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# WOMAN AS REASON Anti-femicide goes global

by Terry Moon

Women are deepening a global movement to combat violence against us, from violent rapes to domestic

battering to outright femicide. Demonstrations have spread across the globe.

## FIGHTING THE 'FEMINIST EMERGENCY'

In **Spain**, women demonstrated in over 250 towns on Sept. 20, declaring a “feminist emergency.” “This has been a summer dominated by barbarity, murders, rapes, assaults, pedophile and gang attacks,” said Feminist Emergency, the group that helped organize the protests.

In **Pakistan** in March 2019 massive demonstrations in Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad were groundbreaking and most signs and chants spoke to ending violence against women, including: “End to violence,” “#IPledgeToStopAcidAttacks,” “#IPledgeToStopHonorKillings,” and “We are not punching bags.”

In **Italy** over 10,000 women marched on Nov. 23, protesting the murders of 142 women in 2018 and the 95 femicides committed up to that date in 2019. On that same date **France** (see “Women Worldwide” this page) saw thousands of women marching, including 100,000 in Paris, protesting domestic violence. Every three days in France a woman is killed—in the U.S. it is three women killed every day!—by a partner or former partner.

Women in **India** were in the streets once again protesting the brutal gang rape and murder of a young veterinarian. They called for stricter laws and punishment, although these have done little to stem the carnage. December saw the gang-rape and murder of a lawyer in Jharkhand, and the rape and murder of a six-year-old child in Rajasthan. An Indian woman who had been raped was set on fire by her rapist and his friends while on her way to testify against him. She died the next day. In India, an average of 92 women are raped each day.

## WOMEN'S CREATIVITY TO END VIOLENCE

The global response that began in the 1960s when women marched to “Take Back the Night” has taken a remarkable and creative direction. It leaped ahead on Valentine’s Day 2013 with the One Billion Rising action, which called on women to strike and dance to call attention to violence against us. It spread like wildfire, as tens of thousands joined rallies and dance events. Women saw it, one said, “as a new struggle for freedom.”<sup>1</sup> There were 40 events in New York City alone.

In **March 2017**, women in Sweden held several huge demonstrations where they sang “Quiet” by Milck, also sung at the Jan. 21, 2017, Women’s March on Washington and other demonstrations around the world. The song is about a woman who decides she will no longer keep quiet about rape and abuse.

Last year women in Chile, in the midst of the rebellion there, adopted a chant and dance, “Un Violador en Tu Camino” (“A Rapist in Your Path”), that made explicit what and who we are fighting against. Thousands of Chilean women came together on Dec. 5 outside Santiago’s National Stadium—a prison camp under Augusto Pinochet, notorious for torture including rape.<sup>2</sup>

## CALLING OUT 'A RAPIST IN YOUR PATH'

“A Rapist in Your Path” has been taken up by hundreds of thousands of women across the globe. The protests continue—in New York over 100 women sang at the County Court building on Jan. 10, loud enough so that serial rapist and abuser Harvey Weinstein, there for part of his trial, could hear. Then they marched over to Trump Tower and chanted again.

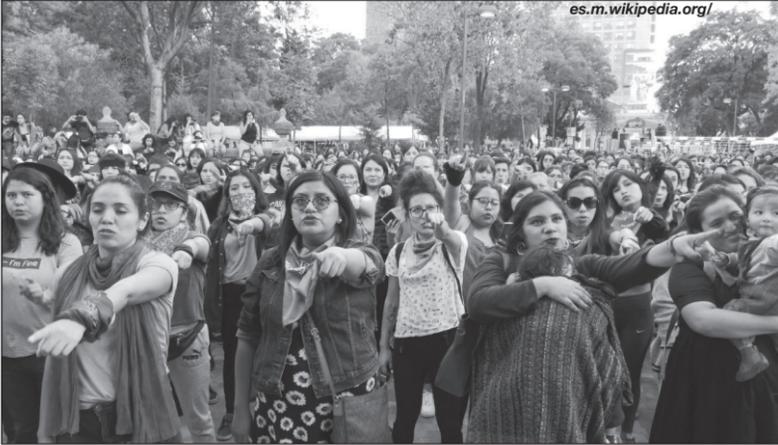
New is that the words women are now chanting worldwide, make explicit *who* their rapist is: “The rapist is you/ It’s the police/ The judges/ The state/ the President.” No longer will women tolerate being told that feminism is some “Western invention,” foisted on women in developing nations: “The oppressive state is a macho rapist.” “The Patriarchy is a judge/ that judges us for being born/ And our

punishment is the violence that you don’t see./ It’s femicide/ Impunity for my killer/ This disappearance/ This rape/ And it wasn’t my fault/ not where I was/ nor what I wore/ The rapist was you.”

## INTERNATIONALISM OF STRUGGLES

Women, literally everywhere, are making clear they know that violence is endemic in their cultures—that rape culture *is the world’s culture*. We reject the idea that women should change our behavior, dress modestly, drink less, stay hidden, stay veiled, wear this or that, stay in at night—the list never ends. We are demanding men change, *that our entire societies be transformed.*

Women have—explicitly—positioned themselves at the center of the fight. Revolution must include all segments of society and be total from the start. This is a struggle about creating new human relationships. It will continue and it will deepen.



Mexican women rehearse “A Rapist in Your Path” at the Alameda Central in Mexico City.

## WOMEN WORLDWIDE

by Artemis

French feminist organizations pressured their government to investigate the increasingly high rates of femicide and the police and judicial systems’ refusal to stop it. Activists pasted posters all over France reading, “Femicide: the state is guilty and the judiciary is complicit.” The government held a national summit from September through Nov. 23, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

That day, tens of thousands marched through Paris in the largest such demonstration in French history. Relatives of murdered women held their photos and signs reading “To Love is Not to Kill,” “Break the Silence, Not Women,” and “Down with Patriarchy.” The group Femicides by a Partner or Ex examines the media to keep an updated tally of femicides. Grieving families were able to connect and form the National Union for Families of Femicide, which is pressing for financial and psychological support for victims’ families similar to that provided after the 2015 terrorist attacks.

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In Uganda, a network of ecofeminist groups is fighting environmental destruction. They have protested and sued the government and corporations for illegally evicting farmers, traditionally women, and logging the forest that provides them with food, water, firewood, and medicine. “Our husbands sell the land that we are farming on without us knowing, and when they receive the money they run off and marry other wives,” stated Benine Naluyima of the Ganyana Women’s Group.

Cleared land is used for palm oil and sugar plantations; mining and oil drilling cause further destruction while mainly benefitting foreign corporations. Deforestation reduces rainfall, leading to food scarcity and domestic violence. The National Association for Professional Environmentalists, the National Association for Women’s Action in Development, the Bukingindi Tree Planting Women’s Group, and the Fridays for Future movement raise awareness about these problems, replant the forest, and develop new farming opportunities.

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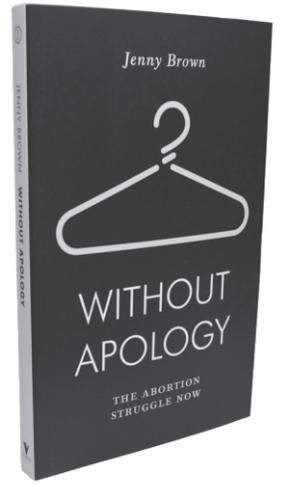
In July 2019, a 19-year-old British girl vacationing in Ayia Napa, Cyprus, was gang-raped by 12 Israeli youths, ages 15-22, who filmed the attack and uploaded it onto the internet. Police questioned her for seven hours without a lawyer or interpreter, pressuring her into signing a statement that she had lied. The youths were released soon after their arrests and returned home, where they drank champagne and chanted, “The Brit is a whore.”

In December she was found guilty of “public mischief” and given a four-year suspended sentence. In London, over 100 people demonstrated against the girl’s mistreatment. Outside the courtroom in Cyprus, over 50 Israeli women joined protesters from the UK with signs reading “Israeli Women Believe You” and “Boycott Cyprus.” Also present was the Cyprus feminist organization Network Against Violence Against Women, recently formed when police ignored disappearances of seven migrant women, later found to be murdered by a Cypriot National Guard officer.

## ‘Without Apology’

by Adele

*Without Apology: The Abortion Struggle Now*, by Jenny Brown (Verso, 2019), is an important book for it explains how we can win the fight for full reproductive rights by returning to the Women’s Liberation Movement’s original goals and strategies. Feminists began fighting for abortion rights as a mass movement in 1969. For several decades before that, the situation had been similar to that of today. Authority figures discussed the conditions under which they might allow a woman to have an abortion and whether the fetus had rights.



## THE NECESSITY OF LEGAL ABORTION

Second wave feminists learned consciousness raising from the civil rights movement and gathered in groups to discuss their own lives, comparing experiences. They learned situations they thought were “personal” were widely shared, having common “political” causes in patriarchy, capitalism, and racism. They discovered abortions, then mostly illegal, were common and dangerous, concluding safe, legal abortion was necessary for women’s freedom, equality, and self-determination. Previously, a few women fought for the right to abortion in extreme cases out of charity for others.

Then thousands joined the Women’s Liberation Movement and marched for free abortion on demand because they understood their personal stake in it. They comprehended laws against abortion as attempts to bring women back under male control and coerce them to produce more workers for capitalism. They viewed abortion rights as inseparable from the right to contraception since women historically have been able to participate more in society when able to control reproduction.

Brown explains how this mass movement exposed a corrupt, unsustainable society, forcing the U.S. Supreme Court to legalize abortion. However, *Roe v. Wade* is a deeply flawed compromise based on the right to privacy between a woman and her doctor, not “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” or freedom from slavery. Its restrictions on abortion allowed the government to control women.

She describes how a liberal feminist emphasis on individualism replaced feminism as a radical mass movement. Some liberal feminists worked with conservatives, describing abortion as a “tragic choice.” Without a mass movement’s support, women were afraid to say they had a right to an abortion as a way to control their own lives. They returned to the ineffective strategy of focusing on exceptional cases rather than demanding a better world for all women.

## REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE MOVEMENT

Even radical feminists began strategizing for things they did not really want, such as a return to do-it-yourself abortions and underground networks. Brown explains this will not help all women who need abortions. Even worse, recent radical feminist history with its important lessons about organizing, strategy, and philosophy was forgotten.

The reproductive justice movement, initiated and led by women of color, is a return to radical, effective philosophies and methods. Women have the right to choose not to have a child, to have a child, and to parent children in safety. This places abortion back into the original feminist framework of demanding full human rights for women and children, including employment and free healthcare, childcare, and education. Brown explains the radical feminist mass movement was successful in achieving these demands in other countries.

She describes how feminists sticking to radical methods won over-the-counter access to the morning after pill. They refused to accept partial victories that would have required a prescription and age requirements. The Irish repeal of anti-abortion laws was partly the result of women describing their ordinary abortions. It was these normal stories, not the extreme cases, and the emphasis on women’s freedom that changed people’s minds to support abortion rights.

Brown says the “historic invisibility treatment” has made people think radical change is impossible. This book shows how mass movements have been popular and successful. With a study of radical history, consciousness raising, speaking out, and organizing, they can be again.

Readers: We want to hear from you! Write or email! See contact information, p. 9.

1. “From India to Egypt to U.S., women fighting for freedom,” by Terry Moon, *N&L*, March-April 2013.

2. “Chilean anti-rape anthem becomes international feminist phenomenon,” by Charis McGowan, *The Guardian*, Dec. 6, 2019.

# Google and Amazon workers rebel

**San Francisco**—On Nov. 22, 200 Google workers demonstrated in San Francisco against Google's suspension and subsequent firing of five workers, including Rebecca Rivers and Laurence Berland. Rivers said she was a target for opposing Google putting a pilot cloud product in the hands of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection. About 1,500 Google employees signed an open letter demanding Google end that relationship

## FEARING COMPLICITY IN ATROCITIES

In 2018 workers stopped Google's Project Maven, a cloud Artificial Intelligence system designed for the Defense Department that would help guide drone strikes on particular persons or groups. The Jan. 3 drone assassination of the murderous Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani (see Editorial page 1), for Trump's personal aggrandizement and to divert

## Right's war on voters

Early voting has already begun in some state primary elections, but lawsuits in at least four states could affect critical races including the presidential election this November. Republican state officials around the country are enacting policies to depress the vote of poor people, students, and people of color to extend their minority control of state and federal government.

Florida voters enacted a ballot measure in 2018 that restored voting rights to people convicted of felonies other than murder or sex crimes who had completed their sentence. The next May, the Florida legislature required payment of all restitution, fines and fees, including what prisoners are charged for subsistence while in prison, before a sentence is considered completed. In October, part of the law was blocked in federal court, but it is still on appeal.

## GERRYMANDERING

Two other battleground states, North Carolina and Wisconsin, gerrymandered their Congressional and state legislative districts after 2010 Republican electoral gains. Last June, after years of litigation, the maps were brought to the U.S. Supreme Court for a second time, only to get a 5-4 decision that only state courts rule on redistricting.

**A Wisconsin state judge ordered on Jan. 13 that the elections board must delete 209,000 people from the voting rolls immediately or face daily fines, despite the fact that the Wisconsin Justice Department is appealing his ruling. The voters to be removed did not respond to a postcard sent to their address on file within 30 days. Ohio, which followed a similar procedure in September, has already purged 235,000 voter registrations. John Kennedy in 1960 was the last president to be elected without carrying Ohio.**

North Carolina voters in 2018 approved a state constitutional amendment to require photo identification for voting. This is also blocked in federal court under appeal.

In Georgia—whose sitting governor, Brian Kemp, as Secretary of State had closed 214 voting stations and cancelled 1.4 million registrations ahead of his own election to the governorship and left heavily-Black precincts with fewer voting machines before being “elected” governor in 2018—voters are still being purged by the hundreds of thousands. After purging 308,000 names last December, the state admitted an error and restored 22,000.

**Georgia is one of only two states that now require an exact match between the names on the voter registry and the DMV registry. Data firm L2 found that if the exact match policy were applied nationwide, one third of legitimate U.S. voters would be flagged for removal.**

Georgia is also among several states that use a so-called “use-it-or-lose-it” approach, which requires voters who don't vote over x number of elections to constantly re-register. A Dec. 20 ruling in a court challenge to the exact match and use-it-or-lose-it purges in Georgia came down in favor of the state.

## SUPPRESSING MAJORITY RULE

These are some of the most consequential efforts being waged by the Trump campaign and state Republicans to continue in power with support from a minority of the populace. Other long-standing problems include voting machines without a verifiable paper trail; the national database ERIC, which compares state registries and flags entries for removal based on a secret algorithm; the narrowing of voting hours and the closing of DMVs, and suppressing the vote of college students from families who live out of state.

The Republican Party under Trump boasts of its preference for an unrepresentative authoritarian form of government. The work of building a new society free from the current power relationships that govern capital and workers, dark and light-skinned people, women and men, young and old, humans and Earth, might be easier under bourgeois Democrats who are not busy destroying our ability to survive.

—Buddy Bell



Tech workers support immigrant rights at the May Day march in San Francisco on May 1, 2017.

from his impeachment troubles, is an example of the Pentagon's global capacity to assassinate anyone.

Facing barriers to new growth, tech companies are eyeing the huge pool of money in the state-capitalist war budget. Project Maven was projected to bring Google \$250 million. Google management, aiming to tap into that pool, is ending transparency and repressing internal opposition.

**Workers at tech companies are concerned about their complicity in war and environmental destruction. As the Google employees' recent open letter put it: “We have only to look to IBM's role in working with the Nazis during the Holocaust to understand the role that technology can play in automating mass atrocity.” (Business Week, Nov. 25)**

The “military-industrial complex” is the hallmark of U.S. state-capitalist planning. The Democratic-controlled House enabled Trump's skyrocketing military budgets and war plans by passing an astounding \$738 billion 2020 war budget which, as a portion of the economy, rivals World War II levels. Politicians globally, as in the 1930s collapse in capital accumulation, have blamed capitalist internal barriers to growth on the “other,” and turned to racism, trade wars, currency wars, and shooting wars.

## AMAZON WORKERS FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

Ordinary workers, even well-paid high-tech ones, are questioning their role in this march toward total destruction under the regime of capital. Tech giant Amazon, which is suing Trump over being left out of the Pentagon cloud computing contracts, threatened to fire members of Amazon Employees For Climate Justice who were inspired to join the youth's “Fridays for the Future” in actions to stave off the imminent climate crisis. Over 8,000 Amazon workers signed an open letter to CEO Jeff Bezos demanding the company cut its carbon emissions.

**In Capital, chapter 15, on “Machinery and Large-Scale Industry,” Karl Marx documented how officials half-heartedly enforced the first regulations for children and women in the factories and for workplace safety. The crude bias of officials which Marx cited has now turned to absolute indifference for work safety or the environment.**

NewsHour reported on the death of an Amazon worker, Phillip Lee Terry, due to company negligence at Amazon's Indiana distribution center. They interviewed a state OSHA official, John Stallone. State officials, eager to please Amazon, falsely blamed Terry's death on worker misconduct.

Other workers and former safety inspectors all said that his death was due to company misconduct in not relaying, or even setting, safety procedures. Stallone quit rather than go along with the state's deleting the citations against Amazon.

## ENSLAVING THE WORKER

Marx concluded that the huge scale of this “martyrology” of the worker is inevitable where “the instruments of labor appear as a means of enslaving, exploiting and impoverishing the worker.” Further, this “laying waste and debilitating labour power itself” and “simultaneously undermining the original sources of all wealth—the soil and the worker” comes with the socialization of labor by capital's large-scale machinery and industrial agriculture.

The “organized suppression” of the worker's “individual vitality, freedom and autonomy” can only be overcome through a “restoration” of humanity's “metabolism” with nature “in a form adequate to the full development of the human race.” —Ron Kelch

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# CTU's partial victory

**Chicago**—Members of the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) approved a contract in mid-November after an 11-day strike, the longest teachers' strike in Chicago in more than 30 years. The contract includes key gains like a moratorium on charter schools, a nurse and social worker in each school, and special education improvements.

The strike achieved guarantees on class size: The Chicago Public Schools (CPS) was forced to either reduce class size or add teacher's assistants. The contract includes support for homeless students, a living wage for paraprofessionals and school-related personnel (PSRP), and a 16% raise for teachers over five years

**Many teachers, however, felt like they could have gotten more of what they were demanding, such as a librarian in every school and making up all 11 days of school missed, instead of only five, after CPS and Mayor Lori Lightfoot essentially forced the CTU to strike.**

Just what exactly is meant by a “living wage” for PSRPs, special education “improvements” and “support” for homeless students? I will keep my eyes open for the answers and report on them.

—Network 49 Education Committee member

# Honda workers sit in

**Faridabad, India**—Honda management came out with a notice on Nov. 22, 2019, that asked each worker to sign a good conduct bond before entering the factory. In Faridabad, India, many such notices appeared from 1990 to 2000.

Then, after the demand that workers sign a good conduct bond, worker representatives would argue for non-acceptance and non-compliance with the notice. “Heat up the environment. ‘No’ to any signature. ‘No’ to entering the factory. We'll sit outside.”

The argument would be posed between “illegal lockout” versus “illegal strike.” Workers would spend hours, months, years outside, leading to dissipation of the picket line and scattering of strikers. Companies back then went for restructuring, or declared themselves bankrupt and sold assets. Rarely did the courts manage to get wages to the workers.

**This process of the 1990s is again at play. But this time workers are much more alert. The steps that workers are now taking are as a collective in common. Not leaving the workplace is a common occurrence, increase in the number of days of de-occupation (that is, taking away companies' occupation of factories), and workers are averse to negotiation.**

Following 15 days of de-occupation of the factory by workers hired through contractors, production has been at a standstill since Nov. 4. Honda has issued a special notice to the permanent workers.

Good times ahead.

—Sher Singh

# Art out of genocide

**Dearborn, Mich.**—In the face of genocidal war and famine, the arts survive. In November the Arab-American National Museum in Dearborn, Mich., hosted the 13th Annual Arab-American book awards along with a multimedia exhibit: “*Stories Never Told: Yemen's Crises and Renaissance.*”

From the *Stories Never Told* booklet: “*In spite of the dire situation in Yemen, the resilience and perseverance of the Yemeni people is stronger than ever...the voices of the people are being heard, echoing the beauty of the country, the complexity of their culture and the depth of their suffering.*”

“*Yemeni poets, filmmakers, activists, bloggers, visual artists and hundreds of others are speaking truth to power through their art.*”

Awards went to books that explored human relationships across boundaries of geography, age, gender and race. *Amreekiya*, by Lena Mahmoud, is the story of a young woman from Lebanon on an arranged marriage. *As Good as True*, by Cheryl Reid, is based on her Syrian great-grandparents' experiences in the early 20th century immigrating to a Mississippi town.

*The Sound of Listening*, by Philip Mestres, explores poetry from several languages; and *Syrian and Lebanese Patricios in Sao Paulo*, by Oswaldo Truzzi, takes up their immigrant experience.

**Of 24 artists, 10 are filmmakers, five of whom were supported by Comra Films, foundation for filmmaking in war-torn Sana'a, Yemen. Broken Paths, an award-winning film, depicts the horrible things people do when they allow external forces to shape their perspectives. A Pill portrays a mother of four who has fled to Aden, but cannot obtain medicine for her life-threatening heart condition.**

Artist Saba Jallas draws images that symbolize hope and peace within chaos, by transforming images of smoke in photographs of bombings. In one, the smoke has become a mother rescuing her child.

For the schedule of the traveling exhibit *Stories Never Told*, contact the curator, Hanan Alia Yahya, at [info.storiesnevertold@gmail.com](mailto:info.storiesnevertold@gmail.com) or [facebook/info.storiesnevertold](https://www.facebook.com/info.storiesnevertold).

—Susan Van Gelder

## FROM THE WRITINGS OF RAYADUNAYEVSKAYA

At a time of such intense retrogression in politics, economy and ideology, and such deep disorientation both in the mainstream and on the Left, it is worth revisiting Raya Dunayevskaya's concept of the changed world of the 1980s. She had been analyzing the deep crisis in the world economy that began with the mid-1970s recession. The Changed World followed the economic crisis and the restructuring that capitalist rulers imposed to adjust to it, including driving down working-class wages, benefits and living standards and attacking labor unions. Internationally, it included a similar attack on the populations of less industrialized countries through the exploding debt crisis and neoliberal structural adjustment programs.

That was only the starting point for a multifaceted global retrogression that U.S. President Ronald Reagan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher led throughout the 1980s. It also involved returning to a more aggressive, militaristic imperialism, as seen in Reagan's 1983 conquest of Grenada, rolling back what was left of the revolution in that Black Caribbean country, and his assaults on post-revolutionary Nicaragua and other countries taken up in the articles below. No less central to Reagan-Thatcher's onslaught was what Dunayevskaya termed the ideological pollution that infected not only the mainstream and the Right but the Left as well, so that "Ronald Reagan's 'Changed World' has made counterrevolution so tower over the seething discontent of the masses in the world that the very thought of revolution seems impossible."

The even deeper economic crisis inaugurated by the 2008 crash led to a great intensification of the "Changed World," including the normalization of fascism. We excerpt Dunayevskaya's two analyses that created that category in 1986. The first, an editorial in the April 1986 N&L, was originally headlined "Reagan's Attacks on Libya and Nicaragua," under a joint headline "Counter-revolution and Revolution" with that issue's lead article. The second, a lead article in the October 1986 N&L, was headlined, "As Reagan and Gorbachev Maneuver: Ongoing World Revolts & Economic Crises Challenge Superpower Grip." Footnotes were added by the editors.

Yesterday, March 24, out of the clear blue, the Reagan administration announced that the U.S. had sunk Libyan patrol boats hours before. Supposedly they had approached U.S. ships in the Gulf of Sidra with "hostile intent." The U.S. then followed with actual attacks on "missile sites" on Libyan soil. Whether the Libyan dictator, Col. Muammar Gaddafi, had first given the order to fire on U.S. ships, or whether the U.S. had begun the firing is not the question. What is crucial is this:

Bent on converting the presidency into a regal outlaw throne, Ronald Reagan, that **counter-revolutionary extraordinaire, is engaged in these near-war acts.**

**Ronald Reagan must be stopped!** If he is not stopped now, will his obsession with being Commander-in-Chief in an outright war lead to a full-scale attack on any country, especially a Third World country like Libya or Nicaragua?

For the first time an American president, Reagan, uttered the truth, when he explained to the press that the word "contra" is short for "counter-revolutionary" in Spanish, and declared, "that makes me a contra, too."<sup>1</sup> Reagan is continuing his all-consuming drive to overthrow the Nicaraguan Revolution, demanding \$100 million in aid to the "contras," while allocating \$20 million in immediate "emergency aid" for the Honduran military.

His March 16 televised speech to "the nation," warning of the "mounting danger in Central America that threatens the security of the United States," surpassed all his previous exploits in the Big Lie, as he painted a picture of Castro and Gorbachev, Gaddafi and Khomeini,<sup>2</sup> all converging in Nicaragua and preparing an attack on U.S. borders.

Unintentional truths and carefully planned Big Lies coincided dramatically in a long-winded "background message" he sent Congress that same week, entitled "Freedom, Regional Security and Global Peace." There he vowed that his administration will oppose dictatorships of the Right as well as the Left. Some liberal journalists promptly hailed the message as a "breakthrough in expressing the administration's commitment to 'democratic revolution'"

1. The Contras were right-wing guerrilla groups that tried to overthrow the Sandinistas' Nicaraguan government throughout the 1980s. With U.S. approval, they tortured and killed civilians. Five high Reagan administration officials were convicted of illegally funding the Contras by selling arms to Iran. Later, under the guidance of current Attorney General William Barr, President George H.W. Bush pardoned them and Caspar Weinberger.

2. This refers to then-leaders of Cuba, the USSR, Libya and Iran.

# Crises of retrogressive Changed World

(*New York Times*, March 15, 1986), while others suggested that its purpose was merely public relations. It is more than public relations.

## U.S. AND THIRD WORLD REVOLUTIONS

In fact, "contra aid" and Reagan's new so-called "democratic revolution" represent two prongs of U.S. imperialism's campaign to halt or channel a new wave of revolutions in the Third World of the 1980s. Even though the House voted "no" on "contra aid" March 20, it will vote again in April, and there is every likelihood that Reagan will get in some form his aid to the murderous right-wing mercenaries camped along the Nicaragua-Honduras border, just as he did last year, when it was supposedly limited to \$27 million in "non-military" assistance, and as he did in 1983 when they were secretly funded by the CIA.<sup>3</sup>

**This is true despite the many demonstrations by solidarity activists opposing funding, few of which have been reported by the media. The McCarthyite attacks launched by Reagan aide Patrick Buchanan and by Reagan himself against all opponents have had their desired effect, turning the focus of Congressional debate into marginal arguments over the aid's timing and conditions. So emboldened has Reagan become that he now admits plans to formally send U.S. "military advisers" to the contras.**

What has helped make him so brazen is the "bipartisan applause" for his handling of upheavals in the Philippines and in Haiti. The hope that his sudden, timely support for the removal of Ferdinand Marcos and Jean-Claude Duvalier—right-wing dictators who had long served as loyal mouthpieces for U.S. imperial interests, but who were on the verge of ouster by their own masses—may have staved off full social revolution has been made into a political category by the Reagan administration. In seeking to control "what happens after" the overthrow

of the old, even before the overthrow is completed, Reagan's new "democratic revolution" is revealed to be the other side of the coin of "contra aid." His chief of staff, Donald Regan, admitted as much when he characterized it as "part of our overall strategy for resisting destabilizing forces on a regional basis."

In Latin America today, as in the Philippines, the "destabilizing forces" do not emanate from the global interests of that other nuclear superpower, Russia, but from the deep economic crisis in the Third World and from the profound desire of the masses for a new society....

In this way, economic questions are revealed to be **human** questions, continuing dialogues between Latin Americans who have experienced first-hand both vicious exploitation and Third World revolutions, and North Americans from the "other America" at home—of Black ghettos and concessions contracts, of youth protests and women's liberation demonstrations. It is this human dialogue that the Reagan administration is seeking to destroy with its "contra aid" and with its prosecution of sanctuary activists. And it is this human dialogue that we are seeking to **deepen**, to not only assure that Reagan's fake "democratic revolution" doesn't get substituted for a full social transformation, but to so reorganize our thinking throughout the hemisphere that "what happens after" the overthrow of the old will be a new beginning in ideas and in life.

The latest events in Libya make all Latin America wonder whether Nicaragua is next on Reagan's hit list. Our first task in deepening our dialogue with the Latin American masses begins with staying Reagan's hand before an attack begins.

— March 25, 1986



The changed world that Reagan retrogression brought to a new barbarism with his foray into the Gulf of Sidra, followed by the bombing of Tripoli and the living quarters of Muammar Gaddafi, had even his NATO allies questioning him when his outreach declared SALT II "null and void," as he continued with his empty rhetoric about the "evil empire" whenever it came to any talks with Russia about disarmament.

If the Chernobyl nuclear power disaster<sup>4</sup> led him to think he could sweep every imperialist act under

3. In October 1986, Congress allocated \$100 million in military assistance to the Contras.

4. The Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the USSR, now Ukraine, suffered an explosion on April 26, 1986, that spread serious radioactive contamination across several countries, while the USSR government engaged in a cover-up that helped pave the way for its fall. Thousands of people eventually died from the radiation.

the rug—all the allies sang in chorus against Russia over the horror—the illusion did not last long.

**What is deeply inherent in Reagan's retrogressionism is his effort to turn world capitalism away from what was attempted by it when the Depression threatened its very rule—i.e., the New Deal. Not only is that characteristic of Reagan's two terms in office, but he is determined to incorporate it in unbreakable laws so that it will not matter who wins office in 1988; this is the ground on which they (Democrats or Republicans) will have to operate.**

Now that Reagan has got Congress to approve aid to the Contras, his rhetoric has given forth his true aim—the U.S. is to repeat the Vietnam War by invading Nicaragua, beginning, as with Vietnam, by sending U.S. military advisers to train the Contras.

This is the same Ronald Reagan who thinks he can make himself sound like the great democrat by welcoming Corazon Aquino to the White House, at the same time he provided safe haven for Ferdinand Marcos who is working 24 hours a day to destabilize the new government in the Philippines.<sup>5</sup> It is clear that the only reason Reagan makes such a show of his welcome to President Aquino is because he is concerned with keeping his [military] bases in her land and thinks he can win her into his camp.

## THE CHANGED WORLD ECONOMY

As Ronald Reagan's changed world is preparing for the unleashing of the holocaust while talking of the alleged prosperity of the U.S. and the stability of the Western world, the truth is quite different. The world economy is in deep crisis, and this remains the key to the present world situation.

What the present economists consider the changed world economy—high technology, unimaged, robotized production—is what bourgeois economists have called "the post-industrial world" ever since the end of

World War II. It doesn't really matter whether those economists were referring to monopoly, oligopoly, multinationals, or what they now refer to as the computerized world; all are characteristic of the periods of both the post-WWI and post-WWII worlds. They are characteristic of what Marx originally had singled out as the most fundamental law of capitalist production of his day as it pursued Accumulation, Accumulation, Accumulation.

**What all the bourgeois economists choose to disregard about this high stage of robotized production is that unpaid, surplus labor—i.e., profit—comes, and can only come, from the living, sweated laborer....**

The need to organizationally concretize philosophy anew each year naturally is given new urgency now that Ronald Reagan's "Changed World" has made counterrevolution so tower over the seething discontent of the masses in the world that the very thought of revolution seems impossible....

All of our activities in mass movements, be they in labor struggles or in the Black or Women's Liberation Movement, or Youth, or anti-nuke, or in our international relations, be they in Latin America or Haiti, in South Africa or the Philippines, in East or West Europe, become inseparable from our major theoretical works. Indeed, that was characteristic of us from the first, as both the Hungarian Revolution and the Black Revolution became inseparable from *Marxism and Freedom, from 1776 until Today*.<sup>6</sup>

The same was true in the further development of philosophy and the new passions and new forces of the 1960s that became *Philosophy and Revolution, from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao*. In the 1980s we decided that a balance sheet was needed of all the great revolutionaries like Lenin, Luxemburg, Trotsky—which not only became *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* but saw a new category created of "post-Marx Marxism, beginning with Engels."

It is both our body of ideas and our concrete perspective...which is called upon by the objective situation to meet the challenge of this changed world that Reagan is retrogressively driving for, with his latest repeated threats to Libya and the ever-growing poverty in the U.S., where one-third of the nation is what Franklin Roosevelt said it was in 1933—"ill-clad, ill-fed, and ill-housed"—and now homeless....

5. Corazon Aquino became president of the Philippines after Ferdinand Marcos was toppled by the "people power revolution" on Feb. 25, 1986.

6. Chapters 15 and 16 of *Marxism and Freedom* take up the Hungarian Revolution and the U.S. Black movement, including the Montgomery Bus Boycott.



A Libyan patrol boat after being struck by U.S. missiles March 24, 1986.

# Revolution in Permanence: Trotsky, Marx, Dunayevskaya

*Editor's note: This is an English translation of the review of the book La filosofía de la revolución en permanencia de Marx en nuestros días. Escritos selectos de Raya Dunayevskaya, published in La Jornada Semanal in Mexico City on Dec. 29, 2019,*

by Eugene Gogol

La filosofía de la revolución en permanencia de Marx en nuestros días. Escritos de Raya Dunayevskaya (Casa Editorial Juan Pablos) 2019.

Leon Trotsky is justly famous for the theory of Permanent Revolution—that revolution could occur in a technologically undeveloped country prior to one in an advanced capitalist country—which he developed first with his colleague Alexander Parvus. It

was a brilliant prognostication of events in Russia.

However, it is not Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution which this collection of selected writings of Raya Dunayevskaya takes up in this recently published volume.<sup>1</sup>

The essays, presentations, and letters in *La filosofía de la revolución en permanencia de Marx en nuestros días* focus on this concept in Karl Marx and its meaning for our day.

## ESSAY

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### MARX ON PERMANENT REVOLUTION

Writers on Marx who do mention his writing on permanent revolution often focus exclusively on a call for "permanent revolution" in his June 1850 Address to the Communist League, often analyzing it as Marx's supposedly tactical/strategic call to continue the revolution after the defeat of the 1848-49 Revolutions in Europe, with Marx being "mistaken" in thinking the revolution could continue.

Dunayevskaya, however, had something quite different in mind when she took up Marx's concept of permanent revolution. In fact, she called Marx the "philosopher of per-

manent revolution." What did she mean?

First, she traced Marx's use of the term permanent revolution, His initial expression of the concept occurred in 1843:

*"Political emancipation is, of course, a big step forward. True, it is not the final form of human emancipation in general, but it is the final form of human emancipation within the hitherto existing world order... But one should be under no illusion about the limits of political emancipation.... [T]o constitute itself as the real species-life of man, devoid of contradictions...[I]t can achieve this only by coming into violent contradiction with its own conditions of life, only by declaring the revolution to be permanent.... Only when the real, individual man re-absorbs in himself the abstract citizen, and as an individual human being has become a species-being in his everyday life, in his particular work, and in his particular situation, only when man has recognized and organized his 'own powers' as social powers, and, consequently, no longer separates social power from himself in the shape of political power, only then will human emancipation have been accomplished."*

Thus, for the young Marx, his first mention of permanent revolution was intimately tied to human emancipation. Indeed, as Dunayevskaya strongly argued, the next four decades of Marx's thought and action was a development of a praxis of revolution in permanence as the pathway toward the fullness of human emancipation.

### FINDING THE LIVING SUBJECT

That pathway encompassed finding living subjects of social transformation. The proletariat certainly, but Dunayevskaya as well pointed to Marx's interest in other actors. In his *Ethnological Notebooks* he wrote of Iroquois women in North America, as well as the Australian aborigine who he termed "the intelligent black." He studied the Russian peasant commune, the *mir*, as a possible source for Russia evading the vicissitudes of capitalism. But revolution was needed to accomplish this: "In order to save the Russian commune a revolution is necessary." Women's activity in the First International was mentioned by Marx as well.

**Permanent revolution as pathway to human emancipation was also rooted in the dialectic—the revolution of Hegelian philosophy—that Marx studied, critiqued, and recreated as a philosophy of revolution. This volume contains a number of Dunayevskaya's writings on the Hegelian and Marxian dialectics, showing both Marx's indebtedness to, but also his separation from, Hegel.**

Marx's concept of permanent revolution was further developed in his masterwork *Capital*. Dunayevskaya argued that its content can be most comprehensively grasped by tracing how Humanism and the Dialectic form its foundation.

**In addition to tracing permanent revolution in Marx as subjects of revolution and as dialectical thought and practice, Dunayevskaya wrote of Marx and revolutionary organization—from the Communist League, to the First International, to Marx's writing on the Paris Commune, and his incisive critique of so-called revolutionary organization in his *Critique of the Gotha Program*.**

She saw a Marx searching out spontaneous organizations from below, helping to forge revolutionary organizations at various historic moments, as well as building organizations that would reflect and project an emancipatory body of ideas—organi-

zational forms of permanent revolution.

### THE REVOLUTIONARY BATTLE OF IDEAS

Dunayevskaya's writings here are not only an exploration of Marx's multidimensional construction of revolution in permanence, but also encompass a battle of ideas: a critique of a number of post-Marx Marxists, who, Dunayevskaya argued, did not grasp the fullness of Marx's Marxism. They include critical essays on such thinkers as Eric Hobsbawm, Maximilien Rubel, Roman Rosdolski and Theodor Adorno.

**Finally, an extensive section takes up the question of Marx as Philosopher of Revolution in Permanence—Reading Marx for Today. Here Dunayevskaya's writings include sections on: "Black Liberation and Internationalism," "Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution," and "Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy," among others.**

The book's title centers on *Marx's Philosophy of Revolution for Our Day*. One is then compelled to ask is there a relevance of Marx's philosophy of permanent revolution for Latin America, and if so what is it? I would argue that Marx's and Dunayevskaya's concept of revolution in permanence does speak to Latin America.

Marx's Marxism and Dunayevskaya's Marxist-Humanism stand upon a non-dogmatic revolutionary philosophic view of human emancipation, in which subjects of revolution and emancipatory philosophy are front and center.

What could be more relevant for Latin America, for Mexico, than the permanent emancipatory activity of the Indigenous peoples, of the women fighting for their liberation throughout our continent, of youth demanding a free existence? As a recent issue of *La Jornada's Ojarasca* magazine (No. 270) notes, it is a question of the "permanent revolution of the original peoples."



by Tim Finnigan

The U.S. Justice Department is now investigating mistreatment of disabled patients at Iowa's Glenwood Resource Center, a state-run care facility. Superintendent Jerry Rea, who was fired in December, is alleged to have conducted "harmful and uncontrolled human subject experiments" on residents, including testing his own theories on "detecting and monitoring sexual arousal," among numerous other abuses. Glenwood employees had repeatedly drawn attention to a drastic decline in basic medical care, inadequate nutrition, and the use of cruel physical restraint. Since 2018, at least, Glenwood patients have been dying at twice the expected rate.

Venezuela's ongoing economic collapse has hit the sick and disabled hard. While there are no sanctions against importing medicine or other healthcare products, this hasn't been a priority for the government of President Nicolas Maduro. Lack of cancer, HIV, and mental health drugs have devastated thousands of lives, and the government no longer publishes data on these health issues. The 200-bed Psychiatric Hospital of Caracas now has only 20 patients, no working washing machines, no cleaning supplies, and a lack of clean drinking water. A union official at the hospital said, "The government has no policy for health, even less so for mental health." Many impoverished families struggle to care for their relatives at home.

A bipartisan bill promoting equal access to educational materials for blind students was reintroduced to the U.S. House of Representatives in early December. The Accessible Materials in Higher Education (AIM HIGH) Act would create a commission made up of disabled people, educators, and business representatives to develop criteria for usable instruction materials and technologies. Unfortunately, previous versions of the AIM HIGH Act have died in House and Senate committees.

Disability rights activist and scholar Steph Ban drew attention to the irony surrounding the University of Chicago's September removal of a 1984 mural by artist Astrid Fuller at the School of Social Service Administration. The mural depicted historic struggles for rights, including disability rights, as reflected in the school's history. It was removed to reflect the modernist architect Mies van der Rohe's rejection of ornament. As Ban, who attended the school, wrote in *The Activist History Review* (Nov. 5, 2019), "I didn't know about the mural. Because it was in a stairwell and I am a wheelchair user, I don't know that I ever could have seen it for myself." Mies himself attended his building's 1965 opening ceremony on crutches. As Ban wrote, "van der Rohe was kept from fully accessing his own creation because it failed to account for physical disability (temporary or permanent) within its borders."

1. For Dunayevskaya's comprehensive, critical discussions of Trotsky's theory, see two of her books, *Philosophy and Revolution* (Siglo XXI) and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (Fondo de Cultura Económico).

**CAPITALISM AND CLIMATE**

We need to stress the role capitalism has played in generating climate change since the Industrial Revolution. With all the coverage of the Flint, Mich., water crisis, it was rarely noted that GM, the same company that refused to use the Flint River water because it corroded their parts, had been dumping pollutants into that river for the past 100 years. Likewise, in Australia, climate change resulted also from local environmental damage that British colonists created by their attempts to make money off the land: bringing in rabbits, for example, whose population exploded due to lack of predators, and sheep farming. The dustbowl in the U.S. during the 1930s was the result of destroying the buffalo along with replacing deep-rooted native prairie plant ecosystems with cash crops.



Chicago climate strike, 12/6/2019

Feminist ecologist  
Detroit

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Marx observed that “Private property has made us so stupid and one-sided that an object is only ours when we have it—when it exists for us as capital...” This brings to mind the tragedy of the North Bay wildfires near San Francisco. That has been the treatment of the land in Northern California, starting with the genocide by which it was acquired. Later, developers slapped up buildings with little regard for the land or the safety of those who would live there—it was simply a commodity. The state government did little to maintain the land, and Pacific Gas and Electric was careless in its installations. The computer industry polluted Santa Clara County, resulting in many cancer pockets. In San Francisco’s Bayview-Hunter’s Point, the site of a former Navy base, hundreds of new housing units were built on toxic land. Waste from the construction has made huge numbers of the mostly Black residents ill. On the site of the old Treasure Island military base, 8,000 units of “affordable” housing are planned, even though there is so much nuclear pollution there that current residents are warned not to handle the dirt in their own backyards. Totally new human relations also mean a totally new relationship to nature.

Activist  
San Francisco-Oakland Bay Area

Thank you for including two pages on the terrifying climate crisis that is becoming a global catastrophe. I urge N&L to continue to give space to explore ways that all of us can unite to end this growing threat to human existence. The human race is now at the crossroads of either transforming our entire world community toward life-enhancing activities or to tragically move toward self-destruction.

Rama Kumar  
Fairfax, Calif.

Queer and Trans dance group WERK for Peace, founded in response to the 2016 Orlando Pulse nightclub massacre, accompanied by dance music supplied by a wagon-towing cyclist, temporarily stopped traffic in the “Shut Down D.C.” climate strike protest. WERK’s co-founder Firas Nasr said that their group also targeted Wells Fargo Bank and the American Petroleum Institute for their complicity in climate change because many marginalized communities, like the Queer community, will be the most devastated by climate damage if it is not reversed.

Queer activist  
Midwest

**READERS' VIEWS**

**MIDEAST UPHEAVAL**

The Left really is decrying Soleimani’s assassination without any mention of how bad he was. Two wrongs don’t make a right. Soleimani’s actions in Syria and elsewhere need to be brought out, as does the content of the Syrian Revolution still struggling for existence. Rojava and Kafrabel resisted in creative, remarkable ways, like Radio Fresh insisting on women reporters and when things got too bad, altering the women’s voices to sound like men to keep al-Nusra off their backs. We also need to acknowledge the recent rebellions in Iran, Iraq, and the ongoing opposition to Netanyahu’s apartheid in Israel despite his re-election.

Susan Van Gelder  
Detroit

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The assassination of Iran’s top general, Qassem Soleimani, by the Trump regime, forced the Iranian government to retaliate as it said it would. Now what? Iranians have had a very negative experience with the U.S. and the UK: from the 1953 coup engineered by the CIA and the UK’s MI6 in 1953, through the Iran/Iraq eight-year war when Ronald Reagan and George Bush armed Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, which killed more than one million people; to when Trump pulled out of the international agreement to monitor Iran’s construction of nuclear power plants and then imposed crippling sanctions which have made it impossible for seriously ill Iranians to get medicines they need, resulting in thousands of avoidable deaths.

Tom Siracuse  
New York

**TRUMP THE MULLAH?**

The mullahs and Trump have in common that they will do anything to stay in power. Trump, channeling Napoleon Bonaparte, wants to start a war when unrest threatens at home. It is also in keeping with his subservience to Russia, despite that the Iranians and Russia may soon be in a position to take over Iraq. Trump couldn’t care less. These are “s\*\*\*hole” countries as far as he is concerned. If it becomes a shooting war, Trump will try to use that to win the election, saying a la Napoleon: “don’t change leaders mid-stream.” The entire spectacle of seeing these tyrants try to manipulate entire populations is disgusting. President Trump? More like Mullah Trump.

Retired postal worker  
Michigan

**WAR CRIME HERO**

Trump’s horrific pardon of Eddie Gallagher broadcasts to the world that the U.S. military is not to be trusted; that U.S. soldiers can murder civilians at will and not only will nothing happen to them, they will be treated like heroes and encouraged to make money off of mowing down unarmed civilians including women and children. Trump’s regime has shown that it doesn’t matter what atrocity he and his ilk commit, they will not be punished. This is a horrible precedent.

Women’s liberationist  
Bremerton, Wash.

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The Navy announced that Gallagher would be removed from the SEALs. This, after Trump reversed Gallagher’s demotion over a war crimes charge, amounted to the admiral “spitting in the face” of commander-in-chief Trumpy. Gallagher was convicted of posing with the corpse of one of his victims. News reports said his fellow SEALs became so disturbed with his murders of civilians that they tampered with his rifle to make it in-

accurate and fired warning shots at civilians to prevent Gallagher from murdering them.

Little Brother  
Battle Creek, Mich.

**TRUMP’S JUDGES**

Trump and Mitch McConnell have done tremendous damage with appointments to the Supreme Court and lower courts. The court-packing truly is a swipe at young people. Even if youth gain electoral power, they could be saddled for decades with these unrepresentative authoritarians who are being appointed to life terms on the bench.

Activist  
Pasadena, Calif.

**DETRANSITION DEBATE**

It’s so wonderful to read Adele’s column embracing Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminists and Lesbian separatists and so-called detransitioning (“Detransitioners and Lesbians speak out,” Nov.-Dec. 2019 N&L). It made me thankful that I departed the organization. But how typically opportunistic that, in a separate section of the paper (“Queer Notes” by Elise), it is noted that Chicago TERFs had vandalized a feminist bookstore for daring to have Trans women as employees!

mariposa  
New York

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More support for and study of Detransitioners is needed. I believe Detransitioners and Trans people exist and both are legitimate. I also believe that Lesbians have been exploited by the GLBTQ movement, which remains heavily influenced and steered by white upper- and middle-class men. It cannot be overstated that traditional gender roles—binary, male and female—are still taught, intentionally or not, in the majority of homes and institutions, and are strong influences in society. I do object to the transphobia of trans-exclusive groups such as Get the L Out and Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminists. When at least 331 Trans and Gender Variant people—mostly women of color—were reported murdered worldwide last year, the Trans community must be supported. I suggest people do their research on gender identity. One resource is the work of Dr. Veronica Drantz, <https://www.slideshare.net/drdrantz/gender-binary-lgbt-people-myth-and-medical-malpractice>.

Elise  
Chicago

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In “Detransitioners and Lesbians speak out” Adele quotes Charlie Evans: Detransitioning individuals’ “voices are hidden because we’re seen by the queer community as just collateral damage for the greater good. Many are gender non-conforming Lesbians raised in gendered homes where the roles of boys and girls were strictly defined.” I feel that Evans is making a fair indictment of the gender binary pushed by dominant societies, and no doubt pushed as well by some or most members of the Queer community. No one should be compelled by social/political convention or expediency to be Trans, nor to fulfill any particular role. In my experience there has also been “collateral damage” in the reduction of Trans people. While reading the above quote I was reminded of a student convention of LGBT/Queer college groups at the University of

California Riverside in 2003, where my colleague was told that he was “just going through a phase” in presenting himself as a Trans man. He was very upset, I think because, again, the way one feels most comfortable presenting and identifying herself or himself is an intrinsic matter, which should not be forced by others if we presume to consider ourselves free people.

Buddy Bell  
Los Angeles

**WOMEN’S LIBERATION**



Thousands participated in Women’s Marches all across the U.S. on Jan. 18. Above, from the Chicago march, where 10,000 came out to protest Trump, attacks on reproductive rights and healthcare access, the climate crisis, gun violence and more.

Marcher  
Chicago

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Victoria’s Secret, the lingerie company that has been objectifying women with their products and their Annual Fashion Show for decades, is in financial trouble and the show is cancelled. YES! FINALLY! It shows something about a turnaround in U.S. culture that will no longer accept a view that all women should look like what Victoria’s Secret says they should. The “Fashion Show” featured models who starved themselves and worked out to exhaustion to create a body that few could hope to achieve and never should have in the first place. One can only hope that the brand will cease to exist.

Women’s Liberationist  
Chicago

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In one of the articles I read about the British girl who was gang-raped on Cyprus (see “Women WorldWide,” p. 2), a woman said the Israeli boys who did it were wearing yarmulkes at their reunion with their families at the airport. She said that men in Israel like to appear in court wearing yarmulkes to look pious. That reminded me of men of the religious Right in the U.S. comparing themselves to Jesus whenever they are on trial or suspected of wrongdoing. Someone else pointed out that, even if the young woman had lied, it should have been their families’ responsibility to teach them to be compassionate (and not wildly hypocritical).

Militant feminist  
Memphis

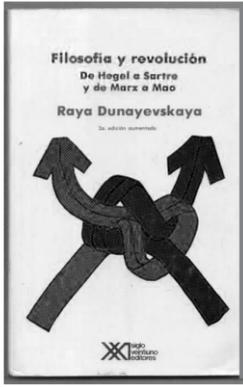
**To our incarcerated readers**

Prisoncrats sometimes choose to return an issue to us undelivered, but if you have been moved—to another prison, or within the same prison—the USPS will *not* forward newspapers. Help us keep N&L in your hands by letting us know your change of address, including when you are released. When you leave prison your donor subscription can continue to your new address for one additional year.

We welcome your contributions to N&L and for our website. There are some things we cannot provide. We do not match up pen pals. N&L cannot help prisoners with individual legal cases, and we cannot offer legal advice or access to attorneys. This paper is a place where the voices of people engaged in struggles inside and outside prison walls can be heard speaking for themselves.

**PHILOSOPHY AND REVOLUTION, ORDER AND DISORDER**

The editor's note accompanying Raya Dunayevskaya's column on the need for "Philosophy and Revolution as process" in times of political crisis (Nov.-Dec. 2019 *N&L*) expressed its relevance for the Trump era. Praxis en América Latina in Mexico also sees the need to grasp the relationship between philosophy and revolution when philosophy means dialectics



and revolution means uprooting this entire social system. Here, the administration of Lopez Obrador claims to be "progressive." But opposition to his developmentalism is strong among Indigenous communities. Other social movements are also questioning his administration. Activism is on the agenda in opposition to a number of mega-projects that are being pushed—a Mayan train through Indigenous communities, a new thermoelectric plant being imposed, etc. Yet much of the opposition is posed as "action" alone, without a philosophic view of the kind of uprooting that is necessary. We in Praxis decided to begin a study group of Philosophy and Revolution as concept unseparated from *Philosophy and Revolution*, Dunayevskaya's book. Dialectics, rooted in Hegel's concept of "absolute negativity" and Marx's development of "permanent revolution," needs to influence "action" in Mexico.

**Eugene Walker  
Mexico City**

less: global capitalism's multitude of surplus population, fleeing economic destitution, climate change and ethnic cleansing. The disorder of this moment—every ego-run-amok nationalist for himself—is its order. Any "deal" is just a moment before a final confrontation. In the 1930s Hitler and Stalin had a deal, until they didn't. Trump-Kim are ever on the verge of a deal. Trump-Putin are ever flirting. Capital markets rise and fall on whippers of a Trump-Xi deal that might reinstate the U.S./China globally structured economy. What scares all the rulers is when workers confront them as a class, as in Chile today, or Iraq and Lebanon, where heretofore rulers had been able to entrench themselves through ethnic division.

**Ron Kelch  
Oakland, Calif.**

**ANTI-SEMITISM**

Readers might think that Trump did something right when he announced that colleges and universities will be denied federal funding if they permit "anti-Semitism" on their campuses. There has been an increased number of violent anti-Jewish acts in the U.S. But look closer: "anti-Semitism" means "criticizing Israel." Real action against anti-Semitism is Palestinian and Israeli women marching together for peace. That action against anti-Semitism shines forth in *Within the Eye of the Storm*, a documentary about two Israeli fathers, one Jewish, one Palestinian, working together to end the violence in their country, to honor their young daughters who were murdered by "the other side." We all must do what we can to make sure these facts are not lost.

**Observer  
Michigan**

**DISORDER IS THE ORDER**

The present turn to racist, other-hating nationalism is in the context of a collapsing rate of growth in the world economy. Nationalist capitalists aim to draw attention away from themselves and transfer the impact of the climate crisis and mass unemployment onto the global poor and defense-

As a Jew I was outraged when alt-Right-leaning President Trump conflated "race, color, and national origin" with being Jewish, in his Dec. 11 Executive Order on Combating Anti-Semitism. Judaism is a religion which some people are born into and continue to accept while some leave

or join another religion; and some not born into Jewish families choose to join at some point in their life. It is not up to Trump, a racist, sexist discriminator against people whose national origin he disdains—and bans from entering the U.S.—to say who Jewish people are. It is racists who treat Jews as a race; it is racists who define Jews as Other. If Trump gave a damn about ending anti-Semitism, he would have to stop being the disgusting racist, anti-Muslim fanatic that he is.

**Jewish feminist  
Illinois**

**BLACK AUGUST**

Faruq in "Black August, from 1971 to 2011-13" (Nov.-Dec. 2019 *N&L*) writes powerfully of his journey to realize freedom by realizing his humanity. He keeps his vision through the incomplete and partial freedoms he first encountered in solitary confinement, and to recognize the humanity in each person he meets. He is steeped in the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic and comprehends the development of each person's humanity through the contradictions he or she experiences under capitalism's alienation.

When he describes the homeless people he meets in San Francisco, it calls to mind the invisible homeless in Detroit and Flint. The specter of homelessness is always a threat, even to senior citizens whose homes are paid for. Many cannot afford basic maintenance and risk losing their homes to property tax foreclosure. Single mothers and grandmothers with young children face a tight rental market of deteriorated properties. They have high eviction rates—and probably twice as many face "informal" evictions when slumlords make them move because they've asked for repairs. Add to these, family conflicts in which teenagers and "returning citizens" are "kicked out" and must couch-surf to survive.

**Activist  
Detroit**

**VOICES FROM BEHIND BARS**

Thank you for the issues of *N&L*. I especially like the story "Creating

homes for ex-prisoners" and Terah Lawyer's freedom from imprisonment (both in Sept.-Oct. 2019 *N&L*). It was a story I can relate to about finding freedom in prison. Now she is creating homes for ex-prisoners. That is encouraging on how she is giving back and restoring others. Thank you, Terah.

**Prisoner  
Plainfield, Ind.**

\*\*\*

Keep up the great work. Please continue my subscription with thanks! I'm on the condemned row in California and am grateful for those who contribute to those of us who can't afford the subscription.



We wouldn't be able to keep up to date on the news of "anti-prison" citizens. In here, it's all

about "Who's never leaving," by the officers (glorified babysitters with a shiny badge). One woman got off the Row this year! History making.

**Woman prisoner  
Chowchilla, Calif.**

\*\*\*

This paper has educated me on what socialism is. People argue that socialism won't work. But will it? Maybe the reason why they don't want it is because it would really work. Sorry to say this, but our Constitution is not broken, it works just fine. That's why some people in this country will always live in the bonds of inequity. I love this paper. Could you please find me a donor.

**Prisoner  
Hondo, Texas**

*TO OUR READERS: Can you donate \$5 for a prisoner who cannot pay for a subscription to N&L? It will be shared with many others. A donation of \$8 pays for a subscription plus the Pelican Bay Hunger Strikers pamphlet to be sent to a prisoner. Prisoners are eligible to continue their free subscriptions when they first get released, a time when the system tries to make them forget the struggle.*

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# The death of counter-revolutionary Soleimani

continued from p. 1

**Soleimani's, must not be allowed to overshadow the continuing struggles for freedom.<sup>1</sup>**

Trump's assassination of Soleimani undercuts the Iranian people's freedom struggle and may allow the Iranian regime to concentrate more of its forces against that struggle.

The Arab Spring, and its high point in the Syrian Revolution, offered a potential opening act of world revolution which must be comprehended philosophically, theoretically, and practically if the current stage of counter-revolution is to be opposed and defeated.

## A CAREER IN SYRIAN GENOCIDE

As one Free Syrian activist stated, "We know that Trump didn't do this for us. We like it anyway." This sentiment was echoed by people all over the region who have suffered through Soleimani's career of counter-revolution: first, as the architect of Iran's regional imperialism; and second, at the most recent crossroads of world history, as world imperialism's tool against the Syrian Revolution.

**At both stages, Soleimani represented the utmost filthiness and deceit. As many have pointed out, the road to Quds (Jerusalem) taken by his fascist "Quds Force" is littered with the bones of peaceful Iranian protesters, Syrian revolutionaries, Yemeni Arab Spring activists, the Palestinians of destroyed Yarmouk Camp—the center of Palestinian life and culture he helped to obliterate, which is now being resettled by his minions—and, most recently, the hundreds of Iraqi Shi'a protesters**

1. "Iranian workers, youth reach for new radical beginnings," Gerry Emmett, *N&L*, Jan.-Feb. 2018 and "The Arab Spring is ongoing," *N&L*, Nov.-Dec. 2019.

## VOICES FROM THE INSIDE OUT

continued from p. 1

50 of us working this minimum wage job using it as a stepping stone to something better. The objective of Urban Alchemy's park monitoring is to "bring a sense of peace and respect to America's most chaotic urban areas," including returning the park to its original function, where children can play and people can enjoy a bit of nature on a walk, etc.

**I clearly saw the tension between the local residents and the less fortunate who have no residence. A part of my responsibilities was to mediate that tension by not allowing anyone to stay in one of the stalls for a long time and to remind people that the restrooms are for public use. This is difficult for the homeless, who have no other place to go, no refuge, nowhere to clean up. I've had to negotiate with them as to what is a reasonable amount of time to use the facilities. Sometimes the bathrooms are used by people with mental illness or drug issues.**

This monitoring does not take much effort. I ask the person politely if they wouldn't mind taking their inappropriate activity somewhere else, out of the view of children playing in the park. What gets to me is the local residents, who often thank me for being there.

Each time I hear a "thank you," it creates an ambivalence in me. It feels good that I can improve someone's sense of being relatively safe. I feel I am doing the right thing. Yet because of my history, I understand the social ills visited on the homeless.

## STORIES TOLD IN THE PARK

The diversity of people in the park makes each encounter interesting. Everyone has a story to tell, and some of them inspire respect and admiration for the teller. For example, a homeless person dealing with severe health issues is not overwhelmed by her present situation. She is always in good spirits and willing to share whatever she has. What is constant in the stories is people's ability to develop various coping skills, other than just self-medicating.

**A very personable mechanic comes with containers to get water. He loves Rasta and sings with his recordings of it. Even though he got bumped from getting a place to stay, he is not bitter. I learned how people take these indignities in stride and keep their humanity.**

This year, while working I got to attend some happenings in the park: a man who had been critically injured had his life saved by a homeless person who called 911. He holds an annual barbecue and feeds the homeless for free. Every year the mother of Mario Woods, who was killed by San Francisco police, throws an event in remembrance of her son. The park as a public gathering space has multiple meanings in the community. It is also the place "to be" for early morning tranquility. As an open and compassionate listener, each encounter leaves me with a richer content of what it means to be human, to act as a human being toward the supposed "other."

shot down by his militias.

On each of the rare occasions that Soleimani's forces lobbed ineffectual missiles at Israel from Syria, he knew he was sacrificing dozens of his fascist followers to Israeli retaliation. Their continuing loyalty was paid for with the spoils of ethnic cleansing of Syrians and Palestinians.

Soleimani never made one serious gesture toward the alleged goal of "liberating" Jerusalem. He left that job to the organizers of Holocaust-denying



Iranian demonstrators rally in Tehran in front of the Meli Bank protesting the dire economic situation on June 24, 2018. Their protests continue.

conferences in Tehran attended by the dregs of the world's rabid Rightists and foolish "Leftists."

Genocide, in theory and practice, was the essence of Soleimani's career.

## THE LIE OF 'HE FOUGHT ISIS'

Soleimani found himself in the unexpected employ of the U.S. when the crimes of U.S. and Iranian imperialism in Iraq had inadvertently given birth to the monster ISIS. ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi was another consequential fascist who attempted to snuff out the idea of freedom embodied in the Arab

## Free Sitawa Jamaa

In early November 2019, Sitawa Nantambu Jamaa, one of the four main representatives in the historic 2011-13 hunger strikes initiated in Pelican Bay prison's Security Housing Unit (SHU), suffered a stroke. Just the week before, we were privileged to hear him speak via phone on the ongoing Prison Human Rights Movement (PHRM). The group was called together to begin a Free Sitawa campaign.

**Sitawa spent over 30 years in the infamous torture of the Pelican Bay perpetual solitary confinement before the historic hunger strikes ended indeterminate solitary confinement in California. Since then he has been a tireless advocate and thinker in PHRM. Sitawa projected the core of the PHRM victory and the path forward for the general prison population.**

The human perspective encapsulated in the PHRM's "Agreement to End Hostilities" (AEH) has, wrote Sitawa, "changed the face of race relations without any help from CDCr." (The small "r" shows prisoners' refusal to acknowledge "rehabilitation" in the official California Department of Corrections name.) Sitawa saw those who signed on to the AEH as beacons who "must take a protracted internal and external retrospective of our present-day prisons' concrete conditions to forge our PHRM onward to the next stage of development, thereby exposing CDCr's racial discrimination and racial animus tactics against our prisoner class."

## STRIKE INSPIRED NEW MOVEMENTS

The human perspective of the successful California prison hunger strikes, initiated by the Pelican Bay SHU prisoners, inspired a new movement among prisoners, prisoners' families, prison and human-rights activists globally.

**Over several decades CDCr and their guards fomented racial animosity, sowing discord between prisoners with a policy of "snitching" to implicate others. AEH continues to shock to its foundation the prevailing CDCr and guard prison culture by taking back prisoners' ability to define who they are and how they choose to relate to others—prisoners, guards and the outside—according to their own sense of what it means to be human.**

Sitawa wanted a campaign to free him to illuminate the many obstacles to prisoner activism. All of the leaders of the hunger strikes have been before the Parole Board since their release from solitary and all of them have been denied parole, mostly based on "confidential information" (unverified snitching) used by CDCr to sow discord among prisoners. We are hoping for Sitawa's speedy recovery and to have his voice again as a beacon to prisoners and humans everywhere aiming to create their own relations to overcome the barriers to their full development under prevailing conditions of life.

—Bay Area Marxist-Humanists

Spring revolutions.

Both Soleimani and Baghdadi traced their origins to the immense brutality of the Iran-Iraq war, Soleimani through his own service and Baghdadi through family members' service in Saddam Hussein's security forces and the Iraqi military, members of which formed the core of ISIS' leadership. Both ended up perversely joining extreme, fascist violence to the reactionary religious ideas that pervaded bourgeois society in its world crisis.<sup>2</sup>

**Soleimani's replacement, Esmail Ghaani, parrots and defends the same fascist views—views that have been utterly discredited among most Iranians. One thing the death of Soleimani—and the redundancy of Iranian regional imperialism, now that it has served its genocidal, counter-revolutionary role—represents is the final descent of the "Islamic Republic of Iran" ideology into history's underworld. There it will live on as an anti-human idea alongside Nazism, Stalinism, Gaddafism, and the Confederacy, to be dredged up by counter-revolutionaries—like a nightmare upon the brain of the living, as Karl Marx put it. Americans saw exactly this with Trump's use of the Alt-Right in the 2016 presidential election.**

The designation of Soleimani's Quds Force as a terrorist organization by the U.S.

last April was essentially a memo to an employee to fall in line or face termination. But like many self-inflated and overly ambitious henchmen, Soleimani had forgotten who he worked for. Trump and Soleimani found themselves in opposition but they are merely opposite sides of the same coin, not absolute opposites.

**They are both manifestations of the changed world. Challenged by crises and revolutions, above all the Arab Spring, this crumbling system has turned increasingly to counter-revolution, reviving fascism, throwing up a series of militaristic nationalists like Trump, and doubling down on repression and the march to war.**

Trump shocked a world that has become used to his self-indulgence, his ignorance, and his guarantee that those who do terrible wrongs—himself included—will not be punished. He makes no effort to oppose the ongoing genocide in Syria's Idlib, for example, where Russian and Assad regime warplanes massacre tens of Free Syrian civilians every week. But to Trump that is a virtue, not an aberration, as the pardon of war criminal Eddie Gallagher shows.

**The truth is that both Baghdadi and Soleimani fought the same reactionary battle against the revolutionary forces in the Middle East and the world. That they both died by the reactionary hand of U.S. President Trump, the ultimate beneficiary of their work, indicates that the world had changed around them as they blinded themselves with the bloodlust and nihilism that christened a new stage of counter-revolution. This changed world has yet to be comprehended by what remains of the Left.<sup>3</sup>**

If imperialist war and counter-revolution are to be defeated, this philosophic comprehension must come. If not, the reactionary world war that has been fought *in situ* against the Syrian Revolution shows all humanity's future.

—Gerry Emmett

for The Resident Editorial Board, January 6, 2020

2. "Religion in General and Jerusalem in Particular in This State-Capitalist Age," Raya Dunayevskaya, *Crossroads of History* (News and Letters Committees, 2013).

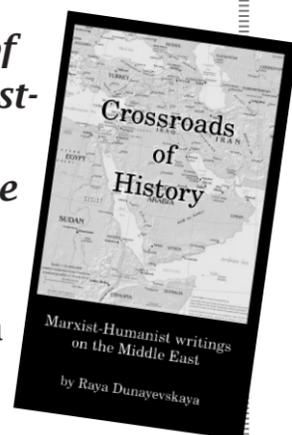
3. "The Changed World," by Raya Dunayevskaya, *Crossroads of History*, and "Trump doctrine for a changed world," Gerry Emmett, *N&L*, Nov.-Dec. 2019.

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# The fall of Morales; whither Bolivia?

New presidential elections in Bolivia are now scheduled for May. Evo Morales and his vice-president Garcia Linera are barred from participating. Their party, MAS, has yet to select its candidate. With an authoritarian Rightist government overseeing the process, it remains to be seen whether the election will be open and fair.

**The consolidation of power, the racism and authoritarianism of those in control need to be opposed. But if we concentrate only on the “facts” of October-November we will find ourselves in the “pseudo-concrete,” and not grasp the reality of Bolivia in the first two decades of the 21st Century.**

That reality is one of great social movement from below and, at the same time, grave contradictions imposed by the Morales/Garcia Linera leadership in their attitude to Indigenous opposition from below and their imposition of a statist ideology from above. To simply focus on a coup, undertaken by the military and perhaps supported by the U.S., when masses were questioning the election results, misses a crucial question: How did we arrive at this moment?

## THE MORALES YEARS—ADVANCES AND CONTRADICTIONS

The years of the Morales-Garcia Linera administration meant important changes in Bolivia: an end to the open racism of previous Bolivian governments, the writing of a new Constitution, improvements in the lives of millions. However, these did not occur without serious contradictions, including:

**The writing of a new Constitution.** Social movements had been calling for a new constitution



Protesters in El Alto, Bolivia, Nov. 11, 2019, resisting the right-wing coup are attacked by police.

demanding direct participation in a Constituent Assembly. However Morales and MAS orchestrated the writing of the Constitution via Party-ism. This gave the neoliberal Right a critical voice and the opportunity to weaken the demand for a transformative Constituent Assembly.

## The TIPNIS (the Isiboro-Secure Indigenous Territory and National Park) conflict.

*Agencia de Noticias Redacción*

The struggle over a proposed road to be built through the Amazonian region revealed two fundamental characteristics of the Morales-Garcia Linera administration: 1) Its willingness to use violence against social protest movements, and to manipulate “consultas” (consultation with the Indigenous who will be affected by the Park) as well as take over organizations to impose its will. 2) Developmentalism and State-ism as the economic foundation of those in charge.

Developmentalism under the direction of a strong state became the defining mark of the Morales-Garcia Linera government: state-capitalism in partnership with neoliberalism. Its ideological base had been provided by the statist Marxism put forth by Garcia Linera—“Andean-Amazonian capitalism” with a strong state presence.

## POWER AND CREATIVITY OF THE MASSES

We need to remember the creative mobilizations of the Bolivian masses—2000-2005—that opened the door for the Morales election in 2006: the Water War in Cochabamba, 2000; the vast mobilizations of the Aymara in the altiplano in 2000, 2001 and 2003; the actions of the coca growers in Chapare, 2001-2003; the First Gas War of 2003; the powerful protests of Aymara in El Alto; and the Second Gas War of 2005. The campaign and election of Morales fundamentally changed the trajectory of this profoundly revolutionary half decade into one of electoral politics and manipulation rather than mass participation from below.

**In the October 2019 election a substantial portion of the population rejected Morales’ attempt to extend his electoral rule for a fourth term. Though they supported him in the past, many have criticized his administration. Among them are significant groups of women—such as the Women’s Parliament which took place during and after the most recent events. They pointed to the machismo and the vanguardism of the Morales administration.**

These masses strongly oppose the reimposition of an authoritarian state. An authentic emancipatory future still belongs in their hands. The Bolivian thinker, feminist and activist Silvia Rivera Cusucanqui captured the thoughts of millions of indigenous Bolivians: *This society has not renounced its right, its memory, its autonomy, and the fact that the Indian is in each one of us. We will not give up or go back to the past.*

—Eugene Walker

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# QUEERNOTES

by Elise

LGBTQ+ rights activist Jeudy Charlot, president of Haiti Queer rights group Kouraj, was found dead in his home in Port-au-Prince. The cause of death is still unknown, but suspicion is high because he received threats of violence over many years, with an uptick near the time of his death. Even though same-sex sexual activity was legalized in Haiti in 2013, LGBTQ+ people still encounter much oppression, harassment and violence. Jessica Stern of Out-Right Action International demanded an efficient, transparent and thorough investigation into Charlot’s death.

\*\*\*

Students and a lecturer at Turkey’s Middle East Tech University are on trial for participating in the annual Pride Parade in 2019. Their supporters were banned from giving a statement of support outside the courthouse where the trial was taking place. The parade in Ankara was banned for the eighth consecutive year. Among the supporters were several officials of European countries. Some of the defendants could be imprisoned for up to three years if found guilty. There is divided support for LGBT people. They face public hostility even though homosexuality has never been illegal in Turkey, and Trans people have been able to change their gender legally since 1988. The case is continued until March.

\*\*\*

Transgender people and their supporters in India protested in the streets against the Transgender Persons (Protections of Rights) 2019 bill. It requires Trans people to apply to the district magistrate for a certificate of identity as a third gender (an identity India’s Supreme Court recognized in 2014), get a screening of a committee’s approval to change their gender, and then provide proof of gender-affirming surgery. Instead, Trans people demand self-identification. Under the bill, punishment for the sexual abuse of a Trans woman would be a prison term of only six months to two years, and there would be no protections in the work place or in public places. The bill speedily passed the lower house, but for now is tabled in Parliament’s upper house.

\*\*\*

Spectrosynthesis II-Exposure of Tolerance, on display at Bangkok’s Art and Culture Centre until March 1, is the largest-ever art exhibit about Southeast Asian LGBTQ+ people. The sponsor, Sunpride Foundation, seeks to raise awareness of the creativity and contributions of Asian LGBTQ people and to raise awareness about sex and sexuality.

# VOICES FROM THE INSIDE OUT

## Impeachment reveals flaws of democracy

by Robert Taliaferro

One of the fundamental aspects placed in the U.S. Constitution by the founding fathers was the power to remove any President who acts as if he—or she—is above the law. The power conferred on Congress to impeach and remove the President for cause is an unquestionably wise provision in the case of the executive branch overstepping or departing from the powers afforded by the Constitution.

Such acts could establish precedents which may instigate more dangerous infractions of the law which—without such punitive provisions—would be tolerated due to such acts becoming the status quo, until they took on a form of absolutism that would be fatal to free institutions, fatal to a government of law, and fatal to democracy.

## A TELLING REACTION TO IMPEACHMENT

It was interesting to watch the impeachment of Donald J. Trump, not so much in listening to the proceedings and the evidence presented during the impeachment process, but in watching Trump and his supporters treat such a solemn and nationally staining procedure with the disdain and socially discordant attitude that one might expect to find in five-year-old children.

**The unfortunate aspect of a president like Trump, who tests his boundaries by overstepping the line of absolute safety and conscientious conviction, is that eventually his actions become a departure from strict constitutional or legal limitations which is demanded by the public welfare of the country as a whole, not just Trump’s partisan constituents.**

During Trump’s impeachment process, a lot of historical references were made regarding the impeachments of Andrew Johnson in the 19th century and William Jefferson Clinton in the 20th. During Johnson’s impeachment, one of the articles of impeachment noted that he corruptly interfered in elections, amongst other charges. If one studied Johnson’s impeachment and compared his actions to Trump’s, one might be amazed at the similarities.

The most aggravating concept about the impeachment of Trump was the constant reminders by the Republicans that the Democrats in the House of Representatives were trying to usurp the 60 million Americans who voted for him. If it were not for the uniquely archaic manner in which U.S. Presidents are elected, that argument might actually hold water.

## U.S. ANTI-DEMOCRATIC VOTING SYSTEM

What is sparsely addressed—if mentioned at all—is that this country is the only democracy on the planet whose chief executive is not elected by the majority of the people, but rather by an antiquated system of numerical alchemy that was designed for an 18th century fledgling experiment in democracy; a process which has not grown with the country, and the national, cultural and social imperatives that need to be considered and expounded upon within a modern democratic system.

**One of the sad things about the U.S. style of democracy is that as much as it purportedly changes, it remains the same. As arrogant, xenophobic, and misogynistic as Trump is, he is only a symptom of a much larger problem, and that involves how little control the country’s citizens have over their elected officials in the executive and legislative branch, and how that lack of control expands to the judicial branch.**

The solution for a large majority of the problems that exist in the three branches of the U.S. government is simple: Constitutional amendments to abolish the Electoral College; the imposition of term limits in both houses of Congress; and, the imposition of mandatory term limits for the federal judiciary rather than lifetime appointments at all levels.

Until that happens, we will be susceptible to narcissistic and elitist governance at all levels, defined not by democratic concepts, but by the continued affirmation of many of the founding fathers who felt strongly that the people were not capable of governing themselves.

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# Australia's megafires lay bare capitalism's death march

continued from p. 1

And how will society adapt to the changes already underway? It is not too late, as long as we can transform the foundations of society—in other words, social revolution.

## MORRISON'S HEAD IN BURNING SAND

The Australian political establishment is working hard to give the worst answer to both questions. Prime Minister Scott Morrison, famous for brandishing a lump of coal in parliament, quietly left for vacation, only to return when photos of him relaxing in Hawaii enraged the public. Upon returning, he spouted more lies minimizing climate change, since Australia has “always had bushfires.” His deputy prime minister called anyone citing climate change “inner-city raving lunatics.”

The fact remains that 2019 was Australia's hottest year on record—and its driest. If humanity had not been assaulted with climate denial propaganda for decades, everyone would recognize climate change at work. However, Morrison and his Liberal Party are not the only ones spreading those lies. Rupert Murdoch's media empire—parroted by an army of twitterbots<sup>2</sup>—is busy shouting that the fires are due to arson, or Greens, or anything but climate change. Climate denial revealed itself as an extremism whose longstanding normalization eased the way for other far-right ideology to be normalized.

**In the midst of the catastrophic fires, Morrison and Murdoch have focused less on protecting lives and preventing fires, or even paying the firefighters, than on protecting the privileges and subsidies granted to the coal and natural gas industries. Australia is the world's biggest exporter of coal and second in liquid natural gas. In the usual lying language of capitalists, they talk about the jobs that they are supposedly protecting, but it's about profits and power, not jobs. Morrison is pushing full steam ahead the opening of Adani's Carmichael coal mine, one of the largest in the world, to export coal to India with subsidies from both countries' governments. At the same time, his government has been pushing laws to criminalize climate protests.**

That is why Morrison had to beat a hasty retreat from furious residents in some of the fire-ravaged towns he tried to visit. One viral clip showed him grabbing the hand of a woman in Cobargo who refused to shake hands, then being protected by a burly aide when the woman tried to demand funding for firefighters.

## 'REAL ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE'

On Jan. 10, thousands came out in nine cities to protest “because we're outraged about our government's criminal negligence about the bushfire crisis, exacerbated by climate change. We are protesting to give a voice to the tens of thousands of people who want real action on climate change and real funding for relief services.” Their main demands were funding for firefighters, immediate rapid transition away from fossil fuels, a just transition for workers in fossil fuel industries, and justice for Indigenous communities, with land and water sovereignty.

**Morrison and his government are not only aggravating Australia's suffering. They banded together with the worst climate criminals, from Donald Trump to the oil companies, at the UN's COP25 (Conference of Parties to the climate convention) in Madrid last December. They joined hands with China, India, Saudi Arabia, Brazil and Russia to block any progress.**

That obstructionism stood in sharp contrast to the passion and urgency of the youth climate strikes that have spread across the globe in the past year and a half, as well as the alarm bells rung by hundreds of climate scientists and the immediate suffering wrought by fires, hurricanes, floods and drought with mounting frequency.

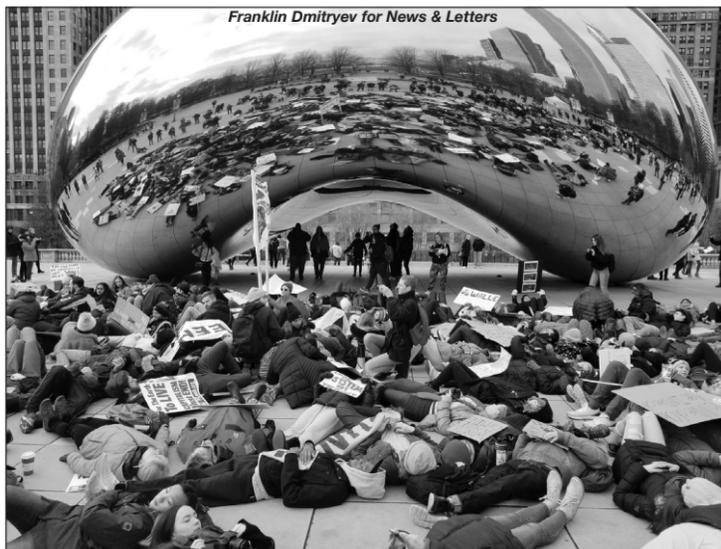
**Despite withdrawing the U.S. from the Paris Agreement, Trump still used its framework to keep major polluters from being held liable for damages to poor countries and to push for ineffective and inequitable rules for trading emissions permits and offsets.**

Four years ago, the Paris Agreement was touted despite its total inadequacy, because supposedly the nations of the world would ramp up their climate action commitments by 2020. Leading up to COP25, scientists released a slew of reports in the vain hope of pushing governments to agree on real action. But the U.S. and its fossil-fueled allies stopped COP25 from even calling for countries to make such com-

mitments, although the final text admits the gap between stated targets and what is urgently needed.

## YOUTH, INDIGENOUS FIGHT BACK FOR THEIR LIVES

Having fought this obstructionism from the beginning of their school strikes, the youth organized the third Global Climate Strike for Dec. 6 to coincide with COP25. Strike actions took place in numerous cities in almost all countries. Half a million marched in Madrid, where COP25 was underway. Protesters in Washington D.C. blockaded streets and disrupted traffic for seven hours. Many actions targeted banks such as Chase that are the biggest financial backers



Downtown Chicago Climate Strike die-in at Chicago's Cloud Gate (the Bean) Dec. 6, 2019.

of fossil fuel projects.

**On Dec. 9, the day after two more forest-protecting Indigenous leaders were murdered in the Amazon, Minga Indigena, the Indigenous peoples' alternative to COP25, joined with Extinction Rebellion to block the road to the summit. Indigenous peoples only get token representation at the UN's process, despite the fact that Indigenous-controlled territories maintain the most biodiversity and the greatest resistance to climate-fouling habitat destruction. Minga's own summit worked out a set of proposals<sup>3</sup> they later delivered to COP25. They warned:**

“The patriarchal, capitalist and colonialist system has brought us into this climate crisis. We see many representatives of states considering only mercantile and financial profit, without taking into account the importance of life. For this reason we understand that they are accomplices of all this destruction.”

## CLIMATE STRIKERS TAKE CHARGE

Their nine recommendations ranged from ending the persecution of Indigenous leaders for protecting their territory to rejecting the commodification of nature and neocolonialist programs that pretend to reduce deforestation.

**Inside COP25 itself, 300 youth strikers, working with Indigenous and other groups, took over the main plenary hall on Dec. 11 to demand that richer countries “step up and pay up” for the damage caused by spiraling climate disasters. Rather than playing around with emissions markets, they demanded real immediate limits on extraction and consumption of fossil fuels. “The oceans are rising and so are we!” they chanted. “We are unstoppable, another world is possible!”**

The rising seas exacerbated the disaster in Jakarta, Indonesia, which experienced its heaviest rainfall in 24 hours on record Jan. 1. The flooding and landslides killed 67 people. More monsoon downpours are expected. Most vulnerable are poor neighborhoods, many of which have been polluted by wastewater and risk disease outbreaks, much as Hurricane Harvey spread toxic industrial waste in and around Houston in 2017. While the ocean is rising, North Jakarta has sunk eight feet in ten years, as the city's groundwater is used up. Jakarta's metropolitan area is the world's second most populous, but the habitability of substantial areas is threatened, and the government plans to move the capital—but not most of the people—to another island.

**While most disasters do not receive the media attention given to Australia's fires, the truth is that wildfires are on the rise from the Amazon to Indonesia, from California to the Congo rainforest, from Russia to Greece. Recent years have also seen climate-fueled record-breaking floods, droughts and deadly heat waves in numerous countries, and unprecedented local flooding from tropical cyclones (hurricanes). Some island nations like Tuvalu and the Maldives may disappear under**

rising seas in a few decades.

In Mozambique, devastated by two cyclones last year, more than 2.5 million people still face food shortages. Puerto Rico was more vulnerable to its January earthquakes because of the destruction from Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, and because of malign neglect by the racist Trump administration and the corrupt administration of former Gov. Ricardo Rosselló. Climate change is one factor forcing waves of refugees around the world to leave their homes, including people leaving farm work in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala and seeking work in the U.S. and Mexico.

The disaster is global. We are not, as some say, sleepwalking into climate change. No, very powerful people are forcing humanity into a death march toward climate catastrophe.

## CLIMATE POLLUTERS DOUBLE DOWN

Major climate polluters, both corporations and nations, are rushing to extract every last bit of fossil fuel and turn forests and peatlands into moneymaking plantations and pastures—with full knowledge that they are destroying the future of generations now living and yet to be born. Each one is on the path to spewing more and more, not less, greenhouse gas emissions, as if there is no tomorrow. And they continue to sow doubt and sabotage any restrictions.

**The U.S.** keeps pushing the fracking boom that made it the biggest producer of oil and natural gas under the administration of Barack Obama—who still brags about it. That has accelerated under Donald Trump.

**China** points to its increased production of renewable energy but is building 148 gigawatts of new coal-fired plants—as much as the capacity of the entire European Union.

**Canada** keeps trying to open the floodgates for its tar sands mines and pipelines to the world market, and is considering approval of its largest ever open-pit tar sands mine.

**Brazil's** far-right President Jair Bolsonaro gave the green light to genocide and burning the Amazon rainforest, resulting in a spike in both deforestation and murders of Indigenous people and environmental defenders.

**Norway**, at the same time it touts plans to lower domestic carbon emissions, plans more quietly to ramp up its oil production by 40% over the next four years.

**Ten oil companies** aim to invest \$9 billion to pump 5.7 billion barrels of oil and gas from the North Sea, far more than the UK's carbon budget allows.

## YOUTH FIGHT INACTION OF THE POWERS THAT BE

Emissions from fossil fuels hit a record high last year. At the same time, scientific reports about our prospects keep getting more dire.

Top denialists in power like Scott Morrison, Vladimir Putin and Donald Trump act as if they think the catastrophic consequences of climate change will fall only on the masses, and they will be able to escape it, even profit from it. They may be right, at first, but eventually the crumbling of society will catch up with those who live long enough. That truth cannot penetrate their delusions precisely because they are acting as personifications of capital. As Karl Marx pointed out, “After me the flood!” is the capitalist watchword.

**No wonder so many young people are furious, desperate, anxious, frustrated! No wonder they take to the streets and denounce the inaction and lying rhetoric of governments! No wonder they want swift, radical action now!**

The rush to catastrophe is a worldwide phenomenon and all the capitalist parties are complicit. However, the fanatical scorched-earth onslaught of reactionaries like Trump and Bolsonaro has raised such alarm that the climate movement is full of talk of the need to vote them out. They are indeed paragons of climate chaos, but the electoral alternatives promise only a slower path to destruction. We cannot allow our thought to be confined to this system's limits at a time when the only practical approach is a revolutionary one. The whole system the youth are marching against is fighting them to the death. It's time to return the favor.

**NEWS & LETTERS**

**VOL. 65/NO. 1 January-February 2020**

News & Letters (ISSN 0028-8969) is published bi-monthly. Subscriptions are \$5 a year (bulk order of 5 or more copies, 25c each) from News & Letters, 228 S. Wabash, #230, Chicago, IL 60604. Phone 312-431-8242. Fax 312-431-8252. Periodical postage paid at Chicago, IL. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to News & Letters, 228 S. Wabash, #230, Chicago, IL 60604. Articles may be reprinted verbatim if credited to "News & Letters." **Raya Dunayevskaya**, Chairwoman, National Editorial Board (1955-1987). **Charles Denby**, Editor (1955-1983).

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News & Letters is printed in a union shop. News & Letters is indexed by Alternative Press Index.

2. See “These Climate Science Deniers are Spreading Misinformation about the Australian Bushfires,” *DeSmog*, Jan. 9, 2020.

3. See <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/10FEca7UBnWk0r1RORrL26B3hp7k5mB-u>.

# YOUTH IN ACTION

by Buddy Bell

Amidst what the Anti-Defamation League has documented as an 84% rise in white supremacist incidents on college campuses since 2016, the student body at Syracuse University (SU), led by Black students, rose up against the administration's inaction. Racist graffiti on a freshman dormitory's bulletin board and in a bathroom prompted students to start a sit-in inside the student center on Nov. 13. They demanded the university president punish any students found to be involved. A list of 19 demands included: "different punishments for different levels of involvement, including expulsion."

**During the sit-in, more incidents occurred: A swastika was drawn in the snow, anti-Chinese graffiti were found at a dormitory, a Black woman walking home was shouted at with a racial slur as she passed the Alpha Chi Rho frat house, and several students in the library received the New Zealand mosque shooter's white supremacist manifesto on their phones via a sharing app. SU student Jabrill Williams told Citrus TV: "When these things happen... racial slurs are being written on walls, and people getting [mad] at people at parties and yelling racial slurs at them...it really makes us feel like we don't belong."**

The sit-in lasted until Nov. 20, when the university president at a public forum refused to sign on to all of the demands. Two hours later, after 100 students marched through campus and back to the campus center, he did agree to sign. A month later, the #NotAgainSU student organization that grew out of the protests criticized SU for posting reports of hate-related incidents on a website instead of emailing the student body as they had agreed.

Pro-Iran militias have violently attacked daily demonstrations in the southern Iraqi city of Nasiriya on several occasions. On Nov. 28 gunfire killed 100 people and injured 350, the majority between 15 and 25 years old. For several months protesters have decried public corruption as the region's oil wealth is pilfered by public officials who don't tackle unemployment and mass poverty. Internet access has been severely curtailed since October. Although the Nov. 28 massacre led to the Iraqi Prime Minister's resignation, militias attacked the protesters again on Jan. 7 and brought torches to burn a protest camp. A 22-year-old girl told the Italian newspaper *Il Manifesto*: "If you go out into the streets to protest, you're risking your life. But it's better to die than to live like this."

The U.S. Youth Climate Strike, an organization which makes no candidate endorsements, will hold a climate strike protest on every Friday preceding a primary election or caucus. The organization will also train interested youth in how to station themselves outside of polling places on Election Day. Minnesota high school junior Ava Corey-Gruenes said in an interview with *TeenVogue*: "We're urging voters to make climate justice their first priority."

## Special Offer for Black History Month

**American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard**  
by Raya Dunayevskaya

Appendix contains four writings by Charles Denby, including "Black Caucuses in the Unions"

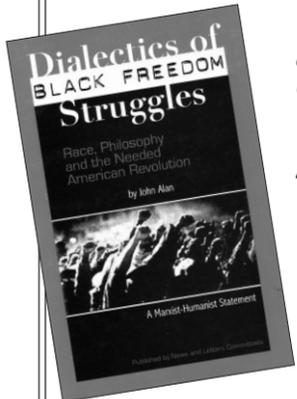
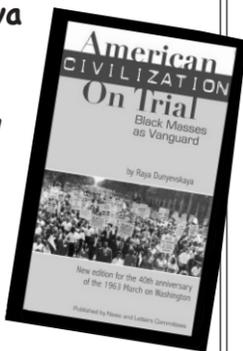
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—Gloria I. Joseph

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# Canada after the 2019 election

Oct. 21, 2019, was Federal Election Day in Canada. As expected, Justin Trudeau is again Prime Minister, but is holding onto power with only a minority government. This should be better for low- and middle-income people and for workers, because the New Democratic Party/Nouveau Parti Démocratique (NDP) and the Bloc Québécois hold the balance of power, with a slight boost from the Green Party, even though the Conservatives won 121 seats, up 22 from the last government.

**Trudeau's Liberal Party tends to lean to the Right when in the majority, but we get more legislation towards the Left when they govern in a minority.**

These are hard times economically for most Canadians, and that is a major concern. In Québec, the two surprises are that the leftist Québec Solidaire (QS) party has tripled its number of seats, which can be seen as a small move to the Left, and the Bloc Québécois (BQ) has also tripled its number.

The BQ is a nationalist party, but not independentist, that may help to protect Québec's social programs and also the French language. Trudeau is openly hostile to French-language rights.

### FRAGILE MINORITY RULE

Without the two metropolitan areas of Toronto and Montréal, Trudeau and the Liberals would be out of power. The Conservatives swept the West except for one riding (federal district) in Edmonton,

## Student DACA march



Protesters at a DACA rally in San Francisco on Sept. 5, 2017.

**Los Angeles**—On Nov. 12, a thousand DACA students, known as Dreamers, and their supporters walked out of class and marched to the Roybal Federal Building downtown. We were protesting Trump's repeal of DACA (Delayed Action Childhood Arrival program), which allowed undocumented migrants brought to this country as children the human right to work, to go to school and to live free of deportation.

At the time of the protest, a challenge to Trump's abolition of DACA was being heard at the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of *Department of Homeland Security vs. Regents of the University of California*. Janet Napolitano, who as Homeland Security Secretary authored DACA in 2012 under President Obama's executive order, now heads the University of California. Chief Justice John Roberts will likely be the deciding vote on whether the DACA program will continue or will be repealed.

### MULTI-RACIAL MARCH

Hundreds of Mexican-American students from Garfield High School in East Los Angeles walked out of school and marched, stopping in Little Tokyo for a rally before continuing to the federal building. They were met by multi-racial students from the San Pedro Area, Black students from South Central and students from other parts of the city, as well as immigrant rights activists and media.

Signs read "Defend DACA!" "Our dreams are not illegal," "Education not deportation," "Home is here," "If fleeing U.S. funded wars, terror, intolerance, and fear is illegal, let's fix it," and "Roberts Court, listen to us: we are the people who you work for."

### RIPPING APART COMMUNITIES

Speakers included Samantha, a 16-year-old student activist who helped organize the walkout. Her message to the justices: "Take into account that DACA recipients are welded into their communities." Another young woman stated: "I was five years old when I arrived. I have not been to Mexico in 20 years. My mom and dad are legally here. I am studying to become a lawyer."

After an hour and a half, the students resumed their march through the civic center and past the financial district for several miles to MacArthur Park, in a Central American immigrant community. They were met by Central American migrants and supporters for another rally.

—Basho

Alberta, and one in northern Manitoba. British Columbia (BC) tended toward the Conservatives and also had an equal number of Liberal and NDP seats, with two Green Party victories.

In the larger provinces the provincial governments are solidly Conservative except for BC which is NDP, and Québec, which is governed by the Coalition Avenir Québec (les "Coalisés") who are nationalists but not independentists. This represents a rejection of the emphasis of provincial Liberals on "cultural" issues (in the ethnic sense, not great art and literature). Their attempt to reduce all issues to "multiculturalism," which allowed little discussion of social class, economics, and actual human rights, has been a failure. "Multiculturalism" here is in opposition to the actual biculturalism of Canada, much as "All Lives Matter" in the U.S. is an attempt to undermine the "Black Lives Matter" movement.

### CLASS ISSUES TO THE FORE

Issues of class and economic well-being are back on the front burner. People want healthcare, education, gender equality, a safe environment, and housing. There is a particular Canadian value called "social housing/*logement social*," which sets the rent payments of low-income people at 20-25% of their income.

**Not only is this insurance against homelessness, but there isn't the same "retail apocalypse" in Canada that is happening in the U.S. because people have more disposable income.**

There are tensions over the fact that the federal government has most of the money, and provinces and municipalities often have a lot of difficulty financing such projects, but that may be alleviated with the NDP and BQ having more influence.

Canada is changing, and there is a sense that people are getting their feet back on solid ground and can work together for better living conditions and a greater sense of social equality. These are just breathing spaces, and the real goal is to get out from under the yoke of capitalism!

—D. Chêneville and Ti-Ouistiti

## Rebellion in Hong Kong spreads

continued from p. 1

limited constituencies. But in November 2019 elections, the pro-Beijing party lost control of 17 of the 18 District Councils. Candidates sympathetic to the Occupy movement won more than 80% of the positions. Repression has firmed up opposition to the government under Carrie Lam, and has even led to calls for formal independence from China.

### SOLIDARITY WITH UYGHURS

Then, on Dec. 22, the Occupy Movement marched in solidarity with Uyghurs who are under concentration camp conditions in "autonomous" Xinjiang. Officials there have waged campaigns even against Uyghurs not locked up in camps for displaying or hiding Muslim religious symbols or elements of their culture. A campaign for Han (ethnic Chinese) Party cadres to rape Uyghur women whose husbands are locked up brings back the ugly reality of Serbs using rape of Bosnian women as an act of war and of genocide in the 1990s.

**The Hong Kong revolt has inspired solidarity around the world, even at great risk in the neighboring province of Guangdong. Activists in Taiwan, also under threat from China's claims and its armed presence in the South China Sea, expressed their solidarity with the slogan "TAIWAN WITH HONG KONG."**

The timing of China's ruler Xi Jinping's New Year's Day invitation to Taiwan to accept reunification with China—under the same "one country, two systems" autonomy as Hong Kong since it was freed from British colonialism in 1997—made it a naked threat. The people of Taiwan have seen how bloody the attacks on democracy marchers have been under that kind of "autonomy." Police have continued to use tear gas, "non-lethal" projectiles and live ammo against the millions of demonstrators and have arrested over 7,000, while criminal gangs have been employed for wholesale beatings, all under the shadow of China's army massed just across the border.

### ELECTION VOTE DEFEATS FAKE NEWS

Voters in Taiwan's elections on Jan. 11 weathered a flood of fake news from China-controlled media outlets and military threats from China, including a naval show of strength in the Taiwan Strait. They still overwhelmingly re-elected President Tsai Ing-wen 57% to 38% over the candidate of the KMT, which long opposed the Communists, but is now backed by China.

Maintaining independence is dangerous, as China has laid claim to any territory that ever sent a mission of tribute to the Emperor, including Tibet and Xinjiang. But the population of Taiwan have solidarized with the opposition to the imperial ambitions of China's state-capitalist regime.

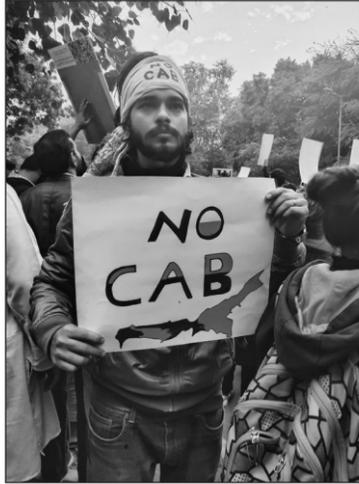
# WORLD VIEW

## Mass protest challenges India's Modi

by Gerry Emmet

The largest protests in decades rocked India following the December introduction of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party government. For the first time, this Act introduces religious qualifications for immigrants to become citizens, and it specifically excludes Muslims. Dozens have died in protests of this bigoted new law.

The movement exploded after New Delhi police brutalized protesting students at Jamia Millia University. The protests only grew larger, spread to other campuses, and were joined by Muslims and Hindus, women, secular



Dec. 14 anti-CAA protest in New Delhi.

### Reactionary Brexit

The Dec. 12 general elections in Britain were a victory for world reaction. They were seen as a referendum on the racist 2016 vote to leave the European Union. Between Boris Johnson's pro-Leave Conservative Party and the lukewarm and ambiguous pro-Remain position of Jeremy Corbyn's Labour Party, Labour was crushed.

With 365 parliamentary seats won by the Conservatives to 203 for Labour, it was Labour's worst loss since 1935. The devastation included the collapse of Labour's "red wall" of seats in the working-class North of England, where Conservatives won seats that they hadn't held in a century.

As the 2016 vote, driven by racism and bigotry, fueled world reaction, so will its ratification now.

### CAPITALISM REARRANGES HUMAN LIFE

In essence, Corbyn's Labour presented its "Left" manifesto—an abstraction in the absence of a revolutionary movement—as an appeal to the identity of those who have historically voted Labour. On the other hand, the "Brexit" project has been an attempt to break down that historic identity and the historic divides between Left and Right, worker and boss, Conservative and Labour, in the interests of capital.

**It is a conscious attempt. Arron Banks, one of those businessmen who funded the Brexit campaign, said: "Our future lies in a different kind of politics, neither left nor right but radical." This is the voice of capital itself speaking, and it is no accident that Banks is close to Trump and the ideologist of Trumpism, Stephen Bannon.**

If there is one thing on this earth that is not abstract, it is the compulsion of capital to rearrange human life in its own image. This compulsion is no respecter of parties or borders. Thus, across the English Channel, French President Emmanuel Macron is waging a brutal campaign to "discipline" unions and pensioners which will ultimately do as much to destroy the EU as has Brexit.

activists, and others who recognize the existential threat represented by the BJP's programmatic negation of the real India of history.

**As historian Ramachandra Guha wrote, "One striking aspect of all the popular protests has been that people of all faiths have participated. In cities like Kolkata and Bengaluru, Mumbai and Delhi, tens of thousands of Indians who are not themselves Muslims have recognized the new Act for what it really is—a body blow to the founding ideas of the Republic" (The Hindustan Times, Jan. 12).**

Guha was forced from his university teaching position in 2018 after publishing his biography of Mohandas Gandhi; he was arrested in the recent protests for carrying a picture of B.R. Ambedkar, author of the Indian Constitution.

### THE THREAT OF MODI'S HIGH TECH

It is absolutely true that the CAA reflects the efforts of Modi's Hindutva BJP to rewrite India's multicultural history. It is equally true that it, along with the National Register of Citizens, points toward a chilling future born of Modi's high-tech politics. The BJP has also introduced legislation designed to "intercept, monitor and decrypt any information generated, transmitted, received or stored in any computer." Numerous federal agencies and the New Delhi police have been given power to carry this surveillance out.

India has also copied China's facial recognition system. New Delhi police have pioneered its use, and it has been introduced in the states of Punjab and Andhra Pradesh. The aim is to create a centralized national database that could work with the growing network of surveillance cameras. A joint Chinese-

Indian firm is producing hundreds of thousands of these cameras in a new factory in Mumbai.

This is being done under the guise of "law and order." There are no planned safeguards. In the bigoted context of Hindutva, the threat of what Black scholar Simone Browne calls racialized surveillance becomes very real—in fact, it appears as a logical outgrowth of bourgeois society itself, prefigured in the branding of runaway slaves.

### NO NEW TRUST IN OLD SWINDLERS

As the CAA went into effect in early January, Modi made a point of traveling to the state of West Bengal, which has seen large protests. He met in Kolkata with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, allegedly to discuss tourism. Banerjee, who leads her own party, has opposed the CAA and joined with protesters, but has her own ambitions.

**She has allied with the BJP in the past, and at times has been a vocal voice in denouncing "illegal immigrants," a term that was only introduced into Indian politics by the BJP in recent decades. As this is written, Banerjee is refusing to join other opposition parties in a meeting to discuss the BJP's attacks on universities. Modi will doubtless seek out other established, opportunistic politicians willing to co-opt the protests.**

The masses in the streets chanting "Azadi!" ("Freedom!") and "You divide, we multiply!" are not inclined, right now, to fall for such a halfway show of opposition. Modi and his Hindu nationalist program are facing their most serious challenge yet. Many see that this is a moment of opposition to the current worldwide stage of "populist" reaction.

## Revolution and genocide in Idlib, Syria

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powerful.

This resistance isn't based in illusion. As journalist Merna al-Hasan wrote, "Idlib's inhabitants have lost all hope that their lot will improve, not even a glimmer remains. No outside country wants to intervene on their behalf to end the bloodshed."

### THE PEOPLE CALL THE QUESTION

Syrian activist Dani al-Qappani has documented other Idlib residents' thoughts in an important article in *The New Arab* (Jan. 16, 2020). One student said, "No sane human can see the tears streaming down people's cheeks, the body parts all over the place, the children in camps, and stay silent for no reason. Humanity is dying."

Another resident said, "Either humanity will prevail, starting in this land, Syria, or it will be a black hole devouring everything that remains—and what will remain when there's no humanity left?"

**"Humanity" is the key word. In Idlib, in the now destroyed towns of Kafranbel and Maarat al-Numan, revolutionaries made a point of communicating and identifying with humanity and with all freedom struggles.**

This is exactly in accord with the young Karl Marx's point that social revolution, even if it only occurs in one area, seeks to unite itself with "the true community, the human community."

### SILENCE AND STATE POWER

Marx's philosophy of revolutionary humanism developed from that insight. Marx contrasted this

humanism to "the state and power." Thus we can see humanity's silence in the face of genocide in Idlib as a self-reduction to the current level of state-capitalist bureaucracy.

Like the Paris Commune, the Syrian Revolution has become a category of thought necessary for grasping and changing human reality. Let us also recall the enslaved human being, a few hundred years ago, who said "No!" Perhaps he or she grabbed hold of an overseer's whip and spit into his evil face. Did an immediate victory follow?

Yet without that act the human spirit would not be the infinitely worthy thing that it is.

### Putin after Putin?

The Jan. 15 resignation of Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev and the Russian Cabinet signaled President Vladimir Putin's plan to retain power after his final term in office ends in 2024.

Putin presented his plan in a televised speech. It includes a weakening of the presidency and, allegedly, a strengthening of the role of the parliament in choosing the prime minister and cabinet.

But Putin is actually laying the groundwork for his own continued hold on state power much as the strongman of neighboring Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, has done by resigning from the presidency he held for 28 years to appoint himself Chairman of the Security Council.

It will be a less formal version of Xi Jinping appointing himself China's president for life.

## NEWS AND LETTERS COMMITTEES

# Who We Are And What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists. It has always stood for the abolition of capitalism, both in its private property form as in the U.S., and in its state property form calling itself Communist, which appeared as the Russian Revolution was transformed into its opposite. That retrogression anticipated the next stage of development—the age of state-capitalism. We stand for a society of new human relations, what Marx called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation.

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910–1987), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, was Chairwoman of News and Letters Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907–1983), a Black rank-and-file autoworker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, was editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983.

The articulation of the relationship between the movement from practice which is itself a form of theory and the movement from theory to philosophy is reflected in Dunayevskaya's three major works.

*Marxism and Freedom, from 1776 until Today* (1958), established the American roots of Marxism while presenting a comprehensive attack on present-day Communism, which is a form of state-capitalism. It re-established Marxism in its original form as "a thorough-going Naturalism or Humanism," while pointing to the new Humanist philosophy expressed by the working class. It presented history and theory as emanating from the movement from practice.

*Philosophy and Revolution: From Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), written after the failed revolts of the 1960s, articulated the integrality of philosophy and revolution as the characteristic of the age and, tracing it historically, caught the link of continuity with the Humanism of Marx. As against the vanguard party, the integration of dialectics and organization reflects the revolutionary maturity of the age and the passion for a philosophy of liberation.

*Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) ex-

plores Marx's body of ideas from his discovery of a continent of thought and of revolution in his youth to the "new moments" of his last decade. Written for our time of revolutions in developing countries, the rise of the international women's liberation movement, and global economic crisis, it reveals the absolute challenge to make real Marx's "revolution in permanence" as the determinant for the relationship of theory and practice and as ground for organization.

These works spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism. *American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard* (1963, 1983) concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way freedom road between the U.S. and Africa.

In 1989 News and Letters Committees published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough—her two letters on Hegel's Absolutes—and her 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism*.

This body of ideas challenges all those desiring freedom to transcend the limitations of post-Marx Marxism. In light of the crises of our nuclear-armed world, climate change, and failed revolutions, it becomes

imperative not only to reject what is, but to further work out the revolutionary Humanist future inherent in the present. The recreation of Marx's philosophy as Marxist-Humanism is recorded in Dunayevskaya's archives, *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development*, deposited at Wayne State University in Detroit and available to all.

We aim to continue to develop Marxist-Humanism and make it available to all who struggle for freedom. In opposing this capitalist, racist, sexist, heterosexist, class-ridden society, we have adopted a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

We participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states:

"It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking.

Send for a free copy of the *Constitution* of News and Letters Committees or see it on our website: [www.newsandletters.org](http://www.newsandletters.org).