FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS!

MOVE 9 heroes welcomed in S. California

In mid-December 2019, the Socialist Unity Party/Partido de Socialismo Unido, the San Diego Coalition to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal and the Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice hosted two very special “Free All Political Prisoners” forums.

They welcomed Pam Africa of International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Carlos Africa and recently released MOVE 9 women, Janine Africa and Janet Africa to Southern California. “Sunday in California was one of many “firsts” for Janine and Janet Africa, released on May 25, 2019 — African Liberation Day — after spending over 40 years in prison. These courageous black women, along with Debbi Sims Africa, released in June 2018, were the longest-held women political prisoners in the United States. Another MOVE woman, Merle Africa, died in prison under suspicious circumstances in 1998.

The San Diego forum was held at the Malcolm X Library on 1001 Logan Ave. Janine Africa, Janet Africa and Carlos Africa flew in from Philadelphia, arrived in Los Angeles at midnight Friday and made the two-and-a-half hour trip to San Diego mid-morning on Saturday, arriving with just enough time for a short tour of the Malcolm X Library before speaking.

San Diego’s Black August Organizing Committee has held annual Black August events at the Malcolm X Library for the last three years, where we have discussed the case of the MOVE 9, researched, posted and viewed footage from the 1978 attack and the 1985 bombing, yet none of our previous discussions can compare to hearing the stories directly from Janine and Janet.

The San Diego Committee Against Police Brutality (SD-CAPB) has hosted birthday celebrations, education forums and commemorations in April and December in honor and recognition of the “long distance revolutionary” Mumia Abu-Jamal for the last 20 years. We have had discussions, have shown video documentaries, and have read Mumia’s essays at local spoken-word events and student forums.

Mumia was an honorary member of the African American Writers and Artists and for many years his essays were read at AAW&A monthly meetings. Yet nothing can compare to hearing the voice of Pam Africa — who has spent 38 years fighting for Abu-Jamal’s freedom — speak about how she met Mumia, his journalism and his commitment to justice for everyone.

Power of the people unleashed

This was a historic day for the Malcolm X Library and the people of San Diego. Many came out to witness this rare occasion. A big, beautiful portrait of Mumia Abu-Jamal, made and donated to the SD-CAPB by local artist Mario Torero, was at the center of the room for all to view. A collection of Abu-Jamal’s books, and Leonard Peltier’s book “Prison Writings: My Life Is a Sundance,” were on display. Pam Africa and Carlos Africa brought some MOVE T-shirts and several copies of the informative pamphlet “25 Years on the Move.”

The majority of people in the seminar room were in their thirties or early forties. Many were not yet born when the MOVE 9 were incarcerated in August 1970. Pam and Carlos are in grade school when the Philadelphia Police Department dropped a bomb on MOVE headquarters, destroying an entire predominantly African American neighborhood, in May 1985.

The program began with a warm welcome to our guests, followed by an update on Indigenous political prisoner Leonard Peltier’s fight for freedom from Zola Rices, organizer for the San Diego Leonard Peltier Defense Committee.

Before we handed the program over to the MOVE 9 members, we gave gifts to all the guests to commemorate their first visit to San Diego and also to show them how much we appreciate the sacrifices they have made to be a better world for all of us. Pam Africa was presented with a copy of the new Struggle-La Lucha book, “Black August 1999–2019,” which includes essays by Mumia.

Pam, Janet and Janine agreed that Mumia Abu-Jamal will be free. Why do they believe this so strongly? They said it is the power of the people that will free Mumia and all political prisoners. This system did all it could to kill Mumia while he was on death row. When he was removed from death row and given life in prison without parole, the system tried again to kill him, by denying him hepatitis-C treatment and other health care.

The people responded. They did not bow down. They never did, they never will. Mumia received treatment for himself and for many other prisoners as well. Now it is time to plan the next steps to free Mumia and all political prisoners.

The meeting ended with a book signing of “25 Years on the Move” with cameras flashing as people took pictures with these courageous women in front of Mumia’s portrait. Next, the visitors were taken to the historic World Beat Cultural Center to meet longtime San Diego activist and WBCC founder Makeda Cheatom, and then on to the Red Sea Restaurant, where Janine and Janet experienced another first — the taste of delicious traditional Ethiopian food.

Black and Brown unity

It was close to midnight when Pam, Janet, Janine and Carlos arrived back in Los Angeles to prepare for the next day’s forum at the Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice.

On Sunday morning, Dec. 29, Pam and Janine experienced another first: visiting Venice Beach, where they toured the boardwalk, walked in the sand and gazed at the vastness of the Pacific Ocean and the mountains of the California coast.

Mario Torero’s portrait of Mumia Abu-Jamal was hung up at the Harriet Tubman Center for the afternoon forum, and delicious food was awaiting when the honored guests arrived. The center was filled to capacity as Jessica Monea Evans performed a high-energy West African dance to begin the program.

The crowd swelled to the point that many chairs were added. Rebecka Jackson-Moeser had to ask for more chairs to be brought out in an attempt to seat everyone before handing the program over to the featured guests Pam, Janine, Janet and Carlos.

Nearby 100 people crowded into the event, publicized through social media and hundred of posters taped up around the city near locations where progressives gather, near colleges and high schools, especially those with large Black and Brown attendance, and at major intersections.

Many of the participants said they learned about the event from a poster, including Manuel F., who was Carlos Africa’s cellmate and whom Carlos hadn’t seen since 1988. “I saw his picture on a poster at a lightpost and I had to come.”

RadioJustice L.A. recorded the entire meeting to be rebroadcast at a later date. The audience included many youth, activists and organizations representing Black liberation struggles in Los Angeles.

Afterward, some of the participants came to a meeting of the Harvard Bou levard block association representing Harvard and Hobart Boulevards in South Central L.A. Folks enjoyed cornbread and coffee, and hearing the featured speakers, who had to catch their breath, just coming from the previous meeting. The packed meeting was held at the home of Maggie Vas cassenno and John and Selou Parker.

The neighbors had many questions and were inspired deeply by the reports of Janet, Janine, Pam and Carlos. Carlos also emphasized the links between the historic struggles of the Latinx community and organizations like the Young Lords with the struggles of the Black Panther Party.

Block club members especially appreciated that emphasis on Black and Brown unity since the bloc is mixed between the two ethnicities and continues to be fought over by the police and politicians to divide the two. In the words of Block Club President Joe Crosby, the meeting was “history in the making.”

Ona Move — our sisters in the struggle!


John Parker contributed to this report.
FOOD IS A RIGHT!

Unite to fight attack on SNAP benefits

Struggle-La Lucha newspaper and the Socialist Unity Party/Partido de Socialismo Unido condemn the Trump administration’s announced changes to the SNAP food assistance program (food stamps) that would drop 700,000 people from the program and reduce the benefits of millions more starting in April 2020. The rule change tightening work requirements imposed by the Clinton administration in 1996, but which have been waived for many states and regions that suffer unemployment above the national average. With millions of workers and families currently hungry and homeless, and a new capitalist recession looming, it is urgent that the working class and its organizations — labor unions, community groups, tenants organizations, student movements — unite to push back against this attack on the livelihood of the entire working class, and especially low-wage workers, the unemployed and underemployed.

While the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which administers the SNAP program, claims the changes apply “only” to single adults without dependents, that’s a lie. Many people classified that way also have children, senior relatives and extended families who rely on their benefits. Many already work part-time, gig jobs, or juggle multiple jobs that may not add up to the hours required.

In addition, the Trump administration plans further rules changes that could result in up to 4 million people losing food assistance and reduce benefits for another 31 million households, according to a recent study by the Urban Institute. A million children could lose free school lunches. A related but less-publicized Trump proposal would strip millions of people of disability benefits administered by the Social Security Administration — mostly children and older workers.

The Trump administration claims that the SNAP rule change will save taxpayers $5.5 billion over five years. Yet just a week after the rule change was announced, congressional Republicans and Democrats overwhelmingly approved $738 billion in military spending for 2020, up $22 billion from 2019. The so-called National Defense Authorization Act includes money for Trump’s “Star Wars” program.

Activists and community members have had to expand their services to cope with the overburdened as 1 in 7 people in the U.S. rely on them for at least a portion of their diet. Food banks and pantries all over the country are overburdened as 1 in 7 people in the U.S. rely on them for at least a portion of their diet. Food banks have had to expand their services to college campuses throughout Southern California as more students do not have enough to eat.

The Agriculture Department’s own figures found that 8.8 percent of U.S. residents are “food insecure.” In Baltimore city, 22.2 percent of residents, including children, are food insecure. As always, it is the poorest class shot through with the ideology of white supremacy and patriarchy, it is people of color, women, LGBTQ people, the disabled and children who bear the greatest burden.

Food is a right! Housing, health care, education. These are basic human rights. The working class already suffers from a shortage of grocery stores with decent prices, selection and quality.

According to Feeding America, 97 percent of U.S. counties, in every state, already include households facing hunger that are ineligible for SNAP and other government food assistance programs. After previous Trump cuts, the number of people receiving SNAP benefits fell to 4 million from 40 million. Food banks and pantries all over the country are overburdened as 1 in 7 people in the U.S. rely on them for at least a portion of their diet. Food banks have had to expand their services to college campuses throughout Southern California as more students do not have enough to eat.

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Mass protests hit Indian government’s anti-Muslim agenda

By Lallan Schoenestein

Massive protests are erupting throughout India following the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB) on Dec. 11. The legislation strips 200 million Indian Muslims, who account for 14 percent of the population, of their fundamental rights.

In August, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) instituted similar measures against Muslims in Jammu and Kashmir by revoking their constitutional autonomy. In order to crush all opposition, the government imposed a dehumanizing curfew, shutting down tele-communications and arresting political leaders. Jammu and Kashmir is a Muslim-majority state that India controls within the disputed Himalayan territory bordering Pakistan.

Modi and the BJP have built their power base through a program of Hindu supremacy against a less privileged Muslim minority with the apparent goal of changing India into a Hindu religious state. From early in Modi’s political career, he has striven to destroy India’s secular unity by promoting an agenda of communal violence. The BJP has relied on a divisive program to bury issues of a faltering economy and growing concern over violence against women in which the BJP has been implicated.

Anti-CAB protests begin in Assam

The epicenter of anti-CAB protests is Assam, Tripura and the northeastern states bordering Bangladesh and Myanmar. CAB was initiated in this region, although Modi has expressed intentions to carry out the CAB and National Register of Citizens (NRC) purge in every Indian state.

The CAB is seen as a supplement to a proposed all-India NRC exercise. The first stage was carried out in Assam during November, leading to more than 1.9 million people being declared as illegal or aliens in India, rendering them stateless. Hundreds were sent to detention camps, termed by many concentration camps. Around 26 people have already died in these detention camps, according to People’s Dispatch of Dec. 13.

To date, more than 3.5 million Assam Muslims, many native to the state, have been eliminated from the NRC registry and are threatened with detention or expulsion.

Students in Muslim universities lead struggle

The first protests against CAB were led by students in Guwahati, Assam, with large torch rallies. Tens of thousands of protesters defied a government curfew and a deployment of military troops. It’s been reported that within hours of the passage of CAB, the police shot and beat to death six people, while arresting dozens of others.

- In Delhi, students and others protested against the brutal police crackdown at Jamia Millia Islamic University. As news of the police assault spread across the country, universities came out in solidarity with the Jamia Muslim students.

- First off was Aligarh Muslim University, where students at the university gate shouted slogans. The police attacked, injuring more than a hundred students. When ambulance arrived, police blocked them from helping the wounded students.

- A large protest broke out in Hyderabad’s Maulana Azad Urdu University. “Shame on the Delhi Police!” was one slogan chanted by the students.

- In Mumbai, students at the Tata Institute led a candlelight march singing the Rai-era Urdu poem “Safaroshi ki Taimanna,” known by its association with revolutionaries such as Bhagat Singh, who fought the British Empire.

- In Bihar, where the ruling BJP coalition supported the CAB, Patna University students clashed with the police.

- In Kolkata, students of Jadavpur University and the Aliah University also mobilized in support.

- And around the rest of the country: in Varanasi, students of the Banaras Hindu University protest-ed, joined by the Pondicherry University students; in Lucknow, students of the Darul Uloom Nadwah Ulama and the IIT Bombay also joined in, marching with torches and singing placards which read, “In solidarity with Jamia.” (From report at Scroll.In)

Massive demonstrations against the attacks on Muslims rapidly spread from Assam to West Bengal and then across India. Outrage against the violence of Hindu supremacists, the police and Modi’s troops in Assam led to pitched street battles. Furious protests have also broken out in a growing number of cities, including Mumbai, Chennai, Varanasi, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Bhopal, Patna and Pondicherry.

Opposition to CAB cut across every ethnic and religious barrier. As one former BJP worker from the Assam region put it, “They wanted to turn Hindus against Muslims, they’ve turned Hindus against Hindus.”

Opposition state governments in Kerala, Punjab and West Bengal have said that they will not allow the Hindu supremacist agenda to be enforced, calling it unconstitutional.

In Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan termed the bill a part of the strategy of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a right-wing, Hindu nationalist, paramilitary group aligned with BJP, similar to the ones adopted by the British in India and Hitler in Germany to divide people along the lines of religion.

Modi’s government has responded to the protests with troops, internet shutdowns and military curfews, just as it did when it clamped down on Kashmir.

Across India, left-wing parties, including the Communist Party of India, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)-Liberation, the All India Forward Bloc and the Revolutionary Socialist Party organized joint popular protest actions against the CAB-NRC on Dec. 19.

A NEW BOOK BY BOB MCCUBBIN

The Social Evolution of Humanity

Marx and Engels Were Right! (Ebook)

https://tinyurl.com/vwarcv7

This study of the evolution of humanity focuses on human social/sexual relations and, in particular, the changing social status of women.

It offers a selection of scientific evidence that updates and augments the viewpoint expressed in Frederick Engels’ masterful work, ‘Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.’

McCubbin is the author of ‘Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression: A Marxist View.’

First published in 1976, during the first flush of the modern LGBTQ2S movement, McCubbin’s unparalleled achievement was to offer a historical analysis of when, where, why and how LGBTQ2S oppression developed.

Published by STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM ★ LA LUCHA POR SOCIALISMO
Masivas protestas se oponen a agenda anti musulmana de gobierno indio

Por Lallan Schoenstein

Masivas protestas están estallando en toda la India tras la aprobación el 11 de diciembre del Proyecto de Ley de Enmienda de Ciudadanía (CAB por sus siglas en inglés). La legislación despoja de sus derechos fundamentales a 200 millones de musulmanes indios que representan el 14 por ciento de la población.

En agosto, el primer ministro Na-randra Modi y el gobernante Partido Bharatiya Janati (BJP) instauraron medidas similares contra los mu-
sulmanes en Jammu y Cachemira al revocar su autonomía constitucional. Para aplastar a toda la oposición, el gobierno impuso un toque de queda debilitante cerrando las tele-
comunicaciones y arrestando a los líderes políticos. Jammu y Cachemi-
ra son un estado de mayoría musul-
mana que India controla dentro del
disputado territorio del Himala
y que limita con Pakistán.

Modi y el BJP han construido su base de poder a través de un pro-
grama de supremacía hindú con
tra una minoría musulmana menos
privilegiada con el objetivo aparente
de convertir a la India en un esta-
dio religioso hindú. Desde el prin-
cipio de su carrera política, Modi se ha esforzado por destruir la unidad vec-
torial de la India mediante la pro-
moción de una agenda de violencia
comunitaria. El BJP se ha basado en
un programa diversivo para enterrar
los problemas de una economía vac-
ilante y la creciente preocupación
por la violencia contra las mujeres
en la que el BJP ha estado implicado.

Protestas contra el CAB comienzan en Assam

El epicentro de las protestas con-
tra el CAB es Assam, Tripura y los estados del noreste que limitan con Bangladesh y Myanmar. El CAB se inició en esta región, aunque Modi ha expresado su intención de llevar a cabo la purga del CAB y del Registro Nacional de Ciudadanos (NRC) en to-
dos los estados de la India.

El CAB es visto como un suplemen-
to a un ejercicio de NRC propuesto
en toda la India. La primera etapa
se llevó a cabo en Assam durante
noviembre, lo que llevó a que más de 1,9 millones de personas fuer-
an declaradas ilegales o extranjeras
en la India, lo que las convirtió en
apárteides. Cientos fueron enviados
campos de detención, denuncia-
dos por muchos, campos de concen-
tración. Alrededor de 26 personas ya
han muerto en estos campos de de-
tención, según el People’s Dispatch
13 de diciembre.

Hasta la fecha, más de 3.5 millones de musulmanes Assam, muchos na-
tivos del estado, han sido eliminados
en el NRC y están amenaza-
dos con deportación.

Estudiantes en universidades musulmanas lideran lucha

Las primeras protestas contra el CAB fueron lideradas por estudi-
antes en Guwahati, Assam, con
grandes manifestaciones de antor-
chadas. Decenas de miles de manifes-
tantes desafiaron el toque de queda
do el gobierno y el despliegue de tro-
pas militares. Se ha informado que
a las pocas horas del paso del CAB, la
policía disparó y mató a golpes a seis
personas, mientras arrestaba a do-
cenas de otras.

- En Delhi, estudiantes y otros
protestaron contra la brutal
represión policial en la Univer-
sidad Islámica Jamia Millia. A
medida que la noticia del asalto
policial se extendió por todo el
país, las universidades se sol-
idarizaron con los estudiantes
musulmanes de Jamia.

- Primero fue la Universidad
Musulmana Aligarh, donde los
estudiantes en la puerta de la
universidad gritaban consignas.
La policía atacó e hirió a más de
cien estudiantes. Cuando llega-
ron las ambulancias, la policía les
impidió ayudar a los estudiantes
heridos.

- Una gran protesta estalló en la
Universidad Maulana Azad Urdu
de Hyderabad. “¿Qué vergüenza
la policía de Delhi?” era una consi-
ga que cantaban los estudiantes.

- En Mumbai, los estudiantes
del Instituto Tata dirigieron una
marcha con velas cantando
do el —poema urdu de la era Raj
Sarfroshi ki Tamanna”, cono-
cido por su asociación a revolu-
cionarios como Bhagat Singh, que
luchó contra el Imperio Británico.

- En Bilhar, donde la coalición
gobernante BJP apoyó al CAB,
los estudiantes de la Universidad de Patna se enfrentaron con la
policía.

- En Kolakata, los estudiantes
de la Universidad Jadavpur y la Univer-
sidad Allah también se moviliza-
ron en apoyo.

- Y en todo el resto del país: en Va-
ranasi, los estudiantes de la Uni-
versidad Hindi de Banaras prote-
staron, junto con los estudiantes

de la Universidad de Pondicherry.

En Lucknow, los estudiantes del
Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama y el
IIT Bombay también se movilizaron,
protestando contra las tropas de Modi en Assam llevaron a batal-
las callejeras. También han estalla-
dado furiosas protestas en un núme-
or creciente de ciudades, incluidas
Mumbai, Chennai, Varanasi, Gu-
wahati, Hyderabad, Bhopal, Patna y
Pondicherry.

La oposición al CAB atraviesa to-
das las barreras étnicas y religiosas.
Como lo expresó un ex trabajador
BJP de la región de Assam: “Querían
poner a los hindúes contra los mu-
sulmanes, han vuelto a los hindúes
contra los hindúes”.

En el estado de Assam, los gobiernos estatales de oposición en Kerala, Punjab y Ben-
gala Ocidental han dicho que no
permitirán que se aplique la agenda
conde de inconstitucional. En Thiru-
nanathapuram, Kerala, el primer
ministro Pinarayi Vijayan calificó el
proyecto de ley como parte de la es-
tratégia de Rashtriraya Swamyavsev
Sangh (RSS), un grupo paramilitar de
derecha nacionalista hindú alin-
eado con BJP, similar a los adoptados por los británicos en India y Hitler en
Alemánia para dividir a las personas según su religión.

El gobierno de Modi ha respondido
da las protestas con tropas, cierres de
internet y toques de queda militares,
tal como lo hizo cuando reprimió a
Cachemira.

En toda la India, los partidos de izquierda, incluido el Partido Comuni-
sta de la India, el Partido Comuni-
sta de la India (marxista), el Partido
Comunista de la India (marxista-le-
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India Forward y el Partido Socialista
Revolucionario están organizando
conjuntamente acciones de protesta
populares contra el CAB-NRC el 19 de
diciembre.

La protesta masiva en Dharwad, Karnataka, condena los ataques policiales contra estudiantes musulmanes en Delhi, el 17 de diciembre.

La policía disparó y mató a golpes a seis estudiantes en universidades en toda la India. Las protestas masivas repudiando las medidas de Modi, que permitirán que se aplique la agenda de supremacía hindú, calificando-la de inconstitucional. Ihrur-
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