



United Actions Affirming Rights Mark Human Rights Day



Salute the Organized Resistance Defending Rights! p.3

CONFLICTS AMONG RULERS INTENSIFYING

Trump Authorizes Lethal Force by Troops at the Border

The White House issued a memo November 20 allowing troops stationed at the border to use lethal force, if necessary. The “Cabinet order,” allows “Department of Defense military personnel” to “perform those military pro-

TECTIVE activities that the Secretary of Defense determines are reasonably necessary” to protect border agents, including “a show or use of force (including lethal force, where necessary), crowd control,

Trump Authorizes Lethal Force • 15

Threatened Government Shutdown and the Need for People’s Empowerment

Trump and Congress are once again threatening a government shutdown, which will impact thousands of workers and the people they serve. The current stop-gap spending measure passed by Con-

gress provides funding until December 21. The Pentagon and Health and Human Services (HHS) have been funded, as has about 70 percent of government, through to

Government Shutdown • 16

Peoples of the World Oppose Those Who Make a Mockery of Human Rights Based on Ulterior Motives

Pauline Easton, TML Weekly, Canada

The peoples of the world do not accept reaching conclusions about whether human rights are being violated in this or that country based on the self-serving propaganda of warmongering forces. A serious study of the economic, political and social system of a country will clearly expose what is going on there. Serious study and investigation of social systems is not the desire of the U.S. imperialists and their allies, including Canada, who float “human rights” pretexts and organizations for their own purposes. For them,

truth is a matter of creating an outlook that permits them to carry out their neo-liberal anti-social nation-wrecking agenda with impunity. They use the pretext of championing human rights in whatever manner suits their particular pursuit of the moment. If truth has to be bent and twisted to its opposite, so be it, if this is what serves their interests. The question of human rights is used by the Anglo-American imperialists as a political tool, a weapon to justify aggression and intervention

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December edition of *Voice of Revolution*

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DECEMBER 10

United Actions Affirming Rights Mark Human Rights Day in U.S.

United actions at the southern border with Mexico and across the country marked Human Rights Day, December 10. Many cities in New York, Florida, Minnesota, Texas, California and elsewhere saw demonstrations defending the rights of migrants and of all human beings and denouncing the refusal of the U.S. government to uphold these rights. The way in which children are treated is an important standard for assessing the state of human rights in a given country. The united actions made clear people across the country, from all walks of life, reject the brutal attacks on migrant children, including use of tear gas, separation of families, detention even of babies, and more. As signs brought out these are crimes, and the stand of the people is *No Crimes Against Humanity in Our Community!*



People have rights by virtue of being human, whether they are migrants, or youth, or women or workers, documented or undocumented, all human beings have rights simply by virtue of being human. Government has the duty to uphold these rights, but facts are repeatedly showing that the U.S. is among the worst when it comes to upholding human rights, at home and abroad. The bombings against the peoples of Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan are clear examples of the brutal destruction of the productive powers human beings have created and depend on. Use of sanctions and blockades, serving to kill millions of children are additional examples. Here at home the attacks on migrants but the racist mass incarceration, including life sentences for juveniles, are further facts showing government organized attacks on human rights.

In his proclamation on Human Rights Day, Trump emphasized that “As a part of the Constitution, the supreme law of the land,

the Bill of Rights has protected our rights effectively against the abuse of government power for 227 years.” He said it has “protected the right to speak freely, the right to freely worship, the right to keep and bear arms, the right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures, and the right to due process of law.” The claims are made in the face of broad attacks precisely on these rights, where due process of law has been eliminated, as evidenced at the border and where Muslims are being targeted, to give only two examples.

The right to speak freely necessarily means the right to organize on the basis of that speech — the right to conscience and to act on that conscience, as a human being. Yet people peacefully demonstrating are regularly attacked, with tear gas, rubber bullets and more. The few dozen people who knelt at the border fence, calling on the government to uphold human rights were arrested for doing so — hardly an example of free speech!

It must also be remembered that the Constitution and Bill of Rights enshrined slavery and genocide against the indigenous peoples. When Trump says he vows “To fiercely protect the eternal flame of liberty... We reaffirm our commitment to defend the Bill of Rights and uphold the Constitution,” it is enslavement and genocide and the “liberty” of government to act with impunity against the peoples that he is upholding.

The united mass actions across the country affirming human rights and affirming that organized resistance will continue contributes to the struggle worldwide for the human rights of all. *Voice of Revolution* salutes all those taking up this struggle as it is an essential part of advancing society toward one that is fit for human beings.



DECEMBER 10 ACTION AT THE BORDER

Indigenous and Religious Leaders, Veterans, Rights Organizers Unite to Defend Rights

Manuel Ocaño, Latino Rebels, December 11, 2018

Dozens of Indigenous spiritual guides, Muslims, Jews, Catholics, Unitarian Universalists and Buddhists, anti-war veterans among others, were arrested a few feet from the border wall Monday, December 10, where the state of California merges with Mexico and the Pacific Ocean. They were protesting in solidarity with migrants from the caravan. They were part of more than 400 people that had come from around the U.S. to join in the peaceful protest.

The demonstration took place at Border Field State Park, the same location where President Donald Trump's Operation Faithful Patriot unfolded. Trump has used an unprecedented amount of resources, including military troops, in an attempt to restrain thousands of Central American migrants. The migrants arrived in Mexico fleeing misery and violence, seeking asylum.

The people of faith together with other demonstrators carried banners and blankets that declared *Love Has No Borders*. About 30 of them were detained just feet from the border wall, which is now covered with concertina wire. The action took place in close proximity to the 1,600 soldiers deployed there, alongside armored vehicles, part of an arsenal that President Trump has deemed appropriate for containing what he refers to as an "invasion."

The demonstrators first marched in procession along a mud-covered road on the California border and then silently crossed the sand of the beach for more than a mile, until they encountered the deployment of border patrol agents equipped with riot uniforms and both lethal and non-lethal weapons.

While the first group thrust themselves in front of the agents, the rest of the contingent waited at a distance, cheering them on with song.

Twice, the Border Patrol pushed back with their weapons, forcing the demonstrators to retreat. On the second occasion, some people disobeyed and sat or knelt on the sand. The agents initially arrested four people, who were released moments later



with a verbal warning, noting that if they were detained again, they would be handed over to the bailiff.

A little while later, after a third warning to retreat, the Border Patrol had federal agents arrest at least 30 people who were sitting on the sand in peaceful resistance, disobeying orders.

The detainees never invaded a security zone established by the officers. Instead, the arrests by federal agents

were due to the fact that the demonstrators refused to move away from that area.

Protesters used International Day of Human Rights, December 10, to demand that the U.S. government grant and streamline asylum hearings for migrants stranded in Tijuana. The American Friends Services Committee (AFSC), one of the organizers of the protest, reported that this action is part of a nationwide campaign that will continue until December 18, the International Day of the Migrant.

"These beliefs call upon us to support those who flee violence and poverty, and to ask our government to respect the human rights of migrants and to end the militarization of border communities," said Laura Boyce of the AFSC. "In the face of the rhetoric and policy of violence of the Trump's administration, we are here to support border residents against militarization and for absolute protection for immigrants seeking shelter and asylum."

In a joint statement, parishioners of various faiths who participated stated that the march had served to ensure that all of the religions participating in the action had asked the U.S. to respect the human right of migration, to put an end to the militarization of the border communities, and to stop the deportations of immigrants.

They also demanded that the U.S. government dismantle Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and curb the growing budget of Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

(Manuel Ocaño is a journalist based in San Diego.)

Anti-War Veterans Join Border Actions

About Face: Veterans Against the War

As post 9/11 veterans working to demilitarize our society and redirect resources towards what communities need most, we are outraged to see asylum seekers — including children and families — being villainized while our military is deployed once again on an inhumane and immoral mission.

The majority of asylum seekers are fleeing violent conditions that are directly fueled by U.S. policies, from ones that undermine democracy to those that support corporate interventions and abuses in the region.

Monday, December 10, our About Face members joined hundreds of faith and movement leaders at the border to act upon their morals and take nonviolent direct action in protest of this militarization and to demand just treatment for asylum seekers. Ramon Mejia and Brittany DeBarros were amongst those arrested for civil disobedience.

We have leaders on the ground at the border, and we are sending more to help assess the situation, connect with existing efforts and figure out how best to plug our members into the powerful, migrant-led work to show up for asylum seekers. We know that as veterans, we can use our skills and experience to be of service both to those being harmed by a heartless immigration policy and

to the people's movements fighting to change the conditions that caused this crisis.

Join us at the border and donate today to help us fight against the culture of militarism that has led to this and so many more disgraceful situations.

What else can you do?

- Fight fear by educating yourself and talking to the people you know about the asylum seekers;
- Contact your elected officials to let them know you demand an end to the inhumane treatment of those seeking asylum;
- Support both long-term organizing efforts working to address the root causes of the current crisis and direct aid for asylum seekers.

Here are two initiatives that we really want to recommend. The first to help Honduran organizers continue to support the caravan and the second providing direct legal aid to asylum seekers:

- To support Honduran human rights defenders & social movement organizers - La Voz de los de Abajo (see hondurasresists.blogspot.com)
- To support legal assistance for asylum seekers via legal organization Al Otro Lado (alotrolado.org)

Peace Caravan to the U.S./Mexico Border

CODEPINK for Peace

CODEPINK Community Call to action to support the Caravan

In December, among many migrants, eight children arrived at the Otay Port of Entry in San Diego. Rather than being welcomed and allowed to apply for asylum as both international and U.S. law require, they were callously rejected by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). So much for “give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.”

Today, as Human Rights Day is being celebrated across the world, we call on Congress to ensure that asylum seekers are welcomed with due process, not tear gas. Contact Congress and ask them to travel during this holiday season to the U.S.-Mexico border to accompany asylum seekers through the border.

The children, ages 15-17, had fled their homes in Honduras in a desperate attempt to seek refuge from horrific violence and a near-complete breakdown of societal systems — a breakdown resulting from previous U.S. intervention in Latin America. The children had spent weeks waiting for humanitarian support in Tijuana.

To love and support and provide relief to asylum seekers and the community supporting them, our Local Peace Economy organizer, Kelly Curry, is right now at the border doing the necessary care-giving work that sustains the world in troubled times.

Representative Pramila Jayapal (Seattle, Washington) recently provided political care-giving for the asylum seekers. She traveled to the border herself to walk refugees across and ensure that U.S.

federal and international human rights laws were enforced. Send a message to Congress to follow in her footsteps. Tell them to accompany asylum seekers at U.S. Ports of Entry.

And it is not just at the U.S.-Mexico border that we must provide support for refugees. Last August, we traveled to Greece to support the war refugees living in the Kara Tepe refugee camp on the island of Lesbos. Many of you had sent us baby shoes, socks, and clothes which we delivered. While there, we witnessed horrible living conditions and a shocking lack of resources. Today, on Human Rights Day, our own Nancy Mancias is back at it, delivering clothes you sent us to give to the refugees.

Along with the kinds of humanitarian relief Nancy and Kelly are providing, we need more of the political action that Representative Jayapal is doing. Tell Congress to act now to ensure that children at the U.S.-Mexico border are able to peacefully seek asylum.

During December CodePink will be taking more supplies and participating in various actions:

- Kelly Curry KellyC@codepink.org will be there to make smoothies and teas and will be on both sides of the border December 9-15.
- Jodie Evans Jodie@codepink.org will be leaving Los Angeles on December 27-29 with supplies and caravan of CODEPINK members.
- Xan Joi and the Bay Area CODEPINK team

mhubert7@earthlink.net will be leaving the Bay Area with supplies on December 15.

• Paula Graciela Khan pau.graciela@gmail.com is currently supporting actions in Tijuana.

Send us your contact info if you are willing to:

- Sponsor a refugee
- Work a consistent daily shift on a 24-hour emergency hotline for those stranded in the desert who need help
- Commit to monthly contribution to sustain a family

List of supplies to bring to San Diego, LA, or Bay Area:

- Medicines to boost immunity as many are sick
 - Dried fruit, nuts, and healthy nutritional snacks
- Please think of Mother Earth and human bodies. Buy organic and in bulk to limit plastic and waste in the desert
- Sturdy shoes, thick socks, bandages and medicine especially for blistered and bleeding feet
 - Larger airtight goggles, bandanas, blankets, windbreaker/rain jackets
 - Immune support medicines, aspirin and ibuprofen
 - A generator
 - Butane Canisters for portable stoves
 - Three portable stoves
 - A few big steel pots for tea

- Water, Honey, Cups, Stirrers/Spoons, Tea cloths
- Extra vitamix
- Pitchers to pour and distribute drinks
- Buckets
- Stuffed animals for kids

Drop-off Address

CODEPINK Donations in San Diego
C/O Jewell Faamaligi
5527 San Onofre Terrace
San Diego, CA 92114

CODEPINK Donations in LA

C/O Jodie Evans
2010 Linden Ave
Venice, CA 90291

CodePink will also be joining “Love Knows No Borders”: A moral call for migrant justice – an action in support of those seeking sanctuary at our southern border. Specifically, we are asking you to send a delegation to the border in San Diego/Tijuana December 8-10th culminating in a faith action on December 10 and support outreach through your networks for solidarity actions across the country from December 10-18.

JOIN US AT THE BORDER

We Are Building a Caravan of Support

Movimiento Cosecha

Trump may be sending 15,000 troops to the border. We will not let this be what greets migrants and asylum seekers coming to this country. We need 15,000 people in support of immigrants and asylum seekers to join us at the border.

Sign your name now to get updates on how you can join us at the border, to be the first to hear about the progress of this community, and to find out about the immediate supports needed to help counter Trump’s agenda and keep families together.

Trump is trying to create a story that workers, families, and children traveling from Central America, mainly Honduras, are an invasion against the United States, but we know the truth. We know that no parent would risk being separated from their children unless they knew that what they were leaving behind is worse than separation. We know that nobody would risk losing their home forever if violence was not pushing them out. We know that nobody would risk everything to come toward a country welcoming them with 15,000 troops unless the alternative was worse.

Stand in solidarity and show the exodus of migrants seeking refuge that Trump’s words are not our words. We will go to the border and welcome them to the United States, and we will show the troops and Trump that we are watching. Sign up now to pledge your support.

“We are not migrating, we are fleeing,” said Timothy, who like thousands of other workers and young people in the caravan has come from the city of El Progreso, Honduras.

Trump wants us to believe that these migrants are a threat to our safety, but we know that the real threat to our safety comes from an increasingly militarized state, one in which peaceful migrants risking everything to flee from violence and poverty are used to incite violence and white nationalist panic. This is a scary time for many, but it is the moment for us not to turn inward but instead to build increased solidarity that recognizes the humanity in each of us.

Join the Movement

The movement for immigrant rights has always been a struggle led by the people and the few victories won in the immigrant rights movement have never been a gift. Through the years, we have learned that the only thing that works to make effective change is direct action such as large mobilizations and general strikes. The most important lesson however, has been that united we are strong and that if we fight together — we win.

We are 11 million.

We are the labor this country takes for granted.

The single mother, the farm worker, the factory worker, the

student.

We are all 11 million undocumented immigrants.

We call on the diverse groups of immigrant people in the United States to join together for a collective struggle. We have to help each other free ourselves of the chains of fear. Because although there are laws that limit us, it is fear that keeps us quiet and weakens us as a community.

In this era of Donald Trump and his administration — we need to be courageous and be in touch with our spirit of solidarity. We need to break down the barriers and biases that we bring from our native countries which make us different.

At the end of the day, the immigrant does not make his pilgrimage for luxury or pleasure but out of necessity. We do what is necessary for a better life for our family including risking our lives for a better tomorrow.

We will not stop fighting until we have permanent protection that allows us to live in peace with our families — until the dignity of each human is the same regardless of skin color and until this country shows respect for the sacrifices we have made to be here. We ask this for our parents, our friends and for the 11 million undocumented immigrants who sustain the United States.

“Stop the Tears” Weekend of Action December 1 — 2

On November 25, 2018, U.S. Border Agents fired tear gas and rubber bullets at a group of immigrants crossing into San Diego from Tijuana, Mexico, including young children. These policies are cruel and unjustified, and must be loudly rejected. The people who were fired upon are fleeing dangerous conditions and have the human and legal right to seek asylum in the U.S.

Let us make December 1 – 2 a weekend of international action! We will not stand idly by while the U.S. government tramples our values, human rights, and domestic and international laws.

Get U.S. citizens and allies together in your city or community to hold a rally/protest/vigil outside a U.S. embassy or consulate or in a centrally located square or park.

Stand up to the Trump Administration to say #STOPTHE-TEARS

Join *Families Belong Together* for a weekend of action on Dec. 1 – 2 to say, “STOP THE TEARS.”

Stop the Tears Rally in Long Island

Zero Tolerance is still happening. *Propublica* just published this story:

“A Defendant Shows Up in Immigration Court by Himself. He is 6.”

Earlier today various concerned citizen groups held a rally to protest the continuing separation of families at the border.

Dr. Eve Krief is a pediatrician on Long Island. She writes:

WHY WE RALLY: It is easy to get distracted by the Mueller Investigation, by planning for control of the House, by pushing for a progressive agenda in New York State. But we must pause for a moment and think about the children suffering right now because of this administration’s horrific policies. We must not

forget them.

- Children were tear gassed at the border in violation of U.S. humanitarian policy and harming children.

- An unprecedented 14,000 children are being held in detention indefinitely. Parents and relatives are afraid to come forward to care for them because of the administration’s zero tolerance policy. Pediatricians know that no time in detention is appropriate for children. They should be in loving community settings.

- Detention facility staff are not required to have FBI clearance, which the President of the American Academy of Pediatrics has said puts the children in danger.

- We have learned that the administration is still indiscriminately separating children from their parents.

- Our country has virtually locked our borders to asylum seekers escaping dangerous and life threatening situations. *This Is Not Who We Are. This Is Not What We Want Our Country To Be. We Must Make Our Voices Heard.* Please join us in protest. (D. Posnett MD, *Resist and Replace, Long Island, NY, December 1, 2018*)

Stop the Tears! Rally and Protest, Phoenix, Arizona

We call on all people of faith and conscience to protest cruel



and unjustified asylum policies this Sunday, Dec 2, Noon-2 PM, *Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza at the State Capitol*

A coalition of eight Phoenix organizations, community advocates and concerned citizens will unite on Sunday, December 2 at the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza to show support for those seeking asylum in our country and to reject the current administration's continued use of cruel tactics and policies at our borders.

Arizonans of all walks of life are asking that people remain vigilant and engage in an active role to combat the militarization of police, abuses of power, and violations of human rights here in our state and border into 2019 and beyond.

"We are coming together in solidarity to demand that asylum seekers, primarily women and children, be allowed to go through the application process as is their right by law," said Veronica Monge, Organizer with Arizona Poor People's Campaign. "We are also demanding that the abuses and inhumane actions taken by the U.S. Border Patrol cease, as they are not representative of the values of this country."

The local action was part of the national STOP THE TEARS weekend spearheaded by *Families Belong Together*. The rally and donation drive featured refugees and immigration advocates as

speakers who defended the rights of migrants and rejected attacks on them. More than 100 people gathered at the rally.

Protesters walked into the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza carrying bags of blankets and sweatshirts, socks and shoes, toys and toothbrushes. Volunteers stacked them against a wall.

The supplies, organizer Monge said, would go to local churches, which have taken in more than 2,500 Central American families over the last two months. Any cash would go straight to the border, funding advocacy and legal representation.

"Solid as a rock, rooted as a tree," the demonstrators chanted. "We are here, standing strong, in our rightful place."

Organizing Sponsors:

LUCHA – Living United for Change in Arizona
AZ Resist
Arizona Palestine Solidarity Alliance
Poder in Action
Arizona Poor People's Campaign
No More Deaths Phx
Transqueer Pueblo
Planned Parenthood Advocates of Arizona

TUCSON ORGANIZER ALEJANDRA PABLOS ORDERED DEPORTED

"I Will Continue to Fight for My Rights"

Mijente, December 11, 2018

On December 11 a federal immigration court ordered the deportation of nationally known reproductive rights and immigrant rights activist Alejandra Pablos. Pablos, along with Mijente, a national Latinx organization leading on mobilizing against immigration enforcement and criminalization, released the following statement:

"We are extremely saddened and angered by the Tucson Immigration court's decision to deport Alejandra. Alejandra is precisely the kind of person we need to push back against the Trump administration, someone who stands up for the rights of her community, her family, and herself. She is a recognized leader in the fight for reproductive rights and immigrant rights, the very reasons her life could be threatened if deported. Her case is also an example of the Trump administration's efforts to weaken asylum law, and their obsession with deporting as many immigrants as possible," said Jacinta González, who is leading Mijente's organizing support for Pablos' case.

"I've been living here since I was a baby, and Arizona is the place where I've grown up and learned how to fight for our rights. I will



continue to fight for my right to stay here, to speak out about my story. This is not the end of our fight. We will appeal this decision and urge Arizona Governor Ducey to issue a pardon for the arrests that led to my detention in the first place. Getting a pardon from the Governor would significantly increase my chances to be able to continue to fight to stop my deportation and allow me to stay home with my family and community," Pablos said. A petition to Governor Ducey calling for Pablos' pardon is now circulating.

LETTER TO HOMELAND SECURITY

Renewed Appeal from Experts in Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice and Child Development to Halt the Separation of Children from Parents at the Border

We represent 540 organizations from all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico that have well-recognized expertise in the fields of child welfare, juvenile justice and child health, development and safety. We first sent this letter to you on January 16, 2018 and resubmitted the letter on January 23, 2018 to include additional organizations. Since then, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) implemented a systematic practice of separating children from their parents—as many as 658 children in just two weeks in May 2018—and our ranks grew by more than 300 organizations.

We write again today, after the formal implementation of practices to separate immigrant families, to renew our shared concern that your agency is harming children by taking them from their parents to deter or punish parents and children who come to our border seeking protection. The separation of children from their parents to deter migration, or to punish migration, will have significant and long-lasting consequences for the safety, health, development, and well-being of children. We therefore urgently request that the Administration reverse course on its practice of separating families at the border.

Countless reports have documented that these families are fleeing persecution and violence in their countries, and come here seeking protection. While many come from Central American countries, the parents and children arrive at our border from all over the world, including countries in Africa, the Caribbean, South America, Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

Since early May, DHS in collaboration with the Department of Justice has routinely separated immigrant children from their parents and families. Parents may be placed in adult immigration detention centers and/or summarily deported, while their children are transferred to the custody of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in facilities across the country—as far away as Illinois, Washington, New York, Florida, and Michigan. HHS bears the responsibility of caring for the traumatized children and finding suitable, alternative caregivers.

The children could remain in government care for months or more than a year, during which time the continued separation from their parents would compound their trauma and the time it would take them to recover and return to a trajectory of good health and normal development. Nor does it make any sense to

require the children to participate in a formal legal proceeding about their immigration case while separated from the parent who brought them here, who may have critical information—or the only information—about the child’s claim for protection.

There is overwhelming evidence that children need to be cared for by their parents to be safe and healthy, to grow and develop.² Likewise, there is ample evidence that separating children from their mothers or fathers leads to serious, negative consequences to children’s health and development.³ Forced separation disrupts the parent-child relationship and puts children at increased risk for both physical and mental illness. Adverse childhood experiences—including the incarceration of a family member—are well-recognized precursors of negative health outcomes later in life. And the psychological distress, anxiety, and depression associated with separation from a parent would follow the children well after the immediate period of separation—even after eventual reunification with a parent or other family. We are deeply concerned that recent agency actions institutionalize such harm by taking children from their parents as a matter of policy.

Family unity is a foundational principle of child welfare law. In order to grow and develop, children need to remain in the care of their parents where they are loved, nurtured and feel safe. Thus parents’ rights to the care and custody of their children are afforded particularly strong protection under the U.S. Constitution. While parent-child relationships are generally the province of state law, federal law also recognizes the principle of family unity by providing strong incentives for states to keep children with their parents and to provide services to families to prevent separation and maintain family unity.⁶ The administration’s current policies and practices eviscerate that principle.

For all of these reasons, we urge you to abandon current policies and practices that systematically separate children from their families absent evidence that a specific parent posed a threat to the safety and well-being of his or her child, as required by the laws of all 50 states. Should you have any questions about the serious concerns raised in this letter, or wish to respond to us directly, please contact MaryLee Allen, Director of Policy, Children’s Defense Fund (mallen@childrensdefensefund.org).

Visit our website: usmlo.org

An Open Letter to Homeland Security from Concerned Scientists, Clinicians, and Educators

We, the undersigned, are researchers and clinicians who are deeply concerned about the revised policy of the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security to separate migrant children, some as young as 12 months of age, from their families.

The scientific evidence is clear that early life experiences and resulting development shape a person for their lifetime. This “critical period” in early life can set the stage for cascading effects on psychological and biological well being.

We also know that, during this critical period, parents play a vital role in facilitating the growth and development of their children. Decades of psychological and brain research have demonstrated that forced parental separation and placement in incarceration-like facilities can have profound immediate, long-term, and irreparable harm on infant and child development. These effects include, but are not limited to:

Socioemotional Development:

- Impaired attachment relationships
- Impaired peer relationships
- Despair and flat emotional reactivity
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Stereotyped behaviors
- Difficulties with eating

Post Trauma Responses:

- Nightmares/night terrors
- Negative changes in mood
- Withdrawal and senses of hopelessness
- Physical pain such as gastrointestinal distress and headaches

Neurological & Physiological Development:

- Chronically elevated stress hormones
- Sensitization of the brain’s stress response pathways
- Reduced brain volume and connectivity
- Reduced dopamine and serotonin levels that can impact mood, learning, and decision-making.
- Heightened inflammatory activity

Cognitive Development:

- Dysregulation of attention
- Worse executive functioning
- Reduced memory function
- Immediate and persisting educational challenges
- Impairment in language abilities

These negative consequences are likely to be even more pronounced for migrant children, many of whose parents are seeking asylum, as they are both coming from impoverished or traumatic environments and also challenged by a new cultural and linguistic environment while they are detained.

The broad consensus of the psychological and neuroscientific communities is that the current U.S. government policies on forced separation can only be seen as a form of extreme emotional abuse on the children that are being separated. This has a real potential for causing long-term, and very possibly permanent, harm. As scientists and clinicians, we implore you to end this inhumane practice and to do everything in your power to develop policies that minimize trauma to these children and families.

59,000 YOUTH UNDER 18 DETAINED

The Landscape of Immigration Detention in the U.S.

Emily Ryo, J.D., Ph.D. and Ian Peacock, M.A., American Immigration Council

On any given day, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detains tens of thousands of individuals who are accused of violating U.S. immigration laws. ICE currently relies on a complex network of jails and jail-like facilities to confine these individuals.

The average daily population of immigrant detainees has increased more than fivefold in the past two decades. At the same time, immigration detention facilities have faced numerous civil and human rights violation complaints, including allegations of substandard medical care, sexual and physical abuse, and exploitative labor practices. Yet, the current administration has sought to further expand immigration detention. To assess the full implications of these expansion efforts, it is critical for policymakers and the public to understand fundamental aspects of the current U.S. detention system.

This report presents findings from an empirical analysis of immigration detention across the United States. We analyze government and other data on all individuals who were detained by ICE during fiscal year 2015, the latest fiscal year for which the federal government has released comprehensive data of this kind on immigration detention. Our analysis offers a detailed look at whom ICE detained, where they were confined, and the outcomes of their detention.

We find that ICE relied on over 630 sites scattered throughout the United States to detain individuals, often moving them from one facility to another. Our analysis reveals that individuals detained by ICE were commonly held in privately operated and remotely located facilities, far away from basic community support structures and legal advocacy networks.

The main findings presented in this report include:

STEP UP THE FIGHT TO AFFIRM HUMAN RIGHTS

A majority of detainees were men, from Mexico or Central America, and many detainees were juveniles.

- About 79 percent of the detainees were men. The population as a whole was relatively young, with the average age of 28 (mean and median). Over 59,000 detainees—about 17 percent—were under the age of 18.

- Mexican nationals by themselves made up about 43 percent of the detainee population, and individuals from the Northern Triangle region of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras made up about 46 percent of the detainee population.

- ICE used one or more facilities in every state, with Texas and California having the highest number of facilities and detainees.

- Every state in the United States had at least one facility that ICE used to detain individuals in fiscal year 2015.

The top five states in terms of the number of facilities used by ICE in fiscal year 2015 were Texas, California, Florida, New York, and Arizona. The top five states in terms of the detainee population were Texas, California, Arizona, Louisiana, and New Mexico.

Detention in privately operated facilities and in remotely located facilities was common.

- Many detainees were confined in more than one facility during their detention stay. About 67 percent of all detainees were confined at least once in privately operated facilities. About 64 percent of detainees were confined at least once in a facility located outside of a major urban area.

- About 48 percent, 26 percent, and 22 percent of detainees were confined at least once in a facility that was located more than 60 miles, 90 miles, and 120 miles away, respectively, from the nearest nonprofit immigration attorney who practiced removal defense.

A majority of adult detainees experienced inter-facility transfers involving movements across different cities, states, or federal judicial circuits.



- Many adults were transferred between facilities during their detention, leading to confinement in multiple locations. About 60 percent of adults who were detained in fiscal year 2015 experienced at least one inter-facility transfer during their detention.

- Of those adults who were transferred, about 86 percent experienced at least one intercity transfer, 37 percent experienced at least one interstate transfer, and 29 percent experienced at least one transfer across different federal judicial circuits.

Detention length was significantly longer in privately operated facilities and in remotely located facilities.

- Among 261,020 adults who were released from detention during fiscal year 2015, the average detention length (mean) was about 38 days. More than 87,000 of these adults were detained longer than 30 days.

- Confinement in privately operated facilities and facilities located outside of major urban areas, respectively, was associated with significantly longer detention.

The number of grievances was significantly higher in privately operated facilities and in remotely located facilities.

- In fiscal year 2015, the ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations' Detention Reporting and Information Line (DRIL) received over 48,800 detention-facility related grievances from detainees and community members. The most common type of grievances involved access to legal counsel and basic immigration case information.

- Privately operated facilities and facilities located outside of major urban areas were associated with higher numbers of grievances.



I • Mockery of Human Rights

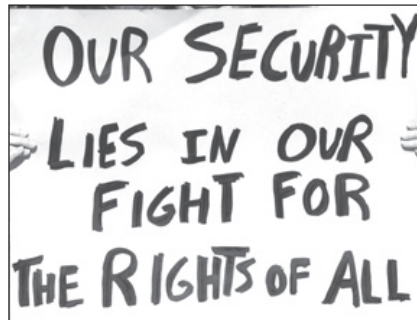
against peoples and countries hostile to their interests.

After the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in 1948, and even during its drafting and the adoption process, the Anglo-American imperialist forces launched the Cold War, based on the lie that the “West” is the “defender” of human rights, and that socialism and communism are not. It was a patent falsity, but it has obviously served as the backdrop for many of the crimes committed against the peoples fighting for national and social liberation since the Second World War. Not only did the Anglo-American imperialists refuse to de-nazify the zones under their control but they actually protected the Nazis, gave them safe-haven and positions of influence and authority while they persecuted the communists, slaughtering them en masse as they did in Indonesia or keeping them in concentration camps for 40 years as they did in Greece and south Korea while carrying out witch hunts, coups d'état and wars of aggression in the name of the containment of communism. They established NATO as an aggressive U.S. imperialist-led war alliance and its North Atlantic Council to make sure that only systems to their liking were permitted in Europe, based on definitions of rights and types of government, which they themselves approved and imposed.

Anti-communism and the defeat of the Soviet Union and countries of the former people's democracies, not defense of democracy and human rights, was their motivation and the most heinous crimes were justified on this basis.

The accusations against others of violating human rights have proven to be well-orchestrated campaigns to divert attention from what the U.S. imperialists and the “West” have been doing at any particular time. At the time the Universal Declaration was adopted, this expressed itself in the clash between the countries that comprised the socialist camp and those that comprised the capitalist camp. The socialist countries fought against permitting rights to be treated as an abstraction while there was no obligation to put in place the economic and social conditions required for their realization. According to the U.S. imperialist mantra, communism was based on the violation of human rights and for this reason was to be overthrown. The overthrow of communism was thus to prove the superiority of the U.S. democracy and its defense of human rights. To this day they continue to erect monuments to condemn the alleged crimes of the communists while the crimes the U.S. imperialists and their allies, including Canada, have carried out in the name of freedom, democracy and human rights are to remain forgotten. But history has its own cunning. Reality exists. Human beings not only exist but they strive to humanize the social and natural environment as a matter of their being human and this is what settles scores with the old conscience of society.

Since the collapse of the former Soviet Union and people's democracies, when the period of flow of revolution went into retreat and U.S. imperialism began subverting the entire world in order to create a uni-polar world under its dictate, the crimes



against humanity in the name of human rights have become unprecedented, even by the previous standards set during World War II. Meanwhile, the European Union, the Russian Federation, Japan and others have pushed for a multi-polar world, a world divided up between various imperialist powers. It is this drive of the imperialists against the peoples of the world that is behind the most flagrant violations of human rights everywhere, including in the U.S. and the “West” as we see

on the news every day.

Clash Between Authority and Conditions

The developments in the United States, said to be the greatest champion of human rights, expose in stark detail the overall clash between authority and condition. Increasingly, the military and police are given broad authority to carry out an agenda worldwide set by a small ruling elite. The war on terror, the Patriot Act, the militarization of Homeland Security and the consolidation of civil defense within its mandate, and the expansion of the rule of the executive branch of government at all levels give powers to the institutions of the U.S. state to act with impunity and without redress and this is willy nilly extended over Canada. The existence of arbitrary powers established through the war on terror and Homeland Security gives license to the executive powers and administrators of the state and their police authorities to do whatever they wish. Having established these police powers they now claim that the war on terror is no longer needed and the main enemies have become Russia and China and their attempts to undermine the “western democracies” by floating fake news, financing third parties and other such schemes. It is on the pretext of fighting these enemies that the U.S. state now claims to defend democracy, freedom and human rights.

Their desire to control the world is their justification to demand that everyone must have brutal capitalist exploitation, which makes a mockery of human rights; and brutal capitalist democracy, which implements totalitarian methods and police powers and violates the most important of all human rights, the right to conscience, and militarizes culture and life itself. They fight so that finance capital under their control only is entitled to maraud all countries. Free competition is non-existent when it comes to the marauding of international finance capital. No matter what crimes are committed, all of it is done in the name of human rights, opposing corruption and fraud, defending the national interest and other pretexts.

On the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, hollow statements are being made by the representatives of the imperialist powers and the UN Human Rights Commission itself to smash public opinion by diverting attention from this reality but also hoping to render all opposition hopeless. Their preferred method is to create straw men and red herrings in order to push their interests, but if this fails, they justify invasions as we see in the Middle East and coups d'état as

we see in Latin America. A favorite diversion is that of accusing others of human rights violations by defining human rights strictly according to their own interests.

Imperialist Pretexts About Rights Exposed

But the peoples all over the world, on the basis of their own fight in defense of rights, have exposed their pretexts. The imperialists respond by creating even more diversionary pretexts. In the name of defending democracy, freedom and human rights they are now defining rights in even more egregious ways, such as turning their attention to rival business representatives who they humiliate and criminalize because they have their own interests and refuse to submit to their hegemony.

All of it shows that the spearhead of the struggle for human rights today is the affirmation of the very right to be, the right of all human beings to be, which the imperialist powers and all those who have usurped power by force are threatening with extinction. This, in turn, means that the affirmation of human rights today requires the affirmation of the right to conscience which is what participating in making the decisions that affect the lives of human beings and their social and natural environment, implementing these decisions and rendering accounts for the result is all about.

In his important work, *The State of Human Rights After the Cold War*, written in 1992, Hardial Bains wrote:

“Human beings are not only social in the way they acquire their living, but in all aspects of their life, they constitute a break with the animal condition. This break with animal existence — with the vagaries of nature — places a new, vital condition on all humans, the condition of being.... This condition of being dictates ... that human beings must have a say in the production and reproduction of real life. The demand of a say emerges out of the condition of socialization and leads to further socialization.... The condition of being demands that everything be judged on the basis of the extent to which the conditions permit the actualization of human rights.”[1]

“A right is fundamentally a phenomenon of human civilization [and] reminds the powers-that-be that we are human beings and that we should be treated in a way which befits human beings,” Hardial Bains wrote. He explains:

“A clash between the act of being, Authority, which refuses to do its duty, and the act of being, Condition, which is demanding that the people do their duty, is the order of the day.... The act of being of the condition has assumed the primary position over the formalities and abstractions used as justifications by various authorities. When authorities do such a thing [neglect their duty], the right to conscience is violated.... Either the authority must bring about changes in the conditions, that is to shoulder its responsibilities so as to favor the right to conscience, or the conditions will continue to deteriorate until the people terminate the authority.... [The people] are doing their duty by claiming their rights from the act of being in definite conditions; they want to overcome those conditions.”

The violation of human rights today is done by asserting the right to be of Authority in the face of anarchy and violence and the danger to the security of that Authority. This is to cover up that Authority has become anarchy and violence in the form of a state which “never stops claiming that it is innocent of any wrongdoing

and that everything which is being done is for the well-being of the entire people and humanity. But the very act of being, the very existence of anarchy and violence, refutes such a claim.... If such a government were fighting for the interests of the people, and were actually doing its duty, anarchy and violence would not take over. This is because the people, who despise anarchy and violence above all else, since they are the ones who suffer from it the most, would certainly side with such a government.... When a government claims to combat anarchy and violence through the massive use of force, by an all-round assault on the mass of the people and through their humiliation, it is not beyond belief that such a government may have created that anarchy and violence in the first place.”



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Peoples of the World Doing Their Duty by Demanding Rights

The peoples of the world are doing their duty by “demanding their rights on account of their conditions of life.” They are striving to end conditions which violate the human rights of the people and their right to conscience, their right to be. Hardial Bains wrote: “People are seeking to abolish the conditions which give rise to violations of human rights in the first place. They want to protect their right to conscience and use the content of their conscience to improve their condition of being.... It is the Authority which is increasingly coming under fire and it is the conditions which are more and more crying out to be changed and an increasing number of people are coming forward to take up their duty.... Forms will vary, but in every instance they will reflect the contradictory process posed by the clash between the claims of authority and the demands of the conditions.... The act of being is what has to prevail. The act of being of conditions overrides any claims of authority.”

The struggle for human rights today is the struggle for the emergence of the modern democratic personality which upholds democratic principle as an act of being. Those who take up their duty to themselves and society force the Authority to change the conditions. An Authority which refuses to do its duty to the people and society, an Authority which refuses to submit to the Necessity for Change will be overthrown by the very force of history itself to remove all blocks in the path to progress.

On this occasion, those whose Authority is out of tune with the needs of the times will be more concerned with the trappings and symbols of the Authority than in doing their duty to the peoples and their societies. “By depriving the people of the right to conscience, Authority is being turned into a cult and conditions are being worshipped as final and immutable,” Hardial Bains wrote. He noted “Whether or not the right to conscience exists in real

White House Approves Use of Force, Some Law Enforcement Roles for Border Troops

Tara Copp, *Military Times*

The Trump administration in November moved to allow troops to act in law-enforcement capacities, including using lethal force, along the U.S.-Mexico border in an order that may represent a move against longstanding practice. The White House, late November 20, signed a memo allowing troops stationed at the border to engage in some law enforcement roles and use lethal force, if necessary — a move that legal experts have cautioned may run afoul of the *Posse Comitatus Act*.

The new “Cabinet order” was signed by White House Chief of Staff John Kelly, not President Donald Trump. It allows “Department of Defense military personnel” to “perform those military protective activities that the Secretary of Defense determines are reasonably necessary” to protect border agents, including “a show or use of force (including lethal force, where necessary), crowd control, temporary detention and cursory search.” There are approximately 5,900 active-duty troops and 2,100 National Guard forces deployed to the U.S.-Mexico border.

An earlier “decision memo” that came to the same recommendations that were contained in the “cabinet memo” was signed by President Trump, according to documents obtained by *Newsweek*.

Some of those activities, including crowd control and detention, may run into potential conflict with the 1878 *Posse Comitatus Act*. If crossed, the erosion of the act’s limitations could represent a fundamental shift in the way the U.S. military is used, legal experts said.

The Congressional Research Service, the non-partisan research agency for Congress, has found that “case law indicates that ‘execution of the law’ in violation of the *Posse Comitatus Act* occurs (a) when the Armed Forces perform tasks assigned to an organ of civil government, or (b) when the Armed Forces perform tasks assigned to them solely for purposes of civilian government.” However, the law also allows the president “to use military force to suppress insurrection or to enforce federal authority,” CRS has found.

Military forces always have the inherent right to self-defense, but defense of the border agents on U.S. soil is new. In addition, troops have been given additional authorities in previous years to

assist border agents with drug interdictions, but the widespread authorization of use of force for thousands of active-duty troops is unique to this deployment.

Each domestic deployment of troops to any of the 50 states or U.S. territories is governed by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3121.01B, “Standing Rules of Engagement, Standing Rules for the Use of Force by U.S. Forces.” Two annexes, L and N, are specific to Defense Department missions in support of civilian authorities.

However, each mission is unique, and the standing rules for the use of force can be adjusted except for the limitation against active-duty U.S. forces conducting law enforcement on U.S. soil, which is enshrined in the act. [...]

Defense officials said the language in the directive was carefully crafted to avoid running up against the bedrock legal limitations set in *Posse Comitatus*. The law was originally intended to protect the states from being controlled by federal troops. It has evolved into a singly defining, almost church versus state-type wall forbidding active-duty forces under the control of the president from conducting any types of crowd control or law enforcement domestically, essentially ensuring that the U.S. military is not used to control or defeat U.S. citizens on U.S. soil.

Chief of Staff Kelly said in the signed directive that the additional authorities were necessary because “credible evidence and intelligence” have indicated that the thousands of migrants who have now made their way to the U.S. checkpoint near Tijuana, Mexico, “may prompt incidents of violence and disorder” that could threaten border officials. [...]

For months, Trump has looked to the military to seal off the U.S.-Mexico border because he has not been able to persuade Congress to fully fund a border wall. Trump has sought to make the military’s border presence more aggressive and suggested that he might send as many as 15,000 U.S. troops to the border.

Last month, just before the mid-term elections, Trump told troops they could consider migrants throwing rocks at them the use-of-force equivalent of migrants threatening them with firearms. Under current military rules of engagement, that would

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life, will actually determine whether a people live or die. It is the fundamental question of our time, along with matters related to the nature of a state, its form of organization and the economic system. It is at a par with these, and it actually overrides them in its importance.... Rights can only find their concretization in the solution of the problems facing a modern society, be they related to the economic well-being of the people or to the peace and harmony between peoples within a nation or between nations, or to matters of a spiritual and social nature.... Rights will be realized

when Authority changes the conditions in favor of the people and the people carry out their duty by ensuring that Authorities do such a thing. People can perform their duty only if they have the right to conscience. This struggle, then, is the fulcrum on which the uplifting of the world and its renewal rests.”

Note

1. The State of Human Rights After the Cold War -- A Theoretical and Political Treatment, Hardial Bains, 1992.

I • Trump Authorizes Lethal Force

temporary detention and cursory search,” according to the *Military Times* (see article p.14).

There are currently about 5,900 active-duty troops and 2,100 National Guard forces deployed to the U.S.-Mexico border. While the Pentagon has said the active-duty troops are mainly unarmed, this order indicates they could now be armed. Secretary of Defense Mattis made this clear, saying, “We don’t have guns in their hands right now,” but “If I change the mission then something like that could happen.” The order was also quickly followed by use of tear gas, a chemical weapon banned in warfare, against unarmed migrants, mainly women and children, on the Mexican side of the border.

The *Military Times* reports, “Some of those activities, including crowd control and detention, may run into potential conflict with the 1878 *Posse Comitatus Act*. If crossed, the erosion of the act’s limitations could represent a fundamental shift in the way the U.S. military is used.” The article emphasized that *Posse Comitatus* “has evolved into a singly defining, almost church versus state-type wall forbidding active-duty forces under the control of the president from conducting any types of crowd control or law enforcement domestically, essentially ensuring that the U.S. military is not used to control or defeat U.S. citizens on U.S. soil.”

It is significant that the *Military Times*, a main voice of the military, is emphasizing this “church versus state” wall and that Trump might be destroying it. It is reflective of the growing conflicts within the military and between the military and the president, the Commander-in-Chief. Even before the memo, Retired Admiral James Stavridis, former commander of the U.S. military’s Southern Command, openly rejected Trump’s “fictitious caravan invasion,” the justification given for the troop deployment. Stavridis was also former Supreme Allied Commander for Europe and NATO and was vetted as a running mate for Hillary Clinton. While now retired, he remains a significant force openly against the president.

Trump has deployed the troops and issued the use of lethal force and detention order in part to force the compliance of the military. The deployment, where the military decides issues of searches, detention and lethal force, is a means to bring all the various federal policing agencies under military control. As Mattis brings out, he is the one deciding the mission. In many ways it can be considered a live military exercise to test the waters for potential martial law. When accompanied with expanding military detention camps and Trump’s repeated claims of “invasion” and “violent criminals,” the ground is clearly being laid for such a possibility. The problem is that martial law requires that the military and all the various policing agencies, which are always in great contention with each other, submit to the dictate of the president. Indications are that such an action could well trigger a more open civil war situation. This is especially true given the continuing battle with the various states, like California and New York, and the dysfunction of elections and Congress, which no longer serve to ease the conflicts among the rulers.

It is also the case the U.S. civil war is related to international wars, including in this case a potential invasion of Mexico. Trump’s



repeated claims about anarchy and violence in Mexico and the need to control the border are connected with this potential use of troops in Mexico. According to the Associated Press, in a conversation with former Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto about “criminal gangs and drug lords,” Trump threatened, “You aren’t doing enough to stop them. I think your military is scared. Our military isn’t, so I just might send them down to take care of it.” While he afterward said he was joking, given Mexico now has a new President, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO), who is expected to oppose U.S. dictate, it could occur. In analyzing the situation, it is important to recognize the inter-relationship between U.S. civil war and U.S. wars abroad, as both influence each other.

The troop deployment is also aimed at the broad and persistent resistance defending the rights of migrants and more generally of all. When Mattis uses the example of an unarmed migrant “beating up” a highly armed border agent — something that does not occur — he is also preparing the ground to justify use of the military against protesters and migrants alike. It is well-known that police provocateurs are sent into demonstrations to break windows, or in this case throw stones, or get into fights with agents. Indeed, there is the recent case of the undercover cop posing as a demonstrator being beaten by other cops attacking the demonstrators. Given the growing unity of the resistance and their work together both sides of the border, such provocations are likely. No such justifications can be accepted, whether for attacking the peoples here or in Mexico.

Following one section or another of the ruling class into their civil war and more wars abroad is no solution. The internationalism currently being expressed at the border, where people both sides are joining to defend rights and across the country, where people are organizing supplies, housing refugee children and more, is the means to contend with U.S. attacks.

Further advancing the fight for an *Anti-War Government, Peace Economy and A Democracy where We Decide* is a means forward. An anti-war government is an aim that recognizes the relationship between imperialist war and civil war and provides a way to block both, as does a peace economy. A democracy where we decide provides the means for rights to be guaranteed and for relations of mutual benefit. Now is the time to advance the work for *Anti-War Government, Peace Economy and A Democracy where We Decide!*

I • Government Shutdown

September 2019. The massive Department of Homeland Security, with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Patrol (CBP), two of the largest policing agencies, has not been funded. While the policing agencies will not be impacted, the rest of the more than 70,000 person department will. Other departments and agencies are also waiting for the approval of the current spending bill. Tens of thousands of workers can be laid off without pay and many services impacted. It is also possible that if the shutdown happens December 21, government will not reopen until January, when Congress returns from its holiday break.

President Trump, in a televised meeting with top House and Senate Democrats Pelosi and Schumer, said he will proudly shut down government if Congress does not provide \$5 billion for extending the wall at the border with Mexico. He rejects the bill that did pass, promoted by Schumer, providing \$1.3 billion. "If we don't get what we want, one way or the other, whether it's through you, through a military, through anything you want to call, I will shut down the government," Trump said. "I am proud to shut down the government over border security."

Press Secretary Sarah Sanders continued to try to invoke fear, claiming, "Any government funding measure must include responsible border security, including a wall, to protect the American people from drugs, crime, terrorism, public health threats, and the severe straining of the social safety net. Illegal immigration is deeply unfair to American workers, wage-earners, and taxpayers — costing billions of dollars and thousands of innocent lives." Many undocumented immigrants are U.S. workers and have been for decades. It is the current war economy and funding along with attacks and crimes by government that are causing insecurity. Trump is continuing his efforts to try and justify further use of the military against people

both sides of the border. He thinks promoting the fear-factor will convince people, but the many demonstrations and actions in support of the migrants and defending rights show otherwise.

It is also the case that the president, Schumer and Pelosi, all want to divert from the reality that government is dysfunctional. Government shutdowns and threats of them are now a regular occurrence, something which greatly impacts the public. How is it that the only concern is who is to blame, and not the harm done to all those impacted? The fighting among and between the factions is such that major legislation, such as that for immigration, does not get passed and budget bills embroil government workers and those they serve in these shutdowns. Even threats of a shutdown requires tremendous preparation by the departments impacted as workers strive to do whatever they can to lessen the impact on the public.

What stands out in the situation is that government is dysfunctional and the current cartel party system of vying factions cannot solve this problem. What is needed is a democracy that empowers the people to govern and decide. The talk of invasion and threats to U.S. security and attempts to get people to take sides with one faction or the other of the rulers, are all aimed at depriving people of an outlook. Such an outlook provides people with a favorable vantage point on the basis of which they can identify and sort out the problems they face to their advantage. A concerted effort is being made to keep people disinformed at a time the vantage point they need is based on the necessity for change, the necessity to empower the people so that they can set a new direction for the economy and bring a democracy into being that is consistent with the demands of the times, not the desperation of the rich. Such a democracy is one that empowers the people and puts guaranteeing the rights of all at the center.

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authorize a return use of deadly force. Trump later backtracked on the rifles comment, saying he never directed troops to shoot migrants and that Customs and Border Protection would take the lead in any of those scenarios.

Mattis Explains New Roles, Authorities at Border

Hours after the White House signed a late night directive expanding the authorities of U.S. troops at the Mexican border, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis met with reporters at the Pentagon to explain what the new policies mean for the domestically deployed forces. The memo directs Mattis to decide which authorities border troops may need to carry out their duties.

Mattis said that while the authorities for U.S. troops along the border have expanded, the Standing Rules for the Use of Force for troops deployed to the border have not changed — unless he decides they need to. "We don't have guns in their hands right now," Mattis said. He added, "I now have the authority to do more." Asked about lethal use of force he said, "If I change the mission then something like that could happen."

Mattis said, "We are not doing law enforcement. We do not

have arrest authority." [Troops are present, often with their armored trucks, to reinforce Border Patrol agents as they attack demonstrators. Just days after Trump's order, tear gas was used against people still in Mexico, including many women and children. VOR Ed. Note]

The memo authorizes troops to be used to provide "temporary detention and cursory search," something they are not allowed to do under *Posse Comitatus*. Mattis said "Detention, I would put it in terms of minutes." He added, "In other words, if someone's beating on a border patrolman and if we were in position to have to do something about it, we could stop them from beating on them and take them over and deliver them to a border patrolman who would then arrest them for it." He claimed, "There's no violation of *Posse Comitatus*," Mattis said. "We're not going to arrest, or anything else. To stop someone from beating on someone and turn them over to someone else — this is minutes, not even hours, OK?"

In terms of length of deployment Mattis said "It's mission dependent." And that some troops may be needed for "new missions." (November 21, 2018)

Buffalo Forum



Local Publication of the
U.S. Marxist-Leninist Organization

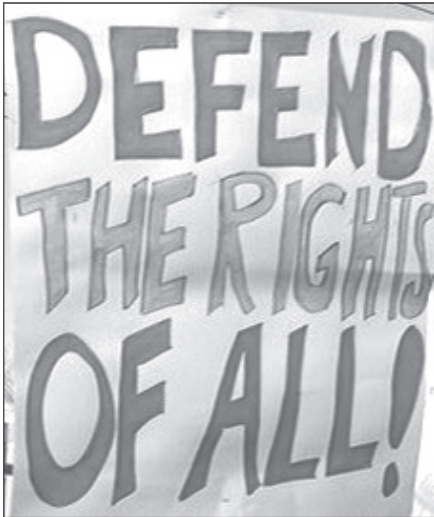
Workers of all countries, unite!

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December 14, 2018

Vol. 22 #12



Universal Declaration of Human Rights Celebrates 70th Anniversary

Affirming human rights is the most important question of our time. It arises out of the objective developments, that is, the colossal advance of the productive forces. It is a question that is calling for the entire restructuring of society, the theory and philosophy guiding it, as well as the economic, political and other theories that shape modern life.

The modern definition of human rights

can be summed up in one sentence: People have rights by virtue of being human. This is the cornerstone around which the entire base and the superstructure of the society have to be built. All people have rights in the objective sense, that is, by virtue of being human. These rights can neither be given nor taken away. This is to say that anyone who tries to take away these

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25 COMMUNITY MEMBERS COME FORWARD TO HELP

When Parents Are Detained, Who Is There for the Kids?

Johnette Howard, East Hampton Star, New York

Minerva Perez, the executive director of Organizacion Latino-Americana (OLA) of Eastern Long Island, is used to seeing possibilities where others see pessimism. But even Ms. Perez admits that when she posted an urgent message on Facebook on November 19, the Monday before Thanksgiving, she privately thought the request was “a huge ask.” It read:

“EMERGENCY CALL for help: Would you be willing to assist with temporary care for children in danger of being

put into foster care because parent is being detained for non-violent offense such as driving without a license?”

“There are families in East Hampton right now in danger of this happening. . . .”

Ms. Perez was surprised when 25 people — many of them Latino, many not — immediately responded with open-ended offers to take in the children. Most volunteered before they even knew the rest of the story: The parent in question was a 30-something

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ATTACKS ON STUDENT RIGHTS

Suspensions are Not Solutions

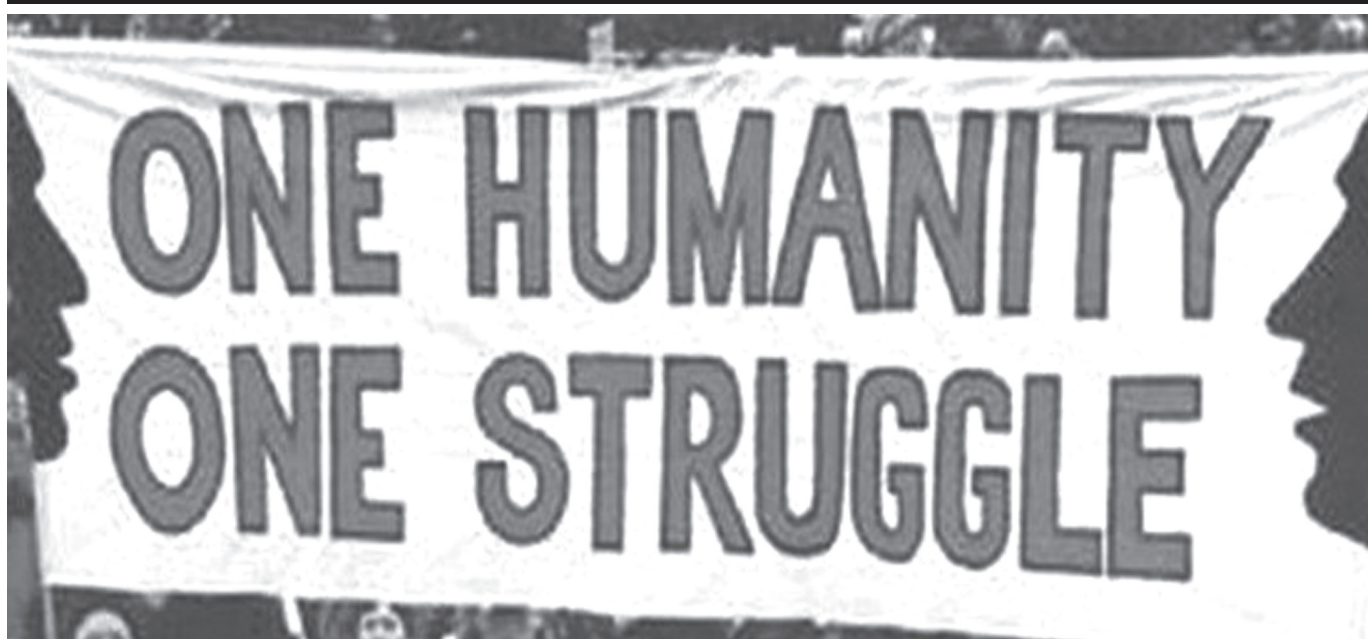
A recent report confirmed what many students, parents and teachers in Buffalo already know — Buffalo suspends students at a higher rate than any of the large urban districts in New York State. African American students are more than twice as likely to be suspended than their white classmates, with black males are targeted the most.

An earlier report, using data from the 2016-17 school year, put a number of Buffalo High Schools in the top ten for the highest number of suspensions. The report ranked 50 public high schools. For Buffalo, MST was #1 (the worst) with 57 suspensions per 100

students; Burgard #2 with 50 students per 100; Riverside #3 with 33 per 100 students; Emerson #4 with 32 per 100, International Prep # 6 with 30 per 100; and McKinley #9 with 24 suspensions per 100 students.

The latest report, issued by the New York Equity Coalition, addressed out-of-school suspensions. It makes clear that African Americans are suspended far more often. It also raises the need to use alternatives that are not as punitive. But it does not speak to the problem already occurring in Buffalo, where the time and resources necessary for

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rights will face the people's opposition. At the same time, the people have to provide these rights with a constitutional guarantee that they can protect. Society has to be organized to provide these rights as a matter of principle, without exception.

A society that has as its foundation the guarantee of human rights according to the modern definition will provide great inspiration for other peoples in the world to follow suit. As people engage in building new societies in their own countries it is normal to sympathize with and support others who are striving for the same.

On the occasion of International Human Rights Day, which this year also celebrates the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, *Voice of Revolution* salutes the peoples of the world who are waging a life and death struggle to provide human rights with a guarantee. We salute all those across the country organizing to defend rights and to further advance this struggle — which is vital for the advance of society.

The fight for human rights is testimony to the fact that societies are advanced enough to express these rights and human

beings are determined to overcome their absence. This can be seen in the many united actions and in the determined stand against government attacks, expressed for example in the demand, *Do Not Do This in Our Name, Do Not Do This in Our Community*. It is further evidenced in the broad rejection of the direction the country is headed in and the efforts to take society in a new direction, one that guarantees the rights of all.

Rights are not expressed by the fact that they are given by this or that economic or political power, this or that social or cultural institution. It is necessary to evaluate these rights as they exist within a particular society or internationally so that the extent to which the society has to advance can be ascertained and the tasks to affirm them can be brought forth.

Of course, this is what the old forces who usurp power through force and fraud do not want the working class and people to do. Their aim is to get the working class and people to submit to their demands. To achieve this, they do everything possible to promote the present arrangements as credible, even as they restructure everything to eliminate even the notion that modern

society is responsible for the claims of its members upon it. They go so far as to rule out even the very mention that society is advancing from one stage to the next by claiming that liberal democracy is the highest possible development of democracy. This is done to block the striving of human beings to change the conditions that are blocking society's path to progress.

Trump, for example, in his proclamation for Human Rights Day brought forward the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights as the means to protect human rights. How can these Old governing structures, which have shown themselves dysfunctional and unsustainable, serve to further advance society? His claim also indicates that the enslavement and genocide enshrined in the Constitution are to be imposed on all. The militarization at the border and growing military detention camps are evidence of this direction.

Voice of Revolution calls on its readers to step up efforts to defend the rights of all abroad and at home and to pay attention to the striving of the people to establish a new coherence in order to renew society so that the human rights of all are provided with a guarantee.

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STATE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE U.S.

Genocide of Mass Incarceration

One indicator of the health and well being of the people of any given country is the incarceration rate. The U.S. has the highest incarceration rate in the world. It is also the only country that gives juveniles life sentences. There are 2.2 million people in prisons and jails — a 500% increase over the last 40 years. Prisons are overcrowded and punitive even though there is increasing evidence that large-scale incarceration is not an effective means of achieving public safety. That is not its aim, which is repression and terrorizing of the people.

Prisons, like schools with their suspension rates, are also discriminatory, with African Americans disproportionately represented, as they are far more likely to be charged, convicted and sentenced to long sentences. Below are a few facts from the

Sentencing Project to indicate the genocide of mass incarceration in the U.S.

Some Characteristics of Prisons

- The number of people incarcerated in state and federal prisons increased by 9.7% from 1,391,261 to 1,526,792 between 2000 and 2015. In addition to the nearly 1.5 million people in state and federal prisons, there were 721,300 people in local jails in 2015, yielding a total incarcerated population of 2.2 million.

- 1 in every 115 adults in the U.S. was in prison or jail in 2015. 4.6 million people were on probation or parole in 2015 for a total of 6.7 million people in America under some form of criminal justice supervision.

Some Characteristics of People in Prison

- 93% of people in prison are men and 7 percent are women, with 104,968 women were in state or federal prison in 2015.

- One in 17 black men aged 30-34 was in prison in 2015, as were 1 in 42 Hispanic males and 1 in 91 white males in the same age group.

- Black males born in 2001 had a 32 percent chance of serving time in prison at some point in their lives; Hispanic males had a 17% change; white males had a 6% chance.

- In 2015, the rate of prison incarceration for black women was double the rate for white women; the rate for Hispanic women was 1.2 times higher.

- Nearly half (46%) of people incarcerated in state prisons in 2015 were convicted of nonviolent drug, property or public order crimes.

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restorative justice practices, as one example, are not provided. This is especially true for training of students and sufficient time, counselors and aides for teachers. In general, suspensions is looked at in isolation, rather than as a reflection of more general problems, like lack of funding and resources for the Buffalo Schools and for addressing issues of poverty and lead poisoning, as well.

The New York State Board of Regents is expected to adopt regulations they say will hold districts more accountable for the number of out-of-school suspensions. However it is not clear if they too will address the issue in isolation and use punitive methods rather than addressing the problems that give rise to suspensions. And the fact that most students and parents think there should not be out-of-school suspensions.

Some of the findings from the Equity Coalition report:

- Buffalo had the highest overall suspension rate when compared to its peers around the state — Rochester, Syracuse and Yonkers. Nearly 14 percent of students in Buffalo received at least one

suspension.

- Buffalo is twice as likely to suspend black students than white students. Nineteen percent of black students had at least one suspension, compared to roughly 9 percent of whites. The suspension rate for black students in Buffalo also was the highest when stacked up against Rochester, Syracuse and Yonkers. In New York City, the overall suspension is lower because of how the district imposes out-of-school suspensions, but the suspensions are also racially disproportionate.

- Black male high school students are suspended at a higher rate than any other group of students. That is particularly true for Buffalo. Outside of New York City, 19 percent of black high school students received at least one suspension. In Buffalo, it was 30 percent.

While the report speaks to the discrimination against African American students, it does not address the fact that suspensions are also arbitrary, with different students getting different punishments for the same problem. Suspensions are also used for what is called insubordination — often students speaking out for their rights —

even though this is not supposed to occur. Similarly there is little coherence in which infractions are given which penalties.

Buffalo is supposed to be implementing restorative justice practices, where students and teachers are brought together to discuss problems and find both short and long-term solutions together. It is supposed to be a means to resolve conflicts in a manner that assists all concerned, but that generally is not occurring. This is in part because suspensions are looked at in isolation rather than in relation to the state of public schools overall, the society of which they are a part and the need for parents, teachers and students to have decision making power. At the very least, far more teachers, counselors and aides are needed to provide smaller class sizes and a means to address issues more fully, using the expertise of all concerned. More generally a broader overhaul of the curriculum to modernize it is also needed. And an end to a culture that is more like prison than a learning center. Justice and an end to inequality cannot be achieved without looking at the parts in relation to the whole, especially when it comes to decision making.

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Latina cancer patient and single mother with two children. She was stopped by police for driving without a license, a choice the woman made because she had no viable alternative to get to her medical treatments or handle the rest of her responsibilities, including work.

To Ms. Perez, “To have 25 people who have families, who have responsibilities, get back to us right away just shows the depth of concern our community has for those that are vulnerable.”

For the Mom, when she failed to appear for her recent arraignment because she was “terrified” that she might be flagged as an undocumented immigrant and deported once she entered the legal system, her worst fears were confirmed: A warrant was issued for her arrest, Ms. Perez said. She turned herself in and made bail and is now awaiting a local court decision to see if she will be sent to the county jail.

Ms. Perez emphasized she does not advocate driving without a license or breaking the law in any way. Laura Auerbach and Lynn Blumenfeld, two of the 25 people who responded to Ms. Perez’s plea for foster homes, independently stressed the same theme. But all three women also said they question whether these kinds of nonviolent transgressions should trigger the penalties immigrant families are facing today.

It is a scenario that has been playing out over and over here and across the country since the Trump administration made immigration enforcement a front-burner issue and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents started actively pursuing people.

Driving without a license is not an uncommon offense. But what many people do not know is that it is not possible to get a driver’s license in New York if you are not a documented U.S. resident. As such, the woman in this case faced the same dilemma many non-citizens here confront. They often cannot get work visas anymore, let alone green cards or a path to citizenship. Paying for a car service day in, day out is too expensive. Public transportation? Local legislators are trying to address the acknowledged gaps with proposals for increased bus and train service, and the so-called “last mile”

program to get workers from the train stations to their local jobs. But such expanded services do not exist yet.

“And so, what do you do?” Ms. Perez asked. And what do you do as a community, she continued, when individuals are sometimes literally being plucked off the street or taken from their homes by immigration enforcement, thrown into jail, abruptly depriving their family of a breadwinner or parent, traumatizing or even orphaning their children, imperiling their job status, and plunging them into permanent deportation proceedings — all for nonviolent offenses?

What do you do when even the fear of being picked up has left families battling severe stress and anxiety, especially when children are U.S. citizens, but one or both parents are not?

Ms. Auerbach and Ms. Blumenfeld say these are sticky questions they ponder too. Ms. Auerbach and her husband, Dominic LaPierre, have three children. He is an architect who works frequently with Latino crews and she is an art therapist who does pro bono work with the Latino community, especially women and children.

Ms. Auerbach said when she heard Ms. Perez got 25 foster parent volunteers, what it signified to her is “our local community does not feel the same as our government [on the immigration issue]. And we recognize it’s going to take a grassroots effort to change what’s happening. . . . These people are our friends, our neighbors, an important part of the fabric of this community.”

Ms. Auerbach said she was also motivated to help because, “I know the anxiety and fears and PTSD that is happening from my work with the Latino community. I’m deeply, deeply saddened — and angry — at how our country is treating Latinos and Muslims, targeting those two groups in particular. Our country was built on immigration. We’re all descended from immigrants or refugees or slaves.”

Ms. Auerbach said all four of her grandparents were Russian Jews that emigrated to the United States to escape pogroms in 1912 and 1913. “They were running from persecution, from death,” Ms. Auerbach said. “And when they came to the U.S. they

were welcomed at Ellis Island. So I still have that immigrant mentality. I will always feel there is room at the table for one more.”

Ms. Perez said OLA is working on at least 10 cases of Latinos in severe peril of being deported for nonviolent offenses or old charges that they served their punishment for years ago. But numerous other families also have issues. To help, OLA has entered working relationships with the East Hampton and Southampton Town governments, asking them to publicly declare their policies on immigration enforcement and hammer out new legislation, if necessary.

OLA sponsors community mental health workshops, and Ms. Perez landed funding for OLA to hire a staff human rights attorney, Andrew Strong, to help families with legal issues.

Ms. Blumenfeld, a Montauk businesswoman, said she objects to how people are being actively targeted. “One question I have, just from reading the weekly crime reports, is are all these people really breaking the law, or are they being profiled?” Ms. Blumenfeld asked. “To me, it just seems like our country has lost its spiritual center. . . . The day after the [2016 presidential] election we got Ku Klux Klan invitations here in Montauk. The country is changing. I wanted to help because I think every individual has to act in a way that brings us together, and not divides us.” Ms. Blumenfeld added, “The East End would collapse without Latino workers.” [. . .]

Ms. Perez added, “We also have to understand the landscape before us. . . . Our judges do have discretion in many of these cases. . . . At OLA, we want to make sure this is a deep conversation that people are willing to have. Are we making our communities less safe or safer when we do this?”

Ms. Auerbach said she sees the trauma surface in the art that her Latino therapy clients produce. Like Ms. Blumenfeld, Ms. Auerbach emphasized she felt sheepish even being interviewed for this story. Ms. Auerbach said she and her husband were acting on what they think this country should be. “We were just offering to do what I think anyone who calls themselves an U.S. citizen would do,” Ms. Auerbach said. “Particularly when it’s children in need.”