

WORKERS WORLD

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite! workers.org

JUNE 24, 2010 Vol. 52, No. 24 50¢

Detroit's crisis demands ABOLISH RACISM, CAPITALISM

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire
Detroit

After decades of rapacious capitalist policies aimed at the weakening of the trade union movement, the super-exploitation of labor and the maintenance of racism and national oppression against African Americans, Detroit is the epicenter of the economic crisis in the United States.

Corporate Detroit — the financial institutions, insurance companies and other multinational corporations — continues to set the agenda for the future of the city. With such a political orientation, it is not surprising that the city of Detroit continues to decline in all the major economic indicators.

This economic policy failure is not confined to Detroit. In fact, the crisis is international in scope due to the phenomena of overproduction and the unequal distribution of wealth and economic power.

Over the last three years the economic situation throughout the country has taken a drastic turn towards disaster. In the fall of 2008 the collapse of several major banks, insurance companies and industrial firms caused panic among the ruling class and the state.

When President Obama won the elections in November 2008, there were reports that his administration would engage in a vigorous economic stimulus program similar to the New Deal of the 1930s. Yet when Obama announced his appointees to the treasury, foreign affairs, labor, housing and defense, it became obvious that there would not be any real shift in U.S. domestic or foreign policy.

How does this political crisis play itself out in the city of Detroit and the state of Michigan? The most pressing need in Detroit is for meaningful employment for nearly half the city's population. Detroit has the highest unemployment rate among all major cities in the U.S.

Unemployment and underemployment

In Detroit, the problem of joblessness has multiple ramifications on the municipality's overall social fabric. The city of Detroit has an extremely high rate of poverty — approximately 40 percent and rising. Many people who have not been working become discouraged and completely drop out of the labor market.

This income loss affects small businesses, housing, schools, and family and community life. These factors can even hamper the ability of people to mobilize and organize around their most basic needs.

In Detroit, the overall quality of life has deteriorated. There is a dearth not only of money for individual households but also of fresh foods, recreational facilities, cultural activities and reliable public transportation.

Despite ruling class propaganda that promotes the myth of an economic recovery, recent reports indicate

that virtually every major urban area in the U.S. has seen an increase in unemployment over the last few months.

In the city of Detroit — where unemployment is highest and with its 85 percent African-American population — the crisis could accurately be described as being at depression levels. The disproportionately high unemployment rate among African Americans has become a cause of concern for many civil rights organizations.

The crisis in education

In Detroit, the school system has been severely affected by the decline in employment and the losses in individual household income. In 2009 Gov. Jennifer Granholm appointed an emergency financial manager purportedly to address the growing deficit.

The problem of urban education is directly linked to the overall economic crisis and the national oppression of African Americans and other people of color in the U.S. Detroit's overwhelmingly African-American school system has been in decline for decades due to underfunding, the loss of students and the foreclosure problem.

However, in 1999, when the state took over the Detroit public education system, the district had a surplus of funds as well as a voter-approved \$1.5 billion bond for capital improvements. After five years of state control, the Detroit school system was virtually bankrupt. Since

Continued on page 6

JOIN WORKERS WORLD PARTY

What's next after USSF? FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM

Workers World Party extends warm greetings and solidarity to the thousands of progressive activists from around the country and the world who are gathering in Detroit for the U.S. Social Forum.

Perhaps you are a young person wondering how to pay for your education or if you'll ever get a job. Or maybe you're a senior whose pension has been ripped off by the company where you toiled for many years. Or you're a laid-off or low-wage worker trying to provide for yourself and your family on no or diminished income. Or you have no health insurance and can't get the

Continued on page 10

Meet us at the social forum! 6,7

LGBT PRIDE 2



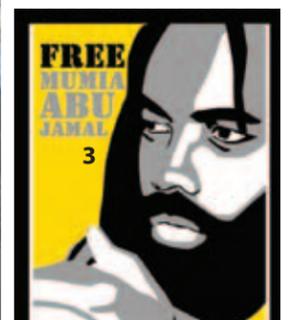
PHOTO: KELLY VALDEZ

SAVE THE PLANET From capitalist destruction 8-9



PUERTO RICO STUDENTS Learning through strike 11

BE IN PHILADELPHIA JULY 4 TO



SUBSCRIBE TO WORKERS WORLD

Eight weeks trial \$4 One year subscription \$25

Name _____ Phone _____

Email _____ Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Workers World Weekly Newspaper 55 W. 17th St. #5C, NY, NY 10011
212.627.2994 workers.org

Memorial pays tribute to gay militant, Sebastian Pernice

WORKERS WORLD
this week...



Marsha Goldberg and Tim Sutton
people of color heroically fought back against bigoted police repression at the Stonewall Inn in the Village area of Manhattan, N.Y.

Although Pernice walked with a cane due to a hip replacement, any pain or discomfort that he may have felt didn't

The New York branch of Workers World Party held a memorial June 12 for Sebastian Pernice, a 1969 Stonewall Rebellion participant and Party member who passed away on Feb. 1 at the age of 61 from lung cancer.

Many of the speakers spoke of Pernice's fierce dedication to the struggle for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer equality and for the liberation of all working and oppressed peoples. Besides the various speakers who paid tribute to Pernice, there were also cultural performances.

A video showed Pernice speaking at a 2009 WWP forum marking the 40th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion. Pernice shared his remembrances of that four-day rebellion, when mostly young transgender

prohibit him from joining picket lines and rallies. Before he became bedridden, Pernice could be found every Thursday helping to organize the WW paper shipments to the branches.

Born in Sicily, Pernice was a working-class chef whose cooking brought great joy to the staff and volunteers at the Solidarity Center.

The memorial was chaired by long-time lesbian activist and WWP national committee member, Marsha Goldberg, and featured opening remarks by Pernice's life-partner, Tim Sutton, both pictured here. The memorial ended with the singing of the Communist song "The Internationale" and with a chant of "Sebastian Pernice, ipresente!"

— Report and photos by Monica Moorehead

★ **In the U.S.**

- Abolish racism, capitalism 1
- Memorial pays tribute to gay militant, Sebastian Pernice 2
- Anti-war message at Philly Pride 2
- Outrage over U.S. Border Patrol's killing of Mexican youth ... 3
- Mumia Abu-Jamal on 'Soul Music' 3
- Defend education, cancel the debt to the banks 4
- Autoworkers rally outside convention 4
- Minnesota nurses struggle vs. lockouts 5
- Detroit legal aid workers demand union contract 5
- On the picket line 5
- FIST youth: Thoughts on the U.S. Social Forum 6
- Come visit us while you're in Detroit 7
- Fracking a danger to communities 8
- Pollution, exploitation and socialism 8

★ **Around the world**

- Bhopal disaster culprits given slap on wrist 8
- Haitian farmers reject Monsanto's seeds of destruction 8
- To save the planet, get rid of capitalism! 9
- South African trade unions boycott Israeli apartheid 10
- Gaza Freedom Flotilla — the new Freedom Riders 10
- Striking Puerto Rico students hold graduation ceremonies 11

★ **Editorials**

- Fight for socialism 1

★ **Noticias En Español**

- BP: Capitalismo y medioambiente 12

Anti-war message at Philly Pride



PHOTO: KELLEY VALDEZ

Workers World Party and the International Action Center joined the Vets for Peace contingent during Philadelphia's annual lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender pride parade on June 13. The group was well received the entire way. In addition to the anti-war contingent, there were contingents for immigrant rights, for youth and in support of striking hotel workers. □

Organize the South

The Durham Solidarity Center has officially opened its doors to the progressive movement. The Center is home to the Durham branch of Workers World Party; Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST) youth group; Bail Out the People Movement — North Carolina; and others. The address is Durham Solidarity Center, Suite 408, 331 W. Main St., Durham, N.C. 27701. □

Rainbow Solidarity

In Defense of CUBA

This ground-breaking book documents revolutionary Cuba's inspiring trajectory of progress towards liberation of sexualities, genders and sexes.

Available at Leftbooks.com

By Leslie Feinberg, author of Stone Butch Blues



JOIN US

Workers World Party (WWP) fights on all issues that face the working class and oppressed peoples—Black and white, Latino/a, Asian, Arab and Native peoples, women and men, young and old, lesbian, gay, bi, straight, trans, disabled, working, unemployed and students.

If you would like to know more about WWP, or to join us in these struggles, contact the branch nearest you.

National Office
55 W. 17 St.
New York, NY 10011
212-627-2994
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta
P.O. Box 5565
Atlanta, GA 30307
404-627-0185
atlanta@workers.org

Baltimore
c/o Solidarity Center
2011 N. Charles St., Bsm.
Baltimore, MD 21218
443-909-8964
baltimore@workers.org

Boston
284 Amory St.
Boston, MA 02130
617-522-6626
Fax 617-983-3836
boston@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.
367 Delaware Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14202
716-883-2534
buffalo@workers.org

Chicago
27 N. Wacker Dr. #138
Chicago, IL 60606
773-381-5839
chicago@workers.org

Cleveland
P.O. Box 5963
Cleveland, OH 44101
216-531-4004
cleveland@workers.org

Denver
denver@workers.org

Detroit
5920 Second Ave.
Detroit, MI 48202
313-459-0777
detroit@workers.org

Durham, N.C.
Suite 408
331 West Main Street
Durham, NC 27701
durham@workers.org

Houston
P.O. Box 3454
Houston, TX 77253-3454
713-503-2633
houston@workers.org

Los Angeles
5274 W Pico Blvd.
Suite # 207
Los Angeles, CA 90019
la@workers.org
323-306-6240

Milwaukee
milwaukee@workers.org

Philadelphia
P.O. Box 34249
Philadelphia, PA 19101
610-931-2615
phila@workers.org

Pittsburgh
pittsburgh@workers.org

Rochester, N.Y.
585-436-6458
rochester@workers.org

San Diego, Calif.
P.O. Box 33447
San Diego
CA 92163
619-692-0355

San Francisco
2940 16th St., #207
San Francisco
CA 94103
415-738-4739
sf@workers.org

Tucson, Ariz.
tucson@workers.org

Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 57300
Washington, DC 20037
dc@workers.org

Workers World

55 West 17 Street

New York, N.Y. 10011

Phone: (212) 627-2994

Fax: (212) 675-7869

E-mail: ww@workers.org

Web: www.workers.org

Vol. 52, No. 24 • June 24, 2010

Closing date: June 15, 2010

Editor: Deirdre Griswold

Technical Editor: Lal Roohk

Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell, Leslie Feinberg, Kris Hamel, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson

West Coast Editor: John Parker

Contributing Editors: Abayomi Azikiwe, Greg Butterfield, Jaimeson Champion, G. Dunkel, Fred Goldstein, Teresa Gutierrez, Larry Hales, David Hoskins, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Cheryl LaBash, Milt Neidenberg, Bryan G. Pfeifer, Betsey Piette, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Gloria Rubac

Technical Staff: Sue Davis, Shelley Ettinger, Bob McCubbin, Maggie Vascassenno

Mundo Obrero: Carl Glenn, Teresa Gutierrez, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Donna Lazarus, Michael Martínez, Carlos Vargas

Supporter Program: Sue Davis, coordinator

Copyright © 2010 Workers World. Verbatim copying and distribution of articles is permitted in any medium without royalty provided this notice is preserved.

Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the first week of January by WW Publishers, 55 W. 17 St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011. Phone: (212) 627-2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$25; institutions: \$35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from University Microfilms International, 300 Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Subscription information is at www.workers.org/email.php.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., 5th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10011.

Outrage grows over U.S. Border Patrol's killing of Mexican youth

By Gloria Rubac

A June 11 demonstration in San Antonio to protest the killing of 14-year-old Mexican student Sergio Adrián Hernández Huereka by a U.S. Border Patrol agent placed the blame for his killing on the U.S.'s militarization of its border with Mexico.

Hernández Huereka was shot and killed on June 8 as he played with friends near the border in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, across the river from El Paso, Texas. His body was found in Mexico with a spent shell casing nearby, raising the question of whether the fatal shot was fired inside Mexico.

In a press release announcing the protest, the Southwest Workers Union said, "President Obama's decision to send an additional 1,200 National Guard troops to the U.S.-Mexico border is what caused the

death of an innocent Mexican student."

Mexicans are seething over this death, the second in two weeks at the hands of the Border Patrol. On May 28, 42-year-old Anastasio Hernández was beaten and tasered to death on the border between San Ysidro, Calif., and Tijuana, Mexico. He had lived in San Diego for 26 years. Hundreds protested this killing on June 3. (Workers World, June 10)

Last week in Arizona a Border Patrol agent pleaded guilty in federal court to a criminal civil rights charge for assaulting a Mexican citizen by punching and kicking him. Sentencing is set for August.

A wake for Hernández Huereka was held in the family's house on the outskirts of Ciudad Juárez on June 9. On an unpaved street more than 30 family and friends gathered around a simple grey metal casket, calling for justice.

His sister, Rosario Hernández, sobbed

and cried out, "Damn them! Damn them!" María Guadalupe Huereka, his mother, said, "May God forgive them because I know nothing will happen [to them.]" (Associated Press, June 9)

Above the casket was a photo of the youth wearing his soccer uniform and his junior high school report cards, which showed grades of all As and Bs. His mother said he was a good student who never got in trouble.

Prosecutors in the Mexican border state of Chihuahua have concluded that Hernández Huereka's death was an intentional homicide and have turned the case over to federal prosecutors for further investigation. Lawmakers from both the ruling and opposition parties have demanded the extradition of the agent for prosecution in Mexico, although Mexican President Felipe Calderón has not given any indication his government plans to

seek extradition. Instead, Calderón called for a thorough U.S. investigation that "clears up the facts and culminates with punishing those responsible."

The FBI, which claims the youth was throwing rocks at the agent, has now opened a civil rights probe.

In an open letter to the families of the recent victims as well as the people of Mexico, Latin America and the world, Unión del Barrio, a revolutionary Mexican organization based in California, said: "We are clear that these attacks are part and parcel of the genocidal legislation fabricated and elaborated by the U.S. government. These acts did not happen in a vacuum, isolated from the climate of hate, racism and discrimination that are part of the very fabric of legislation such as [Senate Bill] 1070 and the policy of the militarization of the border." □

Be in Philadelphia! JULY 4 ANNUAL PROTEST TO DEMAND MUMIA'S FREEDOM!

July 3rd is the day that political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal was sentenced to death for a killing he did not commit. This year's July 4 theme is "ancestral uprising!" featuring dramatic presentations through performances of heroic anti-slavery fighters. The protest will also include a special presentation on the year-long struggle to demand a civil rights investigation for Mumia on the part of the U.S. Justice Department.

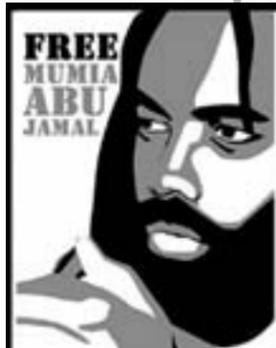
While the eyes of the country are on Philadelphia, join protesters across from the Liberty Bell, where a new memorial to enslaved Africans is being constructed. From 3 p.m. until 5 p.m. the Avenging the Ancestors Coalition will feature a tribute to ancestors enslaved by George Washington.

Join Immortal Technique, the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Coalition (NYC), the International Action Center, Fight Imperialism-Stand Together (FIST) and many others on Sunday, July 4, to say, **"Free Mumia and all political prisoners!"**

Go to www.freemumia.com and www.millions4mumia.org for more updates, bus information and July 4 literature.

Save
the
Date!

10 am - 2 pm
6th & Market St.



From Mumia Abu-Jamal on death row
'SOUL MUSIC'

Taken from a June 5 audio column at www.prisonradio.com. Go to www.millions4mumia.org to read updates on Mumia's legal case

From the time the first Africans set their feet on this New World, they brought their rhythms and beats along.

In every land they were shipped to new music emerged; songs fueled by love and longing; fear and dread; tribulation and triumph — the long thirst for freedom.

They danced in chains — not in happiness but in struggle for survival. Their shackles became the tinkling accompaniment of new melodies, and while the beat of the drum became a capital crime, their bare feet banged against the earth; and they sang songs to ease their sufferings and to pass the long days of bondage.

From Afrobeat to Zouk — literally from A to Z — Black musicians have made the world dance to their distinctive sounds.

From mournful dirges of Negro spirituals, to ragtime, to jazz, to rhythm and blues, soul, Black rock, disco, salsa, reggae, meringue, rap, reggaeton and to the next music form that emerges, Africa has shown her many faces and voices in startling creativity.

June is Black Music Month, but not an hour passes that isn't filled with the music of Black people, causing hearts to soar and heads to bob. □



Bolivia conference offers

People's voice to climate change

Hundreds of thousands mobilize to demand Fund jobs and education



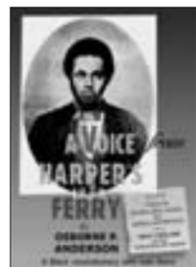
Left Hook is the quarterly newspaper of the revolutionary socialist organization for young activists, Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST). Each edition of *Left Hook* will provide analyses of political events, social movements and revolutionary struggles that impact our world. Commentary, theory, culture and news reporting intersect in the pages of *Left Hook* to provide readers with radical analysis from a Marxist perspective.

Subscribe to *Left Hook* 2 years: \$10.00 <http://FISTyouth.org>
Send checks/coupon to World View Forum, 55 W. 17 St., 5th fl., New York, NY 10011

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper.

Edited by Monica Moorehead. Includes: **Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination** Larry Holmes **Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery** Sam Marcy **Black Youth: Repression & Resistance** Leilani Dowell **The Struggle for Socialism Is Key** Monica Moorehead **Black & Brown Unity: A Pillar of Struggle for Human Rights and Global Justice!** Saladin Muhammad **Alabama's Black Belt: Legacy of Slavery, Sharecropping & Segregation** Consuela Lee **Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior** Mumia Abu-Jamal **Are Conditions Ripe Again Today?** **40th Anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion** John Parker **Racism & Poverty in the Delta** Larry Hales **Haiti Needs Reparations, Not Sanctions** Pat Chin

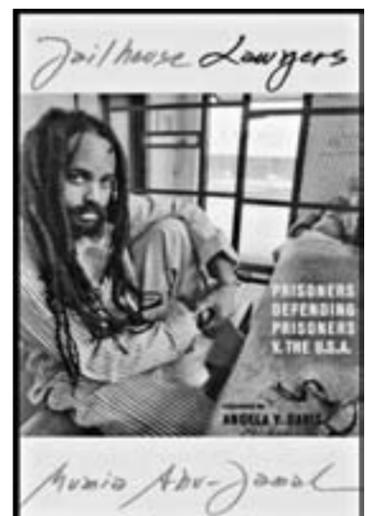


A Voice from Harper's Ferry 1859

By Osborne P. Anderson, a Black freedom fighter.

Prefaces by Mumia Abu-Jamal, Monica Moorehead and Vince Copeland on the 'Unfinished Revolution.'

A unique account by the only Black combatant to survive the raid — an armed attack by Black and white volunteers on a citadel of the South in the struggle against slavery — refutes those who try to minimize the role of African-American people in fighting for their freedom.



Mumia Abu-Jamal's book, **'JAILHOUSE LAWYERS: Prisoners defending prisoners v. the U.S.A.'**

Books are available at Leftbooks.com.

People's needs before capitalist profits

Defend education, cancel the debt to the banks

By Fred Goldstein

Playing by the rules and priorities of the capitalist profit system means surrender in one area of life after another when the workers, communities, students and youth are under attack. Whether it is the fight for jobs, the environment, housing, health care, or a decent retirement, the framework established by capitalism leaves no way but to give in to the rich.

Breaking out of the framework imposed by capitalism is the key to survival for millions.

Education is an urgent example of the need to push past the barriers put up by bankers, corporations and their political enforcers in both capitalist parties. Capitalism says that profits and interest due to the banks are sacrosanct. It is time to declare that the right to an education is sacrosanct. When it comes to a conflict between education and payment to the banks, it is time to cancel the debt, including student debt.

Public education is under attack from all directions. K-12 schools have already been cut back across the country and even greater cuts are threatened. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan recently announced that between 100,000 and 300,000 teachers are faced with job loss in the next school year.

The reason given is that cities, states and the federal government have suffered a decline in revenue due to the economic crisis. Budget cuts must be made. It is a matter of arithmetic. You cannot spend what you don't have.

But that is capitalist arithmetic. If you cannot spend what you don't have, then how can the federal government write a \$750 billion check to the biggest banks in the U.S., buy up their bad debts, and guarantee their loans to the tune of \$10 trillion while handing the Pentagon more

than \$700 billion each year?

Apparently you can spend what you "don't have" when it is going to the super-rich. In fact, schools are being closed, teachers are being fired and class sizes in the public schools are going up. Meanwhile, hundreds of billions of dollars that these state and city governments owe to banks and bondholders in interest payments are going to be paid out on time. And many of these banks are the ones that got the bailouts in the first place.

So there is money. It is just a matter of who is going to get it.

In Detroit, 80 percent of the budget is spent on paying interest to the banks, yet the city is planning to shut down 45 schools. In New York City, Mayor Michael Bloomberg has been trying to shut down 19 schools and open up a raft of charter schools in their place. But New York City pays billions to the banks every year in interest. Bloomberg just forced city teachers to give up raises by threatening to lay off 4,400 workers if the concession was not made.

Big business is moving into the funding of charter schools. The K-12 system is becoming a major investment target for capital. Billions are being poured into charter school investments while the public education system is being starved. The Race to the Top fund of \$4.3 billion established by the Obama administration is meant to strengthen the charter school movement.

College students are in debt before they even start out in life because of the high cost of a college education. Education, which is free in socialist Cuba, is now a source of capitalist profit in the U.S.

Students in California carried out widespread occupations and demonstrations throughout the public university system in March to oppose a 32 percent increase in tuition. California was not the only state to put the debt to the banks

and the bondholders before the needs of students. Tuition hikes are scheduled in many states, from New York to Colorado to a second round in California.

Thus, there is no middle ground between the interests of the banks and capitalist investors on the one hand, and the interests of the masses of students and their families at all levels.

Low-wage, low-skill economy shrinks education

In addition to the profit motive, the shrinking of the education system is also based upon the fact that the bosses have created a low-wage, low-skill economy. They no longer have a great need to generate a vast base of skilled and semi-skilled workers. To the bankers, the cost of educating large sections of the population, especially African-American, Latino/a, Asian, Native and poor white youth, is unnecessary overhead. They would rather have the money in their vaults. After all, the growing job openings are in low-skill categories.

That is the nature of advanced capitalism itself. The book "Low-Wage Capitalism" says the following about the "education scam":

"All the apologists for the system have been touting education as the way for workers to raise themselves up. But the entire trend of capitalist development moves in the direction of deskilling workers and lowering wages. The bosses want to reduce skills in order to reduce the need for training, to render workers virtually disposable by making them interchangeable, and thus to increase the competition among individual workers.

"... [T]he application of technology has as its goal simplifying the labor process. Thus, under capitalism the relative need for higher education and higher skills in the workforce goes down, not up, with the

advance of technology."

This was written in 2008, before the full development of the economic crisis. The massive unemployment today among youth age 16 to 24, which is officially around 25 percent, confirms this trend. People with college degrees are trying to get jobs as clerks, salespeople, waiters — any job, regardless of how far below their skill level it is — just to survive.

To the bankers and the bosses, education is a drain on their profits and is only needed on a much reduced scale to keep the system of exploitation going. The ruling class is perfectly content to see an educational system that will cull a layer of talented survivors from among the working class students and an upper crust of academic elite from among the more privileged children of the upper middle class and the rich. Meanwhile, they will let the rest of the educational system flounder, underfunded and impoverished.

The capitalists would rather see public funds used to boost their profit margins than for the education of the younger generation of the workers and the oppressed. Thus the struggle for education is a struggle against the capitalist profit system.

The students and youth, parents and communities, cannot be bound by the limitations of the profit system. They must demand the cancellation of the debts to the banks so that public money can be used in education and many other areas. They must demand that the rights of capital be suspended in favor of the right to education.

The writer is author of the book "Low-Wage Capitalism," a Marxist analysis of globalization and its effects on the U.S. working class. He has also written numerous articles and spoken on the present economic crisis. For further information, visit lowwagecapitalism.com.

Autoworkers rally outside convention

'What does a union do? Fight back!'

By Martha Grevatt
Detroit

While delegates were registering for the United Auto Workers 35th Constitutional Convention outside Cobo Center in Detroit, about 50 militant autoworkers demonstrated outside with the theme "1 million members lost — It's time to change course." Among the chants were, "Working people under attack — What does a union do? Fight back!" and "A job is a right — We're gonna fight, fight, fight."

The demonstration was called by the rank-and-file activist group Autoworkers Caravan and endorsed by the online discussion groups Factory Rat and Warriors of Labor and by the retiree chapters of UAW Locals 160 and 412.

Many autoworkers are frustrated by the degree to which the UAW leadership has become cooperative with the bosses of General Motors, Ford, Chrysler and their suppliers. They are tired of being asked to take major pay and benefit concessions, purportedly to keep the compa-

nies in business and save jobs. That concessions do not save jobs is underscored by the fact that the UAW's numbers have fallen from a high of 1.6 million members in 1979 to 355,000 today.

Among those demonstrating were delegates to the convention, elected and sent by their locals. In meetings after the rally, they reviewed the lengthy resolutions book that the top leadership will ask delegates to ratify. There is a great deal of progressive content in the book, from support for the Employee Free Choice

Act to calling for the repeal of Arizona's racist SB1070 to international solidarity, although on most issues the language could be stronger. What is most lacking is any formula for changing how the union functions — for reactivating the rank and file to win justice, both at the bargaining table and in our communities.

Those issues are addressed, however, in a separate book containing all resolutions submitted to the convention by various locals. Some, drawn up by Caravan activists, call for international solidarity, converting closed plants to create "green" jobs, defending every worker's right to a job and "rebuilding our fighting union." Others address issues such as discrimination based on gender identity and gender expression, improving union democracy and the need for the labor movement to call a national protest — "Solidarity Day III." In past conventions it has been nearly impossible for local delegates to get their submitted resolutions discussed.

Knowing the convention is tightly controlled by the UAW machine, activists met after the demonstration to strategize on how to challenge the class-collaborationist leadership on the floor. □

"Low-Wage Capitalism by Fred Goldstein is a most timely work, as the working class prepares for a fightback during the greatest crisis of capitalism since the Great Depression."

Clarence Thomas, ILWU Local 10 and Co-chair, Million Worker March Movement

Low-Wage Capitalism

What the new globalized high-tech imperialism means for the class struggle in the U.S.

Fred Goldstein's book provides an easy-to-read analysis of the roots of the current global economic crisis, its implications for workers and oppressed peoples, and the strategy needed for future struggle.

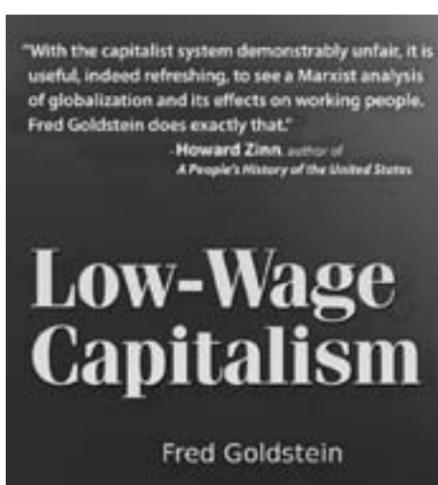
Paperback, 336 pages. Includes graphs, charts, bibliography, endnotes and index.

"Patriarchal prejudice serves capitalism in two ways: it keeps the whole working class divided, and it holds down wages for women and for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender workers. Low-Wage Capitalism shows the necessity and the great potential for solidarity among all the low-wage workers of the world."

Martha Grevatt

Nat'l Executive Officer, Pride At Work, AFL-CIO, UAW Local 122

Available at www.Leftbooks.com and bookstores around the country



ON THE PICKET LINE

By Sue Davis

Minnesota nurses struggle vs. lockouts

By Deb Konechne and the staff of Fight Back! Minnesota

A 24-hour strike by 12,000 members of the Minnesota Nurses Association concluded at 7 a.m. on June 11.

It was the single largest nursing strike in the history of the United States. The excitement of history in the making had been palpable in the voices, chants, songs and faces of the determined nurses on picket lines. "We are the union — the mighty, mighty union. We are fighting for patient safety — for nurses' safety — for better health care. Against the greedy bosses — the greedy, greedy bosses — against the greedy management. Shame on them."

The one-day strike got strong backing from the labor movement and the public.

On the picket line, Robert Kasper, president of the Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation told Fight Back!, "On behalf of the 50,000 union members and the 120 labor unions, we are proud to stand behind the Minnesota Nurses Association. [This strike] has been long overdue. Nurses need better working conditions. The public is behind the nurses. The world will be watching this strike, the country will be watching this strike, and the unions will be watching this strike and the outcome."

The MNA reports that some Twin Cities hospitals illegally locked out nurses at the end of the strike by not following language in the labor contract regarding how nurses are supposed to be called back to work. The MNA has filed unfair labor practice charges

with the National Labor Relations Board.

The MNA is continuing the struggle for a decent contract. Key outstanding issues include staffing levels that insure patient safety and pensions.

On June 10 the strikers, wearing red, picketed area hospitals. "The CEOs are fat cats, driving in their Cadillacs, while we're breaking our backs," they chanted.

"All the nurses are fired up and are behind the strike. We are standing up for patients' safety and the safety of all the nurses," said Sheila, a veteran nurse who has worked at Bethesda Hospital in Saint Paul for five years. "Nurses just don't give out medications, we do much more. We like to spend time with each patient to really listen to them and their needs. Just simply being at their bedside is priceless for them."

A newer nurse working at Bethesda brought her family to the picket line. She said, "I love my job and being a nurse. We are striking to raise awareness regarding patient safety. Though I worry that this one-day strike may not be enough and may end up being a longer strike. However, we are prepared for it." Many nurses echoed that sentiment, saying that they are ready to go all the way if this one-day strike doesn't get the results that nurses are demanding.

At Fairview Riverside Hospital in Minneapolis, nurses reported that 400-500 were picketing at mid-day on June 10. A group of surgical nurses related how they reported for the start of their shift at 5:30 a.m. and then walked out of the hospital at 7 a.m. to a large

chanting crowd of fired-up nurses on the picket line.

Margaret Adedji, a staff nurse from Fairview Riverside, spoke about why she was striking. "The pensions are a big thing. If the hospitals and CEOs are making so much money, they can give it back to the workers. They are taking advantage of this economic crisis to set a precedent for the future of nurses."

One striker at Fairview held a sign that read: "Fairview profit 2009 — \$155,030,000." It further detailed that the CEO of Fairview, Mark Eustis, makes \$1.01 million per year, which equals \$486.54 per hour.

At Minneapolis' Abbott-Northwestern Hospital, close to a thousand nurses covered the sidewalks and streets encircling the complex. Allina, the corporate health "system" for the hospital, paid CEO Ken Paulus a shocking \$1.74 million in 2009. At rush hour, honks filled the air as supporters drove by.

At Fairview Southdale, a large suburban hospital, more than 400 were already on the picket lines by 7 a.m. By 10 p.m. more than 200 nurses were prepared to picket throughout the night. "We are not going to give up until we get our demands met for safe patient care and to keep our benefits we've earned over all these years," stated Margaret Sarfehjooy, who has been a nurse at Fairview Southdale for 23 years. "The hospitals should be more concerned about patient care than CEO salaries."

Based on reports in *Fight Back!* (fightbacknews.org), the online news service of Freedom Road Socialist Organization.

Spirit Airline pilots strike

After four years of negotiations for a fair contract and two deadline extensions, 500 pilots at Spirit Airline hit the bricks on June 11. The Spirit pilots are the lowest paid at small airlines. Despite the fact that Spirit reported banking \$83 million last year, management refused to meet the pilots' demands for salaries comparable to those at other discount airlines and work rules that preserve safety.

Though management bragged that Spirit would keep flying during the strike, it announced on June 13 that all flights were cancelled through June 15. Informational picket lines were held in Atlantic City, N.J.; Detroit; Fort Lauderdale, Fla.; and New York the week before the strike, with pilots from a number of major airlines joining the picket lines. The Air Line Pilots Association, which represents the pilots, is planning daily picketing in several airports until Spirit offers a contract that respects the pilots' essential services. (www.alpa.org)

Co-Op City workers locked out

More than 500 porters, maintenance workers, garbage attendants and groundskeepers at Co-Op City in the Bronx, N.Y., were locked out of their jobs at midnight on June 1, minutes after their contract expired with Riverbay Corp. The workers are represented by Service Employees Local 32BJ.

Despite the fact that 32BJ offered to extend contract negotiations for a week, Riverbay refused and pre-empted the workers' right to strike for a living wage. The lockout affects 55,000 residents of the largest housing development in the U.S. and the largest cooperative housing development in the world. Obviously Riverbay has as little regard for the residents' needs, health and safety as it does for the workers' right to keep up with the 10 percent rise in the cost of living since the last contract three years ago.

N.J. workers protest budget cuts

In the largest union rally in New Jersey history, about 40,000 union activists swarmed the state Capitol in Trenton in late May to denounce Gov. Chris Christie's budget, which would devastate vital social services, public schools, health facilities and libraries. What added fuel to the workers' outrage was that two days before the rally the governor vetoed a "millionaire's tax" on people earning more than \$400,000. Could that be more offensive?

Day care closings protested in N.Y.

Hundreds of unionists, community leaders and parents marched to New York's City Hall on June 9 to protest billionaire Mayor Michael Bloomberg's proposed closing of 16 child care centers, cutting 1,165 child care slots and 725 jobs belonging to members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees District Council 1701. At a time when only 27 percent of children eligible for child care are being served and many parents, especially single mothers, need child care in order to work, the cutbacks are a callous blow to workers and working parents alike. Just cough up a couple of million for the vitally needed services, Mayor Scrooge!

California nurses join one-day strike

In order to emphasize the demand for safe nurse-to-patient ratios that prompted 12,000 nurses in the Twin Cities to hold a one-day strike on June 10, 13,000 members of the California Nurses Association went on strike the same day.

Though the California nurses, who work at five University of California medical centers and four other hospitals, fought a year-long battle for patient safety standards, which went into effect in 2004, a CNA spokesperson said UC is not implementing all of its provisions. A study released in April by University of Pennsylvania researchers found that the California law reduces patient deaths, allows nurses to spend more time with each patient, and helps keep experienced nurses on the job. That's definitely worth fighting for! (afl-cio.org, June 1)

Temple nurses win unemployment pay

Temple University Hospital will have to pay its 1,500 nurses about \$1.5 million in unemployment insurance for the 28-day work stoppage in April, the Pennsylvania Bureau of Unemployment Compensation announced on June 11. The workers are eligible because the PBUC ruled that the stoppage was actually a lockout, since Temple changed the terms of employment when it unilaterally canceled a tuition benefit for dependents in March.

Prior to the start of their strike on March 31, the union had notified management that they would continue to work under the terms of their old contract, which expired in September 2009, if management reinstated the benefit. Eager to break the union, even when it meant paying millions of dollars to bring in scab workers, management refused.

Temple announced it will appeal the decision. Stay tuned.

— Sue Davis and Betsey Piette

Detroit legal aid workers demand union contract

By Kris Hamel Detroit

Members of Local 2095 of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees were joined by other unionists and community activists as they picketed their workplace on June 10. "Legal Aid, you should know, union busting has got to go!" and other chants could be heard outside the swanky offices of the Legal Aid and Defender Association Inc. in downtown Detroit.

Staff attorneys at LAD voted in June 2008 to form a union and have tried for two years to bargain in good faith for their first contract. These attorneys serve seniors and other poor residents of Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties and have not had their wages raised in five years. Some of the staff attorneys are still at their starting salary despite many years of experience. Meanwhile, according to the union, "LAD has received significant funding in-



June 10 protest at Legal Aid and Defender Association.

WW PHOTO: BRYAN G. PFEIFER

creases from its main funder, the Legal Services Corporation and Congress.

"LAD management spends the taxpayer dollars on its fancy new building and fine offices for top management, but refuses to hire additional attorneys, additional support staff or provide adequate funding for litigation. Our clients are hurting, as a result. These millions in taxpayer dollars are for the sole purpose of providing quality

legal services to low-income persons ... but LAD management is using the funding to stuff its own pockets and pay for its expensive offices."

The staff attorneys are demanding a standard union contract, a fair and equivalent wage increase and a new focus on providing improved and increased legal services to clients. Messages of support can be sent to clgunion2095@gmail.com. □



FIST YOUTH

Thoughts on the U.S. Social Forum

By Lauren Burnett
Detroit

As a born-and-raised Detroiter and a socialist, the decision to attend the U.S. Social Forum was a no-brainer for me. A gathering of thousands of folks from all over the country (and the world), all dedicated to the creation of another more peaceful, just, loving world? The possibility of not going never crossed my mind. I view it as a very important event for the left.

The USSF will provide me with a chance to catch up with old friends and comrades — as well as to meet hundreds of folks for the first time. Networking opportunities are a clear advantage of going. I will have an opportunity to hear

what people in other parts of the country and the world are doing about various issues at the plenaries and workshops, and I hope to take what I learn and incorporate it into my organizing in Detroit. The youth space, the cultural performances, the marches and protests, the art — I am excited about all of it, and all of it is important to building a movement that excludes no one and celebrates everyone.

I have high hopes for the USSF. I hope that the thousands of us who will be in attendance will be able to work together in Detroit and build ideas that we can move forward with after the week is over. I hope that the forum really is instrumental in bringing about the

better world that we know is possible. In the words of FIST organizer Larry Hales, “At the very least, though, it is a chance for left activists to share the same space and to talk to one another about the struggles happening, even in the most isolated corners of the country, and to see the commonness in the struggle of poor, oppressed and working people.”

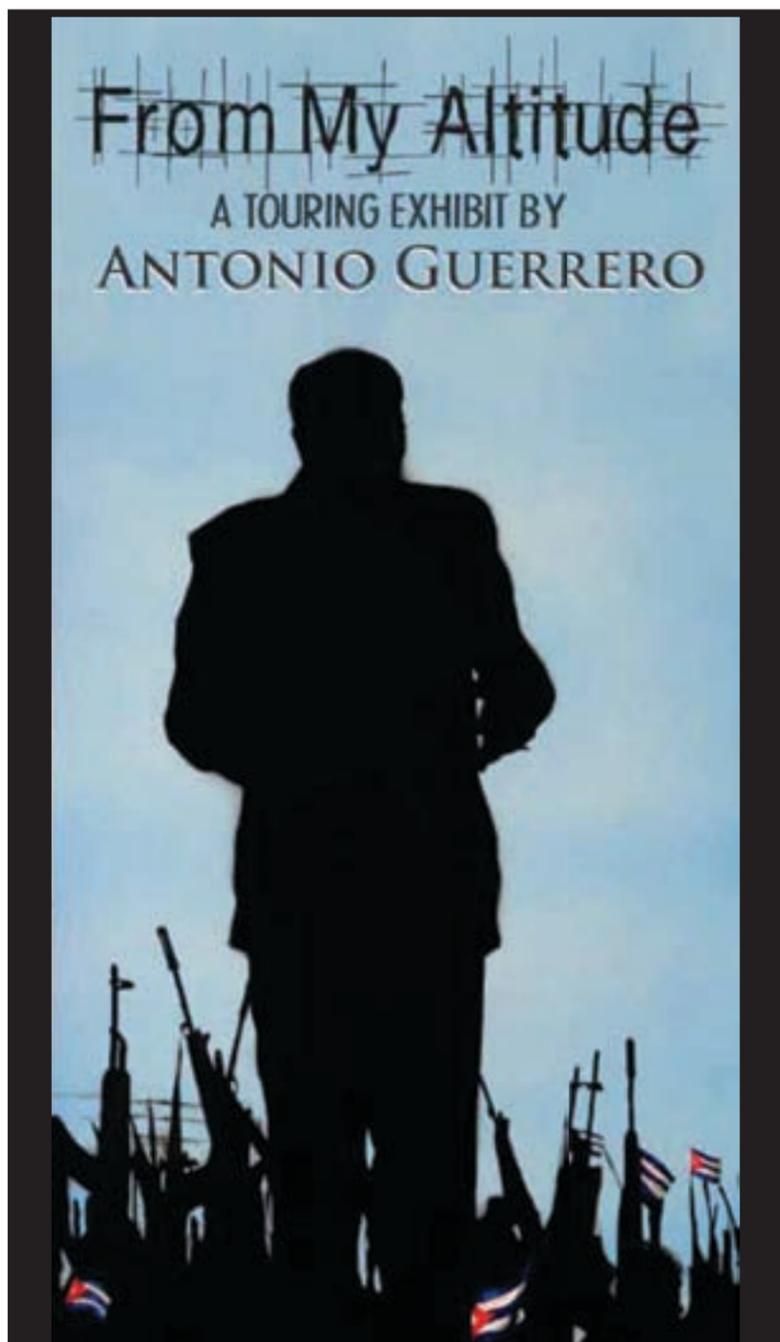
See you there! ☐

Detroit's crisis dem ABOLISH RA

Continued from page 1

2005, the district has fallen deeper into debt. With the appointment of the emergency financial manager, the deficit increased by \$100 million in one year.

Plans are underway to close 32 schools this year and lay off more employees in the school district. The ultimate plan is complete privatization and charterization of Detroit schools. There has been a substantial growth in charter schools, which disallow unions and direct parental involvement.



USSF2010 IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE CUBAN 5

Special Detroit Opening Program:
Wednesday, June 23 - 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

hosted by SereNgeti Gallery Global at the

Virgil H. Carr Cultural Arts Center
311 E. Grand River in Harmonie Park/Paradise Valley

“FROM MY ALTITUDE” art exhibit in Detroit until July 8, 2010
Original prison art by Antonio Guerrero, one of the Cuban Five political prisoners held in the U.S.
Regular Gallery hours: 11 a.m. - 5 p.m., extended hours for USSF

Sponsored by:

International Committee for the Freedom of the Cuban 5 (www.thecuban5.org);
Michigan Campaign to Free the Cuban Five/Justice for Cuba Coalition;
U.S./Cuba Labor Exchange; SereNgeti Gallery Global;
COMPÁS, Center of Music and Performing Arts Southwest;
Tyree Guyton, DFA, artist and founder of the Heidelberg Project.

VISIT our Cobo Hall table, daily 10 am - 10 pm
Leftbooks.com Books to change the world — That's the point

DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENT
Tues.	June 22	11 am - 1 pm	Meet MORATORIUM NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shut Offs
		3 pm - 5 pm	Opening march - Woodward at Warren to Cobo Hall
Wed.	June 23	10 am - noon	Fighting for a Moratorium on Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shut Offs
		10 am - noon	How to Create 30 Million Jobs Bail Out the People Movement
		1 pm - 3 pm	Youth and Students to FREE MUMIA ABU-JAMAL with International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal
		1 pm - 5:30 pm	Capitalism is killing us ... Fight for Socialism! in two parts by Workers World Party and FIST
		4 pm - 6 pm	“From My Altitude” Art exhibit by Antonio Guerrero, one of the Cuban 5 unjustly in U.S. prisons
Thu.	June 24	10 am - noon	Stopping War, Fighting for our Jobs and Lives Int'l Action Center (IAC) with BAYAN, MECAWI, MAWO, SDS, May 1 Coalition
Fri.	June 25	9:45 a.m.	MARCH on the BANKS with Moratorium NOW! and Farm Labor Organizing Ctte
		1 pm - 3 pm	The Fight for Education Rights: March 4th and Beyond
		5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	COME MEET FIST! Free Dinner
Sat.	June 26	10 am - noon	Meet MORATORIUM NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shut Offs

USSF2010 VENUES IN DETROIT

- Cobo Hall
- UAW National Ford Program Building (Next to Cobo) - .1 mi, 3 min walking
- Wayne County Community College (WC3, W. Fort & 5th) - .4 mi, 7 min walking
- TWW Building (W. Fort & Shelby) - .3 mi, 6 min walking
- Westin Book Cadillac Hotel (WBC, Michigan & Shelby) - .3 mi, 6 min walking
- Christ Church (Jefferson & I-75) - .8 mi, 16 min walking
- Woodward Academy (WA, Lafayette & I-75) - .9 mi, 20 min walking
- Chrysler Building (Jefferson & Chene) - 1.5 mi, 30 min walking
- Wayne State University (WSU, Warren & Woodward area) - approx. 2.2 mi, 45 min walking
- Leftist Lounge (Eastern Market, Russel & Division) - 1.7 mi, 34 min walking
- USSF Village - .5 mi, 10 min walking
- Film Festival Venue (600 W. Lafayette) - .9 mi, 15 min walking

Workers World Office
5920 Second Ave.
Detroit, MI 48202
313-459-0777
detroit@workers.org

Hands RACISM, CAPITALISM

Parents, teachers, students and the community have been outraged at the plans to close more schools. Unions have demonstrated against the proposed changes, which are imposed by the state under Granholm's direction. The debt incurred by the district is hampering its ability to function, with 80 percent of state aid being directed to service the debt.

The Wayne County Circuit Court placed a preliminary injunction on the emergency financial manager on April 16 after hearing a lawsuit to halt him from implementing academic decisions and the closing of schools without the involvement of the locally elected Detroit Board of Education. However, a state appeals court ruling affirmed the undemocratic administration and control of the majority African-American school system.

A broad-based effort is needed to question the legitimacy of Public Act 72, which mandates the appointment of emergency financial managers in local governments and school districts.

Role of Pentagon budget

The Pentagon budget has been a consistent drain on the national economy of the U.S. These funds should be utilized to create jobs, housing, health care, senior services and quality education for all.

U.S. military involvement costs the working people of the country at least \$800 billion a year, not to mention the toll taken in deaths, injuries, psychological distress and the lost labor power of those misused in a series of wars that cannot be won. The so-called "war on terrorism" is merely a cover to intensify the repressive apparatus against working people and the oppressed inside the

country and around the world.

International opposition to imperialism can serve as a rallying point for exposing the hypocrisy of the U.S. ruling class, as well as building working-class solidarity throughout the world.

Ruling-class culpability and response

In order to build an effective struggle to fight the current onslaught against working people and the oppressed, we must be clear about the source of the problem.

In a city like Detroit, the population is reflected in the presence of African Americans in political institutions such as the mayor's office, city council, election commission, charter commission, school board, etc. However, organizers must continue to emphasize that the economy of the city is still controlled by the capitalist class, which is exclusively white and based outside the city limits.

This phenomenon is somewhat similar to the conditions that prevail on the African continent and many other post-colonial societies where, despite the attainment of national independence, the economic sources of power still reside in the hands of the former colonial masters or the U.S., which is the leading imperialist power in the world.

The capitalist class in Detroit is responsible for the current crisis involving joblessness, home foreclosures and evictions, utility shutoffs, the usurpation of political power from existing elective bodies, police repression and the lack of health care and quality education. The emphasis of our overall political strategy, the tactics that we utilize, the demands we advance and the slogans we chant must always point to the actual source of the problem.

This is important because the ruling class will always attempt to blame the workers for their misfortune and poverty. In discussing the economic crisis in Detroit, the corporate media never point to the role of the automotive companies and their failed policies related to capital flight, the undermining of organized labor, outsourcing, downsizing and the lowering of wages. Instead the workers and oppressed are attacked viciously and made to feel that their plight results from a lack of correct values and hard work.

What is to be done? The need for a program of action

We must be organized around a political program that attacks the exploitative and racist system at its base. This is why locally based progressive organizations have for the last three years called for the immediate implementation of a moratorium on foreclosures, evictions and utility shutoffs, to keep people in their homes in Detroit.

The failure of the city administration, the state legislature and the governor to impose a moratorium has re-

Come visit us while you're in Detroit

The Workers World Party Bookstore will be open Tuesday through Friday, June 22-25, from 10 a.m. until 10 p.m. during the U.S. Social Forum. It's located at 5920 Second Ave. in Detroit, one block west of Cass Avenue (at Antoinette) and just north of Wayne State University. Every evening a coffee house will take place at the same location from 7:30 until 10. On Friday, FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together) will hold a meeting for youth organizers from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. □

sulted in the large-scale destruction of the housing stock throughout the region. With the school systems heavily dependent on tax revenues for their operations, it is not surprising that huge cuts in education have taken place throughout the state.

The appointment of an emergency financial manager over the Detroit Public Schools represents the inability of elected politicians to effectively address the problems stemming from predatory lending, job loss and the decline in wages.

It also represents the failure of capitalist economic policies. Banks, insurance companies and multinational corporations have looted the cities through corrupt mortgage schemes, redlining and tax avoidance. Many of these firms do not pay any taxes to the cities, yet they continue to insist that they dominate the political and economic direction of local government.

We are encouraging all U.S. Social Forum participants to study the work of the Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shut-offs and the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War and Injustice, both of which continue to push for a halt to foreclosures, evictions and utility shut-offs.

The demand to stop school closures is also essential during this period, as the corporations engage in the theft of resources allocated for education and the weakening of unions within the school systems.

Ultimately the only solution to the current crisis in the capitalist system is the transformation of the economy and social structures toward socialism. This will require a total break with capitalism and imperialism and a protracted struggle for the realization of a society based on scientific socialist principles.

V.I. Lenin, the leader of the Russian Revolution and the founder of the Soviet Union, stated as early as 1903: "Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. This idea cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism goes hand in hand with an infatuation for the narrowest forms of practical activity. ... At this point, we wish to state only that the role of the vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory." ("What Is To Be Done?") □

LOCATION
Cobo 02-41
Cobo 02-33
Woodward Academy 1475
Woodward Academy 1437
Cobo 02-44
Virgil H. Carr Cultural Arts Center - lower gallery - 311 E. Grand River
Vestin Book Cadillac Hotel WB1
Gather at Woodward and Grand Circus Park
Cobo D3-18
5920 Second Ave. (near Wayne State Univ.)
Cobo 02-41

Workshop Location
First Aid Station
Not Wheelchair Accessible
Other Venues

LEFTIST LOUNGE

10a Bert's Warehouse
 10b Johanson Charles Gallery
 10c Eastern Markek Shed 3
 10d 1440 Collective / Youth Speak Out!

Workers, Immigrants, Unemployed, Youth, Students:

Capitalism is Killing the People & the Planet

If you are interested in abolishing a profit-hungry system that is:

- throwing people out of work & their homes
- closing schools & hospitals ● denying universal health care
- making war ● bailing out banks ● jailing the poor & the youth
- racial profiling Black people, Latinos/as, immigrants & all people of color
- destroying the environment with global warming & oil spills

Then it's time
to stand up, unite and
fight back for a socialist future!

WORKERS WORLD PARTY CONFERENCE

NOV • 12 ~ 14

new york city



Workers World Party and its youth arm, Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST), from coast to coast are actively organizing in the struggles for jobs, education, housing, health care; organizing to stand up against racism; to say no worker is illegal in Arizona and elsewhere; and for women's and lesbian, gay, bi, transgender, queer equality. We are organizing to stop imperialist wars in Iraq, Afghanistan & oppose occupation from Haiti to Palestine.

WWP & FIST are Fighting for Socialism —

a world without oppression, exploitation, poverty and war — where all the wealth of society belongs to the people and is used to meet human need not corporate greed. Don't wait until the Nov. conference. Workers World holds weekly meetings and discussions in addition to organizing. If you are interested call us at 212-627-2994, email wpp@workers.org and go to workersworld.net for updates on the Nov. 12-14 conference.

Three incidents in one week

Fracking a danger to communities

By **Betsey Piette**

Will the rapid, unregulated expansion of hydraulic fracturing to extract natural gas give way to the next major disaster in the oil and gas industry? Three separate accidents in just one week signify that this could happen.

On June 3 a blowout of a Marcellus gas well in Clearfield County, Pa., sent a gusher of natural gas and chemical-laced drilling fluid 75 feet into the air. The gusher leaked wastewater for 16 hours, spilling an estimated 1.5 million gallons of toxic fluid. Campers were evacuated when the fluid seeped into a small stream in Moshannon State Forest. The well was owned by EOG Resources Inc. — formerly Enron Oil and Gas Co.

Precious hours were lost because a blowout control team had to be flown in from Texas. A virtual media ban on coverage followed the incident; a reporter who attempted to take pictures of the toxic flow was told he'd be shot.

On June 7 seven workers were burned in an explosion caused when drillers hit a pocket of methane in an inactive deep mine near Moundsville, W.Va. The resulting fire flared 50 feet high for four days.

The drilling operations were under subcontract to Union Drilling, headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas. In the past five years, Union Drilling has had more than two dozen violations of Occupational Safety and Health Administration rules and been fined a total of \$226,000 at sites in five states.

A gas line explosion on June 7 in North Texas killed one person and injured seven more. The resulting blaze could be seen from 30 miles away.

These are just the latest incidents stemming from the questionable process of using a chemical mix to drive natural gas from shale levels deep below the surface. The mix used in hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, contains more than 85 toxic chemicals, including known carcinogens. Yet state and local government officials

across the U.S. seem more interested in the money to be made from gas well leases than in implementing regulations to safeguard residents.

Pennsylvania state officials allowed EOG Resources to restart drilling June 11. Clearwater County Commissioner Mark B. McCracken said the county still wanted a share of the gas boom's benefits. Commissioners acknowledged that more blowouts were to be expected.

The Texas Railroad Commission, which regulates industry in that state, has reported 102 blowouts of oil and gas wells since 2006, resulting in 10 fires, 12 injuries and two deaths. (Philadelphia Inquirer, June 13) Yet in Fort Worth, wells continue to be built in urban areas, often close to residential areas and even schools.

Upon investigating the natural gas industry, filmmaker Josh Fox encountered Pennsylvania landowners struggling for income in small, rural communities, who gave in to industry pressure and lived to regret their decisions. His investigation

led to the documentary "Gasland," which will air June 21 on HBO.

In western Colorado, Fox found a formerly rural area that had rapidly industrialized, with more than 5,000 wells drilled. Medical researchers from the University of Colorado conducted studies on the air and water and found acute problems as a result of toxic omissions from gas development.

In a March 27 interview, Fox described the pressure the natural gas industry has put on politicians to trade "a short term energy fix and money for the future of our water in America." (NOW on PBS) More than 200,000 wells are proposed in Pennsylvania and New York state, with 50,000 in the New York City watershed alone, with no additional restrictions placed on drillers.

Fox noted: "I could take a car battery and throw it into a watershed and go to federal prison, but these guys can take the same chemicals and inject them by the thousands of gallons and they're exempt." □

Pollution, exploitation and socialism

The struggle to save the environment must end up as a class struggle.

The BP oil company, which has just unleashed the worst environmental disaster in U.S. history, is part of the oil lobby that defeated all attempts to stop climate change in Copenhagen this past spring.

The Massey coal mining company, which killed 29 miners through criminal negligence and defiance of safety rules, is part of the coal lobby that also has blocked attempts to save life on earth by stopping climate change.

General Motors, Ford, Chrysler and big auto have resisted limits on pollution for decades and participated in the payoffs to lobbyists to block environmental protec-

tion for the planet.

In fact, big oil and gas, the utility companies, most of big industry, the Chamber of Commerce — in a word, big capital — are the powers that are mining, drilling and clear-cutting from one end of the earth to the other. These are the powers that are destroying the rainforests and the ice caps, destroying habitats and endangering island and coastal civilizations that are thousands of years old, all in the pursuit of profit.

This relentless pursuit of profit is threatening much of life on the planet. The subordination of life to profit seems to be madness. But this appears as madness strictly from the point of view of humanity

as a whole. CEOs and boards of directors of giant banks and corporations do not operate, cannot operate, from the point of view of humanity, but only as the agents of accumulation of profit without regard to result — even to the point of risking self-destruction and the destruction of life.

The corporate polluters are the same ones that are laying off workers and pressuring those who remain on the job to work more intensely than ever. They are lowering wages, cutting benefits, speeding up production and services, and getting richer and richer as they pauperize the working class more and more.

Thus those who pollute are those who exploit. There is no separation. The process of capitalist production is also the process of environmental pollution. The

process of capitalist production is the process of making profit. The working class has a profound interest in protecting the planet and ending the profit system and exploitation.

The means of production under capitalism are both the means of pollution and the means of exploitation. It is by seizing the means of production and putting them to use for human need, for society as a whole, on a planned and rational basis that includes the protection of the environment, that life on the planet can be saved. Socialism can save life and society. And the working class, whose historic need is to end its own exploitation, is the class that can put an end to environmental destruction.

— **Fred Goldstein**

Bhopal disaster culprits given slap on wrist

By **Kathy Durkin**

Twenty-six years ago, the worst industrial catastrophe in history occurred in Bhopal, India.

When 40 tons of methyl isocyanate, a poisonous gas, leaked from a tank in a U.S.-owned Union Carbide plant on Dec. 3, 1984, 3,000 people died instantly, mostly children and the elderly. Thousands more died later or suffered terrible injuries. More than 500,000 people were affected, nearly all working and poor people, who lived in the heavily populated, impoverished neighborhoods surrounding the pesticide factory.

Survivors, their families and advocates have fought for justice for more than 25 years. On June 7, an Indian court finally found eight former officials at the corporation's Indian subsidiary guilty of negligence, the original charge of "culpable homicide" having been reduced earlier. The seven who are still living were each sentenced to only two years in prison and fined \$2,000. The short sentences have enraged activists and family members of the injured and deceased.

The chief culprit, former Union Carbide Chairperson Warren M. Anderson, has never taken any responsibility and has evaded extradition from the U.S. and prosecution.

To this day the toxins are causing ailments that afflict Bhopal's residents. There are still 425 tons of hazardous waste sitting in a warehouse at the accident's site. Pesticide residue has seeped into the soil and water, contaminating the community's drinking water, gardens and more.

Community activists, health organizations and environmentalists are among the many forces that have been mobilizing and pressuring Dow Chemical Company, which purchased Union Carbide in 2001, and their government to remove the hazardous waste. Yet nothing has been done.

Capitalist greed knows no bounds. In pursuit of megaprofits, the superrich corporations seek to ravage the earth with impunity, destroying villages and resources and causing massive deaths and injuries in their wake. There is nothing they won't do in their quest for the almighty dollar — or euro.

The people of Bhopal deserve justice. Moreover, the world's peoples deserve and need an economic system that would take every precaution to prevent industrial accidents, one that organizes production for human need, not profits, and one that puts their health and that of all life — including that of the planet itself — as the top priority.

That system is socialism. □

Haitian farmers reject Monsanto's seeds of destruction

By **G. Dunkel**

Agribusiness giant Monsanto's profits have been slipping recently, so it saw the recent earthquake in Haiti as a chance to expand its market for the seed-fertilizer-herbicide package it sells.

Hundreds of thousands of people — no precise figures are available — fled the Haitian capital, Port-au-Prince, after the Jan. 12 earthquake to take shelter with friends and family, mainly small farmers and peasants, in rural areas of Haiti. Farmers had a hard choice — feed their families the grain they had saved for the next planting, or see their families starve.

Now, when the time has come to plant for the next harvest, they are short of seeds. Monsanto offered to donate 475 tons of corn seed and two tons of seeds from a variety of vegetables. This "gift" was made under the framework of the WINNER project (Watershed Initiative for National Natural Environmental Resources), an operation the United States Agency for International Development set up after the hurricanes in 2009 to "improve" the productivity of Haitian agriculture.

Monsanto denied that its corn seeds were genetically modified, claiming that they were just a hybrid produced for trop-

ical climates. Haiti's minister of agriculture said genetically modified organisms are not against the law in Haiti because the country has no laws concerning them.

Jean-Yves Urfié, a former professor of chemistry at the Collège Saint Martial in Port-au-Prince, claims that Monsanto has already distributed seeds in the Haitian areas of Gonaïves, Kenscoff, Pétionville, Cabaret, Arcahaie and Croix-des-Bouquets et Mirebalais. He and others have pointed out that the Monsanto seeds require Monsanto herbicides and fertilizers as well as well-prepared fields. (www.labreche.ch)

Chavannes Jean-Baptiste, the leader of the Peasant Movement of Papay (MPP), told *Via Campesina*, "It is a new earthquake, more dangerous in the long term than the one that took place Jan. 12. ... It is a strong attack against our agriculture, peasants, biodiversity and Creole seeds, which we are defending and which must remain our environment." Jean-Baptiste accused the Haitian government of profiting from the earthquake to sell the country to imperialism and transnational companies.

On June 4 more than 10,000 peasants gathered in Hinche, a small city in central Haiti, and burned Monsanto seeds at a rally called by the MPP. The Haitian Times reported that demonstrators

To save the planet, get rid of capitalism!

Following are excerpts from talks given by Teresa Gutierrez and Jen Waller at a Workers World Party/Fight Imperialism, Stand Together forum on June 11 in New York. Both Gutierrez and Waller attended the World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth, held from April 20-22 in Cochabamba, Bolivia.

TERESA GUTIERREZ: Climate change and revolution

Capitalism's war on the environment argues for the overturning of capitalism and imperialism. The future of humanity is at risk.

Scientists have warned that urgent action is required on the climate crisis. It is well documented how extreme weather events are directly linked to global warming.

In August 2007, at the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change, scientists and government officials stated that the window of opportunity to prevent catastrophic changes to the planet's climate is narrowing rapidly. The U.N. conference called for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent to 40 percent by 2020, or, it warned, many animal and plant species could become extinct and economic havoc caused around the world.

The biggest polluter has been the United States. Yet, the U.S. won't agree to reduce emissions and undermines all attempts to reach agreements.

Mother Earth, yes; capitalism, no

The fundamental questions of "how we got to this point" and "how we can get out of it" were asked at the historic Cochabamba conference. Workers World Party and FIST representatives were honored to attend.

This working-class conference gave political and revolutionary answers to this crisis; it called for an end to capitalism. A key slogan was "Pachamama si, capitalismo no" ("Mother Earth, yes; capitalism, no").

Monsanto

Continued from page 8

chanted, "Down with [Haitian President René] Prével!" "Keep Monsanto out of Haiti!" and occasionally "Down with the occupation!"

Monsanto made its reputation producing Agent Orange, which poisoned hundreds of thousands of people in Vietnam. According to the Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 4.8 million Vietnamese people were exposed to Agent Orange, resulting in 400,000 deaths and disabilities and birth defects among 500,000 children.

Monsanto's representative in Haiti is Jean-Robert Estimé, who is also the in-country director of the WINNER project. He was Haiti's foreign minister under Jean-Claude Duvalier in the 1980s, when USAID "convinced" the Haitian government to wipe out the Creole pigs indigenous to Haiti because they might be infected with the swine flu virus, which could spread to the U.S.

The replacement pigs from Iowa were ecologically and economically unviable — they got sunburned and required expensive feed and clean water. According to exiled Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's book, "Eyes of the Heart," the campaign cost Haitian peasants \$600 million and led to a 30 percent drop in enrollment in rural schools, since parents could no longer sell pigs to pay school fees. □

The leaders concluded that only socialism could resolve the environmental crisis.

The Cochabamba conference put fear into the ruling class here, even more so because it took place in Latin America, which has a rich history of militant, anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist struggles and is today the center of revolutionary upheaval.



The election of Evo Morales, the first Indigenous president in Bolivia, was itself a huge step forward, striking a blow against racism and colonialism and advancing the struggle for self-determination.

That the Cochabamba conference took place and that the environmental crisis was elevated was because of socialist Cuba's impact on the world movement.

Nicaraguan leader Tomas Borge urged everyone to stand with Cuba. He stressed that without Fidel, without Cuba, neither President Hugo Chávez of Venezuela nor President Morales could have surfaced and thrived.

For 50 years, Cuba has withstood imperialist aggression and remained the beacon of revolutionary inspiration. Imperialism has not been able to defeat Cuba.

Cuba is the number-one sustainable country in the world, says Global Footprint Network. This is another reason why the world movement must defend Cuba.

Socialist Cuba has provided the material basis for the advancement of a revolutionary movement in Latin America. It has provided critical Marxist thinking and analysis on every burning question.

It has shown that not only a movement but also a class can stand up to imperialism, and it can win if there is political will, a class understanding and unity.

BP: A crisis of capitalism

The BP oil spill is a tragedy of epic proportions. In the 53 days since its rig exploded, 90.1 million gallons of oil may have spewed. No one really knows what the environmental consequences will be — the loss of animal life, of jobs, of income and the effects on the ecosystem. It is another rapacious crime of capitalism, perpetrated by one of the world's largest oil companies.

BP repeatedly disregarded safety problems and attempted to silence anyone who tried to tell the truth about the spill. This disaster exposes the true nature of capitalist corporations: Profits come before the workers, before safety, before environmental concerns.

Another hazard is the existence of 80,000 chemicals used in the U.S., of which only about 200 have been tested. This was raised in a recent CNN series, "Toxic America," which told how more children are experiencing cancers.

Who is doing the testing?

Who spends millions to lobby the government to support a chemical? Isn't the Environmental Protection Agency ineffective and in the corporations' pockets? Who pays for research at universities if it isn't the same chemical companies?

Although the government passed the Toxic Substance Control Act, even a congressperson admitted that it would have little effect in protecting anyone.

An American Chemistry Council representative told CNN that his industry doesn't want a system that sets high barriers for new products but one "that allows our industry to maintain its competitive edge."

They want capitalism, the free market system where they have free rein to make profits at the cost of humanity.

We want a system that puts workers before profits, that protects the earth and turns back the clock on the ravages made on the earth. The capitalists have ravaged the world's forests and drilled in the earth for profit, disregarding the consequences. In order for humanity to survive, capitalism must be abolished.

These crises powerfully illuminate the need for workers' control of the means of production. It cries out for a revolutionary and socialist transformation of society.

What other government but one like socialist Cuba's can replace much of its energy needs with solar power and environment-friendly resources, and do so much more?

The environmental crisis is a struggle for socialists.

JEN WALLER:

U.S. environmental movement must address capitalism

I feel that the most important thing about the Cochabamba conference is that it represents a growing anti-racist, anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist climate justice movement. The spirit of the conference looks at the environmental crisis as a result of this capitalist system of exploitation and constant growth for the sake of profit for few at the expense of many. The U.S. climate justice movement must learn from this model.

Making the connections between environmental destruction and capitalism is not the norm here. Take the BP oil spill. If it had been going on when the conference took place, everyone would have been relating it to capitalism. But here, people talk about it as though it is a cross between an inevitable reality and a freak accident. The idea that it is an unnecessary tragedy that is typical of corporations within this system is not even considered by most in the U.S.

One of the main messages of the conference was that the climate justice movement must include all oppression. Demanding climate justice must mean demanding an end to all injustices. This includes freedom of movement for all.

We can't separate the climate crisis from immigration, as the issue of climate migrants is all about racism and exclusion. One meter of water rise could wipe out 20 percent of Bangladesh. Where are those people going to go? We all have to

think about how we are going to support climate migrants. Many migrants are already climate migrants. Many of the world's conflicts in recent years are due to the environment — for example, the war in Afghanistan or the conflict in Darfur must both be thought of as wars over natural resources.

The structural causes of climate change and climate migration are due to capitalism. It's a globalized economy, which is based on intensive development reliant on the consumption of carbon and the exploitation of the natural resources of the entire planet. But people aren't allowed to move like capital, because the only thing this system attempts to sustain is capital.

Right now we're controlling migration as determined by economy, but it needs to be based on human rights and needs, not on the economic needs of governments and corporations.

Even the so-called "solutions" to climate change that the U.S. government promotes, such as reforestation and carbon trading, are causing displacement. The way the U.S. and other powerful countries are dealing with climate change is not in any way going to solve the problem.

The decision has already been made that the people of the world are going to be sacrificed because the rich and powerful do not want to lose their power and privilege.

We will all be affected by climate change, but not at all equally. Last year's Copenhagen summit truly signed a death warrant for countries. President Obama threatened poor countries, saying they would only get aid if they signed the Copenhagen accord. Who would sign their suicide? Some did. The Ethiopian leader may have sold out his people by signing it — but was the alternative better? The leaders of other countries refused to sign the accord, such as Ecuador and Bolivia. At the Cochabamba conference, the foreign minister of Ecuador claimed that the U.S. cut off \$2.5 million in aid after Copenhagen; he stated that he would send \$2.5 million to Obama if he would sign the Kyoto protocol.

In Cochabamba I was around so many people who truly understand the enormity of this crisis. Meeting people from Latin America and from all over the world who are facing the destruction of climate change was a humbling experience. We shared our thoughts and agreed on so much. They were excited and surprised to meet someone from the U.S. who agreed with and understood their views — and I was overjoyed to speak to everyday people who didn't think my anti-capitalist views about the environment were completely crazy.

And then I came back here to so much waste. So many wasted resources and a climate "justice" movement that is willing to discuss consumerism but refuses to mention capitalism. We have to talk to our people. This is our people, whether we like it or not, and we have to change their hearts.

It became clear in Cochabamba that the people of the world are demanding that capitalism be discussed as the root cause of this crisis. Very few of us are facing climate change head on, so who are we to deny that? We have no right. □



WW PHOTOS: JOHN CATALINOTTO

KEY DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY FOR CUBA AND THE U.S.

	CUBA	U.S.
Life expectancy	77.7	77.9
Literacy rate	99.8	99
Infant mortality rate (per 1000 live births)	6	6
% children with low birth weight	5	8
% of children enrolled in primary school	97	92
Public expenditure on education (% GDP)	9.8	5.9
Electricity consumption per capita (kWh)	1,380	14,240
CO ₂ emissions per capita	2.1	20.1

SOURCE: DATA FROM THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX REPORT 2007/2008

JOIN WORKERS WORLD PARTY**What's next after USSF?
FIGHT FOR
SOCIALISM***Continued from page 1*

medical care you need.

Maybe you're sick of union busting, plant closings and layoffs, and the mass unemployment that has destroyed so many lives. You wonder why education and health care are so expensive, why schools and hospitals are shutting down or being privatized when the need is so great for the services they provide.

Perhaps you're a woman fighting attacks on reproductive rights or worrying about how to pay for child care and provide for your children. You're struggling to pay your rent or mortgage and not lose your home to foreclosure and eviction. Maybe your utilities have already been shut off. Or you're a differently abled person who is literally shut out by lack of access to buildings and transportation.

Maybe you are gay or lesbian, bisexual, transgender and/or queer and face down bigotry and discrimination on a daily basis. Or you're a person of color who knows firsthand what racism and national oppression are all about. Maybe you struggle to stop police brutality or demand jobs not jails for youth.

Maybe you are an immigrant or an immigrant rights activist who fights to stop the raids and deportations. Or you're organizing to overturn the racist SB1070 law in Arizona and others like it being introduced in other states.

Perhaps you are sick of the U.S. wars and occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan and tired of paying taxes for a bloated Pentagon while every social service is slashed to the bone and budgets are cut. Or you support the Palestinian struggle and demand no more U.S. funding of apartheid Israel. Or you're tired of all the lies directed against Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Perhaps you're an environmental activist sickened by the oil disaster in the Gulf of Mexico, the melting of polar ice caps, disappearing rain forests and the extinction of species due to global warming. You want a sustainable planet and more renewable sources of energy.

All these situations and struggles — and many more — will be represented at the USSF. But despite the sincerity, commitment and hard work of every activist, can any one of these deep problems really be fixed? Is there a permanent solution to any of them?

What these profound problems share is a common source: capitalism. Capitalism is a system driven by a never-ending need to increase profits no matter what the cost to human beings, other species or the planet itself.

Capitalism is killing us and our planet. More and more people — especially youth — are against capitalism according to recent polls. They see what the profit system has done and are fearful that their future under capitalism holds little to no promise of a fulfilling life. They see the suffering of billions of people around the world while a tiny clique of rich parasites own, control and run everything.

Being against capitalism is a good start. But let's take it further. We need to abolish capitalism and replace it with socialism, a system where all of

society is planned and organized to meet human needs and the needs of the earth instead of profits for a few.

Socialism means the right to a job at a living wage, free education and health care, housing for all and much more. It means the development of each person to their full potential, and it means taking care of our planet. Cuba, with very few resources, has shown the world that socialism is possible with a strong leadership and the will of the people. Imagine what could be possible in the richest country in the world, the U.S., if the multinational working class — which creates all of the wealth — were united and empowered.

But socialism won't happen by magic. It takes a revolutionary party — independent from the capitalist parties — to help organize the class-conscious fighters for the overthrow of capitalism and for a socialist world. Workers World Party — along with its youth arm Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST) — unites our many battles and actively expresses solidarity with all those around the globe fighting for a better life.

Look for us at the USSF. Read our newspapers. Attend our national conference in New York City Nov. 12-14. Get to know us better and join us in the fight for a socialist future. □

South African trade unions call for boycott of Israeli apartheid**By Joyce Chediak**

Israel and its apologists bristle when Israel is called an apartheid state. Most loudly shouting, "Israeli apartheid," however, are those who know the best — the workers of South Africa, who suffered the most under South African apartheid. South African trade unions have denounced the siege of Gaza and the apartheid wall on the West Bank, and have urged forward the boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign (BDS).

Adding their voices to the call to boycott goods from Israel are UNITE, the biggest trade union in Britain, and the Swedish Portworkers' Union, which called a boycott of all Israeli ships and cargo from June 15 through June 24.

The South African Transport and Allied Workers' Union, which refuses to handle Israeli goods at South African ports, called the Swedish boycott "the kind of powerful workers' action that was used during the fight against the South African apartheid regime and helped bring it down. It must be used again today against this criminal apartheid regime in Israel."

The South African Municipal Workers Union announced June 4 that it would "engage every single municipality to ensure that there are no commercial, academic, cultural, sporting or other linkages whatsoever with the Israeli regime. ... Every SAMWU branch will immediately approach municipal and water authorities to become part of the BDS campaign, and to publicly declare their solidarity with the Palestinian people."

The Congress of South African Trade Unions expressed outrage at the May 31 kill-

ing of activists by Israeli commandos, and in a statement urged "all South Africans to refuse to buy or handle any goods from Israel or have any dealings with Israeli businesses." This umbrella group of unions supports "the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to national sovereignty" and demands "the immediate end to the Israeli siege and the illegal occupation of the sovereign territory which has been violently seized from the Palestinian nation."

Biggest Britain union joins boycott

UNITE, Britain's biggest trade union, just voted for a complete boycott of Israeli goods and services at its annual conference in Manchester. The 2-million-member union called Israel a "terror" state, with "a policy of ethnic cleansing." UNITE said it would "actively and vigorously" promote a boycott of Israeli goods and services "similar to the boycott of South Africa during the apartheid era," and also pursue a policy of divestment from Israeli companies.

Other labor groups protesting the May 31 Israeli commando raid on the Freedom Flotilla are the International Dockworkers Council, the International Transport Workers Federation, the International Trade Union Confederation, the South African National Union of Mineworkers, the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the British Trade Union Congress. The British University and College Union broke ties with the Histadrut, a Zionist so-called labor organization. UCU spokesperson Tom Hickey said the Histadrut "supported the Israeli assault on civilians in Gaza" and "did not deserve the name of a trade union." □

**Gaza Freedom Flotilla —
the new Freedom Riders****By Joyce Chediak**

The heroes and heroines of the Gaza Freedom Flotilla, so brutally attacked by Israeli commandos on May 31, have transformed the struggle to break the siege of Gaza and raised it to a higher level. They are the new Freedom Riders.

Freedom Riders were Civil Rights activists who rode interstate buses into the southern United States 50 years ago to defy racist segregation practices. Like the Palestinians, the African-American population of the South lived under a separate, apartheid system, called "Jim Crow."

Merely because these Black and white activists traveled together, ate together and shared facilities together where it was forbidden, they were attacked, beaten and even murdered by racists. Their vehicles were firebombed while the local police looked away. Their willingness to risk their lives exposed the brutality of Jim Crow racism and inspired others, who were appalled by the violence against them.

Freedom Riders transformed the Civil Rights Movement and marked a turning point in that struggle, which then grew throughout the South.

When nine courageous Gaza Freedom Flotilla activists were killed and scores wounded by Israeli commandos on May 31 for merely trying to bring food, medicine and housing materials to the besieged people of Gaza, the world was horrified and outraged. The illusion that Israel had any legitimate case against the people or government of Gaza was shattered and Israeli brutality exposed before the world.

More Freedom Flotillas are now on their way to Gaza, and the worldwide boycott, di-

vestment and sanctions campaign against Israel is growing by leaps and bounds.

Israeli investigation called 'farce'

Rejecting a United Nations call for an international inquiry into its murderous commando raid, on June 14 Israel's cabinet approved an Israeli government-appointed commission to investigate its own attack on the aid ship. This "independent public commission" doesn't seem very independent. Led by retired Israeli Supreme Court Justice Jacob Turkel, it will have two foreign observers, but only as non-voting members.

Israel claims its commission would "examine the legality of Israel's naval blockade of Gaza and whether the raid on the flotilla conformed with the rules of international law." (New York Times, June 14)

But Israel's newspaper of record says that the Israeli government really seeks to investigate its victims. "The truth that Netanyahu wishes to bring out involves the identity of the flotilla's organizers, its sources of funding and the knives and rods that were brought aboard," the paper wrote. "He does not intend to probe the decision-making process that preceded the takeover of the ship and the shortcomings that were uncovered." (Haaretz, June 13)

Even Haaretz calls this investigation a "farce."

U.S. — A silent partner in Israeli commando raid

Washington, it seems, is a participant in the farce. Just hours after Israel announced its "independent" investigation, White House spokesman Robert Gibbs "welcomed" it as "an important step forward."

Washington has criticized neither Is-

rael's commando attack nor its 36-month blockade of Gaza. U.S. officials have said as little as possible about the commando raid, while continuing to funnel funds to Tel Aviv. In fact, Washington's huge economic and military support for Israel and its political cover for Tel Aviv make it accountable for Israeli actions and a silent partner in the deadly commando raid.

While Washington may disagree with Israeli tactics, the Pentagon has its hands full with the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Israel remains the Pentagon's most reliable ally to keep the oppressed Palestinians and other peoples in line in that oil-rich and strategic area. There are no splits on this in U.S. ruling circles.

Recently Congress added \$205 million to the \$3 billion the U.S. already gives the Israeli military each year for a missile system. The additional sum was approved by a bipartisan vote of 401 legislators.

Flotilla forces Egypt, Arab League response

In addition to changing the character of struggle, the Freedom Flotilla is responsible for a chain of political events. On June 7, an Egyptian security official declared the blockade on Gaza a "failure" and opened Egypt's border with Gaza "indefinitely."

Egypt is one of the most repressive regimes in the area and a colluder with Israel in the siege of Gaza. Egypt had previously placed every obstacle in the way of Viva Palestina delegations attempting to deliver humanitarian aid to Gaza via Egypt's border. This included physically attacking the delegations, threatening to strand them in the Sinai Desert, confiscating their material aid and deporting their leaders.

Egypt has now opened the Gaza border

Honored in struggle

Striking Puerto Rico students hold graduation ceremonies

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

On the 52nd day of a strike against privatization and tuition increases, the students of the University of Puerto Rico celebrated a symbolic yet very genuine act of commencement right on Ponce de León Avenue, in front of the Río Piedras campus. Accentuating one of the strike's main slogans — “Eleven campuses, one UPR” — it was the first time a graduation was held of all 11 campuses and the UPR High School together. This was a graduation that rewarded the most essential education — the commitment to a just society shown by these students, who are aware of their historic role and loyal to their people, particularly the poorest on the island. Dressed in a variety of ways, from graduation gowns to jeans, the students wore ribbons that read, “UPR 2010 Dignity.”

In this unique act that was organized by students, parents and professors, the students were given a certificate that read in part: “You have demonstrated an unquestionable commitment to your country in the defense of public higher education of accessible quality. You are a worthy example for future generations. For this and other reasons we award you the honorary degree of exemplary citizen.”

They marched to the tune of “Aida” played by the Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra, finishing with the UPR anthem,

which was sung by the Medical Sciences Campus choir.

No U.S. flags were displayed, nor was the U.S. anthem played, as is customary in this U.S. colony. Instead, when the Puerto Rican anthem was played, the original lyrics (the revolutionary anthem) were sung by some of those present.

Strike achievements so far

Despite the intransigent position of the UPR administration represented by University President José de la Torre and Board of Trustees President Ygri Rivera, the students have achieved hard-won concessions. The most important are the defeat of Certification 98 and the promise by the administration that the institution will not be privatized. Certification 98 took away the tuition exemptions for students earned through honor grades or work representing the university in areas such as sports, music and arts.

The students are still negotiating tuition increases, a special quota that the administration recently announced, and the penalization and expulsion of student leaders of the strike.

The administration never wanted negotiations, unilaterally imposing their neoliberal project to destroy this public institution. They refused to negotiate in earnest, and instead took the students to court.

Although the administration thought that the courts would side with them against the students, the opposite has happened. On June 11, Superior Court Judge José Negrón Fernández ordered a process involving mediators, one from each party, to help solve the crisis. The students, after consulting with their lawyers, accepted.

The administration had previously accepted an anti-union mediator, imposed by Gov. Luis Fortuño, that the students rejected on the basis that the mediator was not familiar with the institution. However, the administration initially refused the court-imposed mediator.

The administration finally was forced to accept the ruling, and the process began June 12. At the time of this writing, it is still going. The conversations are confidential so no details are known at this time.

Lessons from the strike

The UPR historically has been the scene of many strikes. It has always represented a voice of dissent and challenge to the colonial government and a refusal of U.S. militarization and domination of the island. The police have always been called in to defeat the students, entering the campus and violently beating them.

Yet everywhere you go in Puerto Rico people comment, “How different this strike has been!” Even former students who participated in strikes in the 1970s and 1980s remark on the difference. What makes this one unique?

This strike has advanced the class struggle in the island, and not only because the students are part of that working class. Their struggle has been an open confrontation against the ruling class — represented by the UPR administration and the thoroughly pro-U.S./Wall Street governor — and their attempts to privatize the Puerto Rican heritage and eradicate national identity in order to convert the island into a U.S. state. This also makes this struggle an anti-colonial struggle, for self-determination of the people. It has been a complex struggle.

The students have used the following elements:

1. A clear and firm message. Their demands have been concretely expressed from day one. They have always used simple language to explain the most complex issues involved, walking away from discourse on political ideology and instead concentrating on a specific demand: the right to a public education for all, particularly for the poorest in the island.
2. At the same time, they have pointed out the failures of the Fortuño administration. In this way, their demands have resonated with the majority of the people, who have been affected by budget cuts, privatization of services, layoffs and more.
3. Exposure of the UPR administration lies and slander tactics. The students have carefully researched and shown facts presented through PowerPoint, videos, documents and other media. They have called several press conferences where they address the people of Puerto Rico, keeping them informed every step of the way. The people have, in turn, responded with support and solidarity — making this a people's strike.
4. Uniting all the 11 campuses in one struggle around important demands that affect all of them. The aim has been to defend public education, regardless of political affiliation or ideology.
5. Participatory democracy. Every action, proposal and demand has been fully discussed at the base, where the input of everybody is crucial. The representatives in the National Negotiating Committee, which represents the 11 campuses, do not make a decision without discussing it and getting the approval from the base.
6. They have taken the struggle outside of the campuses, going to where the people are.
7. They have used utmost creativity throughout the strike: street theater, clever songs and slogans, use of art and music, etc.
8. They have made full use of the Internet, social networks like Facebook and Twitter, blogs, diverse websites and alternative media, including the creation of a radio station, “Radio Huelga” (Strike Radio), where they give daily updates and directly communicate with the people outside the university.
9. They have carefully and thoughtfully prepared important and realistic proposals to solve the financial crisis of the university. These proposals have been presented to the administration and the general public in order to end the strike.
10. They have cared for the campus while occupying the university. In fact, they have turned it into a living university that truly teaches on the most pressing problems of the island, while calling attention to the issues that impact the whole population.

For instance: In an island where recycling is almost absent, they teach the dangers of environmental pollution by recycling. In an island where public transportation is ineffective, with one of the highest ratios of cars per inhabitants, they show the importance of alternative transportation by using bikes. In Puerto Rico, where despite the mild subtropical climate 90 percent of food is imported, they teach by example by creating organic vegetable and fruit gardens, showing the possibility of food self-sufficiency.

They have also taken firm positions on social issues like anti-LGBT bigotry, displaying banners against homophobia around the campus. In the evenings they hold enriching organized discussions and show documentary films on many topics.

The 2010 student strike, regardless of the final outcome, has already been a success. It will only help other sectors in the advancement of the class struggle.

Email: bjceci@workers.org

You can subscribe at workers.org.

- Eight weeks trial \$4
 One year subscription \$25

Or write to Workers World Newspaper
 55 W. 17th St, #5C, NY, NY 10011

Follow Workers World on Twitter
twitter.com/workersworld.

Facebook <http://bit.ly/c4ndYg>.



Right, Freedom Riders with a burning bus at Anniston, Alabama, May 1961. Below, Freedom Riders challenge segregation of interstate travel, 1960.



Continued from page 10

out of fear of its own population, which has been inspired by the solidarity of the Freedom Flotilla and angered by the Israeli attack.

And on June 13 Secretary General Amr Moussa of the Arab League toured Gaza for the first time since Hamas took control there. Moussa, the highest-ranking Arab diplomat to visit in three years, entered Gaza from Egypt through the newly opened border and immediately called for lifting the blockade.

Where was the Arab League for the last three years? Until the Freedom Flotilla, the 22-member group did not speak out seriously against the siege.

Surely the Arab countries, where the people feel so deeply the 60 years of Palestinian repression and the siege of Gaza, would be the logical place to organize flotillas to break the blockade. However, most Arab regimes are in the vest pocket of Wall Street and fear that any show of mass sentiment in their countries could result in their own overthrow. Flotillas from their countries would not be tolerated.

Turkey's contradictions

Meanwhile, Turkey's popularity among the peoples of the Middle East has sky-

rocketed following its denunciations of Israel's tactics and because it let the flotilla organize from its shores and provided political support. Turkish flags and posters of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan have been prominent in demonstrations around the world protesting the Israeli commando attack.

When Israel attacked a Turkish ship in the flotilla, eight of the flotilla participants killed by Israeli commandos were Turks and the ninth was a Turkish American. Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, who called for an international investigation, dismissed Israel's proposed panel. He said “We have no trust at all that Israel ... will conduct an impartial investigation.”

There are contradictions here. Turkey, a key U.S. client, was one of the earliest regimes to recognize the Israeli state after it displaced Palestine. However, the Turkish government is strongly against the siege of Gaza and often speaks out against it.

While this view reflects the strong feelings of the Turkish people and plays well for Turkey's domestic audience, the Erdogan government is also seeking some international autonomy.

U.S. wars in the Middle East have hurt the Turkish economy. Turkey has not been admitted to the European Union. So Turkey is striking out more on its own, politically and economically, wanting trade and better relations with Middle Eastern neighbors such as Iran and Syria, which Washington has branded “terrorist.” □

El desastre de BP

Sistema de lucro hace enfrentar puestos de trabajos contra medioambiente

Por Gene Clancy

Es una imagen inolvidable y desgarradora. Un ave marina de Grand Island en el estado de Luisiana se encuentra en una cesta, cubierta con una gruesa capa de petróleo tratando de respirar y parpadeando aturdida como si estuviera asombrada.

Cuando la BP (British Petroleum) anunció que su más reciente “solución” había tenido un éxito parcial, esta y otras imágenes de la devastación en la región del Golfo de México han traído a la conciencia la enormidad del crimen que BP y sus colaboradores capitalistas han perpetrado. La llamada tapa contenedora que se puso el 4 de junio ha tenido un éxito limitado: sólo un tercio de los 750.000 galones que por día se pierden del pozo destruido, es succionado.

¿Por qué nos conmueve ver imágenes de aves moribundas? Inmediatamente, es por la empatía que tenemos por la vida y el sufrimiento de otros seres que sienten, con los cuales compartimos el planeta. Pero en un sentido más profundo, es porque hondamente nos damos cuenta de que la destrucción de estas aves y su hábitat es también un ataque sobre nuestro propio hábitat y sobre nuestra propia capacidad para sobrevivir y ganarnos la vida, aunque la devastación pueda no ser tan obvia inmediatamente.

Cuando el Deepwater Horizon explotó el 20 de abril matando a 11 de los trabajadores, los empleados de por lo menos 13 diferentes empresas estaban a bordo. Además de los ingenieros de alto nivel de la compañía Transocean que operaba la plataforma petrolífera, y la BP, que tenía el contrato de arrendamiento, los trabajadores incluían soldadores, buceadores, cocineros, limpiadores de tanques y tra-

bajadores de lavandería empleados a través de varias empresas subcontratadas. Y para cada puesto de trabajo de exploración y producción, se estima que hay cuatro puestos de trabajo auxiliares en y alrededor de la región.

Hay 5.000 plataformas marinas de petróleo y gas sólo en Luisiana, muchas de las cuales puede verse desde la costa, además de 17 refinерías de petróleo, 119.091 kilómetros de gasoductos y 90 fábricas importantes de productos químicos. El sistema portuario de Luisiana es el más grande del mundo, con seis puertos de aguas profundas, ocho costeros y 13 en el interior. Sólo el Puerto Fourchon maneja el 90 por ciento del tráfico que sirve a la industria del petróleo y del gas en aguas profundas del Golfo. Estas instalaciones coexisten junto a una industria pesquera comercial y deportiva que trae \$2,5 mil millones anuales. También existe una industria turística considerable.

La BP ha lanzado una campaña publicitaria a un costo estimado de \$50 millones en la que su director ejecutivo Tony Hayward, se compromete a limpiar el desastre que BP ha causado. Por supuesto, Hayward mismo no hará nada sino que será un ejército de miles de trabajadores/as quienes realmente se encargarán de las tareas de limpieza.

El 27 de mayo el Departamento del Interior estadounidense emitió una moratoria de seis meses en la perforación de aguas profundas en el Golfo con el fin de “determinar qué ha fallado y cómo poner remedio a las deficiencias de seguridad”. La moratoria afecta más directamente a 17 compañías petroleras, incluyendo gigantes multinacionales como la BP, Exxon Mobil, Shell y Chevron, que se vieron obligadas a cerrar sus operaciones en 33

plataformas de perforación.

La mayoría de los científicos ambientales han dicho que seis meses es totalmente inadecuado. Sin embargo, las industrias del petróleo y del gas de Luisiana y los políticos asociados a ellas, ya se están quejando. El gobernador de Luisiana Bobby Jindal, quien se ha expresado condenando la destrucción del medio ambiente a lo largo de la costa del Golfo, fue sin embargo muy crítico de la moratoria. “Durante uno de los períodos económicos más difíciles de las últimas décadas, lo último que necesitamos es adoptar políticas públicas que sin duda van a destruir miles de puestos de trabajo existentes y evitarán la creación de miles más”, dijo en una carta al presidente Barack Obama.

¿Medio ambiente o puestos de trabajo?

Cada vez que una corporación capitalista percibe una amenaza a sus ganancias, rápidamente amenaza a los/as trabajadores/as con la pérdida de puestos de trabajo. Los/as trabajadores/as saben por amarga experiencia, que no se trata de amenazas en vano. A los capitalistas les gusta presentarse como unos semidioses benévolos que otorgan los puestos de trabajo a quienes los “merecen”. Pero para la mayoría de los/as trabajadores/as, su trabajo es su único medio de supervivencia. Cuando los empresarios amenazan a los/as trabajadores/as con perder sus puestos de trabajo, lo que amenazan es la misma supervivencia de los/as trabajadores/as.

Los/as trabajadores/as en la región del Golfo son de muchas maneras semejantes a los que trabajan en las minas de carbón en Apalachia. Desempeñan trabajos difíciles y peligrosos para compañías que violan el medioambiente y arruinan a las comunidades cercanas. Como operan en

zonas económicamente deprimidas, las compañías tratan de dividir a la gente trabajadora oponiendo a quienes están más afectados/as por la destrucción medioambiental, contra quienes trabajan en las minas y en las plataformas de petróleo.

Una lista de 100 de los “Empleos más populares donde la mayoría de los trabajadores no necesitan tener educación universitaria” publicada en Nueva Orleans, muestra una preponderancia de empleos en los campos de las industrias de petróleo, gas, barcos y químicos. (City-Towninfo.com) Invariablemente esos están también entre los empleos con sueldos más altos. Los jefes les dicen a los/as trabajadores/as que deben escoger entre no contaminar y destruir sus alrededores o un trabajo que pague bien (aunque sea sucio y peligroso).

A estos patronos no les importa nada salvar los empleos de los/as trabajadores/as. Algunos/as ambientalistas han señalado que si la capa aceitosa actual migra a aéreas donde hay otras plataformas, esas instalaciones tendrían que cerrarse indefinidamente de todos modos. La verdadera preocupación de los capitalistas del área del Golfo está más relacionada a la globalización que a cualquier moratoria sobre perforaciones. Ellos no quieren que los dueños ni los operadores de las plataformas cancelen sus contratos y muden sus operaciones a las aéreas costaneras de África o Brasil o alguna otra parte en el exterior.

El pueblo pobre y trabajador no debería estar forzado a escoger entre un medioambiente limpio y un empleo que pague bien. A diferencia de las aves marinas cubiertas de petróleo, los/as trabajadores/as y el pueblo oprimido tienen la conciencia y el poder de luchar contra el brutal sistema capitalista, y crear una sociedad en la cual las contradicciones entre los seres humanos y el medioambiente serán finalmente resueltas. □

Obreros/as, Inmigrantes, Desempleado/as, Jóvenes, Estudiantes:

El capitalismo está matando a la gente y al planeta

Si está interesado/a en abolir un sistema basado en ganancias

- sacando a la gente de sus trabajos y de sus viviendas
- cerrando las escuelas, negando atención médica
- haciendo guerras
- rescatando a los bancos
- encarcelando a los/as pobres y a los/as jóvenes
- utilizando el perfil racial contra toda la gente de color y los/as inmigrantes
- destruyendo el medioambiente con calentamiento global y derrames de petróleo.



El Partido Workers World/ Mundo Obrero y su sección juvenil FIST (Luchemos contra el imperialismo, unámonos) De costa a costa están organizando activamente por trabajos, educación y atención médica. Estamos organizando en contra del racismo, Para decir que no hay trabajadores/as ilegales en Arizona ni en ninguna otra parte; y en pro de los derechos LGBTQ. Estamos organizando para ponerle fin a las guerras de los ricos en Iraq y Afganistán y oponernos a la ocupación, desde Haití hasta Palestina.

El Partido WW/MO y FIST luchan por el Socialismo — un mundo sin opresión, explotación, pobreza y guerra — donde toda la riqueza de la sociedad pertenezca al pueblo, y esté organizado para satisfacer las necesidades humanas y no a la avaricia corporativa. ¡No espere hasta la conferencia de Noviembre! WW/Mundo Obrero tiene reuniones semanales además de organizar. Si usted está interesado/a, llámenos al 212-627-2994 o mándenos un correo electrónico a wwp@workers.org para más información sobre la conferencia del 12-14 de Noviembre.

Entonces es tiempo de levantarnos, unirnos y luchar por un futuro socialista

Conferencia del Partido Workers World/Mundo Obrero

12-14 de noviembre

Marque la fecha new york city



¿QUIÉNES SON LOS CINCO CUBANOS?

Los Cinco Cubanos están cumpliendo largas e injustas

sentencias en prisiones de EEUU por defender a su patria – Cuba – de

grupos terroristas del exilio Cubano en Miami. Los Cinco Cubanos fueron arrestados en 1998 por monitorear las actividades de esos grupos violentos e informar a Cuba sobre sus planes. Por casi 12 años, estos cinco hombres han permanecido en prisiones de EEUU y como un castigo adicional, a dos de ellos se les ha negado el derecho humano básico de recibir visitas de sus esposas. Únase a personas de todas partes del mundo – parlamentarios, Premios Nobel, sindicalistas, activistas comunitarios – que se han pronunciado contra el injusto encarcelamiento de los Cinco Cubanos y continúan demandado su libertad. Para más información visite: www.thecuban5.org



USSF EN SOLIDARIDAD CON LOS CINCO CUBANOS
PROGRAMA ESPECIAL
Miércoles, 23 de junio 4 p.m. a 6 p.m.
hosted by Sere Ngeli Gallery Global at the
Virgil H. Carr Cultural Arts Center
311 E. Grand River in Harmonie Park/Paradise Valley