

# WORKERS WORLD

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

JULY 1, 2010 Vol. 52, No. 25 50¢

## IN SOLIDARITY WITH GAZA

# Dockworkers honor picket, won't unload Israeli ship

By Judy Greenspan  
Oakland, Calif.

When an Israeli cargo ship pulled into Berth 58 in the Port of Oakland on the evening of June 20, there were no dockworkers on hand to unload it. Longshore workers refused to cross a picket line of hundreds of labor and community activists protesting Israel's blockade of Gaza and its recent murderous attack on the Gaza Freedom Flotilla.

The day had begun at 5 a.m. at the West Oakland BART station. Members of the Labor/Community Committee in Solidarity with the Palestinian People had gathered before dawn to march to Berth 58, where an Israeli ship from the Zim shipping line was due to dock. By 5:30 a.m., a loud, organized, roving picket of hundreds of people had blocked all four entrances to the Port of Oakland berth.

Chants of "Free, free Palestine, don't cross our picket line" were heard throughout the port area. Truck drivers making early morning deliveries to Berth 58 blew their horns and refused to cross the picket line. At 7 p.m., the first shift of dockworkers drove up and, one by one, drove back home, honoring the strong protest.

The picket line continued into the late afternoon and successfully turned away the second shift of dockworkers, who also honored the picket line and returned home.

Members of International Longshore Workers Union, Local 10, were out on the picket line all day talking to protesters and showing their support for the action. Clarence Thomas, an ILWU lineman and leader, thanked the Labor/Community Committee and the San Francisco and Alameda County Labor Councils for their support of this action.

Both labor councils recently passed resolutions criticizing Israel's attack on the Gaza Freedom Flotilla and demanding that Israel lift the blockade of Gaza. Thomas called today's picket line "historic" and "reminiscent of the 1977 action on Easter Sunday," when dockworkers conducted a one-day job action to protest the massacre of South Africans in apartheid Soweto. Thomas noted that dockworkers around the world, in South Africa, Norway and Sweden, have declared that they will refuse to handle any Israeli cargo.

In a short interview with this reporter, Thomas talked about the 1984 organizing effort by progressive ILWU members that led to an 11-day work stoppage and boycott to protest South African apartheid. "Our actions helped raise the level of resistance to apartheid in this country, especially among workers," Thomas stated. "This protest today will also help raise consciousness among longshore workers about the need to end the Israeli blockade of Gaza," Thomas added.

The protest was endorsed by a broad coalition of progressive organizations, including Arab-American Union Members Council, Al-Awda, the Palestine Right to Return Coalition, ANSWER, Palestine Youth Network, International Action Center, Transport Workers Solidarity Committee, and many other labor and community organizations in the Bay Area.

□

## WW Pride statement

# Repeal 'don't ask, don't tell'— and the military

Activists in the lesbian, gay, bi and transgender communities are continuing to push for a repeal of the reactionary "don't ask, don't tell" law, which dictates the discharge of LGBT members of the U.S. military if they reveal their sexuality or if it is otherwise exposed.

Both the Senate Armed Services Committee and the full House of Representatives have now voted to repeal the law. However, implementation of the repeal is being delayed until the Pentagon completes a report, due Dec. 1, assessing the effects of the repeal on the military.

Despite laws like DADT, LGBT people have always been in the U.S. armed forces. Increasingly they enlist in the military — knowing full well that they will experience discrimination — because they can't find better job prospects or opportunities.

Once inside, they attempt to withstand a culture in which the military brass use the vilest racist, homophobic and anti-woman language to promote violence against the "other" — fellow working-class sisters and brothers in other countries, and sometimes at

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**SOCIALISTS UNITE!** Statement of WWP & FIST 10

# Witnesses to Israeli terror speak out

By Joyce Chediac  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

In a spirit of militant defiance, some 450 people packed Brooklyn's House of the Lord church June 17 to hear an eyewitness report from the Gaza Freedom Flotilla. They wanted to hear what really happened when Israeli commandos stormed the Turkish ship Mavi Marmara on May 31 in international waters, killing nine and wounding scores.

Just attending this meeting became an act of struggle after so-called liberal Democratic politicians terror-baited the meeting's speakers, trying to suppress the free speech of eyewitnesses to the Israeli attack and the right of people here to hear the truth. A small group of Zionists picketed outside during the meeting.

New York City Council speaker Christine Quinn, U.S. Representatives Jerrold Nadler, Anthony Weiner, Carolyn Mahoney and Charles Rangel, along with Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, had gathered in Times Square on June 14 to demand that the State Department investigate the invited speakers for "ties to terrorism" and prevent or delay their entry to the United States.

This was not merely a local matter. Speaking as a group in the home of Wall Street, these politicians were really speaking for the U.S. government.

Despite this pressure, the Freedom Flotilla report-back took place as planned. Eyewitnesses Kevin Ovenden and Iara Lee, a U.S. filmmaker, had their say. However, another keynote speaker, Ahmet Unsal, a former member of the Turkish Parliament and a member of the Turkish charity group IHH, was denied entry to the U.S.

The meeting was chaired by Dima Abi Saab from Al-Awda-NY, the Palestine Right to Return Coalition. Awda member Iltur Aturk spoke in Turkish.

Rev. Herbert Daughtry, pastor of the historic Black church, gave a warm welcome. He said those supporting Palestine were in the company of others who, over the

years, had come to his church to support many different struggles, including the South African freedom struggle and the fight for justice for Haiti.

Bill Cecil, an Al-Awda-NY organizer who had been on the second Viva Palestina land convoy, said those present were "standing up to the new McCarthyism." He called the politicians' attack on the Freedom Flotilla "a modern witch-hunt of those who oppose Israel, the Rhodesia of the Middle East." He called for an end to all U.S. aid to Israel, and pointed out that every bomb, every weapon used by the Israeli government was paid for with U.S. tax dollars, which could instead be used for jobs, schools and hospitals here.

City Council member Charles Barron gave a history of Zionist oppression of the Palestinian people, adding, "Liberating Palestine is liberating all of us." Barron has come under severe pressure for going on a Viva Palestina delegation to break the siege of Gaza. He announced the formation of a new, Black-led political party, the Freedom Party, to provide an alternative to the Democratic Party, and invited all to join.

Kevin Ovenden, a leader of Viva Palestina USA and attaché to former British MP George Galloway, witnessed the shooting by Israeli commandos of flotilla activists, including one shot in the head. Of the nine people killed, he said, their "blood was not shed in vain because the tide has turned ... this is a new phase in the struggle."

"Now," he continued, "the question is not if the siege will be lifted, the question is how rapidly. ... We must refuse the idea that in some sense the murders were the fault of those aboard the ship. Victims of lethal violence have an absolute right to defend themselves. ... We didn't land on Israel, Israel landed on us."

Ovenden said the ships would keep coming. Viva Palestina is now organizing both the largest land convoy and the largest flotilla ever. The land and sea convoys will leave together for Gaza in September.

Iara Lee, a U.S. filmmaker on the Mavi Marmara, played video footage she smuggled out showing Israeli commandos descending from a helicopter and small Israeli boats around the Turkish vessel. "We saw flotilla activists carrying the wounded downstairs into the ship and treating them," she said, "while shots could be heard." Among those treated were two Israeli soldiers.

In Lee's footage, one flotilla participant held up for the camera a booklet with pictures of flotilla activists and their names, which an Israeli soldier had dropped. It is widely believed that this was an assassination list.

Al-Awda-NY Co-Chair Lamis Deek said that while it was important to break the siege of Gaza, it was also important to have an overall perspective. Otherwise, "Palestinians will end up in Bantustans, with the people divided from each other." She said that when Palestinian people in Gaza elected Hamas, "they voted for full resistance to Israeli occupation and one state in all of Palestine." She called for the "full dismantling of all Zionist institutions and laws, repatriation of all Palestinians and reparations for Palestinians and their descendants."

Solidarity statements were read, including from Sara Flounders of the International Action Center, Lumumba Bandele of the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, Valerie Francisco of the Filipino organization BAYAN USA and Dan Meyers of the National Lawyers Guild.

Al-Awda-NY organized this event, along with dozens of other groups including the IAC, American Muslims for Palestine, International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network and the New York NLG. □

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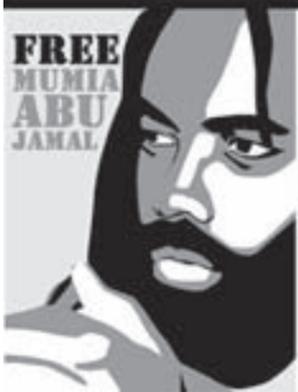
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## Be in Philadelphia! **JULY 4** Annual protest to demand **MUMIA'S FREEDOM!**

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.



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](http://www.freemumia.com) and [www.millions4mumia.org](http://www.millions4mumia.org) or call ICFFMAJ at 215-476-8812 for more updates, bus information and July 4 literature.

## JOIN US

Workers World Party (WWP) fights for socialism and engages in struggles on all the issues that face the working class & oppressed peoples — Black & white, Latino/a, Asian, Arab and Native peoples, women & men, young and old, lesbian, gay, bi, straight, trans, disabled, working, unemployed & students. If you would like to know more about WWP, or to join us in these struggles, contact the branch nearest you.

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## Boston LGBTQ Pride

# Hotel union marches with Stonewall Warriors

Hundreds of thousands of spirited marchers and cheering spectators participated in Boston's 40th Lesbian/Gay/Bi/Trans/Queer Pride Parade on June 12. The theme of this year's march was "From Riots to Rights."

The Stonewall Warriors contingent raised many issues of solidarity. Their banner said, "Come out against racism, sexism, foreclosures and war," while their signs opposed Arizona's racist anti-immigrant laws and supported the Hyatt Hotel workers.

The strong Stonewall Warriors contingent linked up and marched with the large UNITE HERE Local 26 contingent and float, in solidarity with Hyatt Hotel workers and the hotel boycott. The boycott was begun after the Hyatt 100, workers who were forced to train temporary workers to do their job, were replaced by the same workers at half the pay.

Local 26 members carried signs at the Boston Pride march which said, "Hyatt is anti-worker, anti-gay." UNITE HERE locals have participated in Pride marches in more than 12 cities nationwide so far this year.

In California, the LGBTQ community has joined with UNITE HERE to support the boycott. Hyatt Hotel owner Doug Manchester contributed large sums to the right-wing campaign to put the anti-gay-marriage Proposition 8 on the ballot in that state.

In San Francisco, LGBTQ activists have staged "flash mob infiltrations" of boycotted hotels, encouraging support for workers' rights and singing, "Don't be caught in a bad hotel!" Boston's LGBTQ community carried out a similar action at the Hyatt Hotel here on June 11, the day before the Pride march.

— Frank Neisser



WW PHOTO: MAUREEN SKEHAN

## LGBT group denounces Israel



Chanting, "Queers come out and take a stand, there's too much blood on Israel's hands!" an angry group of LGBTQ activists picketed on June 17 in front of the Castro Theatre in San Francisco to protest Israeli support of the Frameline LGBT Film Festival. The action, organized by Queers Undermining Israeli Terrorism, maintained a strong presence in front of the theater for two hours.

According to a QUIT statement released at the protest, progressive members of the LGBTQ community are

opposed to this year's Israeli Consulate sponsorship of the film festival. The statement strongly criticized Israel's massacres, imposed starvation and military occupation of the Palestinian people. Signs at the protest also highlighted the recent Israeli military attack on the Gaza Freedom Flotilla.

The QUIT statement reminded members of the LGBTQ community that "we are not so desperate for acceptance that we will ally ourselves with racists and murderers."

— Report and photo by Judy Greenspan

## Birmingham for Palestine



About 35 people met in the Five Points South neighborhood of Birmingham, Ala., on June 19 to show solidarity with the besieged and invaded people of Palestine and to protest the Freedom Flotilla massacre. The demonstration lasted from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. without incident. Some of the chants were "Free, free Palestine!", "1-2-3-4, stop the killing, stop the war! 5-6-7-8, Israel is a terrorist state!" and "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free!"

The demonstration was sponsored by Birmingham Students for a Democratic Society, Birmingham FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together) and the Birmingham Peace Project.

— Report and photo by Dustin Getz, Birmingham FIST

### WW Pride statement

## Repeal 'don't ask, don't tell'— and the military

Continued from page 1

home.

"The purpose of military training is to churn out non-thinking killing machines," Stephen Funk, a gay Filipino Marine and the first conscientious objector imprisoned for refusing to fight in Iraq, described in a statement. "One must go through a transformation in order to accommodate the unnatural way of life that the military teaches." ([www.resistersbook.org](http://www.resistersbook.org))

That same process is used to divide members of the military itself — manifested in attacks, including sexual assault, against women and LGBT service members.

In a 1993 Workers World pamphlet, Rebeca Toledo explained: "As does any other employer, the Pentagon tries to keep the workers divided. Artificial barriers keep Black and white troops apart, men and women divided, and gays and straights at odds. When these barriers break down, the potential arises for rank-and-file soldiers to recognize the brass as their common enemy, unite against them and refuse to take their orders. ... Thus, in reality rank-and-file solidarity in the military can pose the ultimate threat to

capitalism." ("Armed & dangerous: Why the Pentagon declared war on lesbians and gays.")

Workers World Party supports the right of LGBT people to serve in the military free of harassment, intimidation and discrimination. This becomes especially important in this harsh economic climate, when an economic draft is forcing more LGBT workers, like all workers, to enlist.

In addition, we call for the complete dismantling of the U.S. military — an instrument of U.S. imperialism that is used to repress, oppress and murder people around the world, all in the name of unbridled profit. We salute those members of the military who resist.

Further, we assert the right of LGBT people to real jobs with real wages — including full health care benefits for themselves, their partners and their families. It is important to note that the repeal of DADT was tacked on to the Defense Department's annual, massive spending bill, which allocates the continued theft of money from U.S. working people to feed the war machine. That money could be used to provide job opportunities to LGBT and all people, so that they wouldn't have to enlist in the military in the first place. □



Mumia Abu-Jamal's book, **'JAILHOUSE LAWYERS: Prisoners defending prisoners v. the U.S.A.'** Books are available at [Leftbooks.com](http://Leftbooks.com)

## Gov't entrapment plot exposed

# Case against Newburgh 4 falls apart

By Dee Knight  
New York

A federal judge in White Plains, N.Y., “indefinitely postponed” the trial of the Newburgh 4 on June 15. The four are charged with plotting to bomb a Bronx synagogue and a Jewish community center and shoot down military planes at Stewart International Airport near Newburgh, N.Y.

Judge Colleen McMahon angrily criticized prosecutors for covering up an investigator’s report showing the “plot” was the work of a government agent, working for the FBI.

The judge declined a defense motion to dismiss the charges because of the entrapment scheme. But, she asked, “Did the government locate some disaffected individuals, manufacture a phony terrorist plot that the individuals would (and could) never have dreamed up or carried out on their own, and then wrongfully in-



PHOTO: MIDDLETOWN TIMES-HERALD-RECORD  
Alicia McWilliams outside courthouse: “The government needs to be held accountable.”

duce them to participate in it?”

Six days later, on June 21, Judge McMahon said she would announce a decision on bail for the four by the end of the week.

Prosecutors argued against bail, claiming the four are “a danger to the community.”

The defense team noted the presence in court of FBI agent Robert Fuller, who ran the sting operation. He also directed the successful sting of the Fort Dix 5 in 2008. His presence was interpreted as a message to the judge. Supporters of the defendants also sent a message. There was a large delegation in the courtroom, while outside others held three banners denouncing the entrapment, calling for freedom for the Newburgh 4 and an end to the wave of anti-Muslim hysteria.

The four defendants — James Cromitie, David Williams, Onta Williams and Laguerre Payen — face life in prison.

“Let’s get this straight,” wrote Bruce Ticker of the Philadelphia Jewish Voice. “These four suspects never possessed the resources necessary to execute such a plot until they partnered with a conspicuous FBI informant, and the FBI made certain to supply them with a harmless arsenal of bombs and a missile launcher. In other words, the

Riverdale Jewish Center and Riverdale Temple were never endangered.” (Riverdale Press, June 04, 2009)

Alicia McWilliams, the aunt of defendant David Williams, told Workers World she has dedicated the past 13 months to winning justice for the four. She contacted Nada Khader of the Westchester Peace Action Council (WESPAC), who connected her with a network of local, statewide and national groups and institutions, including Project SALAM in Albany and Mauri Saalakhian of the Peace and Justice Foundation. Representatives of both groups, as well as WESPAC, were in court on June 15 and again for the bail hearing on June 21, along with supporters from Newburgh, Westchester County and the Bronx organized by Anne Gibbons and Ivan Braun and Pastor Doug Cunningham of the New Day United Methodist Church.

Nada Khader of WESPAC is leading a workshop this week at the U.S. Social Forum on the subject of Arab and African-American relations. The Newburgh case has emerged as a battle against a massive government conspiracy to entrap Muslims and other people of color in supposed acts of terrorism. Khader told Workers World that the FBI’s role is meant to sustain an atmosphere of terror and anti-Muslim hysteria, serving to justify the illegal U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Alicia McWilliams told Workers World that she and Anne Gibbons have become a campaign team. On June 1 they went together to Philadelphia to support the Fort Dix 5 — another case of government entrapment of Muslims, in which the defendants were convicted and are serving life-plus-30-years. Their case is on appeal. (See “Voice of the Oppressed” on Facebook.)

McWilliams plans a rally in front of New York’s City Hall on July 15. “It’s my turn,” she said. “I want them to apologize to my family. The government needs to be held accountable for these actions. This is just the beginning.” □

## Film tells story of Angola 3

Lincoln Center’s Walter Reade Theater was packed on June 16 and 17 for the New York premiere of the documentary “In the Land of the Free,” which tells the chilling story of the Angola 3 — members of the Black Panther Party who were targeted for their struggle against atrocious conditions at the hellhole known as Angola penitentiary in Louisiana. A highlight of the event was the presence of Robert King, one of the original three, who was released from Angola in 2001. Herman Wallace and Albert Woodfox remain incarcerated there, convicted of the murder of a prison guard despite no physical evidence and no credible eyewitnesses. In photo, King signs copies of his autobiography, “From the Bottom of the Heap,” which was published by PM Press. He said after his release, “I’m free of Angola but Angola is not free of me,” and continues to fight for his comrades’ freedom.

— Report and photo by Anne Pruden



## Picket at Detroit ball game ‘No to Arizona law SB1070!’

On June 18, a multinational crowd of spirited demonstrators protested the Arizona Diamondbacks at Comerica Park in downtown Detroit before the baseball team’s game with the Detroit Tigers. The protesters demanded the repeal of Arizona’s apartheid law SB1070 and all laws targeted at undocumented workers and immigrants. They hoisted banners and bright red signs that read, “Overturn Arizona apartheid: Jobs, not racism,” and chanted, “Say no to racism: Boycott Arizona!” Demonstration participants included African Americans, Latinos/as, students, youth and union members.

Protesters are targeting the Diamondbacks at stadiums across the U.S. because the team’s owners have bankrolled legis-

lators and Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer, who are responsible for the passage of SB1070 and other racist laws. In Detroit, the militant protest and widespread media coverage forced the Diamondbacks’ owners to issue a statement in which they denied any responsibility for the racist laws in Arizona.

The demonstration was called by the Michigan Emergency Committee against War and Injustice; the Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shut-offs; Fight Imperialism, Stand Together — Detroit; Latinos Unidos; and Solidarity and Defense. Numerous individuals and organizations supported the action.

— Report and photo by Bryan G. Pfeifer

## Rainbow Solidarity In Defense of CUBA

Leslie Feinberg, author of *Stone Butch Blues*  
This ground-breaking book documents revolutionary Cuba’s inspiring trajectory of progress towards liberation of sexualities, genders and sexes.

Available at [Leftbooks.com](http://Leftbooks.com)



## As Senate stalls

# Extended jobless benefits start running out

By Monica Moorehead

On June 1, an estimated 325,000 eligible unemployed workers were denied extended unemployment benefits. By the end of June, if Congress does not pass the latest emergency unemployment benefits extension bill, this number is expected to mushroom to at least one and a quarter million workers, according to government figures.

Why is it that in the midst of the worst capitalist economic crisis since the Depression of the 1930s desperate workers can't receive even a measly amount of money from the government? This money represents a withheld percentage of their wages, so why aren't they automatically entitled to it?

The immediate answer is that while the bill passed the House of Representatives on June 11, the millionaire Senate, including both Republicans and Democrats, has stalled its passage due to a certain provision within the same bill. No measure can become law unless both houses of Congress approve it.

That provision centers on whether the wealthiest people living in the U.S. will continue to enjoy enormous tax breaks and pay at most just 15 percent of their

income, or will have to pay more to narrow the tax loophole that exists. Since the Senate majority's priority is to represent the interests of mainly Wall Street investors, these lawmakers are doing everything they can to save their clients a reported \$25 billion in earnings over the next decade. Most workers have to dole out close to 50 percent of their incomes, if not more, in various taxes, whether there is an economic crisis or not, whether they are unemployed or underemployed.

This is not the first time that the Senate has stalled on passing extended unemployment benefits. Their excuse for doing this repeatedly, even using the filibuster tactic, is their "concern" for the federal deficit. If this concern were truly genuine, they would not be bending over backwards to bail out their ruling-class masters with billions of dollars in so-called stimulus money and tax breaks.

State budgets pay for 26 weeks of unemployment benefits. After that time, the federal government pays for extended benefits, up to 99 weeks in total. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, there are currently 15 million jobless workers. Unofficially, however, there are millions more, considering those who have given up looking for work and those

who are excluded, including youth, the undocumented, prisoners and others. Forty-six percent of the official 15 million have been out of work for more than half a year. This is the highest level recorded since 1948, when these statistics were first compiled.

Jobless rates overall and state by state create a false notion of what is really going on underneath. For instance, in May the U.S. government claimed in one breath that jobless rates fell, but in the next breath stated that this was due to two important factors: one, more unemployed people became so discouraged that they stopped looking for work, and two, the government created temporary jobs working for the 2010 U.S. Census.

According to this report, Nevada has the highest official unemployment rate of any state, at 14 percent, with Michigan a very close second at 13.6 percent. Detroit still has the highest unemployment rate of any city. It is officially 22 percent, but it is at least double that rate among African-American youth.

In fact, for Black workers in general, the depression did not begin at the end of 2007 when the current economic crisis began to intensify for most workers. These oppressed workers have been vic-

tims of a last-hired, first-fired racist policy for many decades. Due to deindustrialization caused by the restructuring of the capitalist economy over the past 25 years, Black workers have lost their unionized jobs disproportionately — especially in auto and steel — at a much faster pace than white workers.

The Institute for Southern Studies gives these statistics on Black unemployment based on January 2010 figures: Eight percent of African-American men have lost their jobs since November 2007, and while the June 2010 unemployment rate is officially 9.7 percent, for African Americans it is 16.4 percent. The state with the highest unemployment rate for African Americans is South Carolina at 20.4 percent, which amounts to more than one out of every five Black workers.

These statistics alone should be motivation enough for the national labor leaders to put resources into mobilizing the unemployed and employed, the unorganized and organized, in the hundreds of thousands to go to Washington, D.C., and stay there to demand a government-funded jobs program for all. Another demand should be no-strings-attached, extended unemployment benefits, for however long the workers need them. □

## Study shows

# Housing crisis hits people of color hardest

By Abayomi Azikiwe  
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Despite claims of an economic recovery by the Barack Obama administration and corporate media, the crisis in home foreclosures — which triggered the 2008 financial meltdown — still remains a major problem. A recently released study by the Center for Responsible Lending reports a 4.5 percent rate of home foreclosures for whites and rates nearly twice as high for African Americans and Latinos/as.

During the so-called real estate boom of 1990 to 2005, the largest nationally oppressed groups in the United States were targeted with predatory lending schemes that proved disastrous for both communities. In early 2007, housing prices began to decline rapidly as interest rates and penalties on mortgages rose sharply.

Many borrowers fell prey to real estate brokers and unlicensed salespersons who told them that housing prices would continue to appreciate and that they should purchase and/or refinance. The impact has been devastating for the working class as a whole, but especially so for nationally oppressed families and neighborhoods.

Both the financial industry and the federal government refuse to provide an accurate assessment of the situation. Consequently, the available data is questionable and the total magnitude of the crisis is still hidden.

The report by the Center for Responsible Lending, entitled "Foreclosures by Race and Ethnicity: The Demographics of a Crisis," is the source of all quotes below.

"Although a number of useful mortgage databases are available," it states, "there is no official, nationwide, publicly available census of completed foreclosures or associated demographic information."

The report continues: "During the first three years of the foreclosure crisis, from January 2007 through the end of 2009, we estimate that 2.5 million foreclosures were completed," the vast majority on owner-occupied properties with mortgages originated between 2005 and 2008.

Using the available data, the CRL estimates that 56 percent "of families who lost homes were non-Hispanic and white, but African American and Latino/a families were disproportionately affected relative to their share of mortgage originations ... even after controlling for differences in income patterns between demographic groups."

Even with these extremely high numbers of home losses, the crisis is far from over. The Mortgage Bankers Association's National Delinquency Survey reported that the rate of foreclosures still remains at 4.63 percent, nearly six times the 1979 to 2006 average.

Including households where two or more mortgage payments are behind, the CRL estimates that 5.7 million households are at serious risk of losing their homes and in the future between 10 and 13 million homes will be lost — even if the current crisis in capitalism subsides.

With specific reference to the future, this same report says that "Non-Hispanic whites represent the majority of at-risk borrowers, but African-American and Latino borrowers are more likely to be at imminent risk of foreclosure (21.6 percent and 21.4 percent, respectively) than non-Hispanic white borrowers (14.8 percent). American Indian (16.5 percent), Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders (18.6 percent) and Asian borrowers (15.7 percent) all also show an increased likelihood of being at-risk."

When the actual losses and imminent

foreclosure risks are taken into account, the proportion of people who are impacted by the housing crisis will continue to grow at an alarming rate. The CRL estimates that 17 percent of Latinos/as, 11 percent of African Americans and 7 percent of white mortgage holders have lost or will lose their homes in the coming years.

This large-scale home loss will negatively impact the overall wealth of the African-American and Latino/a communities, already disadvantaged by the legacy of slavery, national oppression and institutional discrimination in the United States.

"Between 2009 and 2012, \$193 and \$180 billion, respectively, will have been drained from African-American and Latino communities in these indirect 'spillover' losses alone. With millions of foreclosures still ahead, there is an urgent need for policymakers to take stronger actions to stabilize the housing market, keep families in their homes and prevent destructive lending practices in the future."

### Maryland case study

The report described Prince George's County, Md., a Washington suburb, as the "Foreclosure Capital in the shadow of the nation's capital," where African-American home losses have reached astronomical levels.

Louise Golden and her now-deceased spouse purchased their home in Lanham, Md., outside Washington in 1980, as many African Americans were re-locating there. When her spouse became ill, he was forced to refinance their home to pay medical bills. They initially thought the deal was good, with a 30-year refinanced mortgage that started out at a reasonable monthly payment.

They later discovered that the interest on the mortgage was far too high and that the

Adjustable Rate Mortgage (ARM) would periodically reset, driving the monthly payments way beyond their ability to pay. Her spouse died, leaving Golden strapped with huge monthly mortgage payments while the house lost value every year.

"Louise Golden is not alone. With a population that is 64 percent African-American, Prince George's County offers a case study of the unequal impact of the nation's foreclosure crisis on communities of color. Prince George's has become Maryland's foreclosure capital, far and away recording more total foreclosures and a higher rate of foreclosure than any other jurisdiction in the state," totaling 13,412 foreclosure filings in 2009.

"According to the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, one out of every 24 homes in the county was subject to a foreclosure filing last year, compared to a statewide rate of one out of 54."

In part the high rate of loan default and foreclosures among people of color communities can be attributed to discriminatory lending practices where African Americans and Latinos/as are charged higher rates of interest than whites, irrespective of their credit histories. This disparity has held true even among higher income families from both of these communities.

### Moratorium on foreclosures needed

In Michigan the Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shut-offs has waged a campaign for the last two years to force the state government to halt home seizures. Even though the demand is rooted within U.S. case law and is more than required, due to the large-scale home losses in the state, Gov. Jennifer Granholm and the

*Continued on page 10*

## At opening of 2010 U.S. Social Forum

# Thousands march in Detroit for social justice

By **Betsey Piette**  
Detroit

Thousands gathered here on June 22 at the place where Martin Luther King Jr. had begun his June 1963 "I Have a Dream" march. They marched to Cobo Hall for the start of the second U.S. Social Forum.

"I was very impressed with the young people who came here for the opening demonstration," said Abayomi Azikiwe of the Detroit Moratorium NOW! Coalition. "We see this event as a great opportunity for outreach and networking among activists throughout the U.S."

"Detroit is the epicenter of the economic crisis and consequently it should also be the springboard for the emerging fight-back against the ravages of capitalism and racism."

Participants came from across the U.S. and around the world to address social and economic justice issues at this historic conference. As marchers made their way down Woodward Avenue, they passed numerous vacant lots and abandoned buildings — glaring evidence of the devastation that has hit this working-class city.

A popular chant that rang out from the multi-national, multi-generational crowd was, "Banks got bailed out, the people got sold out!"

Contingents included several groups with placards and banners in support of immigrant rights and against the racist, apartheid Arizona law SB1070, which was passed in April. They also opposed the Schumer bill, now before Congress, that would also set back the struggle.

Others marched for environmental justice, single-payer health care reform, LGBT rights, disabled rights, and in solidarity with political prisoners including Mumia Abu-Jamal, the Cuban Five and Troy Davis.

An anti-racist, anti-capitalist theme was clear throughout the march, with banners contrasting the billions of dollars spent on war to the growing crisis of cuts in social programs spreading across the U.S.

The Michigan Emergency Committee Against War and Injustice carried a banner calling for a moratorium against plant closings, layoffs, school closings, utility shutoffs and evictions. Several workshops on the struggles of Detroit workers and oppressed to save their city will be held by the Moratorium NOW! Coalition during the Social Forum, as well as a demonstration on June 25 against Chase Bank.

Workers World Party had a strong presence. Members wore bright yellow T-shirts emblazoned with an image of Che Guevara and the declaration "Fight For



Socialism." They hoisted banners declaring "Abolish racism, capitalism — Fight for socialism."

The youth and student organization Fight Imperialism, Stand Together had a militant contingent with members wearing bright red T-shirts and carrying banners and placards. There were many other youth contingents raising numerous issues.

Giant paper maché puppets in images

of Indigenous, civil rights and labor activists — including Martin Luther King Jr., Ella Baker and Cesar Chavez — were carried the length of the three-mile march.

An opening ceremony to kick off the 2010 U.S. Social Forum will take place at Cobo Hall following the march. It will usher in an intense four days, with more than a thousand workshops scheduled plus people's movement assemblies and other demonstrations. □



WW PHOTOS: BETSEY PIETTE AND BRYAN G. PFEIFER

## From 'Low-Wage Capitalism'

# Decades of rank-and-file fight-back

The following is from the book "Low-Wage Capitalism, a Marxist analysis of globalization and its effects on the U.S. working class" by Fred Goldstein, published in the fall of 2008. This excerpt from Part 3, "Lessons from the Past for Future Struggles," covers a wide range of struggles from the 1930s to the present showing the capacity and willingness of the U.S. working class to engage in militant struggle at great sacrifice. For more information visit [www.low-wagecapitalism.com](http://www.low-wagecapitalism.com).

The slide in union membership, the decline of wages, and the general deterioration of living conditions for the working class, as well as the increase in racism and national oppression, the wave of anti-immigrant attacks, and all the other setbacks during the last three decades and more, were not inevitable. They were avoidable.

The underlying relationship of class forces in U.S. capitalist society was not objectively so unfavorable to the working class that it had no way to overcome the anti-labor offensive. Nor is further decline inevitable, even in the face of capitalist crisis.

What has contributed to the feeling of

inevitability about the retreat of the labor movement and the workers in general has been the steadfast refusal by the AFL-CIO leadership, including the Change to Win leadership that set up a parallel federation in 2005, to muster the latent power of the workers and the oppressed in a true test of strength with the ruling class.

To be sure, there are undoubtedly thousands of local union leaders, delegates, shop stewards, labor council members, as well as rank-and-file militants throughout the labor movement, in every part of the country, who have been straining at the bit to launch a fight-back. Such militancy has manifested itself over and over again in struggles during the 1980s up until the present day. What will revive the labor movement is when these forces are able to multiply, organize, and gain the upper hand.

The deadly conservatism of the present-day top labor leadership resembles in many ways the refusal of the old leadership of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), all the way up to and through the 1930s, to lead the struggle of millions of industrial workers who were crying out for organization. It was the work-

ers themselves, with general strikes, sit-downs, shop actions, and other forms of struggle that broke through and worked around the old conservative leadership to achieve historic victories. As the present-day leadership becomes an unendurable obstacle to the workers' need to defend themselves against the bosses, it is inevitable that these leaders will be either bypassed or swept aside by a mass upsurge.

### Solidarity Day and beyond

During the entire period of the anti-labor offensive, there have been numerous opportunities for the labor leadership to open up a counteroffensive by seizing upon the militant resistance of the rank-and-file workers against concessions and union busting.

A month after Reagan fired the PATCO workers in August 1981 and replaced them with scabs, the AFL-CIO leadership called a demonstration in Washington labeled Solidarity Day. The architect of the demonstration was the conservative head of the labor federation, Lane Kirkland, the successor to George Meany. It was the largest single demonstration of the U.S. working class until that time and

was estimated at half a million. Workers came from all parts of the country, many of them traveling long distances yet refusing to fly out of solidarity with the fired air traffic control workers.

The entire labor movement came out. Black and Latino/a groups and women's groups were invited and came. So did farmers' groups, environmental groups, consumer groups, and community organizers. In a rare departure for the encrusted, reactionary, white male labor leadership, the "approved" slogans included ones from moderate anti-war, civil rights, women's, and voting rights groups, as well as demands for jobs. The progressive movement gravitated toward the power of the labor movement as an answer to the Reagan reaction.

The demonstration was timely. It came in the wake of the sharp anti-labor turn in the Democratic Party under the Carter administration followed by the endorsement of the drastic Reagan budget cuts by the Democratic Party leadership, which still controlled both houses of Congress. Democrats joined Republicans in passing cuts in school lunches, student loans, and

Continued on page 7

## UAW convention

# Fighting words inspire delegates, but fight-back strategy is needed

By Martha Grevatt  
Detroit

The 35th Constitutional Convention of the United Auto Workers, held here in Detroit for the first time in decades, concluded on June 17 with a rousing speech by the union's newly elected president, Bob King. King stressed the UAW's renewed commitment to organizing the unorganized, starting with Toyota's U.S. plants.

Barring "a terrorism campaign by the bosses," workers there will be eager to become unionized, King said. "We aren't going to wait for EFCA." The unions have been lobbying for some time for the Employee Free Choice Act, but so far in vain. The new leader called on delegates to become volunteer organizers.

King reiterated the UAW's commitment to civil rights, blasting Arizona's racist profiling law against immigrants, SB 1070. That law, he said, "is what the bosses have done since day one. Don't get sucked into divide and conquer."

King brought the 2,000 delegates and guests to their feet when he closed with a challenge: "Sisters and brothers, are we ready to take on the fight for social and economic justice for all workers?"

While King had nothing but praise for outgoing UAW President Ron Gettelinger — who had hailed as "transformational" the 2007 concessionary contracts that brought a two-tier wage scale to Ford, General Motors and Chrysler — many may interpret this speech as signaling a new orientation toward militancy and activism.

As the convention adjourned, delegates prepared to march on Detroit's financial district. UAW staff led the energetic crowd in chanting, "No justice, no peace" and "They say get back, we say fight back." The march was a high point of the convention.

Yet a critical observer would question

whether the UAW leadership has the wherewithal to carry out a serious struggle against "the bosses" and for "justice for all workers." The sessions leading up to King's acceptance speech resembled a high school pep rally. Delegates sat through one tribute after another to the officers who were retiring and to those who were replacing them. Every delegate who spoke was expected to open with a reference to his or her "great regional director" and delegates from that director's region were expected to stand up and cheer. Scripted comments were handed to delegates to read as if they were the delegate's own words.

Critics of the leadership — who saw the glaring contradiction between the resolutions tackling every aspect of "social and economic justice" and the cooperative relationship between the UAW leaders and their own ruthless employers — faced numerous obstacles to get their message heard. Resolutions could not be amended, so dissenters were limited to opposing a somewhat progressive, multi-issue program on the grounds that it did not go far enough.

Supporters of challenger Gary Walkowicz — who led a successful effort to vote down concessions at Ford last October, while King was the UAW vice president in charge of Ford — were harassed while campaigning and told to throw away their leaflets before entering the convention hall.

Supporters of King's "Mobilizing for Justice Team" were able to enter the hall in the wee hours of the morning of the election and flood the room with campaign balloons. The pressure to conform was so intense that only around 20 brave delegates openly cast their ballots for Walkowicz, who ran on an anticoncession platform.



WW PHOTO: BRYAN G. PFEIFER

UAW members outside convention call to "Rebuild our fighting union."

The day before the convention, this writer, an elected alternate delegate, was threatened with arrest for handing out leaflets for a "solidarity rally" with the theme "One million members lost — it's time to change course." Former union president Al Benchich, an elected delegate, and this writer were told we could not even stand in front of Cobo Convention Center with leaflets under our arms. Benchich was arrested, handcuffed and released only after agreeing to cross the street.

Now is the worst possible time for the UAW to suppress militant opposition, to violate the most basic democratic norms and ethical standards, and to do so in collusion with the capitalist state. Not only has membership plummeted, but union wages and benefits are in danger of elimination by bosses hungry for a bigger slice of the value workers alone produce. The situation cries out for serious deliberation

on how to resist further attacks on the union's own members as well as workers all over the world — rather than a four-day feel-good session.

Nevertheless, the fighting words coming from the lips of the new helmsman will give the rank-and-file encouragement. UAW members should hold their leaders' feet to the fire and say, "Economic and social justice for all workers — including us!"

GM workers in Saginaw, Mich., didn't wait for a sign from above to demonstrate their will to resist. In the Nexteer plant — which GM took back from former parts division Delphi, where wages were already cut drastically in 2007 — UAW members shot down demands for further pay cuts. The vote, which took place the same week as the convention, sent a message that staged applause could not drown out. Enough is enough, and we will resist! □

across-the-board social welfare spending. Furthermore, the Reagan administration threatened to cut Social Security.

Solidarity Day had a challenging tone to it. Capitalist politicians were excluded from the platform. Even Kirkland declared: "We have come too far, struggled too long, sacrificed too much, and have too much left to do, to allow all that we have achieved for the good of all to be swept away without a fight. And we have not forgotten how to fight."

Coming out of Solidarity Day, the workers were inspired and fired up. The sense of strength in unity was at a high point. But behind the scenes the labor leaders were really fashioning a non-struggle, self-defeating agenda. For them the goal of the demonstration was to strengthen their hand in the Democratic Party. This was the strategic road taken by the bureaucracy to arrest the budget cuts and reverse the anti-labor atmosphere in Washington. Kirkland's demagoguery about fighting back notwithstanding, the AFL-CIO donated \$1 million to the Democratic National Committee and remained passive while the bosses escalated their anti-labor offensive.

This steady retreat and acceptance of concessions without a significant struggle of the working class was entirely unwarranted. The retreat ran directly in the face of numerous manifestations showing the desire and willingness of the workers to fight back throughout the entire period. □

## NYC unions rally against cuts

Thousands of New York City workers — from janitors to teachers, day care, transit and hospital workers — rallied at City Hall on June 16 to oppose 11,000 layoffs and deep cuts in every social program demanded by the banks and billionaire Mayor Michael Bloomberg. They were joined by community and student groups from across the city. Every time speakers said the words "Wall Street," roars of anger swept the ranks. The great-

est response came when speakers vowed to take back our city; a few union leaders said we'll shut the city down. The rally's power and the workers' militancy were diluted, however, by police barricades that penned everyone in and separated workers from each other. Many workers wanted to break out and march through the streets. They expressed hope that at the next rally, they'll do just that.

— **Gabrielle Gemma**



For video of protest go to [www.dc37.net](http://www.dc37.net).

"With the capitalist system demonstrably unfair, it is useful, indeed refreshing, to see a Marxist analysis of globalization and its effects on working people. Fred Goldstein does exactly that."

— **Howard Zinn**, author of  
*A People's History of the United States*

## Low-Wage Capitalism

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"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

# Conference blocked in Spain but Support for Iraqi Resistance continues

By John Catalinotto  
Madrid, Spain

The government of the Spanish state has sabotaged an international conference in the Asturias autonomous region of Spain. By doing so, Spain joined the U.S. in supporting the occupation regime in Baghdad.

Had it allowed the meeting, the Madrid government could have opened the door to European Union discussions with representatives of the Iraqi Resistance, the only legitimate representatives of the Iraqi people.

On June 21 a delegation from the international participants in the conference presented a declaration and their complaints to a group from the Spanish Parliament in Madrid.

Behind the conference and its cancellation was the instability of the Iraqi puppet regime. Madrid's actions also showed Spain's subordinate role with regard to the rest of European imperialism and Washington.

As of mid-May, the conference was on and the Foreign Ministry had guaranteed visas to all the Iraqi participants — all of them legitimate representatives of communities in Iraq. In addition, many had received visas to enter Spain in the past.

Then, following a visit from U.S. Vice President Joseph Biden, the Spanish government double-crossed the conference organizers by refusing visas. It was decided to continue with the conference by video. Organizers had the full support of

the governments in the city of Gijón and of Asturias, in addition to strong support from the population there.

The Spanish government took a further reactionary step by transmitting to the organizers threats apparently made by militia close to the Maliki regime in Iraq. These included death threats against the families of some of the Spanish organizers. It made no promise to try to protect Spanish citizens or the invited Iraqis, and pressured the organizers to call off the conference.

Under those conditions the organizers in the Spanish Campaign Against the Occupation and for the Sovereignty of Iraq (CEOSI) made the decision on June 18 to cancel.

Spain's government did this in the face of mass support among the population for the Iraqi people and the Resistance, support that could be easily seen in Asturias. Despite the cancellation, Asturians found other ways to express their solidarity. At an annual celebration of the struggle against the Spanish monarchy and for a republic — held by chance on June 19 — words of solidarity with the Iraqi Resistance received the strongest applause from the hundreds of participants.

## Exposing the U.S. occupation

In recent years the U.S.-based corporate media have played down and distorted the events in Iraq. They misrepresent the legitimate actions of the Iraqi Resistance as sectarian or even "terrorist," even though the Resistance is careful to distin-

guish between civilians and legitimate targets: the soldiers and mercenaries of the occupation forces and their puppets.

The media have also given the false impression that the current Iraqi regime is stable and somehow democratic, based on electoral support.

The regime in Iraq is not only undemocratic and corrupt, but its extraordinary pressures on the Spanish government — which likely were cooked up in Washington — indicate that the regime fears for its stability.

On June 21 a delegation representing those international participants who had been able to enter Spain held a meeting with members of the Spanish Parliament in Madrid. They delivered a statement from many of the groups that had planned to participate in the conference — not only from Iraq and Spain but also from England, Luxemburg, Belgium, Germany, Sweden, Portugal and the U.S.

The statement made this point: "The Maliki regime is built on corruption and plunder and on a sectarian and ethnic divide of Iraqi society that was itself imposed by the occupation. This divide now threatens extinction of some of the smaller minorities as it turns all Iraq into an Abu Ghraib."

The statement also pointed out how "the seven-year-long U.S. occupation has destroyed the Iraqi state, its economy, its educational and health care systems and the Iraqi infrastructure, and threatens to destroy the entire fabric of Iraqi society." It gave the example of the U.S. use of

white phosphorus and depleted uranium weapons.

Representatives from the Parliament, including Gaspar Llamazares of the United Left (IU), another from the National Bloc of Galicia (BNG) and one from the ruling Socialist Workers Party (PSOE), reacted to some of the points raised. The IU and BNG speakers expressed the solidarity of their parties with the Iraqis and promised to work in this effort.

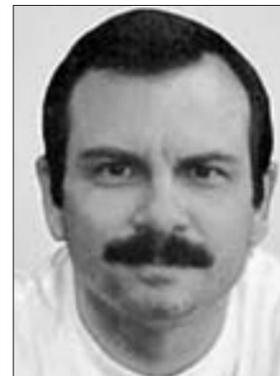
Llamazares also promised to raise in Parliament the question of why the Spanish government changed its policy between April and June regarding the visas. He pointed to Biden's visit and the pressure not only from the Green Zone of Baghdad but also from Washington.

The international participants, including those from Iraq, agreed to continue their work in supporting and building solidarity with the Iraqi Resistance, including supporting the demand for "unconditional, total and immediate withdrawal of all troops and mercenaries and the payments of reparations for the damages of the war and occupation."

On June 21 the unions in Galicia announced strikes for June 24 against "reforms" that cut wages and remove protection of workers' jobs. As with the general strikes now in preparation, one might say that the pro-Resistance activists in Iraq have joined the workers in the slogan: The struggle continues!

*Catalinotto was in Gijón and at the Parliament in Madrid representing the International Action Center.*

# Media bias central to new appeal by Cuban 5



Gerardo Hernández Nordelo, Ramón Labañino Salazar, Rene González Sehwerert, Antonio Guerrero Rodríguez and Fernando González Llort.

By Cheryl LaBash

Reporters for big media outlets owned by corporate giants are nevertheless supposedly independent and unbiased. What happens if the U.S. government is also paying them while their articles and broadcasts inflame the atmosphere against defendants during a high-profile political trial?

This question has become a major issue in the case of the Cuban Five, political prisoners who have been incarcerated since 1998 in U.S. jails. Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González and René González are imprisoned for the so-called "crime" of defending Cuba and its people against assaults by ultra-right wing organizations.

The five anti-terrorist heroes were trying to protect their country from acts of violence that were being planned, funded and launched from the U.S. They were falsely charged with espionage, tried and convicted in 2001. The U.S. courts treated them brutally, sentencing Guerrero and Labañino to life terms, while giving Hernández two life sentences, to be served consecutively.

An international campaign to "Free the

Cuban 5" resulted in the reduction of life sentences for Guerrero and Labañino in 2009. However, Hernández's prison term was not shortened. Moreover, he has not been able to see his spouse, Adriana Pérez, during the entire period of his incarceration. The U.S. government has denied her a visa to enable her to visit him.

As of June 14, Hernández's attorneys began legal actions, which seek a new trial for him.

According to noted human rights attorney Leonard Weinglass, the current motion focuses on "constitutional violations which had not been part of the previous

appeal and a claim of actual innocence."

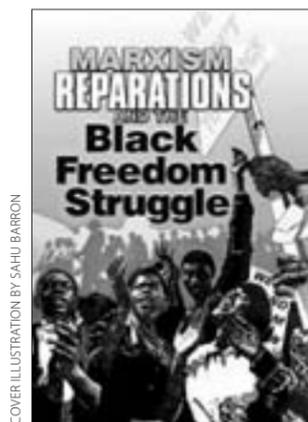
In 2005, a unanimous three-judge panel of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the Cuban Five's convictions and ordered a new trial to be held outside Miami. The ruling said, in part, "Here, a new trial was mandated by the perfect storm created when the surge of pervasive community sentiment, and extensive publicity both before and during the trial, merged with the improper prosecutorial references."

Although this decision was later overturned by the full 11th Circuit Court of Appeals, its intent is echoed by the revelation, backed up by documentation, that

Spanish-language reporters working for Miami media were on the U.S. government's payroll during the original trial of the Cuban Five.

It is no wonder that news coverage of the Cuban Five's Miami trial was blatantly unfair and hostile towards the defendants.

This new information and legal thrust gives supporters of the Cuban Five a new avenue to publicize the tremendous injustice done to them and their families. Additionally, it further exposes U.S. imperialist policy, which extends back more than 50 years, to use warfare of all types to destroy Cuban socialism. □



## MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

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## After 58-day strike and occupation

# Students win at U of Puerto Rico

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Jubilantly chanting, "Victory, victory, victory for history!" and "Eleven campuses, one UPR!" students at the University of Puerto Rico on the 58th day of their strike emerged from a final negotiating session with the Board of Trustees having won an agreement. It still has to be ratified at an assembly of the students as a whole.

### What was won

The board accepted all four of the students' main demands: no Certification 98, which would have eliminated tuition exemptions for students who also received a U.S. federal Pell scholarship for academic excellence; no privatization of the campuses under Gov. Luis Fortuño's neoliberal decree on Public-Private Alliances, an attempt by the current pro-statehood government to privatize Puerto Rico's heritage; no charges against the students, faculty and workers who, exercising their freedom of speech and assembly, participated in many demonstrations during the strike; and no imposition of a special quota in August that would have doubled the tuition.

The UPR administration, backed by Fortuño, is still determined to increase the tuition. The written statement from the BT read that "the Board of Trustees considers necessary the establishment of a quota starting January 2011."

The students are equally determined to defend public education. They included a statement that "the aforementioned agreements should not be understood as an acceptance" by the students of the quota. The students have stated publicly that they will continue organizing, defending public education against any attempt to increase tuition in January.

This was necessary to break the stalemate that had prevented a conclusion of the strike. It allowed the university to open and the students to finish the semester.

### What were the roadblocks?

It is interesting to note that most of the students' demands have not changed since the strike began. Both UPR President José de la Torre and BT President Ygris Rivera had taken a thoroughly intransigent position against the students, preventing any effective negotiation. It took the imposition of a mediator by the Superior Court to get the BT to negotiate. The mediator, Pedro López Oliver, a former judge of the Appellate Court whose son is in the UPR School of law, was accepted by both the students and the BT. This helped bring all the trustees to the table — one of the demands of the students, who accused Rivera of speaking on behalf of the whole board while she kept them in the dark.

It turned out that this was entirely the case. Once the whole body of trustees was involved in the negotiations, the majority opposed Rivera and voted to accept the students' demands.

Ygris Rivera has been a key player representing the island's right-wing administration. She is well known for collaborating with the most repressive governors. In the 1970s, she was special aide to then Governor Carlos Romero Barceló in the area of "public security." These were the years when an FBI undercover agent lured and killed two innocent pro-independence youth in what became known as the Case of Cerro Maravilla. She is now continuing that anti-people, anti-progressive, anti-independence role through her work as president of the BT.

This underscores the current colonial administration's crucial role in this strike.

Fortuño himself had declared that the quota was necessary. The students, however, have always stated that the UPR's deficit did not emerge solely from the institution's past and present failed fiscal administration. They targeted the failure to collect millions of dollars owed to the UPR by different governmental and non-governmental agencies and, most importantly, the cut in funding under Fortuño's Law 7.

This law, imposed to deal with Puerto Rico's economic crisis, effectively cut the funding by 9.6 percent. Fortuño, they say, wanted to declare the UPR insolvent, thus making it easier to privatize under his Wall Street neoliberal plan for the island. The law backs a plan to repay Wall Street for an obscure figure of \$700 million that the UPR supposedly owes in bonds issued for the construction of expensive buildings and other, undisclosed expenses.

One of the students' initial demands was that the administration open the financial books. To date, the administration has refused.

### National Assembly, the 'road to history'

The agreement will be discussed in a National Assembly on June 21 in a stadium in the city of Ponce. Buses and car caravans will converge in what the students have called "the road to history." Students from all 11 campuses will be present to ratify the agreement and to discuss the future actions and perspective for the coming academic year.

Shirley Rosado, president of the Ponce campus Students' Council, was busy preparing for the assembly. She told WW: "We are coordinating the National Assembly, which is key to ending the strike we have had for 58 days. We have responsibilities to fulfill, to finish the semester. However, the students have shown and

have expressed to the administration the concern we have and that we have been and will continue to be vigilant about everything that happens in the UPR and that we will be on the alert for the defense of higher public education."

Assemblies have been an essential part of the strike; all the students' voices are heard and taken into consideration by the National Negotiating Committee. Because of that there are now efforts by right-wing members of the Legislature from the pro-statehood, ruling New Progressive Party to destroy that capability. They are introducing a bill that would terminate the public assembly and in its place institute a system of consultations in secret, by e-mail, in order to prevent the gathering of students.

### UPR's history of struggle

They will not have an easy road, as has been demonstrated by the students.

The student body of the UPR has a rich history of class consciousness and anti-colonial struggle. Many famous strikes and mobilizations have been held there.

Papo Coss, a veteran student of the UPR in the seventies, reminiscences about the 1973 struggle. In an e-mail circulated through the Internet he writes, "The 1973 National Strike of the university students' movement was also victorious. It lasted 30 days. The riot police invaded the campus and expelled us from the Río Piedras campus. We then occupied the male students' residence, where we held educational activities. All campuses were paralyzed, including some private colleges."

One thing is for sure: In Puerto Rico, under the current critical conditions, the struggle will continue.

The writer visited the striking UPR campus at the end of May. She can be contacted at [bjceci@workers.org](mailto:bjceci@workers.org).

# Rainbow of solidarity at Boston meeting

By Frank Neisser  
Boston

The theme of the night was solidarity and struggle at the Workers World Forum here on June 19. The evening began with stirring video footage of University of Puerto Rico student strikers confronting the cops and celebrating their recent victory.

The featured speaker was Dr. Alberto Baretto, long-time activist for Puerto Rican independence and liberation. The meeting was co-sponsored by Coordinadora Caribeña y Latinoamericana de Puerto Rico. Baretto explained how and why the capitalist attack on public education has intensified in this economic crisis. He described how the Puerto Rican students showed that the people united in movement and struggle can defeat the capitalist onslaught.

The filled room also heard from Sandra McIntosh and Jose Lopez, co-chairs of the Coalition for Equal Quality Education, who explained how the very same attacks are happening here in Boston. They spoke of a Community Summit planned for June 23 to organize the community fight-back against school closings, privatization, union busting and the racist re-segregation of the Boston schools.

Then Lai Wa Wu and two high school leaders of the Student Immigrant Movement told the crowd of a round-the-clock



WW PHOTO: STEVE GILLIS

Speakers from Puerto Rico and Haiti shared experiences with LGBTQ activists and youth struggling for equal education.

vigil the group is conducting at the Massachusetts State House. The youth are opposing a draconian set of anti-immigrant budget amendments that would deny all education and social services to those who cannot prove legal residency.

Retes ReJouis, coordinator of the Con-

federation of Transportation in Haiti and president of Unity for Constructive Action by Haitian Unions, addressed the group about the attacks on public transportation in Haiti and the ongoing devastation from the earthquake, which continues to remain unaddressed. He called

for international solidarity.

Frank Neisser of Stonewall Warriors told the crowd of the unity between the LGBTQ community and UNITE HERE Hyatt Hotel workers at the Boston LGBTQ Pride parade. The whole meeting showed what a rainbow of solidarity looks like. □

## Bloody Sunday, 1972; Mavi Marmara, 2010

Like with “man bites dog,” when imperialists admit a crime it is big news.

Sometimes it's a mistake, as when German President Horst Koehler in May admitted that the German government was sending youth to die in Afghanistan to expand German economic interests. He didn't really slip and say “German imperialist interests,” but he still had to resign.

Often something important can be learned on those rare occasions when an imperialist admits to crimes.

Britain's new Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron finally confessed. He didn't go so far as to apologize to the people of the six Irish counties that Britain still occupies. But he did bring up the events of Jan. 30, 1972, which has become known as Bloody Sunday.

The people of Derry in northern Ireland were marching for their self-determination when the British-led army and police opened fire and shot 26 unarmed Irish protesters. Fourteen of them, including seven teenagers, died. Now Cameron has admitted — 38 years too late — that the slaughter was completely uncalled for.

Whatever was behind this admission, it is instructive, especially if you make some comparisons. First, with what the British imperialists said back in 1972, when they were covering up their crime; then, with what the Israelis say today to cover up their murderous attack on the Turkish ship Mavi Marmara on its way to Gaza. This May 31, heavily armed Israeli commandos fired

and killed at least nine unarmed civilians on board the ship as it was attempting to break through the blockade of Gaza with humanitarian aid.

Lt.-Col. Derek Wilford, commanding officer of the 1st Battalion, Parachute Regiment, said in 1972, “My troops behaved correctly.” (London Times, March 7, 1972) “There would have been no loss of life in Londonderry's ‘Bloody Sunday’ last January 30 if the organizers of the illegal civil rights march had not created a dangerous situation.” (London Times, April 20, 1972) The British even said the murdered teenagers had first fired on the troops.

It was a “blame the victims” statement, just like all of those out of Tel Aviv these days. “The people on the ship were armed terrorists, linked to al-Qaeda,” they say. “They brought it on themselves.”

British imperialism lied in 1972 and kept up the lie for the next 38 years. The oppressive Israeli state is lying in 2010 and we can expect it will keep lying unless, like the German president, someone makes a mistake.

The modus operandi of every oppressor is to blame the victims and martyrs. The British oppressors did it in 1972. The Israelis are doing it now. It may be a long time before they admit they slaughtered unarmed civilians. That shouldn't keep the rest of the world from recognizing this war crime today and mobilizing to boycott, divest and impose sanctions on the Israeli state. □

### Study shows

## Housing crisis hits people of color hardest

*Continued from page 5*

state legislature have refused to take any meaningful action to prevent people from being thrown out of their homes. This has destroyed neighborhoods throughout the state's metropolitan and rural areas.

The high rate of foreclosures in Michigan has lowered tax revenues, which has impacted public services, education funding and the overall value of homes. This has largely been the pattern throughout the U.S., where banks and insurance compa-

nies act with impunity because they know that the federal government and the state legislatures will do nothing about the problem.

The politicians in general work for the banks, insurance companies and other multi-national corporations against the will and needs of the working class and the oppressed. Until a mass movement is built across the U.S. that is led by the workers and the oppressed, the problem of home foreclosures will continue. □



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### ‘What is Marxism all about?’

This pocket-sized book is a collaborative work by Fight Imperialism, Stand Together — FIST.

Read it for an analysis of the capitalist economic crisis that's hit working and oppressed people, including students and youth.

This guide for activists devotes chapters to Marxist terms like “imperialism,” “self-determination” and “socialism” and explains them with a working-class perspective and clever illustrations.

## Workers World Party & Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST) statement

# SOCIALISTS UNITE

*The following statement is being distributed at the U.S. Social Forum in Detroit.*

Something important happened last November that did not seem to elicit the widespread interest that it should have. In a speech to a large gathering in Caracas, Venezuela, of communist, socialist and left parties, and social movements from around the region and the world, Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez made a call for a new Fifth International of socialists and communists.

Chávez said the Fifth International must be “an instrument for the unification and articulation of the struggle of the peoples to save this planet.”

Set aside for the moment a discussion of what became of the earlier internationals, or what will come out of this new call for unity amongst revolutionaries. The fact that a leader as prominent on the world scene as Hugo Chávez made this call, and the sense of urgency in the motivation of this call for unity, is something that all who are dedicated to making another world possible should take heed of.

Socialists across the world need to unite. The need for such unity is all the more urgent here in the U.S., because the capitalist system here remains at the center of world imperialism. A socialist front of organizations, parties and individuals — whose agreement on fundamental questions outweighs whatever differences they might have — could greatly advance the work of revolutionaries on many levels.

The biggest capitalist global economic crisis since the 1930s, far from being over, is now moving into a deeper phase. This phase is characterized by the world's big banks demanding sweeping austerity programs intended to deprive workers across the globe of jobs, pensions, health care, education, etc. — basically the requisites of a reasonable life. The real unemployment rate is not only at depression level and worse for young African Americans and Latinos/as, but it also represents structural or permanent unemployment. BP's destruction of the Gulf is the latest example of how the capitalist drive for super profits is destroying the planet. We've come to a teachable moment.

The capitalist system has reached a historical tipping point. From now on, it is going to be increasingly harder for the ruling class — even with all of its control over what people read, hear or see — to stop the inhabitants of the world from concluding that capitalism is the number one enemy of the people, social justice, human progress, and the ecology of the planet. In fact millions of people have already come to that conclusion.

It is time to cast away all illusions. The prolongation of capitalism and imperialism constitutes an existential threat to the future of humanity and the future of the planet. It will become more and more apparent that capitalism can't be reformed. We no longer have the luxury of viewing the end of capitalism as some abstract, distant and irrelevant concept.

Certainly, as activists and as revolutionaries we must continue the day-to-day struggle for measures of justice on many fronts and around many issues. However, the understanding must be engendered and fought for that the number one imperative on the historical agenda must be **the abolishment of capitalism and its replacement with socialism.** Moreover, this understanding must influence how we fight the day-to-day battles.

What might be some of the fundamental points that could serve as the basis for a new socialist unity?

#### • No reliance on the Democratic Party

Amongst such points would certainly be an

understanding that the strategy of trying to build a left pole within the Democratic Party has, time after time, only served to tie the left to the prevailing position of the Democratic Party leaders. And their position is to defend and promote capitalist and imperialist interests.

Many of us appreciate the enormous historical significance of the election of the first African-American president, Barack Obama. Moreover, we are mindful of how important this development is to the African-American people. We are also aware that right-wing, neo-fascistic groups like the Tea Party are waging a dangerous, racist campaign against Obama that activists cannot be indifferent nor neutral about and must be on guard to distance themselves from.

The fact, however, remains that Obama represents U.S. imperialism. Part of the ruling class support for Obama's presidency is their calculation that he can keep a lid on the working class and the poor, and either stop or restrain the ability of the people to take to the streets and defend themselves against unemployment, cutbacks and all of the other attacks that are intensifying. This aspect of Obama's presidency is the most problematic for the working class movement.

If there is no strong fightback from the working class, especially during a capitalist crisis, racist and neo-fascist elements will seek to fill the vacuum — diverting what should be a rising class struggle into a campaign against immigrant workers, the poor, oppressed youth, women and lesbian, gay, bi, transgender and queer people.

#### • Solidarity with oppressed peoples — support the right to self-determination

For this reason, the central principle of socialist unity must be real solidarity with Black people, Latinos/as, Asians, Arabs, Muslims and Native Indigenous people, and their right to self-determination. Without such solidarity, no united movement is possible. This principle must be extended to women and the LGBTQ community.

#### • Anti-imperialism & internationalism

These should be high on the list of unifying principles. U.S. imperialism does not wage some bad wars and some good wars. All imperialist wars and occupations are for imperialist interests. The greater this understanding, the stronger the movement will be.

A **new** socialist unity must strengthen internationalism. Workers, the oppressed and poor people everywhere must know that they have steadfast class allies in the U.S. Internationalism means the defense of revolutionary governments like Cuba and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It also means support for national liberation struggles, such as the Palestinian people, and all who are fighting imperialism — from Haiti to Venezuela and Bolivia; from Iraq to Afghanistan, Iran, Africa to the Philippines.

#### • Centrality of the working class

Socialist unity needs to be centered in the struggle of the working class. Ultimately it is the advancement of the multinational working class, no matter where workers reside or what their immigration status is. This includes the unemployed in the communities, schools and prison; those in the workplace; the organized, unorganized and undocumented of all abilities.

The times oblige serious revolutionaries to find the basis for concentrating their forces on a higher level.

The larger the steps taken in that direction, the brighter the prospects for revitalizing the social forces that are essential to making the social revolution that makes the new world possible. □

## On 60th anniversary of Korean War

# What they don't want you to know

By Stephen Millies

The U.S. government launched the Korean War 60 years ago on June 25, 1950. During three years of massive air attacks and a huge land invasion, more than three million Korean civilians were killed, including hundreds of thousands burned to death by napalm.

U.S. Air Force planes dropped 420,000 bombs on the 400,000 inhabitants of Pyongyang, capital of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea — the socialist northern half of the Korean peninsula. According to historian Bruce Cumings, the Pentagon came close several times to dropping nuclear bombs on the DPRK.

Tens of thousands of Koreans had earlier been incinerated in the U.S. A-bomb attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A least a quarter of the victims there were Koreans used as slave labor by the Japanese imperialists.

It is now nearly 60 years since the U.S. finally had to abandon its immediate goal of conquering all of Korea and signed an armistice in 1953, yet it still occupies South Korea with 29,000 troops. The U.S. Army's Yongsan Garrison occupies 620 acres in the middle of Seoul. It's as if a foreign army occupied Central Park in New York City.

The DPRK continues to be a Pentagon target. No country is slandered more by the U.S. corporate media.

Who started the war?

The biggest lie is that the DPRK started the war by invading South Korea in 1950. This is no truer than saying that Abraham Lincoln "invaded" the U.S. South.

The Soviet Red Army drove Japan out of northeastern China and Korea in 1945 with the help of Chinese and Korean guerrillas. Under agreements between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, Korea was to be temporarily divided.

U.S. Army Col. Dean Rusk drew the demarcation line on the 38th parallel. As secretary of state in the 1960s, Rusk was to help lead the dirty war against Vietnam.

Japan had annexed Korea in 1910 with the approval of the U.S. government. Theodore Roosevelt "gave" Korea to Japan in the treaty that ended the war between Czarist Russia and Japan in 1905.

The Korean people resisted Japanese rule, which was as vicious as the U.S. occupation of the Philippines or the European colonies in Africa. Two million Koreans joined the March 1, 1919, movement for independence. More than 7,000 were killed.

The Korean people launched an armed struggle for freedom. South Korean textbooks concede the most famous guerrilla commander was communist leader Kim Il Sung.

The liberation forces in northern Korea encouraged people to organize themselves. More than 600,000 workers joined unions. Two and a half million acres of land were given to 750,000 peasants.

It was a different story in the South under U.S. rule. Gen. John R. Hodge kept former colonialist Japanese officials and their Korean collaborators. He even tried to retain Japan's colonial governor.

It was as if the Nazis were allowed to continue running their concentration camps after World War II.

Strikes were banned in the South on Dec. 8, 1945, by the U.S. Army. That same month the grassroots People's Republic of Korea and its people's committees were outlawed. Martial law was declared in 1946.

President Harry Truman installed Syngman Rhee as dictator. South Korea's Truth and Reconciliation Commission recently estimated that Rhee killed from 100,000 to 200,000 political prisoners.

Rhee bragged about invading the North. "South Korea's neurotic right-wing government leaders clamor stridently for United States help to 'unify' Korea — that is, for the South to conquer the North," wrote Andrew Roth in the Nation magazine (Aug. 23, 1949).

Truman emissary John Foster Dulles went to South Korea five days before the war erupted. Dulles had been managing partner of Sullivan & Cromwell, the Rockefellers' law firm and would become President Dwight Eisenhower's secretary of state.

Dulles egged on Rhee, who had constantly launched attacks on the North. A half-billion dollars had been lavished on the South Korean puppet army and it was expected to roll over the North.

Instead the DPRK, under Kim Il Sung's leadership, counterattacked. Seoul was liberated within a week as the puppet army crumbled. The Korean People's Army was welcomed everywhere as it advanced.

### Anti-communist crusade

Congress approved \$12 billion for war — worth \$108 billion today — for what Truman called a "police action." The only dissenting vote was East Harlem American Labor Party representative Vito Marcantonio.

With People's China kept out of the United Nations until 1971, Truman was able to use the U.N. as a cover for his invasion.

The Korean War was Wall Street's response to the Chinese Revolution and colonial revolts sweeping the globe. It heightened the anti-communist witch hunt that led to Ethel and Julius Rosenberg's lynching in the electric chair on June 19, 1953.



U.S.-led forces leveled Pyongyang in Korean war.

The Korean War was a racist war. Black leaders like Paul Robeson and NAACP founder W.E.B. Du Bois opposed it.

Du Bois got 200,000 votes running as an anti-war candidate in New York's 1950 U.S. Senate election. A highlight was a concert for Du Bois in Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood, a Black community, featuring jazz saxophonist Charlie Parker.

### No peace treaty

Truman appointed Gen. Douglas MacArthur as commander in Korea. MacArthur in 1932 had ordered veterans bayoneted when they went to Washington, D.C., seeking promised benefits. With the Pentagon pouring in hundreds of thousands of troops, MacArthur advanced to the Chinese border.

Chinese volunteers, aiding their Korean sisters and brothers, counterattacked and helped drive MacArthur out of northern Korea. Among the Chinese soldiers who gave their lives for Korea was Mao Anying, a son of Mao Zedong.

MacArthur was fired by Truman for insubordination — he had advocated dropping atomic bombs along the Chinese border — but only after the president got the consent of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Pentagon brass regarded the armistice signed on July 27, 1953, as a defeat. The U.S. still refuses to sign a peace treaty with the DPRK.

After Che Guevara toured the world in 1960, he said that the most remarkable person he had met was Kim Il Sung. Since the death of Korea's "Great Leader," Kim Jong Il has carried forward his policies.

Like Cuba and Algeria, the DPRK offered refuge to members of the Black Panther Party.

People's Korea wants peace but has been forced to develop nuclear weapons in order to defend itself. The DPRK will never surrender.

Hands off Korea! □

## Kyrgyzstan: Who was behind the violence?

By G. Dunkel

The country of Kyrgyzstan in Central Asia has been shaken by what was at first reported by the Western media as a campaign of "ethnic cleansing" by the current government. Thousands of Uzbeks, who make up no more than 15 percent of the population, were driven out of their homes in Osh and nearby Jalalabad in the south of the country.

However, the current interim government, which took power in April after massive uprisings against the former regime, says it has proof that a systematic campaign of violence to incite ethnic hatred was carried out by the ousted president, Kurmanbek S. Bakiyev, and his family in order to destabilize the new regime.

Kyrgyzstan is an impoverished country with fewer than 6 million people that once was a republic of the Soviet Union. After the USSR was broken up in 1991, living standards for most of the people plummeted. Even according to the Country Study Series put out by the U.S. government, "In 1993 meat consumption [in Kyrgyzstan] was reported to have dropped by 20 percent since 1990, intake of milk products by 30 percent, and consumption of fish (which was imported in the Soviet

period) by 70 percent. The average caloric intake was reported to have decreased by about 12 percent since 1990."

Kyrgyzstan is the only country in the world with both a Russian and a U.S. military base. The U.S. base at Manas, near the capital Bishkek, is the largest airfield in Central Asia, and is vital for U.S. operations in Afghanistan. It handles as much as 12 million gallons of fuel per month, is a hub for KC-135 refueling tankers, and is also a major transit hub for U.S. troops heading to Afghanistan. Up to 50,000 U.S. troops pass through it each month.

It appears that Bakiyev's main base of support was among the Kyrgyz living in the south, while the Uzbeks in the south have supported the new interim government.

The AKI press agency, a privately owned, Russian-language press service in Bishkek, reported June 15 that the Kyrgyz interim government has concrete evidence pointing to the Bakiyev clan.

The commandant of Jalalabad Region, Kubatbek Baybolov, who is also the first deputy chair of the National Security Service, told AKI that "this is an ideological sabotage and provocation."

Tinted-window vehicles are appearing in different places, and shots have been

fired from them at representatives of both ethnic groups, Baybolov said.

"These are especially trained groups who were hired by people close to the Bakiyevs, who were removed from power. We have irrefutable proof and confessions of detainees. ... All the evidence is being gathered, and all proof will be made public literally in the coming days," Baybolov said.

The commandant also said that food, shelter, medicine and other assistance are being provided to Kyrgyz citizens regardless of their ethnicity.

Several reports from Russian journalists with long experience in Central Asia confirm the general outline of Baybolov's charges and add that the financing for these groups came from Maxim Bakiyev.

Maxim Bakiyev, the youngest son of the former president, is currently in detention in Great Britain, where he is seeking refugee status. He flew there on a private plane June 14, and is being held on an Interpol warrant. The Kyrgyz Prosecutor General's Office has charged him with embezzling \$35 million from a \$300 million Russian loan secured after negotiations with the U.S. over Manas.

The Bakiyev family was dispossessed this April after tens of thousands of peo-

ple risked their lives by coming out into the streets. They brought down a corrupt government that had developed a mutually profitable arrangement with the U.S. military while the masses of the Kyrgyz people were starving.

How vital the Manas air base is for the U.S. could be seen in Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's response to Kyrgyzstan's charge that the former president, Kurmanbek Bakiyev, provoked the recent violence in an effort to return to power. "Certainly, the ouster of President Bakiyev some months ago left behind those who were still his loyalists and very much against the provisional government," she said. (U.S. State Dept., June 18) In other words, she admitted the charge is plausible. Had the U.S. come out openly against the interim government, it might have jeopardized its base there.

Clinton also sent Assistant Secretary of State Robert O. Blake to Bishkek for talks on June 19. The Kyrgyzstan government is attempting to impose a value-added tax on the fuel it sells to the U.S. Before Bakiyev's ouster, his brother held the contract to provide fuel for the Manas base and was allegedly pocketing \$10 million a month from the deal. (New York Times, April 12) □

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## Las necesidades del pueblo antes de los beneficios capitalistas Defender la educación, cancelar la deuda a los bancos

Por Fred Goldstein

El jugar por las reglas y prioridades del sistema de beneficio capitalista significa darse por vencido en un área de la vida tras otra cuando los trabajadores, las comunidades, los estudiantes y los jóvenes están siendo atacados. Ya sea la lucha por el empleo, el medio ambiente, viviendas, atención de salud, o una jubilación decente, el marco establecido por el capitalismo no deja más remedio que ceder a los ricos.

Salir del marco impuesto por el capitalismo es la clave para la sobrevivencia de millones de personas.

La educación es un ejemplo urgente de la necesidad de sobrepasar los obstáculos puestos por los banqueros, las empresas y sus ejecutores políticos de ambos partidos capitalistas. El capitalismo, dice que los beneficios y los intereses adeudados a los bancos son sacrosantos. Es tiempo de declarar que el derecho a la educación es sacrosanto. Cuando se trata de un conflicto entre la educación y el pago a los bancos, es el momento de cancelar la deuda, incluida la deuda de los estudiantes.

La educación pública está bajo ataque desde todos los lados. Escuelas K-12 ya se han reducido en todo el país y los recortes aún mayores se sienten amenazados. Secretario de Educación Arne Duncan anunció recientemente que entre 100.000 y 300.000 maestros se enfrentan a la pérdida de empleos en el próximo año escolar.

La razón dada es que las ciudades, estados y el gobierno federal han sufrido una disminución de los ingresos debido a la crisis económica. Los recortes presupuestarios deben realizarse. Es una cuestión de aritmética. Usted no puede gastar lo que no tiene.

Pero esa es la aritmética capitalista. Si usted no puede gastar lo que no tenemos, entonces, ¿cómo puede el gobierno federal entregar un cheque de \$750 mil millones a los bancos más grandes en los EE.UU., comprar sus deudas incobrables, y garantizar sus préstamos por una suma de \$10 billones, mientras que entrega al Pentágono más de \$700 mil millones cada año?

Al parecer, usted puede gastar lo que “no tiene” cuando se va a los súper-ricos. De hecho, las escuelas están siendo cerradas, los maestros están siendo despedidos y el tamaño de las clases en las escuelas públicas están subiendo. Mientras tanto, cientos de miles de millones de dólares que estos gobiernos estatales y municipales deben a los bancos y los tenedores de bonos en los pagos de intereses van a ser pagados a tiempo. Y muchos de estos bancos son los que consiguieron el rescate en el primer lugar.

Así que hay dinero. Es sólo una cuestión de quién lo va a recibir.

En Detroit, el 80 por ciento del presupuesto se gasta en pagar intereses a los bancos, pero la ciudad tiene previsto cerrar 45 escuelas. En Nueva York, el alcalde Michael Bloomberg ha estado tratando de cerrar 19 escuelas y abrir una serie de escuelas “charter” en su lugar. Pero Nueva York paga miles de millones a los bancos cada año en intereses. Bloomberg acaba de obligar a los maestros a abandonar incrementos salariales con la amenaza de despedir a 4.400 trabajadores, si la concesión no se aceptaba.

Los grandes negocios se están moviendo en la financiación de las escuelas charter. El sistema K-12 se está convirtiendo en un objetivo importante de inversión

para el capital. Miles de millones están siendo aplicados en inversiones de escuelas “charter”, mientras que el sistema de educación pública se muere de hambre. El fondo de “La Carrera Hacia La Cúspide” de financiación de \$4,3 mil millones establecido por la administración Obama tiene la intención de fortalecer al movimiento de escuelas charter.

Estudiantes universitarios se encuentran en deuda antes de que incluso comiencen en la vida debido al alto costo de una educación universitaria. La educación, que es gratuita en la Cuba socialista, es ahora una fuente de beneficio capitalista en los EE.UU.

Los estudiantes de California se llevaron a cabo ocupaciones generalizadas y manifestaciones en todo el sistema universitario público en marzo en oposición a un incremento del 32 por ciento en la matrícula. California no fue el único estado que puso la deuda a los bancos y los tenedores de bonos antes de las necesidades de los estudiantes. Incrementos en las matrículas están programadas en muchos estados, desde Nueva York a Colorado para una segunda ronda en California.

Por lo tanto, no hay terreno intermedio entre los intereses de los bancos y los inversores capitalistas, por un lado, y los intereses de las masas de los estudiantes y sus familias en todos los niveles.

### Economía de sueldos bajos y la poca habilidad encoge la educación

Además del afán de lucro, la contracción del sistema educativo se basa también en el hecho de que los empresarios han creado una economía de bajos salarios y bajas habilidades. Ya no tienen una gran necesidad de generar una amplia base de trabajadores calificados y semi calificados. Para los banqueros, el costo de la educación de amplios sectores de la población, especialmente los africanos-americanos, latinos, asiáticos, indígenas y jóvenes blancos pobres, es una sobrecarga innecesaria. Prefieren tener el dinero en sus bóvedas. Después de todo, ofertas de trabajo están creciendo en las categorías de bajas habilidades.

Esa es la naturaleza misma del capitalismo avanzado. El libro “Capitalismo de Bajos Ingresos,” dice lo siguiente acerca de la “estafa de la educación”:

“Todos los apologistas del sistema han estado vendiendo la educación como el camino para que los trabajadores se levanten. Pero la tendencia de todo el desarrollo capitalista se mueve en la dirección de bajar los salarios y la de reducir las habilidades de los trabajadores. Los empresarios quieren reducir las habili-

dades con el fin de reducir la necesidad de la educación, para hacer los trabajadores prácticamente desechables, haciéndolos intercambiables, y aumentar así la competencia entre los trabajadores individuales.

“... La aplicación de tecnología tiene como su objetivo la simplificación del proceso laboral. Así, debajo el capitalismo la necesidad relativa por la educación avanzada y habilidades complejas en la mano de obra reduce, no se eleva, con los avances de tecnología.”

Eso fue escrito en 2008, antes del pleno desarrollo de la crisis económica. El desempleo masivo actual entre jóvenes de 16 a 24 años, lo cuál es oficialmente aproximadamente 25 por ciento, confirma esta tendencia. Gente con títulos universitarios están tratando de conseguir empleos como dependientes, empleados/as, meseros/as — cualquier empleo, sin importar cuánto sea debajo de su nivel de habilidades — solamente para sobrevivir.

Para los banqueros y los patrones, la educación es un desagüe de sus ganancias y se necesita solamente en una escala reducida para mantener el sistema de explotación. La clase gobernante está perfectamente contenta en ver un sistema de educación que seleccione a una etapa de sobrevivientes talentosos de entre los estudiantes de clase trabajadora y un sector superior de entre los niños privilegiados de la clase media alta y de los ricos. Mientras, dejará que el resto del sistema de educación atraviese a duras penas, empobrecido debido a los recortes del presupuesto.

Los capitalistas preferirían ver fondos públicos usados para incrementar su margen de ganancia que para la educación de la generación joven de trabajadores/as y oprimidos/as. Es por esto que la lucha por la educación es una lucha contra el sistema de ganancias capitalistas.

Los/as estudiantes y jóvenes, padres y comunidades, no pueden ser limitados/as por los confines del sistema de ganancias. Ellos/as deben demandar la cancelación de las deudas a los bancos para que dinero público pueda ser utilizado en educación y muchos otros campos. Ellos/as deben demandar que los derechos de capital sean suspendidos a favor del derecho de educación.

El escritor es el autor del libro “El capitalismo de sueldo bajo,” un análisis marxista de globalización y sus efectos sobre la clase trabajadora estadounidense. También él ha escrito numerosos artículos y ha hablado sobre la crisis económica actual. Para más información, visite [lowwagecapitalism.com](http://lowwagecapitalism.com).

### ¿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 demandando su libertad. Para más información visite: [www.thecuban5.org](http://www.thecuban5.org)

### 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 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](mailto: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

