

# WORKERS WORLD

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DEC. 23, 2010 Vol. 52, No. 50 50¢

## Slamming budget cuts, tuition hikes

# Students rise up

By Ben Carroll and Scott Williams

Hundreds of thousands of students across the world have stood up to raise the demand: "Education is a right for all!" Massive student actions in Ireland, Britain, Italy, Pakistan, France, Greece and Puerto Rico have begun to challenge the ruling class's program of draconian cutbacks to education and public services with the pretext of reducing government deficits.

Students in the United States, who held national days of action last March 4 and Oct. 7, plan further actions for the coming spring as state and local governments slash education budgets. The struggle erupted in secondary schools in Boston on Dec. 13 when students walked out to save their school.

The Italian Parliament was voting Nov. 30 on an education "reform" bill proposed by Education Minister Maria Stella Gelmini. The bill would cut 130,000 jobs and 9 billion euros (\$12 billion) from the education system. But more than 50,000 students participated in an action in Rome known as "Block Everything Day."

Students blocked highways, streets and railway tracks across Rome in order to end business as usual and to block the reforms. Students rallied too in other major cities, including Milan, Naples, Palermo, Pisa, Turin and Venice, where protesters also disrupted traffic and blocked tracks at railway stations.

The same week, students occupied Italy's famous landmarks, including the Coliseum and the Leaning Tower of Pisa. The regressive education reform eventually passed, yet the struggle for education justice is far from over.

In Britain the government proposed a budget package filled with massive cuts to education and public services, including a measure to increase tuition threefold at universities. Students responded by taking to the streets in a series of demonstrations that have rocked the country.

Tens of thousands of students mobilized for three separate national days of action in November and December. The actions have grown in size and militancy each time. Students occupied more than 20 universities to fight back against the drastic tuition increase proposed by an

"independent" review commission led by former BP chief Lord Browne.

Parents, teachers and unions have joined with students to protest these austerity measures. London Underground workers from the union RMT went on a four-day strike to protest job cuts and drafted a mutual statement of solidarity with student organizers from the National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts.

Nearly 100,000 students gathered in London on Dec. 9 for a march to the doors of Parliament as a vote on the tuition increase was taking place. In the streets students clashed with police, who attempted to set up blockades as the demonstration got closer to Parliament

and then attacked the march. One BBC commentator remarked that protests of this magnitude and militancy hadn't been seen in more than 20 or 30 years.

At one point during the demonstration, a Rolls Royce carrying Prince Charles and his spouse, Camilla Parker-Bowles, was surrounded by protesters and pelted with rocks and sticks. The tuition measure narrowly passed by just 21 votes, and the NCAFC later issued a statement saying that "the passing of the bill on the tuition fee increase will not deter, nor discourage future actions." A national student assembly was held on Dec. 12 to strategize and plan for future actions.

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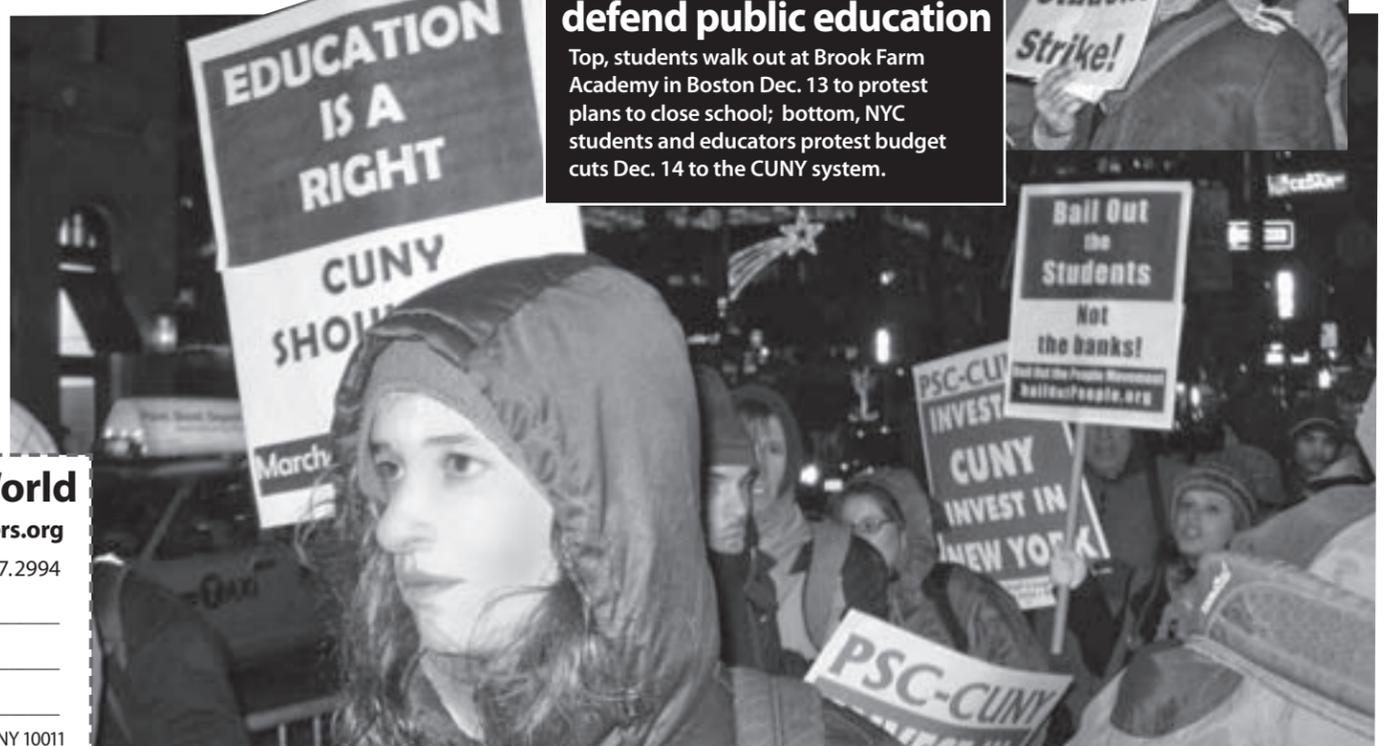
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COALITION FOR EQUAL QUALITY EDUCATION

### Boston, NYC protests defend public education

Top, students walk out at Brook Farm Academy in Boston Dec. 13 to protest plans to close school; bottom, NYC students and educators protest budget cuts Dec. 14 to the CUNY system.



WW PHOTOS: MONICA MOOREHEAD

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

## Based on slave-era U.S. law

# Somalis in Norfolk, Va., convicted of piracy

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**  
 Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Five Somali nationals were convicted of piracy in a U.S. federal court in Norfolk, Va., on Nov. 24, with their sentencing set for March 2011. Based on slave-era laws and criminal statutes that have not been enforced since the 1820s, the Somalis could be sentenced to life in prison.

The captured Somalis claimed they were fishing off the coast of the country and were forced to fire on the Nicholas, a U.S. boat that was part of an international flotilla of warships stationed in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. Government prosecutors tried the case on the allegation that the defendants fired on a U.S. military boat thinking it was a commercial ship that could be held for ransom.

U.S. Attorney Neil MacBride stated after the convictions, "Today marks the first jury conviction of piracy in more than 190 years. Today's conviction demonstrates that armed attacks on U.S.-flagged vessels are crimes against the international community and that pirates will face severe consequences in U.S. courts." (examiner.com, Nov. 27)

The trial lasted for nine days and resulted in the convictions of Mohammed Modin Hasan, Gabul Abdullahi Ali, Abdi Mohammed Umar, Ali Abdi Wali Dire, and Abdi Mohammed Guerwardher. The five were found guilty of "piracy, attack to plunder a vessel, act of violence against persons on a vessel, assault with a dangerous weapon, assault with a dangerous weapon on federal officers and employees, conspiracy to use firearms during a crime of violence, and multiple firearm counts, including the use of a rocket propelled grenade." (examiner.com, Nov. 27)

These convictions come amid a chorus of demands from imperialist military forces to intensify their aggressive dominance of the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean near the Horn of Africa. Since 2008 both the European Union and the United States have led a coalition of naval forces that have pledged to control the flow of goods, oil and arms through the Gulf of Aden and to work toward the prevention of the Islamic resistance forces from seizing power inside Somalia.

Philippe Coindreau, the European Union commander of the anti-piracy naval force known as NAVFOR, told media that the area of operations for the NAVFOR forces had broadened. (AFP, Nov. 25) In addition to the U.S. trial in Norfolk, ten Somalis arrested in the Indian Ocean went on trial in Hamburg, Germany, in November.

Despite the cooperation of the neighboring east African nation of Kenya, which has been assisting the imperialist states in the anti-piracy campaign in the region, a recent trial in that country resulted in the acquittal of 26 people also charged with hijacking vessels for ransom. More than 700 people are now in custody in 12 different countries for piracy.

Proposals have been put forward by the United Nations to establish an anti-piracy court, ostensibly under Somali control, that would put on trial people arrested and charged with this crime on the high seas. Kenya has been suggested as a possible location for the new court.

### Trials provide pretext for U.S. intervention

The trial of the five Somali men in Norfolk should be viewed within the past and present political context involving U.S. foreign policy aims and objectives.

As part of its so-called "war on terrorism," Washington has targeted Somalia. At present the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), underwritten largely by U.S. military appropriations, is propping up the Transitional Federal Government in Mogadishu, the capital. The U.S.-backed governments of Uganda and Burundi supply several thousand soldiers to the AMISOM forces.

U.S. interest in Somalia goes back decades, when during the 1970s, the Carter administration sought to weaken the revolution in neighboring Ethiopia by bribing the military government of Mohamed Siad Barre into an alliance with the Pentagon. A subsequent U.S.-instigated invasion of Ethiopia

by Somali forces in 1978 met with decisive defeat by the Ethiopian military, assisted by Cuban internationalist forces that were inside the region to help consolidate a socialist revolution in Ethiopia at the time.

Another U.S. intervention in Somalia took place from 1992 to 1994. Under the guise of a humanitarian mission to feed the hungry and displaced, U.S. marines invaded the country. Within a few months of the intervention, the Somali masses had risen up against both the U.S. and U.N. forces inside the country, compelling a withdrawal in 1994. In recent months the Pentagon has hinted of its desire to engage in another direct military assault on Somalia.

These U.S. ruling-class efforts stem from Washington's desire to control the strategic trade routes in the Horn of Africa and Arabian Peninsula regions. This is also linked to claims on oil concessions by U.S. multinational firms in and around Somalia.

In neighboring Djibouti, the U.S. and France both have military bases that are often used in war games conducted by the Pentagon and the EU military forces stationed in the region. The imperialists want no government to come to power in the region that is independent of U.S. influence.

This policy is manifested inside the U.S. when U.S. agents arrest Somali expatriates and charge them with crimes related to the "war on terrorism." In Portland, Ore., during late November, a 19-year-old Somali youth, Mohamed Osman Mohamud, was entrapped and charged by the FBI in a sting operation involving a non-existent plot to set off a bomb at a holiday celebration. The FBI concocted and engineered the entire plot, which it then used to ask for more domestic spending on homeland security as well as defense spending to wage a permanent war in the so-called Third World.

In April 2009, the U.S. Navy shot dead three Somali youth, wounded another and then brought a captured 16-year-old Abdiwali Muse to New York to stand trial for piracy.

These criminal cases, coupled with targeting the Somali community inside the U.S., have created an atmosphere of hostility among Somali expatriates around the U.S. □

The trial of the five Somali men should be viewed in the context of U.S. foreign policy aims.

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Vol. 52, No. 50 • Dec. 23, 2010  
 Closing date: Dec. 14, 2010  
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Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the first week of January by WW Publishers, 55 W. 17 St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011. Phone: (212) 627-2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$25; institutions: \$35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from University Microfilms International, 300 Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106. A searchable archive is available on the Web at [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org). A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Subscription information is at [www.workers.org/email.php](http://www.workers.org/email.php).

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

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

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## Georgia prison strike

# Prisoners demand 'our human rights'

By Dianne Mathiowetz  
Atlanta

According to reports from family members and prisoner rights advocates, thousands of incarcerated men throughout Georgia engaged in a coordinated strike starting Dec. 9. They refused to go to work or participate in other assignments or activities, but stayed in their cells, calling it a "lockdown for liberty."

Using unauthorized cell phones, the prisoners have been able to organize among themselves and to communicate with news media and supporters.

What is so extraordinary about this action besides its statewide character is its unity among the prisoners — Black, Latino, white, Muslims, Christians, Rastafarians — to achieve their central demand to be treated as human beings, not slaves or animals.

The Georgia Department of Corrections has refused to provide any information to date but did release a short statement on Dec. 9 claiming that no job action had taken place and nothing unusual was happening. However, the DOC acknowledged that based on the "rumor" of a strike, wardens at four facilities had ordered a general "lockdown" of the institution to prevent any disruption. A lockdown means that all prisoners are confined to their cells and no visitors or phone calls are allowed.

Inmate families and community organizers such as Elaine Brown, a former leader of the Black Panther Party and longtime prisoner rights activist, have received numerous phone calls recounting instances of violence and intimidation by prison guards and officials in response to this peaceful protest.

At Augusta State Prison, at least six prisoners were dragged from their cells and beaten, resulting in broken ribs and other serious injuries.

At Telfair State Prison, guards ram-paged through the cells, destroying personal property while searching for contraband cell phones.

At Macon State Prison, the prison authorities first shut off the heat as temperatures dropped below freezing and then, on the second day of the strike, also cut off the hot water.

An unknown number of prisoners have been taken to isolation or "the hole" at the various facilities.

Georgia, having the fifth largest U.S. prison population, has more than 100 prisons, work camps and other detention centers. It is estimated that one in 13 adult



Emily Guzman and her son, Logan, ready to march to detention center in Georgia.

Georgians are under some sort of legal control by the state — in prison or jail, on parole or out on bond with charges pending, or under some sort of court or correctional supervision.

In a message sent from a prisoner on day 3 of the strike, he urged, "Don't Give Up Now! On Monday, when the doors (to the cells — DM) open, close them. Do Not Go To Work."

Prior to the strike, the prisoners issued a statement outlining nine specific demands:

- **A living wage for work:** In violation of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution prohibiting slavery and involuntary servitude, the DOC demands prisoners work for free.
- **Educational opportunities:** For the great majority of prisoners, the DOC denies all opportunities for education beyond the GED, despite the benefit to both prisoners and society.
- **Decent health care:** In violation of the Eighth Amendment prohibition against cruel and unusual punishments, the DOC denies adequate medical care to prisoners, charges excessive fees for the most minimal care and is responsible for extraordinary pain and suffering.
- **An end to cruel and unusual punishment:** In further violation of the Eighth Amendment, the DOC is responsible for cruel prisoner punishments for minor infractions of rules.
- **Decent living conditions:** Georgia prisoners are confined in overcrowded, substandard conditions, with little heat in winter and oppressive heat in summer.
- **Nutritional meals:** Vegetables and fruit are in short supply in DOC facili-



Members of the Concerned Coalition to Respect Prisoners' Rights and All of Us or None of Us protest at the Mound Road prison in Detroit Dec. 14.

ties while starches and fatty foods are plentiful.

- **Vocational and self-improvement opportunities:** The DOC has stripped its facilities of all opportunities for skills training, self-improvement and proper exercise.
- **Access to families:** The DOC has disconnected thousands of prisoners from their families by imposing excessive telephone charges and innumerable barriers to visitation.
- **Just parole decisions:** The Parole Board capriciously and regularly denies parole to the majority of prisoners despite evidence of eligibility.

The conditions that have caused these men to take such a courageous action are duplicated in prisons and jails across the U.S. News about their historic strike has been censored with next to no coverage throughout Georgia. The New York Times

did print information about the strike following calls by prisoners to the newspaper (Dec. 12).

Solidarity is needed to ensure the safety of the prisoners and the improvement of their conditions. Calls to the following Georgia prisons are encouraged, demanding no retaliation or reprisals and full compliance with the prisoners' demands.

MACON STATE PRISON	978-472-3900
HAYS STATE PRISON	706-857-0400
TELFAIR STATE PRISON	229-868-7721
BALDWIN STATE PRISON	478-445-5218
VALDOSTA STATE PRISON	229-333-7900
SMITH STATE PRISON	912-654-5000

Sources for this article also include the *Black Agenda Report* and the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

The strike continues as of Dec. 14. To sign a petition of support, go to [iacenter.org](http://iacenter.org) and look in the *Action Alerts & Report-Backs* section.

## NEW ORLEANS

# Police killings, the courts & capitalism

By Monica Moorehead

The New Orleans Police Department is known for carrying out heinous acts of racist brutality, especially within the African-American and other oppressed communities. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, which all too painfully exposed broken levees in the predominantly Black Ninth Ward, many police shootings of unarmed Black residents took place as people were desperately trying to escape and survive flooded New Orleans.

An untold number of these residents lost their lives during these senseless shootings. Few police and few of the armed white vigilantes who shot and killed these residents are likely to ever be brought to justice for these crimes against humanity.

Given this history, it was somewhat unusual that some of these NOPD killings came to light — four years after they took place. One was the case of Henry Glover, a 31-year-old Black man who was shot in the back on Sept. 2, 2005, by police officer David Warren. The officer claimed that Glover had a weapon when he shot him. Henry was barely alive when his brother, King, flagged down a Black motorist, William Tanner, in an attempt to get Henry to a hospital.

They asked the police to help them. The cops handcuffed and then beat King Glover and Tanner. Meanwhile, Henry Glover bled to death in the back seat of Tanner's car. Once Glover died, one of the cops burned his body and the car beyond recognition. In early 2009, the *Nation* magazine broke the story of the charred body and

the car being found. This discovery helped to lead to federal indictments against five NOPD officers on various charges.

On Dec. 9 a New Orleans jury found Warren guilty of violating Glover's civil rights along with manslaughter. Two other officers were found guilty of burning Tanner's car and attempted cover-up of the killing. Two other officers were completely acquitted. While some may feel that some justice was served in this case, Henry Glover's aunt, Rebecca Glover, stated that the officers should have been convicted for the murder of her nephew. Warren will most certainly serve less time in prison for the manslaughter conviction.

The case of Henry Glover brings to mind the cases of the fatal police shootings of other unarmed Black men like Sean Bell, Oscar Grant, Amadou Diallo and many others. In these cases and countless more, none of the killer cops were charged with murder, much less convicted of murder. Some of these police would not have been put on trial even for manslaughter if there weren't some level of mass organizing from the oppressed communities and their political allies.

Under capitalism, the police are a repressive force not subject to the same laws that oppress the workers and the oppressed. Cops can get away with murder because they are protected by the same laws that protect the private property and profits of the bosses and bankers. The only way to get rid of police brutality is to get rid of the entire capitalist system, root and branch. That will take a socialist revolution. □

# No execution if a killer's name is DuPont

By Stephen Millies

Dave Schultz was murdered by one of the richest men on the planet: John Eleuthere DuPont. Nancy Schultz, Dave's partner, witnessed the Jan. 26, 1996, killing of the father of their two children.

After pumping three bullets into Schultz — who won a gold medal in wrestling at the 1984 Olympics — DuPont retreated to his mansion. It's a replica of President James Madison's Montpelier house built on a Virginia slave plantation.

DuPont was known to be heavily armed. He used to drive a tank around his 800-acre Delaware County, Pa., estate west of Philadelphia.

Did police shoot their way into DuPont's mansion? Did they drop a bomb on it, like they did on the MOVE house in Philadel-

phia's Black community on May 13, 1985, killing six children and seven adults?

No. Cops don't do things like that to a parasite with a \$250 million fortune. They patiently waited two days before tricking the great-great-grandson of E. I. DuPont to come outside.

Delaware County District Attorney Patrick Meehan immediately ruled out the death penalty, saying there was "no aggravating circumstance" in the case. (*New York Times*, March 13, 1996)

That was a smart career move for the Republican Meehan, who has just been elected to Congress.

Three months before he murdered Dave Schultz, DuPont pointed a machine gun at Dan Chaid, one of the wrestlers training on the millionaire's estate. Newtown

*Continued on page 5*

## Another Black politician targeted

# Community rallies to defend city councilor

By Frank Neisser  
Boston

Cries of “Unjust!” and “Shame!” echoed through Boston City Council Chambers on Dec. 1 as an overflow crowd of community supporters protested the Council’s vote to remove progressive African-American District 7 City Councilor Chuck Turner from the office the people of Roxbury had elected him to. Prior to the vote more than 100 community supporters rallied in support of Turner outside City Hall.

Turner is a tireless fighter for justice, against racism and for the rights of the African-American community of Roxbury. He is the only Boston politician who maintained an office in the heart of the Roxbury community to serve his constituents, paying for it out of his own pocket.

When he was indicted in 2008, the community immediately knew he was innocent and the victim of the U.S. Attorney’s and FBI’s national right-wing political campaign to remove

progressive political representatives elected by oppressed communities from office. In the 2009 election they returned him to office with more than 60 percent of the vote, rejecting the false charges against him.

In October he was falsely convicted of one charge of taking a bribe and three charges of lying to the FBI.

The community immediately rallied behind Turner and sent hundreds of letters to City Council members, telling them a vote to remove Turner would be a vote to disenfranchise Roxbury and deny the community’s right to decide for itself who should represent it.

A letter to council members from the Boston School Bus Union, Steel Workers Local 8751 stated: “Chuck Turner has been a consistent, principled and courageous champion not only for District 7 but for the op-



Chuck Turner

pressed and workers of Boston, the state, the country and the globe. He has been a most powerful and many times a lone voice for justice and liberation.

“In the nearly 40 years that this union has known him, he has been an active supporter and leader in every progressive cause. He has fought against war, poverty, racism, sexism and all forms of discrimination and for jobs and rights for workers. He has been a staunch defender of equal, quality, public education. He has stood for freedom — from Haiti to Colombia, from Palestine to India.”

Turner’s supporters are continuing the struggle so that he doesn’t spend a single day in jail. For information about sending letters to Judge Douglas P. Woodlock, go to supportchuckturner.com. Sign an online petition addressed to the judge at iacoboston.org. □

# LGBTQ liberation and the struggle for socialism

Following are excerpts from a Nov. 13 talk given by LeiLani Dowell, a Workers World managing editor and Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST) organizer, at the Nov. 13-14 Workers World Party national conference. Go to workers.tv to hear the entire talk.

I’d like us to have a moment of silence for all the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer youth who have lost their lives to anti-LGBTQ bigotry — whether by suicide, by police violence or by attacks by others.

A beautiful movement has taken place in the past few months where LGBTQ people have been posting videos, encouraging LGBTQ youth that it may be rough, but to stick it out because it gets better. A project called “We Got Your Back” aims to provide spaces for the voices of LGBTQ people of color.

And yet, we know that things don’t get better without struggle. Marx said that the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, and in this capitalistic society, you can bet that every single step toward LGBTQ liberation was won in the streets.

The final step toward LGBTQ liberation — the total, worldwide defeat of capitalism — will also be won in the streets. It will get amazingly better under socialism. But we know that nothing ever gets better without a fight. And yet, as LGBTQ people, our experiences tell us that the knowledge that it will get better through struggle is like a lifting of a heavy load; while the participation in that struggle keeps us going when every odd is stacked against us.

We in Workers World Party participate in progressive struggles even if we don’t completely agree with the politics, based on a principled stand of unity and recognition of self-de-



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

LeiLani Dowell

termination. And at the same time, we attempt to respectfully insert our politics into those struggles.

In 1970, the women of Youth Against War & Fascism, the Party’s youth wing, formed a Women’s Caucus to connect to the burgeoning women’s movement. This caucus organized the first major demonstration of the women’s liberation movement in New York City, which notably marched to the Women’s House of Detention in solidarity with those imprisoned there.

The next year, Workers World Party co-founder Dorothy Ballan wrote “Feminism and Marxism,” which explained that the oppression of women by men has not been some eternal struggle since the dawn of time, but developed with the rise of class society. The book also challenged white women in the movement who refused to recognize the added oppression that women of color face.

Recently, we had a chance to inter-

vene at a wonderful, anti-imperialist, international women’s conference in Montreal, organized by our allies in FIRE and Gabriela. As a U.S. delegation, we made important interventions to raise the struggles of women within the imperialist countries, as well as approaches to women’s oppression in other countries that did not allow U.S. imperialism to portray itself as “protectors” of women. We made sure that women’s resistance to imperialism in Iran, Afghanistan, etc., was acknowledged.

We also have years and years of intervention in the LGBTQ struggles, beginning in the initial years following the Stonewall Rebellion in 1969. We participate every year in the Pride marches, which have been consciously watered down by the forces of capitalism to be much less about liberation and more about consumerism. But we participate in them regardless, because we have to reach out to our class wherever we can find it. And when we do, we raise the theoretical contributions comrades like Bob McCubbin and Leslie Feinberg have made, not just to our understanding of the LGBTQ question, but to a communist and a global understanding.

I want to close by raising our new call to abolish capitalism and reawaken the struggle for world socialism. Let’s do even more to intervene in the struggle and strategically raise the struggle for world socialism. Let’s do it in honor of the youth who we couldn’t save and for the ones we can. □

## 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)

## On the Picket Line

By Sue Davis

### Religious leaders support S.F. hotel workers

On Dec. 8 more than 100 religious leaders, community members and hotel workers joined in an interfaith candlelight service in San Francisco on the eighth night of the Jewish Festival of Lights or Hanukkah. Carrying eight huge candles and a banner that read, “Shine a light on economic justice for 12,000 hotel workers,” the demonstrators walked around Union Square before delivering a huge “holiday card” to Hyatt hotel’s management. Though the hotel workers, who are represented by UNITE-HERE Local 2, have been working without a contract since August 2009, they have challenged the megabucks hotel chains with a series of rolling strikes for the last 16 months. While owners like Hyatt, Hilton and Blackstone brag about lush profits, they’re asking the already underpaid, overworked hotel staffers to make do with lower wages, speedups and unsafe working conditions. Another protest is planned for Dec. 16. In addition to the union, the Progressive Jewish Alliance and Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice organized the protest.

### National actions demand unemployment benefits

From the steps of the Capitol in Washington, D.C., to the sidewalks of St. Louis, jobless workers, union members and community activists demanded an extension of unemployment benefits on Dec. 7. The AFL-CIO called the coordinated Day of Action, which included both online and picket line activities, to defend the right of the 2 million unemployed to receive extended benefits. In St. Louis, for example, dozens of protesters formed a soup line, reminiscent of those of the 1930s, to dramatize what will happen if unemployment insurance is not continued. As jobless member of the Painters union (IUPAT) Lloyd Schultz said, “Unemployment insurance is the only thing keeping many of us with a roof over our heads and food on the table this winter.” ([blog.aflcio.org](http://blog.aflcio.org), Dec. 8)

### Global call for action to help locked-out Iowa workers

The AFL-CIO has joined with two unions outside the U.S. — the International Union of Foodworkers and the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers’ Union — in a global call to action against French-based Roquette Frères. About 240 workers, members of the Bakery Workers and Grain Millers union Local 48G, have been locked out of their jobs for more than two months at Roquette’s corn milling plant in Keokuk, Iowa. The three federations are asking the U.N. Global Compact to hold Roquette, which signed the compact in 2009, accountable for failing to comply with the right to collective bargaining and freedom of association. Roquette locked out the workers after they rejected proposals that would cut wages, eliminate or reduce benefits, and undermine collective bargaining for critical employment issues. ([blog.aflcio.org](http://blog.aflcio.org), Dec. 9)

### Protesters confront Chase at 100 branches

In commemoration of Human Rights Day, Dec. 9, labor union members, ministers and community activists supporting tobacco workers and victims of fraudulent home foreclosures protested at 100 Chase Bank branches from coast to coast. Handing out fliers to bank customers and passersby during the lunch hour, the protesters, organized by the United Auto Workers and People Before Banks, called on JPMorganChase to institute a one-year moratorium on home foreclosures and to use its influence, as lead banker for R. J. Reynolds, to compel the tobacco giant to improve working and living conditions in the tobacco fields and farm labor camps. The flyer, entitled “Chase Bank: What’s Gone Wrong? Enough Is Enough,” cited Wall Street Journal reports that Chase is number one in home foreclosures in the U.S. The UAW first launched the struggle against Chase at the U.S. Social Forum in Detroit in June and is continuing the campaign for social and economic justice.

Davis, a member of the National Writers Union, UAW Local 1981, participated in the leafleting in New York City.

# DREAM Act up for vote: which way forward?

By Teresa Gutierrez

Dec. 13 —Undocumented students and youth as well as their supporters have ratcheted up the struggle to demand the passage of the DREAM Act with the vote on the agenda in Congress.

Sit-ins, demonstrations and calls to and lobbying of Congress have been on the rise throughout the country as elected officials like Sen. Harry Reid continue to promise to pass the act before a new Congress takes office in January 2011.

The recent actions represent almost a decade of struggle in which a tireless group of young activists have borrowed several tactics from the Civil Rights Movement to get their story out.

The youth are called “Dreamers.” They have added another meaning to the phrase “coming out” as they come forward declaring they are “undocumented and unafraid.” Even in some of the most reactionary anti-immigrant areas in the country —Arizona and Texas for example —students and youth are carrying out impressive actions.

As of Dec. 13 the legislation had passed the House of Representatives and word is waiting from the Senate.

The DREAM Act (Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors) is bipartisan legislation first introduced in 2001. It has the possibility of providing legal status and eventual legalization to about 750,000 youth, although estimates vary.

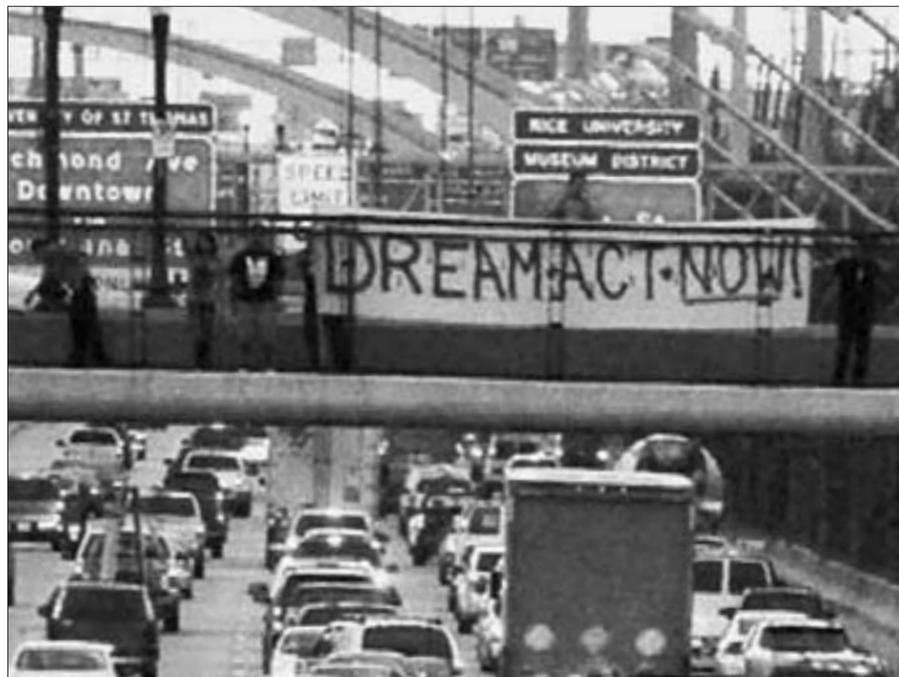
The Migration Policy Institute estimates that about 280,000 high school graduates between the ages of 18 and 24 could meet the necessary requirements to become legal residents if the bill becomes law.

The DREAM Act requires that the youth must meet all of the following requirements: They had to have been brought to the U.S. before they turned 16; they must be below the age of 35; they have to have lived here continuously for five years; they have to have graduated from a U.S. high school or obtained a GED diploma; they have to have so-called “good” moral character with no criminal record; and they must attend college or enlist in the military.

## Imperialist tactic: Divide and conquer

If the young immigrant is not able to obtain a job or afford college, he or she must enter the U.S. military in order to obtain legalization.

This onerous condition has created understandable tension within the progressive and immigrant rights movement. No revolutionary or progressive activist wish-



Texas immigrant youth fight for DREAM Act passage.

WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

es to see youth forced into the imperialist military, putting themselves in harm's way, literally dying for legalization. Too many migrant workers have died already.

Many Dream Act activists are also torn by this odious provision.

The bill originally would have allowed the youth to be eligible for legalization with 900 hours of community service. The Pentagon, however, always in search of fresh cannon fodder, compelled legislators to substitute the military for community service.

In addition, to add salt to the wound, immigrant activists report that the Dream Act has now been tweaked so that it can guarantee that not many youth will actually meet the requirements for legalization, but there will be enough to help fill the ranks of the armed forces.

The American Immigration Lawyers Association writes that Senate Majority Leader Reid, a Democrat, filed a new version of the Dream Act in late November. His aim was to get the Republicans on board — in other words, he appealed to the right wing — under the guise of reaching for the 60 Senate votes required to prevent a Republican filibuster.

The new version tightens the restrictions on eligibility in several ways: It “requires all applicants to provide their biometric data to Department of Homeland Security, to submit to background checks and medical examination, to register for military selective service; ... sets the cut-off age to those who are less than 30 years old on the date of enactment; ... ex-

tends the good moral character requirement back to the date the alien entered the United States rather than the date of enactment of DREAM; expands the applicable grounds of inadmissibility to include the health-related, public charge, smuggling, draft dodging, and unlawful voting grounds; ... [and] expands the circumstances where disclosure of confidential information about DREAM applicants is required for homeland security or national security purposes.” (AILA InfoNet)

In other words, the new revisions are more dangerous and repressive, and make it much more a Pentagon bill. It is hardly the bill the youth have been fighting for.

With the deepening capitalist economic crisis and the leveling of social conditions for the workers in this country, opportunities for jobs and education are becoming more and more scarce, a vanishing dream for many, with or without papers.

The righteous anger of students in the streets of London and Puerto Rico, for example, is a reflection of the worldwide crisis for young people.

The chance that many undocumented youth will be forced into the U.S. military becomes a greater threat. This particular condition of the DREAM Act is treacherous as it represents another version of the poverty draft imposed by the imperialists.

Like the thousands of Black, Latino/a and poor white youth who are forced to join the military because there are no good-paying jobs or opportunities for higher education, immigrant youth will continue to be part of the growing economic draft that fills the ranks of the armed forces.

With U.S. military strategy ever more belligerent, with the continued occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq, its war moves against Korea and the growing militarization in Mexico, Central America and further south, imperialism's need for soldiers recruited from the working class becomes ever more insatiable.

## Yearning for legalization

Progressives here should support any demand for legalization of the undocumented. Workers have earned legalization a hundred times over. Migrant workers are forced to come to this country because of imperialist policies such as NAFTA or wars abroad. The U.S.-orchestrated kidnapping of President Jean Bertrand Aristide of Haiti was another imperialist crime that forced migration. U.S. colonial and military domination of the Philippines forces over 60,000 Filipinos into the U.S. every year.

Yet once workers are forced here they are criminalized and scapegoated, used

solely as cheap labor to fill the coffers of the capitalist class.

Right-wing forces like the Tea Party have steadily campaigned against the Dream Act, calling it an “amnesty for illegals.” But over the last couple of years, Dream activists' expectation that the Dream Act will pass has risen as they receive signs of encouragement from many bourgeois sources.

Elected officials such as Rep. Luis Guterrez and Sen. Reid — some say Reid owes his re-election to the Latino/a vote — have waved a victory flag in front of Dreamers. Many Ivy League university presidents have indicated their support for the Dream Act, including Harvard's head. The CEO of Microsoft also called for its passage.

The support for the Dream Act from the likes of Microsoft begs the question: Why are bourgeois figures, none of them on the side of the working class, supporting legalization for one sector of the undocumented?

The bourgeois voices calling for the Dream Act's passage have their own agenda. They aim to pick what they perceive as the cream of the crop, to get highly motivated and skilled youth into the halls of higher education while at the same time they foster and allow the terror waged against day laborers to continue.

If the Dream Act passes, it will be a step forward for the movement defending immigrant rights. But it can also be a step backward if it is not accompanied by a clarion call to escalate the struggle for legalization for all.

The movement must increase the demand to reinstate the community service provision in the Dream Act, a demand raised by the California Federation of Teachers, the Desis Rising Up Movement, the Southern California Immigration Coalition, the May 1st Coalition of NYC, the Southwest Workers Union and many others.

This demand as well as one to repeal the economic draft will be decisive if the act passes as is.

It would be the height of cruel imperialist irony if those same youth are forced to go to Arizona or California to turn their guns on the migrant workers attempting to cross the U.S./Mexican border, many of whom could be members of their very own families.

If the Dream Act passes, surely most of the students and youth will continue to fight for legalization for the rest of their families.

If the act does not pass, however, it will remain to be seen which way this movement will turn: Will it become demoralized and dissipate? Or will it become radicalized and learn what many of the young people's elders already know: that to depend on the Democratic Party, to depend on the very capitalist system that forces workers to come here, that militarizes the U.S./Mexican border more and more every day leads to a dead end.

Will it look to the struggles not in Washington but in Latin America and elsewhere that demonstrate that militant independent and revolutionary struggle is the only way out?

The dire economic crisis workers and oppressed people face demands a higher understanding of our struggles. It demands a class analysis of every issue.

Legalization is a right for every undocumented person. But the only army our youth should enlist in is the army of the workers and oppressed fighting for our rights.

Dreamers need not lose their dream if the Dream Act does not pass. The struggle inevitably guarantees our victory. □

## No execution for a DuPont

Continued from page 3

Township police ignored Chaid's complaint. (Los Angeles Times, Jan. 31, 1996)

USA Wrestling, which oversees the country's Olympic wrestling programs, did nothing when DuPont kicked three Black wrestlers off his “Foxcatcher” team. According to the New York Times, “Mr. DuPont told one of them that the wrestling center was affiliated with Ku Klux Klan.” (Feb. 4, 1996)

DuPont was deranged, but there are plenty of mentally ill and mentally challenged people on death row.

During the 1992 presidential campaign, then Gov. Bill Clinton went back to Arkansas to sign the execution of Ricky Ray Rector, a man with the mental capacity of a 5-year-old. Rector told the guards taking him to be executed that he was leaving his last meal of pecan pie “for later.”

The brutal, 50-minute execution of a

mentally challenged Black man on Jan. 24, 1992, was a vote-getter for Bill Clinton in the following month's New Hampshire Democratic primary.

“I don't know of a wealthy person ever executed in the United States,” said Sing Sing prison warden Clinton Duffy, who conducted almost 100 executions. (1996)

Warden Duffy was right. “Them without the capital gets the punishment,” were the final words of John Spenkelink, who was strapped into Florida's electric chair on May 25, 1979.

John DuPont had plenty of capital. He was convicted of third-degree murder and sentenced to 13 to 30 years in prison, where he died on Dec. 9.

The lead prosecutor against DuPont was Joseph McGettigen, who is now First Assistant District Attorney in Philadelphia. The Philadelphia DA's office is demanding the death penalty for Mumia Abu-Jamal, an innocent man. □

## Slamming budget cuts, tuition hikes

# Students rise up

Continued from page 1

### Education should be free!

Common throughout all of these struggles is the demand: "Education should be free." Cuba, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Finland, Libya, Norway and several other countries provide tuition-free college. Cuba and Denmark have totally free universities, also giving students a stipend for housing and personal expenses.

In many other countries, such as Germany and Britain, education used to be free at many or all institutions. Some of the public universities in the U.S. also offered free tuition. Since the 1970s, neoliberal ruling-class politicians have supported slashing access to education for the working class, including starving the public sector of tax revenue and implementing higher tuition and student fees, making a university education affordable for only the most privileged students and families.

As tuition rises, students continue to drown in college debt. The average student debt in the state of New York, which ranks number 11 in the U.S., is \$25,739, according to the Project on Student Debt. Some 63 percent of students graduate with debt and face several decades of college loan payments which often exceed rent payments.

Meanwhile, jobs for young people, even college graduates, are few and far between in the U.S. Unemployment is well over 25 percent for young people between the ages of 18 and 29, and nearly 50 percent for youth of color.

### Struggle — the only way out

These students' and workers' actions are showing the only way forward in the face of the unrelenting economic crisis and the austerity programs being adopted by governments around the world: Take bold action and fight back!

We are being made to pay for this cri-



Dwight Peters, president, Bronx Community College Student Association.

sis that we did not create. Even while trillions are being spent on wars, prisons and bailouts, the ruling class is claiming there is no money for human needs like social security and education.

Here in the U.S., as the federal stimulus money dries up and state governments are again facing budgets that are billions of dollars short, neoliberal reforms are being adopted as the only solution. Local governments slash public services across the board, raise tuition with no end in sight, and threaten privatization.

### New York and Boston students take action

Larry Hales, a CCNY student who was one of organizers of the national student days of action last March 4 and Oct. 7, told this to Workers World on Dec. 14: "Motivated by students in California who called for a March 2, 2011, statewide day of action, student activists around the country have decided to call for month-long actions throughout March that will culminate in a student strike on a date that has yet to be decided.



Larry Hales, an organizer with the March 4th Coalition to Defend Education NYC.

WW PHOTOS: MONICA MOOREHEAD

"The student movement here has been energized by the struggles worldwide, especially in Britain and Puerto Rico, and the militant actions by students there. This, along with the cutbacks planned for the CUNY system in the spring and increases in tuition have greatly increased the possibility of more determined actions in the coming months. Today, Dec. 14, students throughout New York will be joining with professors and other staff for a protest at the office of incoming Gov. Andrew Cuomo."

An e-mail announcing the demonstration pointed out that "for many CUNY students who are already financially strapped, the tuition hikes will mean the difference between attending college or not, especially in the context of a continuing economic crisis. At the same time that students are being asked to pay more, Mayor Bloomberg has announced plans to cut community college funding by \$13 million. This comes in the wake of \$225 million in cuts that have already been imposed over the past two years."

In the Boston area on Dec. 13 some

125 students of the Brook Farm Academy, one of 20 schools scheduled to be closed or merged, walked out of school and demonstrated at the school department headquarters, demanding that their school be kept open.

Then, on Dec. 14, a group of students from the Engineering School at Hyde Park High, which is also targeted for closure, staged a similar walkout and also went to the school department to protest. That same evening a demonstration that included parents, students, teachers and the union school bus drivers from all of the area schools took place at English High School, where the school committee planned to vote on the school closings plan.

The movement here seems to be getting the message from Europe and Puerto Rico that the only way to defend public education, as well as all public services, is for workers and students to unite and globalize the struggle against the economic crisis.

Carroll and Williams organize with Raleigh Fight Imperialism, Stand Together; Frank Neisser contributed to this article.

# Protest supports Arab-American journalist

By Workers World Detroit bureau

Students and supporters protested outside the administration building at Wayne State University on Dec. 10 demanding the reinstatement of the Helen Thomas Spirit of Diversity Award.

Thomas is a world-renowned investigative journalist and WSU alumni. Her name was stripped from the award on Dec. 3 because of her staunch anti-Zionist position and her willingness to challenge the United States' and Israel's actions regarding Palestine.

WSU used Thomas' anti-Zionist comments that she made as a keynote speaker at a diversity conference in Dearborn, Mich., on Dec. 2 as a pretext to strip her name from the award. Thomas was fired in May from Hearst News Service for her support of Palestine.

Thomas, a UPI news service reporter for 57 years, was the first woman to be an officer of the National Press Club; the first female member and president of the White House Correspondents' Association; and a fearless White House correspondent who covered every president since Dwight D. Eisenhower. In 1998 the White House Press Corps honored her with the Helen Thomas Lifetime Achievement Award.

"They should put her name back on it. Her name is what made that award. She's one of our most notable alumni," said Ali

F. Beydoun, president of the Arab-American Student Union at WSU. The ASU sponsored the protest.

WSU has a large Arab American and Muslim student population, reflecting metro Detroit's large Middle Eastern population.

Dozens came out to support Thomas and to protest the administration's actions. Chanting "One, two, three, four, reinstate the Helen Thomas award!" and "Helen Thomas, great alumni, stripped of award because of lies!" protesters spoke to the media, signed petitions and informed passersby of the administration's actions.

The protest was supported by the Palestine Cultural Office, the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War and Injustice and others.

The National Arab American Journalists Association, an organization with 250 members in the U.S., issued a statement Dec. 3 supporting Thomas and denouncing WSU's cancellation of the Helen Thomas Award as a move undermining free speech.

The NAAJA called the university's move "a cowardly act surrendering to racist hate" and part of a growing anti-Arab sentiment within the U.S. media. "The voices of American Arabs will not be silenced," said the NAAJA, which will discuss how to fight the attacks on Thomas at its March 4-6 national convention in Dearborn, Mich. □



WW PHOTO

# People's Assembly meets, talks of struggle

Some 70 people gathered at the headquarters of Teamsters Local 808 in Long Island City on Dec. 11 for a People's Assembly six-hour discussion of working-class struggles all over the New York City area. The meeting, which was co-chaired by Jonna of BAYAN and Daniel Villa of the Independent Workers' Movement of day laborers of Queens, presented updates and reports from many organizations, including the Transport Workers

Union, the Freedom Party, the South Bronx Coalition, the Million Workers Movement, the May 1st Coalition for Worker and Immigrant Rights, the Peoples Organization for Progress in New Jersey and Picture the Homeless. A farm-worker organizer and others also spoke. There were cultural performances and workshops on labor, health, immigrant rights and housing.

— Anne Pruden

# Puerto Rico's students defend university and people

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Some 15,000 people marched through the streets of San Juan, Puerto Rico, on Dec. 12, ending at La Fortaleza, the governor's residence. They demanded the elimination of the \$800 special quota the University of Puerto Rico administration imposed that would increase student's tuition starting January 2011. Red balloons throughout the march symbolized the 10,000 students who would have to abandon their studies if the quota takes effect.

Students and professors called the demonstration as part of the continuing struggle against the colonial government's attempt to privatize public education and other essential services. A week earlier, students held a 48-hour system-wide stoppage to try to force the administration back to the negotiating table.

Last summer students occupied most of the 11 UPR campuses throughout the island. That occupation ended in a student victory, with the promise from the government that the campuses would not be privatized and the special quota would be dropped in August. But the government immediately tried to overturn the agreement.

In a fast-track imposition, Governor Luis Fortuño increased the number of members of the UPR's Board of Trustees from 13 to 17. He appointed four people close to his administration so he could have more leverage to overturn the June agreement. The students vowed to continue the struggle, and today it is clear that they are keeping that promise.

The university struggle is related to the class war the island's current neoliberal governor launched against the Puerto Rican people. This relationship is revealed in the ubiquitous slogan "UPR es un país" (UPR is the country). The student's struggle has the support of their families, high school students, teachers, unions, social organizations and the vast majority of the people on the island who see the UPR struggle as not only affecting students but involving other demands such as jobs and services for all.

Both the UPR administration and the island administration use the worldwide economic crisis and Puerto Rico's financial crisis as a pretext for this attack on public education. They say that there is no money. But this is far from true. The students have issued a detailed, workable proposal to rescue the university, but two administrations have rejected it.

In a Fortuño interview on Dec. 9 with Radio Noti Uno, he revealed the government's real intentions: "The University of Puerto Rico must be a place of academic excellence where our future generations obtain their dream, not a place of political activism of the left."

Fortuño tried to justify the current police presence on the campuses. Police had been barred from the campuses after the bloody confrontations in the late 1970s when police killed students during a strike. In a very ominous precedent, the government has again opened up the danger of criminal violence against students by removing fences that secured the university, making the campus a dangerous, open zone.

## Interview with student leader

On Dec. 13, the day before an indefinite university strike is scheduled to begin, Workers World spoke with Giovanni Roberto, a student leader from the Rio Piedras campus. Roberto commented on the police presence and students' actions in the future.



Puerto Rico's students fight for the whole country.

PHOTO: PUERTO RICO INDYMEDIA

He said that according to the media, UPR President José de la Torre is willing to negotiate with the students, but not with those representing the participants in the struggle. Instead, he'll meet with student councils presidents who are not involved in the struggle. Roberto warned that the administration will declare the strike illegal.

Roberto continued: "There is a new scenario now. It has changed since last summer's strike. First, there are no gates and those that remain have been welded. When the students occupied the campus last Wednesday night [Dec. 8], there were many police inside a mobile police headquarters, and they talked a lot about installing security cameras. This is their modus operandi in the poor neighborhoods, and it is important to show this class link. This is the way they operate against the opposition, the poor, the marginalized and against the Blacks in this country.

"With all probability this strike is not going to be like the last strike. It will not be a strike of gates because there are no gates. It is not going to be a strike of barricades inside the campus as we did during the 48-hour stoppage. With all probability it is going to be a very movable strike. It is going to be a different strike.

"We are calling now for a week of solidarity with the UPR, and we are going to establish two peoples' encampments, one in front of the Ponce de Leon Avenue and another behind. They are going to be permanent during this week. We are calling on the people to come and support those encampments, so that the people can keep watch to see what happens inside the campus."

## A message to students in the U.S.

Roberto ended with a message to the students in the United States who are also struggling against privatization. "Do not dismay. It is important in spite of the highs and lows that the processes of struggle have, that a core of people keep that process alive, so that the possibilities of that core becoming a larger mass movement become a reality. For us this has been very instructive. Sometimes the core is reduced, and the number of people who come to a demonstration is reduced.

But it is important to keep up the propaganda. When the moment arrives to agitate, that propaganda is cumulative, and it becomes agitation. It is very important to simply stay in the fight.

"If there are plans to have a strike, there is a need to talk with as many people as possible and to explain why that process is the necessary one to stop the advance of the government, the privatization offensive.

"As a socialist and internationalist, I find the international links very important. For me, the struggle of all the oppressed sectors is the same fight wherever one is, and those links are there, even if

they have not materialized in coordination. It is important for us that if there are similar struggles in other places, global capitalism's offensive against public education becomes weaker.

"Fortuño is using the examples of the universities of the United States to put police inside the campuses. That is what he says. This is going to look more and more like a university in the U.S. As long as there are students in the U.S. also demonstrating, who do not want that same privatized university, that university full of police, the struggle is strengthened."

*bjceci@workers.org*

## Solidarity with Piedad Córdoba

By Michael Kramer  
New York

In busy midtown Manhattan on Dec. 11, a diverse group of around 30 solidarity activists — from Colombia, Ecuador, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Puerto Rico and Venezuela, along with others from the New York metropolitan area — took the message of "Justice for Colombian Sen. Piedad Córdoba" to the Consulate General of Colombia.

The activity was organized by the Committee in Solidarity with Piedad Córdoba and endorsed and supported by the New York Bolivarian Circle "Alberto Lovera" and the Latin America-Caribbean Solidarity Committee of the International Action Center.

The consulate is open on one Saturday a month for the Colombian community, and there is a constant line of people waiting to get inside of the building. Some joined the activity after they were finished with their business inside.

Many were receptive to the anti-imperialist message of justice and solidarity for one of Latin America's most respected and well-known woman freedom fighters.

Sen. Córdoba, an Afro-Colombian feminist, has been an elected official in Colombia for more than 20 years. She has been a

member of the City Council of Medellín, the State Assembly of Antioquia and since 1994 a member of the Chamber of Representatives of Colombia. She is a lawyer and has always been a strong supporter for the rights of Colombians, particularly of those who suffer most oppression: women, Afro-Colombians, Indigenous people and the LGBTQ community.

In 1999 she was kidnapped by a right-wing death squad and forced into exile in Canada for more than a year. Since then she has been active in trying to resolve the internal armed conflict in Colombia and has promoted the anti-imperialist drive for Latin American solidarity.

Most recently she has been a target of the Administrative Department of Security (DAS), which is the Colombian equivalent of the FBI. On Sept. 27 her credentials as a senator were revoked by the Inspector General of Colombia, and she was banned from holding public office for 18 years!

The solidarity campaign for Piedad Córdoba is worldwide. And it is most important in the U.S., which provides hundreds of millions of dollars a year to the right-wing Colombian bourgeoisie and allows them to hold on to power against the popular forces that Piedad Córdoba represents. □



## WIKILEAKS

# Grassroots actions defend the right to expose imperialist crimes

By Gene Clancy

The U.S. government's attempts to shut down WikiLeaks after the group's release of a quarter-million secret military and U.S. State Department documents, which have exposed and embarrassed Washington and other governments around the world, have aroused a strong and widespread resistance. People around the world are standing up for the right to expose government and corporate crimes.

Executives at the credit card giant Visa were stunned to discover on Dec. 8 that its website was under cyber attack. Unable to cope with the onslaught, the website went down, to be followed by the MasterCard website. Hours earlier a Swiss bank was attacked and taken down, while another vigorous attack slowed the PayPal.com site, which handles eBay's transactions.

The methods used were simple but effective. According to Barrett Lyon, CEO of 3Crowd and an expert on this type of attack, the organization used DDoS (distributed denial of service) techniques in which thousands of computers from around the world make simultaneous demands for information from a website until it collapses.

Lyon told Wired.com that the attacks were "historic," given how well-organized the attackers were. He estimated that as many as 5,000 people may have been involved and noted that the organizing site includes frequently asked questions, a propaganda operation, and a radio station. (Dec. 9)

The resistance is in response to U.S. officials and politicians, who have pressured corporations such as Amazon.com, Visa,

MasterCard and PayPal to stop doing business with WikiLeaks, hoping to cut off contributions and funding. Swiss Post Finance was also attacked because it had frozen the account of WikiLeaks' founder Julian Assange.

Anonymous, an online organization, took credit for the attacks, which they call "Operation Payback." An Anonymous member wrote to Wired.com to announce the attacks, passing along this statement from the chat channel being used to organize the attack:

"We are the clear logic used to unveil wrongdoing. The general public, clouded by misleading information mostly by the media with a political agenda, fails to see and understand this wrongdoing. Because of this, those who do the wrongdoing escape unpunished. Anonymous is here to

ensure punishment does not go unserved to those who deserve it." (Dec. 10)

Some U.S. politicians have been very vocal in condemning Wikileaks and Assange. Many have pressured U.S. companies like Amazon.com and PayPal to stop cooperating with WikiLeaks. The U.S. Justice Department has been looking into a range of criminal charges, which they hope to bring against Assange, including violation of the 1917 Espionage Act, which could bring a life sentence.

Not surprisingly, government officials did not escape the attacks by Anonymous. Former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin and Sen. Joe Lieberman, who are among WikiLeaks' loudest critics, as well as the Swedish prosecutor and lawyers who have pressed for Assange's extradition from London, all found their respective

websites under attack. Palin's website was completely disabled for an indefinite period of time.

In its rush to attack WikiLeaks, the U.S. government and its big-business allies have exposed both inconsistency and weakness. While condemning WikiLeaks and its founder, they have been careful not to attack big-business media like the New York Times and The Guardian, which have published many of the documents in question. Amazon.com, which made headlines by dumping WikiLeaks, even carried a special edition that carried some of the released documents on its Kindle reader.

The U.S. government and corporate allies have also tried desperately to steer discussion of the WikiLeaks issue away from what the videos and documents have revealed: U.S. soldiers massacring unarmed civilians in Iraq; NATO and Afghan forces torturing and murdering civilians and prisoners of war; and systematic lying, spying, intimidating and extorting by U.S. embassies and their allies in governments around the world.

Worst of all, from the viewpoint of the capitalist class, this latest episode shows that struggle can break out literally anywhere, even online. They have tried their mightiest to crush WikiLeaks, but not only have their efforts proved to be ineffective, but they have added fury to the fires of the online resistance movement.

A look at the numbers tells the story. As of Dec. 12, WikiLeaks.ch reports that 1,885 "mirror sites" had sprung up to host the WikiLeaks site. This broad support makes it extremely difficult to suppress the release of the cables. □



New York protest defends WikiLeaks, Manning.

WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

## Hyundai in Korea

# 'Precarious' autoworkers end heroic sit-down

By Martha Grevatt

Superior Township, Mich.

In south Korea, according to the International Metalworkers Federation, "Union repression is among the worst in the world." (imfmatal.org)

Nonetheless, on the morning of Nov. 15 a group of temporary workers — referred to as "precarious workers" — began an occupation of a Hyundai seat assembly plant in Ulsan. They demanded permanent employee status with Hyundai after being dismissed when the subcontractor

they worked for went out of business. The new subcontractor stipulated that they would only be rehired if they resigned from the Korean Metal Workers Union.

Within an hour the 40 courageous workers were dragged from the plant, beaten by company thugs and arrested. Later that evening, 1,000 precarious workers — all KMWU members — occupied the nearby car assembly plant, completely stopping production of the Hyundai Accent. Two other assembly plants were occupied for short periods, after which workers concentrated their forces

on the Accent plant.

Hyundai's refusal to hire the precarious workers was illegal. In July the Korean Supreme Court ruled that after two years of contract employment a worker must become a permanent employee of the contracting company. This ruling was upheld Nov. 15, the day workers were fired with no advance notice.

Yet while the workers were fighting to uphold the legal right to their jobs, the strike was deemed illegal and leaders threatened with arrest. Hyundai Kia Automotive Group — Korea's third largest

company and the fourth largest car company in the world — filed criminal charges against 78 strikers and "compensation claims" for \$14 million against 419.

The workers refused to be intimidated. Their heroic sit-down drew worldwide attention, with the federation calling on member unions around the world to send solidarity messages.

### Solidarity from U.S. autoworkers

On Dec. 6 the United Auto Workers held a rally outside the Hyundai America Technical Center in Michigan. There UAW International President Bob King stated, "We have an unbelievable disparity between the very wealthiest in society and the working and poor class in society. The only way we are going to win justice for American workers, for Korean workers, for Chinese, Japanese, Mexican and Bangladeshi workers and workers everywhere is through global solidarity."

The rally of 150 drew supporters from other unions, including the Teachers and Food and Commercial Workers. Eun Park, a striking violinist with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, read a statement in Korean from orchestra members, which was translated into English by another striker. "We have been on strike for more than nine weeks against huge pay cuts and other demands," said Park. "So we are happy to lend our voice to those who are calling for fairness for the Hyundai workers."

## 'Precarious work affects us all'

Workers around the world face a double crisis. Not only are they trying to survive the worst crisis of capitalist overproduction since the 1930s, but this crisis came during a massive global restructuring that has eliminated untold numbers of formerly secure jobs.

A growing number of workers are "precarious," which according to the Merriam-Webster definition means "characterized by a lack of security or stability." Temporary, part-time, contingent, contract, flexible — whatever word defines their status — these workers' lives are indeed precarious.

They never know from day to day if they will work, for how many hours, or if they will be let go. Having a "flexible" workforce is highly profitable for the

bosses. They only pay wages to the workers needed for a given time period or on a given day. More often than not these precarious workers receive no benefits.

For many working class and oppressed youth, precarious work is all they have to look forward to when they graduate from high school or college.

The International Metalworkers Federation has publicized many struggles around the world of precarious workers demanding secure employment. Strikes in south Korea, marches against labor law "reform" in Turkey, organizing drives in Indonesia, and educational campaigns around the globe are part of an international metalworkers campaign called "precarious work affects us all."

These efforts are depicted in a youtube.com video of the same name.

"Precarious work is bad for all workers," the federation explains. "It creates cut-price labor that drives down wages for all. It increases the gap between the rich and poor and amplifies the unfair practices that already disadvantage women, young and migrant workers."

"Good jobs are what trade unions bargain for. Around the world, unions are mobilizing, organizing and bargaining for better, more secure work. That means challenging the legal and political ruses that allow precarious work to flourish. It means mobilizing globally and taking union action against precarious work." (www.imfmatal.org)

— Martha Grevatt

Continued on page 9

## WikiLeaks reveals:

# U.S. imperialism's role in Africa

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**  
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

WikiLeaks release of U.S. State Department diplomatic cables continues to expose Washington's Africa policy for its imperialistic designs. Various African states, those viewed as enemies and others considered allies, all face successive U.S. administrations' efforts for economic control and political destabilization.

Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson's briefing on Dec. 9 outlined the Obama administration's priorities on the continent. Carson played down the damages from WikiLeaks' exposures and attempted to shift the discussion to other issues such as the recent disputed elections in Ivory Coast.

Carson said, "The United States government is very much focused and engaged in a wide array of issues across the African continent and WikiLeaks has not distracted U.S. officials in any way from their overall goal of building a strong U.S.-Africa partnership." (America.gov, Dec. 10)

Throughout Africa, however, people inside and outside of various governments have expressed outrage at U.S. efforts to undermine the independence and sovereignty of various states. These cables reveal that U.S. decisions led to displacement and deaths for millions of Africans.

### U.S. targets Somalia and Zimbabwe

For more than three decades U.S. imperialism has given special focus to the Horn of Africa. A major effort has taken place since the early 1990s in the nation of Somalia where the U.S. has intervened militarily both directly from 1992 to 1994 and indirectly in recent years since 2006.

According to the Sudan Tribune, the U.S.-backed government in Ethiopia was compelled to intervene in Somalia in 2006 to carry out Washington's foreign policy aims in the region. The intervention resulted in the worst humanitarian crisis on the African continent, leaving tens of thousands dead and more than 2 million people displaced.

*Continued from page 8*

The UAW rally might have been even stronger — by attracting more UAW rank and file — if King's anticorporate stance was more consistent. While decrying the exploitation of precarious workers in other countries, the UAW has allowed Ford, General Motors and Chrysler to hire temporary and part-time workers in U.S. plants who, even after becoming permanent and full-time, make half the hourly rate of higher-seniority workers.

King also supported the NAFTA-style "free trade" pact between the U.S. and south Korea. Contradictions aside, the UAW rally drew worldwide attention and let the Hyundai sit-downers know they were not alone.

The strike had been completely successful in halting production of the Accent, costing the company 45,000 vehicles and \$238 million. Precarious workers at Hyundai plants in Asan and Jeonju also joined the strike.

Meanwhile, Hyundai bosses were stymied by their inability to circumvent the occupation and restart Accent production manually. On Dec. 8 the KMWU voted to call a nationwide strike of all Hyundai plants if the temporary workers were not made permanent.

On Dec. 9, after Hyundai agreed to negotiate with the KMWU about the workers' status, the workers ended their 24-day occupation. □

A series of leaked cables indicate that there was a secret agreement between the U.S. and the Ethiopian government of Meles Zenawi. The Ethiopian army would cross into Somalia to stop the Islamic Courts Union from consolidating power.

The ICU movement had brought a much-desired sense of social stability to a country which had been without an internationally recognized state since 1991. The ICU was an independent alliance of community organizations that sought to reconstruct Somalia based on the interests of the people and not Western imperialist forces.

The Dec. 6 Sudan Tribune wrote, "Ethiopia had no intention to invade and said the U.S. was behind the plot and it was sponsored by the United States government." The report noted that Washington was "already tied up in wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and was in no position to openly launch large-scale attacks against Somalia and had to sponsor a country like Ethiopia."

This same report wrote that the Bush administration's "U.S. head for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer spearheaded the proxy war along with allies in the State Department and the Pentagon."

Another major concern of the U.S. has been the growing involvement by the People's Republic of China on the African continent. Relations have been particularly strong between the PRC and the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front, the ruling party in this southern African state.

Washington treats Zimbabwe as an enemy, since 2000 targeting President Robert Mugabe's government for regime-change, following its implementation of a land redistribution program that empowered the Indigenous African masses.

A Dec. 12 Zimbabwe Herald article analyzing the WikiLeaks documents reported: "The West tried various strategies, including a desperate attempt to ask China to influence the reform of Zimbabwe's security sector, in a futile attempt to effect regime-change. After most of their strategies dating back to the year 2000 such as civil unrest, the possibility of a coup and sanctions failed, the United States and Germany resolved to work towards a reform of the security services."

### Big Oil and U.S. policy toward Nigeria

WikiLeaks' most striking revelations arguably relate to U.S. interference in the internal affairs of the oil-rich west African state of Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation. A leading newspaper in Nigeria, ThisDay, reported Dec. 8 that the U.S. State Department, in conjunction with Shell Oil, planted operatives within the government to influence domestic and foreign policy.

According to ThisDay, "Shell's top executive in Nigeria told U.S. diplomats that Shell had inserted employees to every relevant department and so knew 'everything that was being done in those ministries.' She also reportedly boasted that the government had 'forgotten' about the extent of Shell's infiltration and were unaware of how much the company knew about its deliberations."

In addition, ThisDay continues: "The cache of secret dispatches from Washington's embassies in Africa also revealed that the Anglo-Dutch oil firm swapped intelligence with the U.S., in one case providing U.S. diplomats with the names of Nigerian politicians it suspected of supporting militant activity, and requesting information from the U.S. on whether the militants had acquired anti-aircraft missiles."

Also in Nigeria, a potentially criminal case against the Pfizer pharmaceutical company was sabotaged when the firm hired operatives to foster allegations of corruption against Nigeria's attorney general. Pfizer had come under fire for the 1996 "test" of tainted antibiotics used to treat meningitis in children. The test resulted in the deaths of patients and the sickening of others who suffered brain damage, paralysis, deafness and blindness. (New York Times, Dec. 10)

The New York Times reported: "The cable indicated that the information alleging corruption on the part of the attorney general was spread through the media to publicly pressure him to drop the lawsuits." Nigerian Attorney General Michael Aondoakaa dismissed the \$6 billion lawsuit and eventually settled the case for \$75 million.

The Nigerian Vanguard newspaper reported on Dec. 11 that Pfizer reached the settlement for a mere \$75 million for the damage done through the tainted medicines, which resulted in the deaths of 11 children and deformities in dozens of others. The so-called clinical trials in 1996 were said to have involved 200 patients who were given the drug Trovan.

Trovan had been approved for usage in adults only in 1997 in Europe and the United States. In the aftermath of reports of liver failure and deaths resulting from Trovan usage, however, it was then banned in Europe and restricted in the U.S. in 1999.

### Egypt and Sudan unity

Washington is also hostile toward another oil-rich African state, Sudan, whose government has maintained an independent foreign policy. The U.S. and the International Criminal Court have subjected Sudan to allegations of war crimes and genocide.

The Khartoum central government headed by the National Congress Party of President Omar Hassan al-Bashir signed several years ago a Comprehensive Political Agreement with the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, which is based in the south of Africa's largest geographic

nation-state. The CPA resulted in the cessation of hostilities.

The southern region has set a referendum in 2011 on its future. This could result in breaking up Sudan and a resumption of the civil war involving the SPLM and Khartoum. The U.S. is pushing to hold the referendum on schedule and has sent a delegation to the south of Sudan headed by the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice, a leading adviser to President Obama on foreign affairs.

Nonetheless, a close U.S. ally, Egypt, has told Washington of its fears over the potential division of Sudan. Documents published by WikiLeaks reveal that "Egypt had even asked the U.S. government to help postpone next month's referendum by four to six years." (Kenyan Daily Monitor Correspondent, Dec. 7)

### Leaked cables highlight need for anti-imperialist demands

The exposed cables make it clear that the Democratic Party and the Obama administration have not changed Washington's imperialist policy toward Africa. The anti-war and peace movements in the U.S. need to incorporate anti-interventionist and anti-imperialist demands with specific reference to the African continent into their political programs.

At a July 23-25 national conference hosted by the United National Anti-War Committee in Albany, a strong resolution was adopted calling for an end to U.S. military intervention in Africa and upholding the right of self-determination and sovereignty for the African continent. The resolution was jointly sponsored by the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice, the International Action Center, the Virginia Defenders for Freedom Justice and Equality and among other progressive organizations.

This resolution can serve as a guide to the anti-war movement as a whole, which must address concretely U.S. imperialist policy toward the African continent. These efforts on the part of the anti-war movement in the U.S. can assist greatly in strengthening international solidarity throughout the world. □

### *Letter to Guardian*

## Women Against Rape on charges against Assange

*The following letter from Women Against Rape based in Britain published Dec. 9 in the Guardian newspaper puts into political perspective the charges brought against WikiLeaks spokesperson Julian Assange and the refusal to grant him bail.*

Many women in both Sweden and Britain will wonder at the unusual zeal with which Julian Assange is being pursued for rape allegations (Report, Dec. 8). Women in Sweden don't fare better than we do in Britain when it comes to rape. Though Sweden has the highest per capita number of reported rapes in Europe and these have quadrupled in the last 20 years, conviction rates have decreased.

On 23 April 2010 Carina Hägg and Nalin Peggul (respectively MP and chairwoman of Social Democratic Women in Sweden) wrote in the Göteborgs-Posten that "up to 90 percent of all reported rapes never get to court. In 2006, six people were convicted of rape though almost 4,000 people were reported." They en-

dorsed Amnesty International's call for an independent inquiry to examine the rape cases that had been closed and the quality of the original investigations.

Assange, who it seems has no criminal convictions, was refused bail in England despite sureties of more than £120,000 (\$195,000). Yet bail following rape allegations is routine. For two years we have been supporting a woman who suffered rape and domestic violence from a man previously convicted after attempting to murder an ex-partner and her children — he was granted bail while police investigated.

There is a long tradition of the use of rape and sexual assault for political agendas that have nothing to do with women's safety. In the South of the U.S., the lynching of Black men was often justified on grounds that they had raped or even looked at a white woman. Women don't take kindly to our demand for safety being misused, while rape continues to be neglected at best or protected at worst.

**Katrin Axelsson**  
**Women Against Rape**

## Sanders, Clinton & the tax ripoff

It's easy to see that the tax deal is a bad deal for workers and all poor and oppressed people. Though if passed, it will give emergency relief to some of the long-term unemployed, this is at a heavy price to the entire working class. The Barack Obama administration claims it was the best deal it could get, that Republican senators would filibuster anything better. Even Democratic politicians say the president caved in without a fight.

The super-rich benefit big time from the deal. Families with the top 1 percent of income already pocket more each year than those in the bottom 50 percent. They own more than those in the bottom 90 percent. But they refuse to give up their tax break.

When Obama called on Bill Clinton to sell the deal, you knew it stunk. There was no way to watch Clinton mealy-mouth his explanation without flashing back to 1996. Then President Clinton was selling "welfare reform." It was supposed to help poor people find paying jobs.

Now the poor — including all the tens of millions of unemployed and underemployed — have no welfare and no jobs. This is disproportionately horrible for African Americans, Latinos and Latinas, and all oppressed peoples. It is horrible for the whole working class.

Sometimes, even in the millionaires club known as the U.S. Senate, there are one or two who stand up against the tide of reaction. They may not do it consistently, and it would be foolish to count on them, but even resistance from these quarters can have an impact. For example, in 1964 Senators Wayne Morse

of Oregon and Ernest Gruening of Alaska were the only two to vote against the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. Their opposition helped legitimize the then-small movement opposing U.S. aggression against Vietnam.

On Dec. 10 Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont held the floor for eight and a half hours while he railed against the tax giveaway to the rich. There were at least two important lessons from Sanders' day-long resistance.

Sanders' first lesson: If the Democrats who disagree with the deal really wanted to fight it, they could have tag-teamed with Sanders and stopped the bill from passing. Looking backward, if the Democrats had really been serious about opposing the invasion and occupation of Iraq, they could have filibustered the war allocation bills, just as the Republicans filibuster for everything these days.

Sander's second lesson: Maybe the less reactionary senators and representatives can't get a bill passed that helps the poor if they restrict the struggle to Congress. There are too many reactionaries there. But, he said, progressive legislators can use their influence to call on the people to demonstrate and rally, even come to Washington and insist that Congress not do business as usual.

If the legislators were serious, that's what they could do. Conclusion: The Democrats were not serious about opposing the Iraq war and now they're not serious about helping the poor. Realizing this truth is only the beginning of the fight that working and oppressed people need to wage. It's time to take the next step. □

## Stop U.S. aggression against People's Korea



Members of MECAWI from Detroit joined forces to demonstrate in Ann Arbor, Mich., on Dec. 11 against the U.S. military threats directed at the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

— Report & photo by Abayomi Azikiwe

## IRELAND

### Mass demonstration says 'let the rich pay'

In a call to action for the Nov. 27 mass national demonstration and march in Dublin, Jack O'Connor, president of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, called on union members and all the poor and working people in Ireland, not to stand idly by "allowing speculators, bankers and developers to run riot, pillaging and ruining our economy."

More than 100,000 came out to the action in Dublin Nov. 27 to protest the brutal austerity measures by the European Union and banks over the past few years. And in particular the ICTU, Sinn Fein and other independent people's organizations including socialist ones, are incensed and fighting back against the recent Interna-

tional Monetary Fund and EU bailout of banks in Ireland to the tune of at least \$115 billion. The IMF and EU as well as the European Central Bank are now demanding that Irish poor and working people are to pay back the bailouts that were caused by the banks and speculators.

Some of the demands by the IMF, EU and ECB are that the Irish government carries out massive cuts to welfare entitlements, education and health spending and a drastic cut in the minimum wage. As in Greece, France, Portugal and elsewhere throughout Europe the demand from many progressives in Ireland is: "We didn't create the capitalist crisis, we're not paying for it."

Ireland is a country with 32 counties.

## HAITI

### Protests erupt against election fraud

By G. Dunkel

A mass movement of protest and anger has erupted in Haiti against the oppression, extreme poverty and desperation experienced by the vast majority of people. The militant struggle is challenging the so-called "constitutionally mandated" election of Nov. 28, claiming fraud and misconduct throughout the process.

On Dec. 7, after the election results were announced, outraged protesters shut down Haiti's capital of Port-au-Prince, with barricades of earthquake debris, garbage dumpsters and burning tires.

The "official" tally showed presidential candidate Mirlande Manigat leading, with Jude Célestin, the ruling party's candidate, coming in second, ahead of popular candidate Michel Martelly by a few thousand votes. A fraudulent election hadn't put Célestin in the second round; therefore, the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) had to rig the count.

One protester told NPR, "If we don't get Martelly, I'm the rock that will crush you. We are going to tear this country down."

The mass anger aimed at Haiti's ruling party; at its president, René Préval; and at its presidential candidate, Célestin, resulted in its headquarters being destroyed by fire.

Some of the most militant street protests, which confronted the Haitian police and faced down the armored personnel carriers of Minustah, the U.N.'s occupation force, challenged the system itself and called for revolution.

Even though the Nov. 28 election was so flawed and fraudulent that 12 of the 18 presidential candidates called for its annulment or cancellation, the U.N., which provided "security" for the voting, and the CEP declared that it was valid, while admitting it had "some problems."

After three days, the protests died down. People were running out of food, water trucks couldn't get through to the camps, and supplies couldn't get through to the cholera treatment centers.

Then the CEP declared a recount of the votes for Manigat, Célestin, and Martelly. Célestin's party accepted the recount and claimed that a recount would show he "obtained 52 percent of the votes." (Haiti Liberté, Dec. 10).

Manigat refused to participate in the recount and issued a statement criticizing the CEP's press release and procedures. Martelly's campaign formally rejected the recount and at its press conference on Dec. 10 asked, "Would you report theft to a thief?" Martelly's campaign demanded a new CEP before any electoral decisions are made.

The U.S., France and Canada aim to

preserve Haiti's present political structure and maintain their political hold on the country, with the goal of potentially reaping vast profits from its mineral wealth. Between the imperialists' aims and the roiling anger of the masses, it is going to be difficult for the CEP and the wing of the Haitian bourgeoisie it represents to find a solution to the current electoral crisis.

While the imperialists and the Haitian ruling class push their candidates and maneuver the election results, mass protests can restart at any time.

#### Cholera, the U.N. and Cuba

The electoral campaign omitted reference to the cholera epidemic. As of Dec. 10, however, more than 2,200 people have died and more than 100,000 people have gotten ill from the disease.

While the U.S., France and Canada have pushed the phony elections, they and other wealthy, capitalist countries have not provided housing for the 1.5 million homeless since January's earthquake, nor have they provided the necessities of clean water and sanitation, which are life and death matters in this time of cholera.

Angry protesters have chanted, "U.N. and Cholera out of Haiti!" The Haitian people blame the Minustah troops for introducing this deadly disease into Haiti. French epidemiologist and cholera specialist Renaud Piarroux has confirmed this.

Piarroux conducted a study in Haiti in November at the request of the Haitian department of public health. He concluded that the epidemic began with an imported strain of the disease that could be traced back to the U.N. base at Mirebalais in central Haiti. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control confirmed that the cholera strain there originated in South Asia.

Fidel Castro said that Cuban medical personnel, who have been treating 40 percent of Haiti's cholera cases, confirmed Piarroux's theory. He said that this epidemic "is threatening to extend to the neighboring Dominican Republic, the Caribbean, Latin America and other similar Asian and African countries." (Granma, Dec. 7)

While the U.S. is planning a vaccination campaign that will cost \$6 a dose and take two months to start, socialist Cuba is proposing a different plan based on its experience in successfully treating tens of thousands of cholera cases.

Castro explained, "The Cuban medical mission, with the support of the Haitian authorities, has offered a presence in many of the isolated 207 sub-communes, so that no Haitian citizen lacks medical attention in the face of the epidemic, and many thousands of lives can be saved." □



on Dec. 10 hundreds protested over tuition increases in Belfast.

— Bryan Pfeiffer

# Growing worldwide solidarity with Palestine

Following are excerpts from a talk given Nov. 13 by Lila Natalie Goldstein, a Workers World Party member and Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST) organizer in Boston, at the Nov. 13-14 WWP national conference. Go to [workers.tv](http://workers.tv) to hear the entire talk.

In June 1967 Israel invaded the neighboring states of Egypt, Jordan and Syria, gaining control of the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights and further fortifying its dominance over the Middle East. With one fell swoop Israel's territory tripled and approximately 1 million Arabs were placed under its direct control in the newly captured territories. Palestinians had no power over the territories they lived in and were subject to rigorous military rule by Israel.

Within days of the invasion Workers World and its youth group Youth Against War & Fascism called a demonstration in support of the Palestinian people. This was before the development of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and other Palestinian revolutionary groups that grew out of the movement against the 1967 invasion. This set in stone the role that the youth of Workers World would take in speaking out against the Israeli occupation of Palestine during a period when it was an untouched struggle in this country. Even though there was a mass movement against the war in Vietnam, the issue of Palestine in resistance to the Israeli occupation remained a forbidden topic among many on the left in the U.S.

Because of 40 years of resistance from the Palestinian people, the fight for justice has finally come to the forefront of the youth and student movement in the U.S. and abroad, becoming the focus of anti-imperialist struggle. More and more people are beginning to understand that it is the billions of dollars in U.S. and military equipment that prop up the state of Israel itself.

## The BDS movement

In July 2005 over 170 Palestinian groups from trade unions to women's groups to refugee organizations called for the international community to boycott, divest and sanction Israel until it complies with international law. While this was not necessarily a revolutionary program, this caught the imagination of youth all over the world and became a vehicle for struggle. This was inspired by the boycott movement against apartheid in South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s. Since then youth and student groups all over the U.S. and the world have taken on the call and struggled to not only raise awareness through BDS but put a damper on the Israeli economy.

I myself was involved in the struggle at Hampshire College organized by Students for Justice in Palestine to become the first college in the country to divest from the Israeli occupation. Since then other colleges and universities around the country such as University of California, Berkeley and UC San Diego have taken up this cause.

In October, organizers of the Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign forced the Irish government to cancel a contract with a weapons manufacturer called Israel Military Industries that would have supplied 10 million bullets to the Irish Defense Forces.

Student activists in the Scottish capital of Edinburgh were able to shut down a career fair at Edinburgh University in protest of the inclusion of a major weapons manufacturer, BAE Systems, which produces and sells arms and equipment to the Israeli military.

In Norway, a petition calling for a widespread institutional, cultural and academic boycott of Israel has quickly gathered a hundred signatories. That followed major divestment actions by the Norwegian government calling for an academic and cultural boycott of the state of Israel.

After a broad-based grassroots cam-



WW PHOTO: ALAN POLLOCK

Lila Natalie Goldstein

paid in the town of Cigales in Spain, the city council voted to remove bottled water produced by the Israeli company Eden Springs from all municipal buildings.

The Asia to Gaza Caravan, a group of approximately 500 activists from 17 different Asian countries, plans to gather in New Delhi, India, on Dec. 1 to march through 18 cities in Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt in an effort to pressure Israel to lift the siege and blockade on Gaza. In Egypt, more than 300 activists affiliated with the Viva Palestina organization, which included members of Workers World, arrived in the port town of al-Arish with humanitarian aid, including more than \$5 million worth of medical equipment and food supplies.

On Oct. 20, two Israeli Defense Force soldiers came to the University of Michigan campus as part of a national promotional campaign by Stand With Us aimed at justifying Israel's recent atrocities in the Middle East. Students, staff, and community members collectively engaged in a silent walk-out in memory and in solidarity with all the silenced Palestinian children who were killed by the IDF during Israel's most recent offensive on the Gaza Strip.

With every growing movement that threatens U.S. imperialism comes brutal repression. On May 31 Israeli naval commandoes attacked the humanitarian

Freedom Flotilla, aimed at breaking the blockade of Gaza, killing nine activists execution-style in international waters. Following the attack, in June Nicaragua suspended diplomatic ties with Israel and both Venezuela and Cuba publicly condemned Israel's actions.

Later in June people from all over the San Francisco Bay Area demonstrated at the Port of Oakland, staging a spirited community-labor picket line in front of a berth where an Israeli freighter was due to dock. Dock workers from Local 10 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union refused to cross the picket line, and the company was forced to cancel the shift and send the workers home.

In July the Olympia Food Co-Op Board of Directors decided to boycott all Israeli goods at their two locations in Olympia, Washington.

In the last month the Jewish Federations of North America and the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, which are both Zionist groups, launched a multimillion-dollar joint initiative to combat the anti-Israel boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign. They recently invested \$6 million for the next three years to help put a stop to the movement.

This reaction is an indication of the fear the Zionist forces feel from the growing movement against the Israeli occupation. However, the U.S. still gives Israel over \$3 billion in aid every year and the fight to stop this pipeline has to grow stronger.

In 1967 the U.S. was able to paint Israel as a small besieged state. The brutality of the decades of occupation, the graphic images of the bombing of civilian populations, the collective punishment against Palestinian homes and orchards, and now the building of a physical apartheid wall have helped to unmask the true nature of Israel as an oppressor of the Palestinian people. It is our task in the U.S. to expose the way that the U.S. aids and uses Israel to control the Middle East.

Now more than ever we can appeal to the youth of the U.S. and build solidarity between the oppressed peoples of Palestine with the exploited working class and oppressed peoples of the U.S. Long live Palestine! □

## Help to publish—

# GAZA: Symbol of Resistance

WW compilation, edited by Joyce Chediac.



Edited by  
Joyce Chediac

The compelling story of how Gazans withstood blockade and bombardment only to stand tall, refusing to give up the right to determine their own lives and to choose their own government; how Gaza's courage inspired a worldwide solidarity movement determined to break the blockade and deliver aid; exposes the forces behind the punishment of Gaza, and how a growing people's media is breaking the mainstream media's information blockade on this event.

This book will be published in December. Every aspect of production — writing, editing, proofreading, cover and book design — was done by voluntary labor.

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# Growing rich on misery

By G. Dunkel

It read like the start of a request to give generously. "Earthquakes in Haiti and Chile, floods in Pakistan, a drought in China, storms in Australia, a volcano in Iceland ... an ever increasing stream of natural disasters leaving millions of people dead, sick, starving or homeless and billions of dollars in lost global economic activity."

But the Dec. 4 conference at the Wharton School of Business, entitled "From Haiti to Pakistan: A Year of Disasters," was not about how to help people throughout the world suffering from the effects of these natural disasters. Its focus was on entrepreneurship, the art of quickly and innovatively responding to rapidly changing events to guarantee maximum profits.

The press release for the conference in Wharton's student newspaper emphasized exploring and examining "the challenges and opportunities of disaster response." When a business executive or business student hears the word "opportunities," they immediately complete the phrase with "for profit."

Wharton held its conference with big

shots from government and strategic consultancies like Deloitte and McKinsey & Company. They wanted to make sure they didn't create more problems than profits by operating without any regard for the feelings and needs of people.

But there is another approach to disasters, called solidarity. After the earthquake in Haiti, unions and churches, community groups and charities of all kinds opened up their hearts, efforts and pocketbooks to relieve the obvious distresses of the Haitian people.

More than half the people in the United States contributed to the Haitian relief effort. Similar outpourings of solidarity occurred throughout the world. Cuba, a small socialist country lying about 75 miles across the Windward Passage from Haiti, reinforced its medical teams already working there.

The U.S. military's occupation of Haiti and other maneuvers of the U.S. government mangled the expression of this solidarity. But no one can deny it existed, was powerful and helped the Haitian people far more than the actions of a few entrepreneurs who "saw opportunities." □

## Sindicalistas militantes de las Américas se reúnen en Tijuana

Por Bob McCubbin y Mike Eilenfeldt  
Tijuana, México



MO FOTO: CHERYL LABASH

Por séptimo año consecutivo, líderes sindicales, activistas de movimientos sociales y socialistas de muchos países del hemisferio occidental se reunieron en esta dinámica ciudad fronteriza en el primer fin de semana de diciembre para una serie de intensos debates. Se centraron en la crisis mundial del sistema imperialista, su creciente beligerancia y sus ataques devastadores sobre las condiciones de vida de la clase obrera internacional.

Frente a esta crisis sin precedentes, los/as oradores/as de la conferencia analizaron las estrategias de contraataque, haciendo hincapié en el papel de los sindicatos, la construcción de la Alianza Bolivariana para las Américas (ALBA) y la unidad como factores importantes en la lucha mundial por el poder de los/as trabajadores/as.

La delegación de Cuba se componía de cinco mujeres quienes detallaron el proceso en curso para realinear la fuerza laboral de Cuba manteniendo los logros del socialismo. También plantearon proyectos para aumentar la unidad de los/as trabajadores/as en las Américas.

En paneles especiales se habló sobre las condiciones que llevan a la lucha a los/as trabajadores/as en México, así como la urgente lucha por los derechos de los/as inmigrantes y las manifestaciones del Primero de Mayo en EEUU.

La conferencia adoptó un programa de acción que incorpora el Manifiesto de Caracas del Tercer Encuentro Sindical de Nuestra América, la propuesta para una gira de líderes sindicales mexicanos/as durante la primavera a través de los EEUU y una escuela sindical en México. Apoyó el 16to Congreso de la Federación Sindical Mundial que se celebrará en Grecia, y el cuarto ESNA que se celebrará en Nicaragua del 17-19 de julio próximo. También apoyó las acciones del Primero de Mayo y un apoyo concreto a la lucha en Colombia, incluyendo el boicot de la Coca-Cola. Entre los/as presentadores del programa estaban Ignacio Meneses y Cheryl LaBash del Intercambio Sindical EEUU/Cuba y Benjamín Prado de la Unión del Barrio.

### Conferencia dedicada a la libertad de los Cinco Cubanos

Martín López Ortiz, en representación del Frente Amplio de Izquierda Social, FAIS, de Michoacán, dio la bienvenida a los/as asistentes a la conferencia en México y afirmó que los pueblos del mundo rechazan las injusticias del imperio estadounidense tal como el encarcelamiento de los Cinco Cubanos, como se confirmó en un reciente encuentro internacional en Holguín, Cuba. Estos cinco revolucionarios cubanos, que han estado presos en cárceles estadounidenses desde 1998, son aclamados en todo el mundo por sus esfuerzos para exponer los planes terroristas contra Cuba orquestados en Miami.

Ailí Labañino Cardoso, la hija mayor de Ramón Labañino, uno de los Cinco Cubanos presos, describió mesurada pero emotivamente, el sufrimiento de los Cinco y sus familiares causados por el aislamiento y la separación. A Olga Salanueva y Adri-

ana Pérez se les ha negado las visas de entrada a EEUU para visitar a sus esposos, René González y Gerardo Hernández.

Una llamativa exposición estrenó las caricaturas políticas de Hernández. Alicia Jrapko, coordinadora del Comité Internacional por la Libertad de los Cinco, presentó a Silvia García Tabío, representante de la Asamblea Nacional del Poder Popular, quien habló en detalle sobre los aspectos jurídicos del caso de los Cinco. García instó a las organizaciones sindicales a seguir el ejemplo de varios sindicatos grandes de Canadá que han enviado cartas al presidente Barack Obama exigiendo la libertad para los Cinco. En lo que constituyó una brecha en los medios de comunicación, Telemundo entrevistó a Labañino Cardoso, quien también participó en un almuerzo especial para jóvenes el sábado.

### Crisis mundial del imperialismo: efectos y respuestas

Ermela García Santiago se centró en el enfoque de la Cuba revolucionaria a los problemas causados por la actual crisis económica mundial. Cuba está ahora en el proceso de hacer ajustes, comenzando con un debate popular sobre los cambios que sean necesarios. Los temas se discuten abiertamente y se muestran en la Internet para cualquier persona que esté interesada en los detalles.

La necesidad de cambio está impulsada por la crisis económica mundial. Ni siquiera Cuba está inmune a sus efectos negativos. Los/as cubanos/as saben que la riqueza proviene del trabajo humano y el crecimiento viene de una buena planificación. Algunos sectores de la economía cubana han recibido subsidios excesivos y otros sectores albergan un número excesivo de trabajadores/as. Los reajustes se realizan a través de largos períodos por los/as propios/as trabajadores/as.

Lo que es indiscutible es el apoyo y la participación de los/as trabajadores/as cubanos/as. Ellos/as entienden que estos cambios fortalecerán la revolución y garantizarán la seguridad social básica de enseñanza gratuita, asistencia sanitaria y jubilación.

José Humberto Montes de Oca Luna, en representación del Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas, caracterizó la crisis capitalista actual como generalizada y global. En marcado contraste con Cuba, él describió la ofensiva capitalista desatada contra los/as trabajadores/as en México y en otros lugares. El gobierno ha respondido a la crisis aumentando los esfuerzos por privatizar las empresas estatales. Montes de Oca describió en detalle la lucha del SME contra los esfuerzos de la oligarquía mexicana para destruir el sindicato, incluyendo ataques legislativos y judiciales y el encar-

celamiento de dirigentes sindicales. La estrategia básica de contraataque debe ser la lucha de clases, subrayó diciendo: "Necesitamos independencia política. Tenemos en nuestro lado a miles de jubilados/as, nuestras familias y la manifestación de 70.000 en el Estadio Azteca". Él instó a los/as asistentes a la conferencia a que escriban cartas de apoyo a los dirigentes del SME, al presidente de México y a los legisladores mexicanos. Por último, hizo un llamado a una asamblea del pueblo mexicano para exigir que México se una al ALBA.

El líder del Movimiento Pro Rescate del Pueblo, Larry Holmes, recibió una ovación tras su presentación donde analizaba la crisis capitalista. El colapso del sistema económico hace dos años, dijo, dio paso a una nueva realidad en todo el mundo. Aunque increíblemente productivo, el sistema actual ya no es sostenible. Parte de nuestro trabajo es romper el muro ideológico que impide a los/as trabajadores/as exigir un nuevo sistema, un sistema que funcione en beneficio de sus intereses, instó Holmes. No importa las diferencias que tenían los grupos de izquierda en el pasado, seguramente no son lo suficientemente importantes como para evitar que se unan ahora. La única pregunta debería ser: ¿Está usted listo/a para luchar contra el sistema? ¡Los/as trabajadores/as deben estar antes que el capital!

### ALBA como alternativa

Fredy José Franco, secretario general de la Federación Nicaragüense de Profesores de Enseñanza Secundaria, habló de la diferencia fundamental entre el ALBA y los llamados "acuerdos de libre comercio" impulsados por EEUU.

El ALBA se basa en la solidaridad entre sus miembros. Las fortalezas específicas de cada país se utilizan para complementar las deficiencias de las otras naciones miembros. Expresó la confianza en que, tras las elecciones de noviembre 2011, el gobierno sandinista sea capaz de profundizar la revolución socialista.

Magaly Batista Enríquez, representante del Departamento de Relaciones Internacionales de la Confederación de Trabajadores/as Cubanos/as (CTC), afirmó que el espíritu del ALBA es compartir combustibles, hidroelectricidad y otros recursos de energía; ganadería; biodiversidad; fármacos; conocimiento de culturas pre-columbinas; minerales; ayuda para la gente incapacitada; agua potable, y otras cuestiones que afectan al pueblo. Programas concretos ya incluyen el cuidado gratis de los ojos, campañas de alfabetización y el entrenamiento de técnicos/as, médicos/as y enfermeros/as. Los gobiernos populares de Latinoamérica también están expandiendo el uso del sucre como moneda de cambio.

Lucy Pagoada, representante de Honduras USA Resistencia, denunció el reciente golpe, citando la connivencia de los Estados Unidos, el ejército hondureño y la Iglesia Católica, además de la oligarquía nacional. Lo describió como un golpe contra el ALBA ya que, de hecho, el gobierno golpista ha retirado a Honduras del ALBA.

Señaló que la base militar más grande en Centroamérica está en Honduras y está controlada por EEUU. Pero el golpe, ella concluyó, ha despertado al pueblo a la lucha política.

Gilda Chacón Bravo, representante de relaciones internacionales del CTC, anotó que el 70º aniversario de la Federación Sindical Mundial será celebrado en su 16to congreso el próximo año en Grecia. La FSM es parte del ESNA, un encuentro internacional anual que promueve la unidad de acción de trabajadores/as a través de las Américas.

Clarence Thomas, de la tercera generación de estibadores en su familia, organizador de la Marcha de un Millón Trabajadores/as de 2004 y líder de la Local 10 de la Unión Internacional de Estibadores, presentó dos ejemplos del poder inherente de la clase trabajadora estadounidense. La L-10 protestó la matanza israelí de activistas que trataban de romper el bloqueo genocida de Gaza al unirse a estibadores internacionales que se negaron a descargar un barco israelí. El sindicato también cerró cinco puertos en la costa oeste por ocho horas para protestar la muerte despiadada por la policía de Oscar Grant en Oakland, California.

Otras panelistas y delegaciones sindicales estadounidenses incluían a Rosie Martínez del Caucus Latino de SEIU 721; Cristina Vásquez, vice presidenta internacional y directora regional de Workers United; y Martha Grevatt, trabajadora automotriz de Chrysler.

Teresa Gutiérrez, organizadora de la Coalición Primero de Mayo por los Derechos de Trabajadores/as e Inmigrantes de Nueva York, puso de relieve el caso de Víctor Toro, detenido y arrestado por faltarle documentos y acusado ahora de terrorismo por ser líder en la oposición al golpe fascista de 1973 organizado por la CIA en Chile.

Ella señaló que aunque la legislación propuesta del DREAM Act ofrece la ciudadanía a jóvenes indocumentados/as, también forzara a muchos a entrar al servicio militar estadounidense.

David Montes, organizador de Unión del Barrio en Los Ángeles, describió el Suroeste estadounidense como territorio mexicano ocupado por los Estados Unidos. Anotó que en los últimos 30 años más mexicanos/as han migrado a estas tierras. Hoy en día, la administración de Obama está deportando más trabajadores/as que Bush. Unión del Barrio ha desafiado la consigna de los Demócratas "¡Hoy marchamos, mañana votamos!" con "¡Hoy marchamos, mañana organizamos!".

Benjamín Prado de Unión del Barrio en San Diego señaló que los capitalistas nunca han reconocido los derechos de los/as trabajadores/as. El capitalismo convierte todo, hasta la gente, en mercancía. Es importante, subrayó, desenmascarar a Estados Unidos como el violador más grande de derechos humanos. Necesitamos aprender del ALBA. Los problemas de inmigración no tienen solución dentro del capitalismo.

Además de los medios alternativos que cubrieron la conferencia, varios representantes de los medios de Tijuana, incluyendo Telemedia 33 y Radio La República, estuvieron presentes. □