

WORKERS WORLD

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!

APRIL 28, 2011 Vol. 53, No. 16 50¢

Hands off ILWU Local 10! Labor defends dockworkers' solidarity with Wisconsin struggle

By Cheryl LaBash

Mobilize! That is the way the San Francisco Labor Council is answering the Pacific Maritime Association's attack on the International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10. In a unanimous resolution, the SFLC called for mass action at the PMA's San Francisco headquarters on April 25 and established a broad defense committee for the union and its members.

The PMA is seeking to punish ILWU Local 10 for its members' rank-and-file job action on April 4. The AFL-CIO had called for a National Day of Action on that date in support of Wisconsin workers. ILWU Local 10 volunteered not to go to work. Without their labor power, nothing moved for 24 hours in the ports of San Francisco and Oakland, Calif.

Intimidation won't work

ILWU Local 10's job action is part of a bigger fight for all workers, and it's an important issue for the labor movement. By dragging this strong union before an arbitrator and a federal court judge, the PMA is trying to send a message to all workers to stay in line.

The PMA says that it is OK to have rallies, demonstrations and prayer vigils. It is OK to lobby, recall and vote. The PMA even told the union local that it is OK to shut down ports, but that type of action must be planned with them in order to suit the bosses.

The wheels of capitalism routinely roll on, squeezing the workers and unemployed even harder to make up for the bosses' losses from the global capitalist economic collapse. However, when the pain of the working class results in a united job action that pinches the profit stream, it really gets attention.

ILWU Local 10 opened up a second front in solidarity with Wisconsin workers, and California's labor movement is saying that the resulting intimidation by the bosses won't work and is taking action to prove it, starting on April 25.

Everyone can defend ILWU Local 10

As a first step for workers beyond California's Bay Area, the Bail Out the People Movement began an online letter campaign to PMA president and CEO, James C. McKenna. It demands that the "PMA drop all retaliatory actions including its suit against ILWU Local 10 and its members for exercising their right to show support for Wisconsin's public workers and to commemorate Rev. Dr. King Jr.'s assassination [on] the AFL-CIO's National Day of Action on April 4.

"We commend the brave longshore workers who showed the way by acting with conscience on April 4. We believe that 'An injury to one is an injury to

all!'" BOPM encourages everyone to sign on to this appeal at www.bailoutpeople.org/ilwu.shtml.

Additionally, they ask that community members, students and other activists turn that letter into a petition and take it to protests against school closings and budget cuts. They ask union members to take the SFLC resolution to union meetings, and supporters to take it to their churches, block clubs or other organizations and ask for a letter of support to stand with ILWU Local 10 on April 25. (See Resolutions at sflaborcouncil.org)

PMA: Union buster

Although the anti-working-class offensive focuses on public workers in Wisconsin, Michigan and other states, the rights of every worker — and all union and broader social benefits for the working class — are in the bosses and bankers' cross hairs right now.

On April 12 ILWU members and supporters occupied the PMA office in Oakland, Calif., for several hours. They held a sit-in in the boardroom to highlight the PMA's refusal to negotiate with the union. That bosses' association aims to destroy the solidarity of the coast-wide contract in order to weaken the West Coast dockworkers' union. According to the Labor Video Project, the PMA even brought non-union crews into the San Diego port as part of their anti-union campaign.

On April 25 at 11 a.m. join the mass action to support ILWU Local 10 at the PMA San Francisco headquarters at 55 Market St. □



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Rand's trash made into a movie:

We don't need the rich

By Caleb T. Maupin

The new film based on Ayn Rand's "Atlas Shrugged" released April 15 is a prime example of how film can serve big capital. It's part one of a proposed trilogy of low-budget propaganda reels backing the billionaire elite in their war against everyone else.

Given its reactionary message, one can only hope that the almost unanimous criticism regarding its lack of entertainment value reflects its ultimate failure. It would still be worthwhile, however, to examine the historic use of film to promote political reaction and to take Rand's ideology apart piece by piece.

Almost 100 years ago, the U.S. capitalist system was in an economic crisis, and millions of workers were joining the growing socialist and labor movements. The new motion picture industry came to the system's rescue with a thoroughly racist propaganda piece.

The 1915 film "The Birth of a Nation" rewrote the history of the U.S. Civil War and its aftermath, prettying up the slave-owning class and portraying the Ku Klux Klan as populist heroes who fought the federal government's efforts to aid former slaves during the period of Reconstruction in the South.

The film helped revive the Ku Klux Klan, which was re-founded in a mass hate rally at Stone Mountain in Georgia. It urged unemployed and downtrodden white workers to direct their rage at Black workers, Jews, Roman Catholics, Socialists, feminists — against everyone except the capitalists responsible for their suffering. Following the film showing, mobs of racist whites reenacted the supposedly "heroic" events depicted in the film by murdering Black men and mutilating their bodies. ("Hooded Americanism: A History of the Ku Klux Klan" by David Mark Chalmers)

In 2011 "Atlas Shrugged" is aimed to serve reaction. USA Today even pointed out that the film was directly linked to the Tea Party movement and produced to push its agenda. (March 23)

Ayn Rand, a career praising 'selfishness'

Born to a wealthy family that fled the early USSR, Ayn Rand came to fame as a friendly witness to the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1947, testifying against progressives in the film industry.

The publicity surrounding her anti-communism aided her lifelong career promoting her ideology of "objectivism." Rand argued that history is made by a small elite clique of "great men," noted for being ruthless and possessing "the virtue of selfishness," who she called the "motor of the world." According to Rand, these "great men" are the "most oppressed minority" because they have to negotiate with unions, follow labor and environmental laws, and pay income taxes. ("Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal," Rand, 1966)

When the "great man" in her novel "The Fountainhead" breaks into the apartment of a woman and rapes her, Rand presents this as a heroic action asserting his rights. Despite this blatant misogyny, Rand has often been mislabeled a "feminist."

"Atlas Shrugged" tells of a few "great men," led by John Galt, joining together and withholding their contribution to society to protest having to pay income tax, follow anti-trust laws and respect the right of workers to organize. They collectively withhold their greatness from an ungrateful society.

Why now?

Right now the Republican Party and its Democratic Party allies are trying to gut Social Security and Medicare, lower taxes for the super rich, and crush unions. In response workers have begun to fight for their existence from Wisconsin to the Oakland-San Francisco dockyards. This film fits Wall Street's need to divert popular anger from itself, much as the Tea Party does in the political arena.

These days Rand's propaganda is pushed at alienated and isolated youths, who are filled with self-doubt and who, despite working hard, continue to endure economic hardship. Rand's work screams that all society's ills are rooted in solidarity, compassion and "collectivism."

We don't need John Galt!

"Atlas Shrugged" repeats a common illusion about capitalism. It pretends that the owners of industry, mines, oil wells and other economic institutions are tireless inventors who work long hours, unleashing their creativity for the good of society.

In reality the vast majority of modern engineers, architects, artists and innovators are workers.

The wealth their creativity produces goes not to them, but to the capitalists, whose only labor and innovation is the task of pushing money in and out of investments, in which other people's labor is appropriated and turned into profits.

The rich man's "strike" portrayed in the film would be a blessing for working people today. If, like the "great men" in the film, today's rich of the world walked away from their banks, factories, mines and oil wells, for whatever reason, this would be no problem for the working class. We pump the oil, work the cash registers, do the hours in the plants, cook the food, invent things, create works of art, design computer programs, build buildings and do all else that produces society's wealth.

We could easily own and operate society without the leeches at the top because they contribute nothing, merely owning what is collectively produced. Our message to all billionaires who would rally behind Rand's fictional John Galt and give up their supposed greatness in protest is, "Good riddance!"

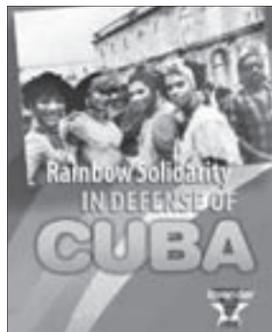
We simply don't need the rich. □

By Leslie Feinberg, author of Stone Butch Blues

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

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

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

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

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

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

Cleveland
P.O. Box 5963
Cleveland, OH 44101
216-738-0320
cleveland@workers.org

Denver
denver@workers.org

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

Durham, N.C.
331 W. Main St., Ste. 408
Durham, NC 27701
durham@workers.org

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

Los Angeles
5274 W Pico Blvd.
Suite # 207
Los Angeles, CA 90019
la@workers.org
323-515-5870

Milwaukee
milwaukee@workers.org

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

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

San Diego, Calif.
P.O. Box 33447
San Diego, CA 92163
619-692-0355
sandiego@workers.org

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

Tucson, Ariz.
tucson@workers.org

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

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Workers World
55 West 17 Street
New York, N.Y. 10011
Phone: (212) 627-2994
E-mail: ww@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org

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Editor: Deirdre Griswold

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Race & the death penalty

The case of Mumia Abu-Jamal

By Dolores Cox

It has been almost 30 years since the case of the internationally renowned political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal officially opened in December 1981. In April 2009 the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear Abu-Jamal's appeal and returned it to the Third Circuit Court of Appeals.

Mumia Abu-Jamal now has a new legal team led by Christina Swarns, director of the Criminal Justice Project of the NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund; and Judith Ritter, professor and director of the Criminal Defense Clinic at Widener University Law School in Wilmington, Del. They will be directing their defense strategy to not only fight reinstatement of Mumia's death penalty but also overturn his conviction.

On April 3 in New York City supporters and human rights activists gathered at the historic Riverside Church to meet and honor the new lawyers. The event was moderated by Suzanne Ross of the Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Coalition (NYC), with the room filled to capacity. The gathering was also video-streamed live worldwide.

Attorney Ritter conveyed that the status of the case is not good news, in that efforts to win Abu-Jamal a new trial have been rejected by all courts. But Mumia is comforted and relieved to have this new legal team. Ritter also related that the Third Circuit Court's decision as to whether Mumia's death sentence/execu-

tion should be reimposed or if he is to remain sentenced to life in prison without parole could be made any day now or could be months away.

Attorney Swarns thanked all the activists for keeping Mumia's struggle alive and stated that it is a pleasure and honor to represent him. Upon receiving tumultuous applause, she stated that she's not used to being received so warmly. While representing Black men on death row in the South for the past 15 years, she's used to a mostly hostile courtroom environment.

Swarns gave an enlightening overview of the history of the NAACP LDF and its 70-year struggle to obtain racial justice and equality. The late Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall was part of the first legal team as a lawyer in the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* desegregation case. The LDF has also organized for and is committed to abolishing the death penalty.

Swarns noted that statistical evidence going back to 1986 has shown that race, not the nature of the crime itself, dictates who lives or dies in the U.S. Even before Abu-Jamal's trial began, newspaper articles about him were all about race. And prosecutors excluded Black jurors systematically during his original trial.

History of lynchings

The origin of the death penalty in the U.S., Swarns revealed, has a direct relationship to slavery. It is a way of using violence to control Black people, an ex-

pression of white terrorism that's existed for hundreds of years.

During the legal segregation "Jim Crow" era, brute force was used to control Black people and hold back any progress that might jeopardize the racist, white Southern economic structure.

Swarns added that thousands of Black people were lynched and murdered with impunity. The lives of Black people were not valued then or now. When the lynching epidemic ended, it was replaced by the weapon of increased jailing and the death penalty. At one point the majority of Black men were imprisoned for allegedly raping white women. Now, disproportionately, more than one third of prisoners on death row are Black.

In Philadelphia, Blacks are four times more likely than whites to be on death row. The LDF considers Mumia's death penalty case to be of utmost importance, one which they had to get involved in, Swarns stated. They're committed to this struggle, and her team looks forward to working with Mumia's supporters and celebrating their victory with everyone.

Pam Africa of the International Concerned Family & Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal stated that we're all on death row whether we know it or not. She mentioned that Mumia's birthday is on April 24, and as a birthday gift to him we should all go back and organize wherever we are to spread the word about Mumia's case.

"We'll show the world like we did in

1995 with Millions for Mumia worldwide; it's not over," Africa added. "We're not called the 'Uncompromising' Free Mumia Coalition for nothing. We're not giving up on Mumia. Like Egypt, we'll continue the fight. "She described Mumia as the "voice of the voiceless" and pointed out that as a jailhouse lawyer he's helped get Black men off death row. She reminded everyone that Amnesty International states Mumia should be given a new trial, not a new death sentence.

The special moment of the event was a phone call from Mumia and his spouse from his Pennsylvania prison. The room immediately became silent. "Hello everybody. Thanks brothers, sisters and friends for coming today, and welcome attorneys," they said. "Your legal briefs have mastered the issues," Mumia added.

Abu-Jamal's new legal team is donating their time and services pro-bono. However, they do need money to cover investigative and other expenses, so financial contributions are badly needed. Send check/money order to National Lawyers Guild Foundation, 132 Nassau St., #922, New York, NY 10038. Write "Mumia" on the notation line. For additional information, call the NYC Mumia Coalition hotline at 212-330-8029 or go to www.freemumia.com.

To remember his April 24 birthday, send cards to Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM 8335, SCI-Greene, 175 Progress Dr., Waynesburg, PA 15370.

Struggle heats up in Georgia as

Anti-immigrant Arizona copycat bill passes

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta



PHOTO: CAITIE ELLE

In an ironic twist of history on April 14, the 150th anniversary of the start of the Civil War, the Georgia General Assembly approved HB 87, a piece of sweeping anti-immigrant legislation that legalizes racial profiling. Labeled the "show me your papers" law, it provides for immediate detention and removal to a federal facility if a person cannot prove citizenship or legal residency to local or state police.

Opponents of the bill often referenced the papers enslaved people were required to carry allowing them to travel off their owner's property and the right of any white person to demand to see them. Enslaved people found without these documents were often brutally beaten and returned to their masters for more punishment.

The same voices that insist HB 87 is not racist also characterize the Civil War as not being about maintaining slavery. Instead they rehash the deceit of an honorable and necessary fight to defend the Constitution and states' rights.

A veneer of legality, as the high principle motivating HB 87, permeated the right-wing rhetoric for public consumption, but the truth came out in the 11th-hour debate on the final night of the House session. Following a forceful argument made by an opponent of the bill who detailed the dangers of racial profiling and evoked the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s struggle for human rights for all, Sen. Renee Untermann declared she "didn't care what happened to Mexican people." So much for equality under the law and due process!

Provisions of racist law

Similar to Arizona's apartheid law SB

1070, which is now being challenged in court, the Georgia legislation requires all businesses in the state with 10 or more employees to run the names of new hires through E-Verify, a federal identification program. However, mistakes in the data have resulted in the firing of eligible workers, who must take considerable time and effort to fix the errors.

There are stiff prison terms and fines for people found to have fake identification and those who knowingly transport or harbor undocumented people in the commission of such a crime. It is well documented that the vast majority of those detained and deported in Georgia counties under the 287(g) program, which allows local law enforcement agents to act as immigration officials, were stopped for traffic violations.

HB 87 also sets up a seven-member Immigration Enforcement Review Board to investigate local and state government officials for not enforcing state immigration laws.

Rep. David Ramsey from Peachtree City, Ga., a wealthy community south of Atlanta, was the prime architect of HB 87. He was assisted by Tea Party activists and national anti-immigrant forces such as NumbersUSA.

Several other pieces of anti-immigrant legislation failed to pass, such as an attempt by right-wing forces to bar undocumented students from attending all Georgia higher public education institutions.

The Board of Regents capitulated to pressure in October and banned students without papers, regardless of their qualifications, from attending the top five schools, including University of Georgia, Georgia Tech and Georgia State University. Undocumented students already pay out-of-state tuition, roughly three times higher than in-state tuition, even if they attended Georgia schools their entire lives.

Other unsuccessful bills sought to deny undocumented workers any compensation if they were hurt on the job and to make a first driving-under-the-influence offense a felony only for undocumented immigrants.

Broad fight against hate legislation

Fighting the whole range of hate legislation is a broad range of political, business and community groups. Everyone from the Catholic Archdiocese to 270 business and agriculture leaders have stated their concerns and called for its defeat.

One of the most active grassroots coalitions is the Georgia Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition, which mobilized for numerous press conferences, lobbying days and coordinated call-ins to legislators. It also held a large rally of thousands on March 24, packing the entire street in front of the Capitol. Rep. John Lewis, himself a veteran of the Civil Rights movement who was beaten and jailed multiple times in the struggle to defeat Jim Crow segregation, urged the crowd to "never back down, to keep on struggling." He declared his willingness to go to jail again for immigrant rights.

Several days later seven students, declaring they were "undocumented and unafraid," stopped traffic on a busy downtown street by staging a sit-in to demand

that GSU President Mark Becker refuse to comply with the Board of Regents ban. Reminiscent of the role of students in the civil rights struggle, undocumented youth plan on using direct actions over the summer in cities around the country to push for passage of the federal DREAM Act, which offers a pathway to legalization for children who grow up in the U.S.

With the Georgia Assembly in its final days in session and arguments over the provisions of HB 87 delaying a vote, more than 23,000 petitions were delivered on April 11 to Gov. Nathan Deal, Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle and House Speaker David Ralston, urging them to stop HB 87. The presenters cited the latest court ruling upholding the unconstitutionality of similar provisions in Arizona and warned of the economic and political repercussions of passing such reprehensible measures.

On April 14, hundreds gathered as dusk fell at the Georgia Capitol. Chanting for hours, with candles lit, children, their immigrant parents, students from Georgia State, religious leaders, peace and justice activists and others demanded "Kill the bill." Inside, legislators debated, recessed, broke their operating rules and, with scant time left in the session, passed HB 87.

Immediately calls were organized to flood the governor's office, urging him to veto the legislation. Despite such vocal dissent, Deal has signaled his intent to sign the bill into law within a few days.

As in Arizona, the law will be challenged in court in an attempt to prevent its implementation on July 1. Plans are already being formulated to organize a boycott of Georgia, specifically focusing on tourist travel, conventions and concert/entertainment performances. For more information, visit www.somosgeorgia.org. □

NEW YORK CITY

Removal of corporate school chancellor a people's victory

By Sara Catalinotto
Co-founder of Parents to Improve School Transportation

The dismissal and/or resignation of Cathleen Black as New York City school chancellor on April 7 is a political victory for parents and other supporters of equal, quality public education for all children.

Black's insensitive "suggestions" offended people from every community. On overcrowded classes, Black opined, "Could we just have some birth control?" To solve inadequate busing for students with disabilities, she suggested they take a taxi.

African-American and Latina/o New Yorkers, whose children comprise more than four-fifths of the student body, noted with outrage that New York City billionaire Mayor Michael Bloomberg chose Black — a white crony with zero exposure to public education — over qualified candidates of color. Black was the insult added to the injury of mayoral control of city schools.

Despite loud protests of all kinds from parents, educators and community activists strategizing together for the first time, the state granted Black a waiver to exempt her from the typical education credentials required for the job. State Education Commissioner David Steiner, who granted Black's waiver, also resigned on April 7.

Bloomberg is a ruling-class billionaire who owns media. His stance has been to ignore what the masses think. However, by April — with his approval rating dipping toward Black's own 17 percent and with March 24 "Day of Rage" and April 4 "We are One" mass mobilizations at his doorstep — Bloomberg had to do something to put his side of the class war in a better light.

One chant last winter was: "Cathie Black must go! Steiner must go! Bloomberg must go!" So far it is two out of three.

Organizing continues for quality public education for all

However, merely removing the best symbols of Bloomberg's agenda for turning public education into a capitalist venture does not reverse the damage. Those who genuinely



Parents raise their demands at Queens, N.Y. rally.

care about New York City students continue to organize. Many feel empowered by Black's ouster.

The labor movement has exposed the city's \$3 billion surplus and the state's killing of a tax on millionaires, and people are angry that more money is going to the rich instead of to education. On April 14, some 600 demonstrated in a Queens, N.Y., rally to "Protect Our Children; Save Our Teachers and Schools."

On April 8, parent Leonie Haimson of Class Size Matters was still advising that "25 percent of all elementary schools have waiting lists for kindergarten next year, with over 3,000 children who cannot get into their zoned neighborhood schools. Over 8,000 students, or 10 percent of all 8th graders, did not get into any of their ten choices for high school." Haimson urged people to speak out at an education budget hearing that day against the proposed cuts of 6,000 teaching positions. (www.classsizematters.org)

An online survey created by parents at www.recallbloomberg.com proposes a new law to allow a recall of Bloomberg and cites a New York City Charter provision for having him charged and suspended. The website notes that the Bloomberg administration "has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on no-bid contracts ... [and] is rushing to close schools but ... did not give these schools the tools they needed to serve their students."

Parents to Improve School Transportation received the [\[bloomberg.com\]\(http://bloomberg.com\) link from a leader in Staten Island's Community Education Council. While Staten Island is considered the "conservative" borough of New York City, when faced with an assault on what should be basic rights — education and the necessary transportation to support it — working-class families there have responded in sync with all others.](http://www.recall-</p>
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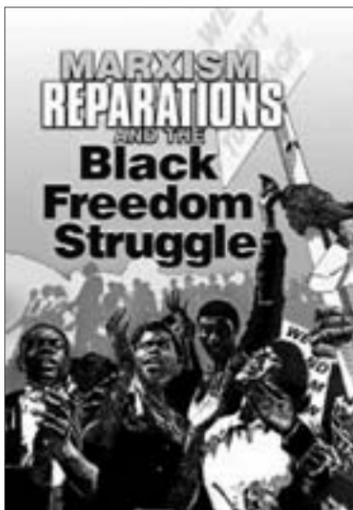
Bloomberg's new choice for chancellor, Deputy Mayor David Walcott, has certain education credentials and is of Afro-Caribbean heritage. However, parent activists tend to doubt that anyone so close to Bloomberg could differ significantly from his education agenda.

The fight for access to free and relevant education is inseparable from the fight against racism. The ruling powers in New York City know this and seem to view Walcott very cynically. An opinion piece in the bigoted New York Post listed his advantages over Black, concluding that Walcott "won't be mau-maued by the education activists." (April 10) The Mau Mau uprising in Kenya was for African self-determination against British colonial rule.

City Councilmember Charles Barron told the April 15 Amsterdam News, "We are not looking for personality change; we need policy change. Walcott said he will continue the school closures, give preferential treatment to charter schools and keep turning out high-stakes test-taking mills."

Black's exit reminds us that political heat generated by united adults can ultimately change the situation of school children. Today, all signs are that this heat will be maintained until the root issues are resolved. As one PIST parent put it, "We should go after the puppet master, Bloomberg."

Parents to Improve School Transportation was founded in the fall of 2010 to demand realistic school bus routing in New York City. The current system, which is especially disruptive for students with special needs, is taking valuable time away from children's education.



GRAPHIC BY SAHU BARRON

Available at www.Leftbooks.com

ON THE PICKET LINE

By Sue Davis

Equal Pay Day spotlights discrimination

Even though it's been 50 years since the Equal Pay Act was passed, working women in the U.S. are paid on average 80 cents for every dollar men make. But it's even lower for women of color: 70 cents for African-American women and 60 cents for Latinas. Women's groups have designated April 12 as Equal Pay Day to draw attention to this form of racist and sexist discrimination. The Labor Department reports that the average, full-time, woman worker gets \$150 less in her weekly paycheck, which amounts to \$8,000 less over the whole year and \$380,000 less over her lifetime. The Institute for Women's Policy Research has released a new fact sheet showing that women have lower median earnings than men in 107 out of 111 occupations, accounting for nearly two-thirds of the workers in the 10 lowest-paid jobs. "Pay discrimination is ... undermining the economic security of American families," said Lisa Maatz of the American Association of University Women. "[We need] to educate the public about this pernicious problem and show women they will not be alone in confronting it." (afl-cio.org blog, April 12)

D.C. unionists dog Gov. Walker

"Wherever [Gov.] Scott Walker goes, he needs to know that we're going to be there waiting for him," said Technical Employees union President Greg Junemann, at a demonstration outside the U.S. Capitol during the April 14 hearing of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee. While Republican committee members (half of whom have received donations from the right-wing Koch brothers) fawned over Gov. Walker, and Democratic committee members got him to admit to his anti-union politics, protesters outside were chanting, "Hey, Walker, you can't hide, we can see your corporate side!" National Nurses United, whose members at the Washington Hospital Center are still battling for a contract, called the protest. "What corporate America is trying to do to unions is unfair, unjust and unnecessary, and we can't tolerate it," Vicki Carroll, a labor and delivery nurse at WHC, told Union City! (Metro D.C. AFL-CIO online newsletter, April 15)

Grocery workers rally to save D.C.-area jobs

When the Food Marketing Institute — the lobbying arm of the food industry — met at the Hyatt Regency Hotel on Capitol Hill on March 30, hundreds of D.C. grocery workers, shoppers and community allies rallied to defend union jobs. Dutch-owned megacorporation Royal Ahold, its subsidiary GiantFood and its grocery supplier C&S Grocers are colluding to destroy hundreds of union jobs in the D.C. area as Giant outsources its warehouse operations to C&S Grocers. Members of Teamsters Local 863 in New Jersey recently lost their jobs after C&S shut down all major warehouses in that area. Though C&S claimed it was due to financial troubles, the corporation actually made nearly \$40 billion last year. The workers say Ahold, Giant and C&S are also lobbying against legislation that grants sick leave to workers and extends workers' rights. "[Ahold] — on a global basis — is attempting to destroy the economic standing of workers wherever they do business with no consideration whatsoever to the workers or the communities they live in," said Food and Commercial Workers Local 400 President Tom McNutt, who pledged to "stand and fight" with the workers. (Union City!, March 31)

Workers' compensation lags behind productivity

Are you working harder but find your paycheck doesn't stretch as far? A new study by the Economic Policy Institute explains why: The wages of all working people have stagnated or decreased even though they are producing more. While compensation between 1989 and 2010 grew modestly at 20.5 percent for public workers and even less at 17.9 percent for workers in the private sector, productivity of both grew more than three times that to a whopping 62.5 percent. That exposes the ruling class's latest tactic of trying to pit private-sector workers against those in the public sector. As a class, all workers are overworked and underpaid as part of the ruling class's ruthless war against the workers. (afl-cio.org blog, March 10) □

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper. Edited by Monica Moorehead. Includes • **Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination** Larry Holmes

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

WISCONSIN

Activists confront Tea Party, shout down Palin

By Bryan G. Pfeifer

Thousands of labor, community and student activists and organizations showed up to protest and drown out the racist, neofascist Tea Party and its keynote speaker, Sarah Palin, in Madison, Wis., on April 16 at the state Capitol.

The progressive coalition Wisconsin Resists stated in a press release for its counterprotest: "The Tea Party is not a 'grassroots movement,' but a right-wing network bankrolled by billionaires like [Gov.] Scott Walker's friends the Koch Brothers and big-business, special-interest groups like the misnamed 'Americans For Prosperity.' The Tea Party has also sponsored events nationwide with a message of racism and hatred.

"Let's show that the voices of democracy and workers' rights will not be drowned out by big business and that racism in any form is not welcome in Wisconsin. Wisconsin Resists encourages everyone to bring signs that highlight that Wisconsin stands up for workers' rights and democracy against the Tea Party, says no to racism, and that it's time the banks, corporations, and the rich pay their fair share."

Thousands across the state have attended the state Legislature's required Joint Finance Committee hearings in Neenah, Wis., and West Allis, Wis. No meetings were held in Milwaukee, although it is the largest population center in the state and has the largest Black and Latino/a populations. The JFC is legally required to have a few public hearings for the public to express their views on Walker's proposed 2011-13 fiscal budget bill, which includes \$3.6 billion in draconian cuts to poor and working people. Democrats in the Legislature — under pressure from the people — will hold hearings in April and May, since the JFC has now concluded the required number of public meetings. (www.defendwisconsin.org)

On April 14 Walker was in Washington, D.C., testifying before the State and Municipal Government Debt Governor's Panel. He admitted under questioning that the anti-union bills he's been pushing in Wisconsin aren't about fiscal priorities. His actions are to weaken and bust unions.

Thousands of poor and working people across Wisconsin — individually, or as part of their union, community or student organizations — continue to gather signatures for recall campaigns targeted at politicians responsible for voting for the anti-union bills. They are also engaging in various protests in cities small and large. And across the U.S. and around the world, Wisconsin solidarity actions are taking place daily. (wisafclcio.typepad.com)

The final tally for the Wisconsin Supreme Court election — which was widely considered a referendum on Walker's anti-union measures — was released on April 15 showing the conservative David Prosser winning by 7,316 votes over independent JoAnne Kloppenberg. Kloppenberg said she will make a statement by April 20 on whether or not she will request a statewide recount. Until then the Government Accountability Board can't certify the results. The election is marred by controversy due to a conservative clerk in Waukesha County "finding" the day after the election, thousands of ballots for Prosser, which made him the winner of the election. The clerk, Kathy Nickolaus, is a former Prosser employee and has been

investigated for voter fraud previously.

On April 14 Dane County Circuit Court Judge Maryann Sumi dismissed one of three lawsuits filed by Democratic Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk challenging the anti-union legislation signed by Walker on March 11 after it was illegally rammed through the Legislature. The judge ruled that state law forbids an agency or arm of government like a county from challenging the constitutionality of state laws.

Another lawsuit brought by the Dane County district attorney remains. In that case, Sumi blocked enactment of the law earlier this month while she considers whether the state's open meetings law was violated in the process of passing the anti-union bill. This lawsuit was appealed by Walker's administration to the appellate court, which refused to hear it. Thus, it is now before the Wisconsin Supreme Court, which has yet to decide whether to hear the case.

A third lawsuit brought by various labor unions that challenges the anti-union law has yet to be heard by Sumi.

Anti-union attacks continue

Some counties in Wisconsin — such as Milwaukee County — are attempting to use the anti-union climate to push millions of dollars in concessions on unionized workers. Both the Personnel and Finance Committees of the Milwaukee County Board voted to take at least \$13 million through next year from 3,500 AFSCME Council 48 workers in the county through higher health care costs, employee pension contributions of 6 percent of salary, a pay freeze and restrictions on overtime pay. The county is also prepar-



WW PHOTO:

ing to impose on the union additional concessions made possible by the anti-union law, including raising the retirement age from 60 to 64 and reducing future credit toward pensions by 20 percent. These attempted concessions, which will affect Black and women workers the most, are even greater than those Walker proposed when he was Milwaukee County executive.

According to an April 16 report on Forbes.com, Walker is working on a Michigan-type "Emergency Financial Manager" law written by the anti-union law firm, Foley & Lardner, the largest legal firm in the state of Wisconsin. The bill would empower the governor to insert a financial manager of his choosing into local government with the ability to cancel union contracts, push aside duly elected local government officials and school board members, and take control of Wisconsin cities and towns. Such a law would, additionally, give Walker unchallenged power to end municipal services of which he dis-

approves, including safety net assistance to those in need.

What these unrelenting attacks by the banks, corporations and the Pentagon against poor and working people show is that it will take more than recall campaigns and demonstrations to defeat the vicious anti-union, anti-people attacks both in Wisconsin and nationwide. It will take an independent, classwide, anti-racist, anti-capitalist movement that directly challenges politicians that do the bidding of Wall Street. It will take engaging in creative, militant, direct action such as occupations and strikes that slow or shut down the machinery of capitalism like the rank-and-file members of International Longshore Workers Union Local 10 did on April 4 by shutting down the docks in Oakland, Calif. There can be no business as usual.

To help and for more information, visit www.wisafclcio.org; wisafclcio.typepad.com; www.vdlf.org; www.defendwisconsin.org; and www.bailoutpeople.org.

Mass march to converge on Wall Street May 12

By Larry Hales
New York

On May 12, which falls on a Thursday and is a full week after the New York City budget proposal will be released by billionaire Mayor Michael Bloomberg, a coalition of city unions and community organizations will converge on Wall Street. It will be the second mass demonstration to target Wall Street in a span of two-and-a-half months.

The group, led by the United Federation of Teachers, plans to converge on Wall Street from seven different locations in the downtown area. Details are sparse at this point, but on Wall Street there will be teach-ins and more protests against austerity and the attacks on public sector unions, especially teachers.

Within its resolution in support of the May 12 mobilization, the UFT states, "In New York City, Mayor Bloomberg has launched a 'stealth Wisconsin gambit,' threatening thousands of unnecessary and unconscionable teacher layoffs for the sole purpose of passing legislation which would eviscerate the right of New York City teachers to due process and create de facto, 'at will' employment, allowing teachers to be fired for any reason or no reason at all."

Bloomberg has threatened to lay off

more than 4,500 teachers in New York and has been trying to dismantle the rule of "last in, first out," which guarantees protection for experienced teachers with seniority.

Many other public sector unions and organizations are beginning to show support for May 12. Such a protest is needed as part of the process of building a massive fightback of working people against a

program of austerity. In fact, many more actions will be needed like this one.

Increasingly, Wall Street will become a target of these protests, especially in New York, where there is a struggle to reinstate the millionaires' tax and for the state to keep the monies it collects from the stock transfer tax to use for peoples' needs instead of giving the billions of dollars back to the superrich. □

May 5 march to demand good education & contract

By Workers World New York bureau

The Professional Staff Congress, American Federation of Teachers Local 2334, has called for a rally on May 5, beginning at 4 p.m. at New York City's City Hall and then marching to the Borough of Manhattan Community College on Chambers Street in lower Manhattan.

The PSC represents about 20,000 faculty and some of the staff at the City University of New York, a large urban university with 23 campuses and more than 250,000 students. The students are the daughters and sons of workers or themselves members of the working class in

New York City and are predominantly Black, Latino/a and/or immigrants.

The union is calling for all its members, and CUNY staff and students to come out.

Its Web page says: "We will be demanding a good contract, an end to economic austerity for CUNY, and a restoration of CUNY's public funding. Our working conditions are our students' learning conditions; when we stand up for a good contract we are standing up for the quality of education at our public university."

The PSC endorsed and had a strong contingent in a March 24 march on Wall Street and has endorsed May 12 protests on Wall Street. □

Community college in Long Beach, Calif.

Marxist author, students discuss capitalism, globalization

By Workers World Los Angeles bureau

Fred Goldstein, author of “Low Wage Capitalism,” spoke about capitalism and globalization to an audience of more than 130 students during a two-and-a-half hour meeting in a packed lecture hall at Long Beach City College in Southern California on April 13.

Students at this two-year community college are almost all from working-class families. In this part of Southern California this means they are also from Latino/a, white, and some Asian and Black families.

The students were well aware that besides being the author of a book their instructors were using in their one sociology and three history classes, Goldstein is a Marxist and a member of the Secretariat of Workers World Party and a lifelong fighter for socialism. This information was prominent in the publicity for the April 13 assembly.

Goldstein spoke for a half-hour on how “globalization” is a benign word designed to cover up the reality of spreading capitalist sweatshops around the world using the latest technology to seek the lowest labor costs and boost profits. This was followed by two hours of questions and answers, during which everyone remained in the room and many asked questions or added comments.

The enthusiasm and preparation of the students was a sign that the two professors that had organized the session, Julian DelGaudio and Janet Hund, had created an atmosphere that encouraged open discussion of the most difficult topics.

Since this was a new kind of experience in a period when such an audience is searching for answers in a genuine way to break out of a capitalist mode of thinking, Workers World thought it would be worthwhile to ask Goldstein, who also spoke at a public meeting of the Los Angeles branch of Workers World Party, some questions about what happened in Long Beach.

WW: What were the questions that seemed to interest these students most?
FG: If you think they were asking how to get a job for themselves, you’d be wrong. This might have also been on their mind, but they were asking general questions about how capitalist society is organized. How does capitalism exploit workers? How do the corporate media create false consciousness? How would people learn to live cooperatively when they have been trained from birth to compete? What do we do to change things?

Many of the students were easily per-



WW PHOTO: JOHN PARKER

Community college in Long Beach, Calif./ Marxist author holds afternoon of discussion with 130 students.

sued of the evils of capitalism and were sympathetic or at least open to a discussion of socialism. Because it is so unfamiliar to them, they were searching for an understanding of the concept. Examples of Cuban socialism, its free medical system, its free education, affordable housing, all in a poor country, helped to clarify things.

One openly Republican student, because he was well-prepared and ready to engage in discussion, also wound up asking lots of provocative questions that opened up topics. When we were discussing hospitals — many of the students are studying nursing or other hospital employment — he defended the capitalists’ right to profits by arguing that the administration deserves some of the wealth provided because they buy and maintain the building and the equipment, and organize the tasks.

WW: Did you give a Marxist viewpoint on this?

FG: My intervention took a while to clarify the point, with its subtleties. The short answer was that ownership as such is not necessary for the performance of those functions. Most of the real owners don’t have anything to do with actually running the place. Workers and administrators chosen by the workers can run it.

WW: Did you discuss how capitalism works?

FG: I said that under capitalism, everything that’s produced — from the students’ clothing to the building they’re sitting in to a Boeing 747 — is produced not because it is needed but because some capitalist can make a profit out of it. The only answer to this private property is to

socialize it and organize production to meet people’s needs.

The students also engaged in back-and-forth discussion. My comments on socialism led to an earnest exploration by the students about what socialism would be like and how people could work in a society that emphasized social solidarity and cooperation when they have been conditioned to be individualistic and everyone seems so isolated.

One student got up and asked what would keep a socialized administration of society from leading to a situation where the higher ups started taking advantage of most of the people all over again. He gave as an example that the media would be controlled and the authorities would use propaganda on the people.

Another student replied that the media are already controlled now by a handful of rich owners, and the only thing that comes through is their message. Many of the students agreed with this.

WW: That only seems to answer part of the question.

FG: I added to this discussion by saying that under capitalism the government administration, whether it be the White House, the FBI, the Federal Communications Commission or the other organs of the government, is controlled by the capitalists who are exploiting people and stealing their wealth. These capitalists have a class interest in putting forward propaganda to mislead the people.

In a socialist society, where the revolution has abolished capitalism and exploitation and where the goods produced go to the people for their own needs, there is no intrinsic antagonism between the ad-

ministrators and the people.

WW: What was the central point of the discussion?

FG: There were a lot of questions about people’s attitudes. How could people go from being individualistic to being socially cooperative? You see how people are today, they would say. How can people change?

One student answered, “Everyone thinks they’re alone and responsible as individuals for everything. We have to explain that it’s not the individual, but the system, and we have to cooperate and break down the barriers between people, because we’re taught to think individually.”

I added that revolutionary transformations of society from capitalism to socialism don’t happen overnight. They are made by people during a process. Only by the sacrifice of workers and students can they bring about socialism. By the time there is a socialist overturn, many, many people will have changed from an individualistic mentality to having attitudes of social solidarity because of the revolutionary process itself.

Because some of my comrades participated in the occupation of the state Capitol in Wisconsin, I could bring up their description of how masses of workers changed their mentality even during that two-week occupation. And it’s only the beginning.

Regarding the discussion, I don’t know if there was one central point. But one of the most important questions was, “How do we get out of it?” The vast majority of students seemed to be of the opinion that the profit system was no good and hurting everybody. It was a natural question to ask, then, “What is to be done?”

I said that in the short run they had to get together to fight back. But the only ultimate solution is to get rid of capitalism and private property and make all the property of society belong to people collectively. That’s a socialist system, where production is planned and things are produced for use.

One of the students had her own view on it that is worth repeating. She said that she saw the problem of how to get out of it — capitalism — as a generational problem. “Much of the older generation,” she said, “still acts according to the conservative old ways. We in our generation have nothing to look forward to. It’s up to our generation to start fighting back and to change the system. We have to do it ourselves.” □

“With the capitalist system demonstrably unfair, it is useful, indeed refreshing, to see a Marxist analysis of globalization and its effects on working people. Fred Goldstein does exactly that.”
 —Howard Zinn, author of
A People’s History of the United States

Low-Wage Capitalism

Fred Goldstein

Colossus with feet of clay:
 What the new globalized high-tech imperialism means for the class struggle in the U.S.

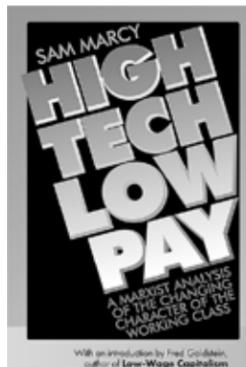
LOW-WAGE CAPITALISM

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

An easy-to-read analysis of the roots of the current global economic crisis, its implications for workers and oppressed peoples, and the strategy needed for future struggle.

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

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www.LowWageCapitalism.com



HIGH TECH, LOW PAY

A Marxist analysis of the changing character of the working class

More than twenty years ago Sam Marcy wrote that the scientific-technological revolution is accelerating a shift to lower-paying jobs and to more women, Black and Latino/a workers. A new

introduction by Fred Goldstein explains the roots of the current economic crisis, with its disastrous unemployment, that has heightened the need for a working-class resurgence.

U.S. widens undeclared war in Pakistan

By Deirdre Griswold

The U.S. is threatening to send troops to Pakistan if that country interferes with the CIA's use of pilotless drones to launch missiles against villages in the north, says a retired Pakistani lieutenant general, Talat Masood. (New York Times, April 13)

When was the last time Congress declared war on another country? In 1941, some 70 years ago.

The U.S. Constitution, which all government officials swear to uphold, says explicitly that "Congress shall have power to declare war." Not the president. Not anyone else.

Congress also supposedly has power over the purse strings — and wars cost a lot of money.

But since 1941 the U.S. has carried out thousands of military attacks on other countries. The decisions are made by the Pentagon, the State Department and the White House, then rubberstamped by Congress, which agrees to pay for them. Millions of U.S. troops have invaded other countries — Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, Af-

ghanistan — and trillions of dollars have been spent on the military, with never a declaration of war.

In the current struggle over the budget, both Democrats and Republicans are ready to slash everything — except the military budget. The elephant in the room is that the huge transnational corporations that dominate this country demand a huge military that will protect their huge foreign investments.

Now U.S. imperialism has a new strategy that does not even involve boots on the ground — at least, not at first. The CIA sends small, silent drones to fly over a country's territory and locate "targets" for missile strikes. Without warning, these planes drop high-power explosives from the sky on villagers.

The most recent attack, in which seven people were killed, was on April 13. It came two days after the head of Pakistan's intelligence threatened to curtail the drone strikes and demanded more information on the CIA's operations there.

Drone attacks have been killing Pakistanis for some time. Last year the U.S.

authorized 117 of these attacks. It gives no accounting of the casualties. But on March 17 of this year a drone missile killed 39 people in a village in North Waziristan and wounded many others. The Pakistani government announced it would compensate the families of the dead — \$3,530 for each person killed. (The Independent, Britain, March 26)

CIA agents operate inside Pakistan to develop "assets" who will give them information on what areas to target. One day before this deadly drone attack, the Pakistani government released Raymond Allen Davis after heavy U.S. pressure. Davis had earlier shot and killed two Pakistani men in broad daylight on a crowded street in Lahore. A U.S. Consulate car rushed to the scene to rescue him from Pakistani police. The car ran over and killed a Pakistani civilian as it careened through the streets.

When it came out that Davis worked for the CIA, the Pakistani people demanded he be tried for his crimes. But then came a full-court press from Washington, which claimed he had diplomatic

immunity, and he was released.

All this has enraged the people of Pakistan, who have held countless protests over their government's complicity with Washington. For years Pakistan was ruled by military dictators who got their weapons from the Pentagon. Now the government is headed by a civilian, but the generals still very much call the shots.

The U.S. wars in Iraq and neighboring Afghanistan have also been fueling popular anti-U.S. sentiment. Today the people of Pakistan are angry at both Washington and their own political-military establishment that collaborates with the imperialists while making a show of exerting some independence.

As U.S. imperialism pours more workers' lives and dollars into attempting to control this vital region, it creates greater resistance. The wars will end only when the super-rich predators recognize defeat — something that the working class here can hasten by adding its muscle to the anti-war movement.

Email: dgriswold@workers.org

The media, war & the movement

By Tony Murphy

Anyone who has ever been a workers' rights or anti-war activist knows how futile it is to depend on the capitalist media to tell the truth. A recent example was the media boycott of the April 9 and 10 anti-war demonstrations in New York and San Francisco.

Logically, it would seem that these events would be top stories. Bombs were falling in a war against Libya, which was then only three weeks old.

On April 8 the government actually threatened to shut down, as politicians discussed cutting trillions of dollars in social programs, while the Pentagon spent a \$100 million a day on bombing.

But when thousands marched that weekend against war, the media silence was deafening.

That silence inspired media activist group Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting to put out an April 15 press release comparing the coverage of Tea Party rallies with progressive rallies.

"A sparsely attended Tea Party rally in Washington, D.C., on March 31 in support of federal spending cuts received generous media attention," the FAIR release read. "One report suggested there was 'at least one reporter for every three or four activists,' and a Republican politician joked that there might be more journalists than activists at the event."

FAIR's report made crystal clear what the dynamic, pro-union Wisconsin protests had already shown by comparison: The Tea Party is a media-fueled, corporate-funded phenomenon, not a grassroots movement.

What the contrast in corporate media coverage reveals, along with the double standard, is the current attitude of the ruling class.

In January 2003, the major national media and every major daily newspaper covered the growing protests against the impending Iraq war in some way. MSNBC stationed a camera at San Francisco's Jan. 18 demonstration and covered it live.

Two days later, the New York Times — which was backing President George W. Bush's "weapons of mass destruction" lies so strongly it was forced to formally apologize a year later — wrote in its lead editorial that the anti-war protests "repre-

sented what appears to be a large segment of the American public that remains unconvinced that the Iraqi threat warrants the use of military force at this juncture." At that time there was a split in the U.S. ruling class about the adventurism of the Bush/Cheney gang.

While the anti-war protests have not been as large in 2011, the bigger factor in the media boycott of April 9 and 10 is that the ruling class is now 100 percent uninterested in covering any kind of resistance in the U.S. as it launches a third war, loots social programs and faces serious revolutionary challenges in North Africa and the Middle East.

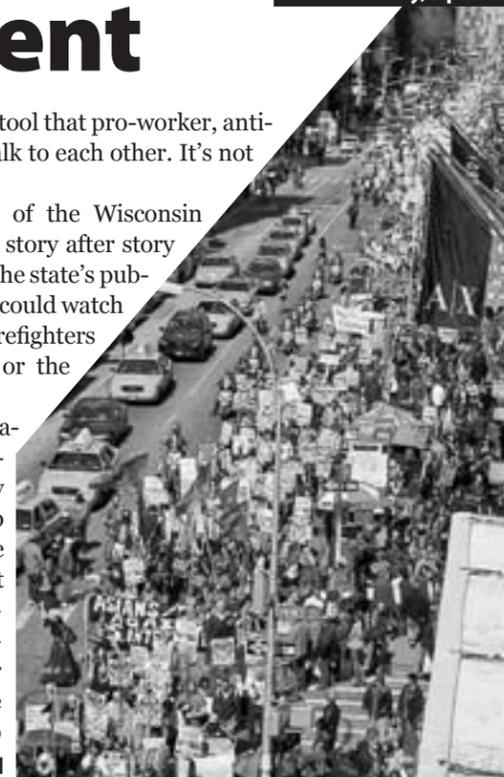
For activists, this is frustrating — and not surprising. The corporations that own the media will control what people see as much as they can. But they are not all-powerful. The ruling class and its lackeys in the media hate WikiLeaks because it

exposes the fact that the internet is a tool that pro-worker, anti-war forces can use to mobilize and talk to each other. It's not able to control large sections of that.

During the righteous occupation of the Wisconsin statehouse, the New York Times ran story after story about how much hatred there was of the state's public sector unions. Meanwhile, anyone could watch live feeds online of, for instance, firefighters joining the protests in the Capitol or the huge rallies outside of it.

As unions and immigrants' organizations join forces for demonstrations on May Day this year, the key for activists will be to further develop peoples' media — from adding more online video feeds or independent newspapers to progressive listener-supported radio. The corporate media may continue to boycott us — or be forced, for its own reasons, to give better coverage. But it will never help us organize a resistance movement. □

New York City, April 9.



WW PHOTO: STEVAN KIRSCHBAUM

GAZA: Symbol of Resistance

A book of articles from WW, edited by Joyce Chediak

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.

Available at Leftbooks.com

Boston meeting discusses

Libya, Palestine, Wisconsin

By Frank Neisser
Boston

A multinational crowd filled the room at the Action Center here on April 16 for a World View Forum featuring Joyce Chediak, editor of the new book, "Gaza: Symbol of Resistance." Chediak's topics were the U.S.'s real aims in Libya and the central role of the Palestinian struggle.

Chediak discussed the current imperialist war that has been launched against Libya and analyzed the role of the U.S. She pointed out how terms like "democracy" mask what is really going on, and that the only way to make sense of it is to start from the role of imperialism. Chediak showed on a map how at the beginning of the 20th century the imperialists had carved up the territory of the Arab world to suit their own interests and described how every imperialist intervention for "humanitarian" purposes has actually harmed the people and served only to tighten imperialist control, citing recent events in Haiti as an example.

Chediak also highlighted the heroic

role of the Palestinian people in resisting Zionism and imperialism, pointing out that the recent Arab uprisings show that the Israeli settler state remains imperialism's only reliable police force in the Middle East. Israel is prepared to take any military action to further imperialism's control of and access to the resources that belong to the people of the Middle East — above all, oil. A lively and vigorous discussion followed, and at the end of the evening many copies of "Gaza: Symbol of Resistance" were sold, signed by the editor.

The program was rounded out with a dynamic eyewitness report from the workers' struggles in Wisconsin presented by Ed Childs, chief shop steward of UNITE/HERE Local 26, Harvard University's cafeteria workers. Childs gave a vivid sense of the surging rise in mass consciousness that is palpable in the workers' resistance movement in Wisconsin. He cited as an example an anti-war demonstration that became a workers' demonstration with the unions, leading the way, carrying anti-war signs. □

U.S./NATO war creates humanitarian crisis in Libya

Depleted uranium weapons used while imperialists plot oil theft

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

The U.S./NATO war against Libya's people and government reveals every day that there is no such thing as a humanitarian war carried out by imperialist states against post-colonial countries.

Even United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has called for an immediate ceasefire in the North African state of Libya. Western-backed rebels and the combined military forces of the United States and NATO have engaged in a sabotage and bombing campaign designed to topple the government of Moammar Gadhafi.

In the western city of Misrata, an ongoing battle for control of the area resulted in the deaths of 17 people on April 17. In the eastern city of Ajdabiya, Libyan military forces routed rebel units, whom people saw fleeing back towards their stronghold in Benghazi.

Both U.N. and Libyan governmental officials said on April 18 that they had reached an agreement to allow aid workers to travel safely to Misrata. It was also announced that a U.N. humanitarian presence would be established in the capital city of Tripoli. (VOA, April 18)

Ironically, U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973 provided the political and legal rationale for U.S./NATO bombing operations over Libya since March 19. In that time thousands of civilians have been killed, and many more have been injured.

NATO countries and their client allies involved in the war against Libya have held meetings in London, Berlin, Doha, Qatar and Cairo, Egypt, all demanding that the Libyan government be overthrown. Some NATO countries — Germany, Turkey and Spain — have voiced skepticism about finding a military solution.

The New York-based Human Rights Watch issued a statement April 16 charging that the Libyan armed forces had used cluster bombs in Misrata. The Libyan government immediately denied the charges and challenged HRW to prove them. (AFP, April 17) No casualties from cluster bombs have been confirmed in Misrata.

The U.S. produced and used cluster bombs during the war against Vietnam, and also in Iraq, Yugoslavia and Afghanistan from the 1990s through the early years of the 2000s. The Israeli Defense Forces used cluster bombs while bombing Lebanon in 2006. Neither the U.S. nor Libya has signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions, adopted in Dublin, Ireland, in 2008 and signed by 108 countries.

Getting less publicity in the corporate media or from human-rights organizations is the U.S. use of depleted uranium weapons in Libya. The Pentagon's denial of reports of U.S. use of DU weapons has been met with skepticism, especially considering U.S. use of the A-10 Tankbuster aircraft there. Kate Hudson, the general secretary of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, said, "We continue to seek a cast-iron guarantee that depleted uranium has not been used and will not be used in Libya. The U.S. has a long history of only admitting to deploying this radioactive material months or years after it has been used." (Herald Scotland, April 3)

Experts on the usage of DU weapons have insisted that based upon news video footage of U.S./NATO strikes on Libyan tank columns, one can see that these materials are being used in the war. The U.S. has launched shells, bombs and cruise missiles containing DU in the past. These easily penetrate and burn through heavy armor and fortifications. In addition, wa-

ter and soil are contaminated with the use of DU weapons.

It has been well-documented that the health and environmental impact of DU weapons are devastating.

The use of DU weapons when the U.S. destroyed the city of Fallujah in Iraq reveals that there have been horrendous health conditions resulting from the U.S. military deployment of these materials. Fallujah represented a stronghold of resistance to the U.S. military invasion and occupation of Iraq in 2003-2004. High rates of infections, birth defects and cancers have been reported that are the direct result of the use of DU weapons.

Economic basis of the war

Libya has the largest known oil reserves on the African continent and substantial reserves of natural gas and other strategic resources.

From the early days of the rebel attacks on the Libyan government, the Western imperialist states froze assets of tens of billions of dollars belonging to Tripoli. In addition, the imperialists have established mechanisms for the theft of Libyan oil from areas being contested by the rebels and governmental forces.

A rebel official, Wahid Bughaigis, has been appointed as the "oil minister" for the so-called Transitional National Council, which seeks to replace the Libyan government. As a result of battlefield damage, two major oilfields in the east of the country, at Messla and Sarir, have been largely out of operation for several weeks.

The rebels accused Libyan military forces of deliberately disabling the operations of the oil fields. However, the Libyan government has blamed U.S./NATO air strikes for the damage done to the oil

fields, which have a production capacity of 400,000 barrels per day.

During early April the Gulf state of Qatar, which is participating in the U.S./NATO war against Libya, facilitated the sale of 1 million barrels of crude that reportedly brought in \$120 million for the rebel forces. Consequently, the theft of Libyan oil is well underway, illustrating one of the real objectives behind the U.S./NATO war against the North African state.

As the war against Libya continues, the opposition within the region and inside the imperialist states is escalating. Since the national demonstrations in New York and San Francisco on April 9-10, which opposed the current war against Libya as well as all other U.S. military occupations and proxy wars around the world, demonstrations have continued throughout the country and the world.

On April 16 the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice in Detroit held a community speakout against the U.S./NATO war on Libya. Representatives from various organizations condemned the war and pointed to the failure of the U.S. and the U.N. to take any action to halt the atrocities being committed against civilian populations in Palestine, Yemen, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Jordan, all of which are Western-backed states.

The wars of occupation and the support for the repression and exploitation of peoples throughout the world represent the desperation of the Western imperialist states, which are facing the worst economic crisis since the 1930s. These wars will only be ended by the mass, organized opposition of workers, youth and other oppressed peoples uniting across various nations and regions throughout the globe. □

Yemen, Bahrain, Egypt

Western-backed militaries use bullets and guile

By **Deirdre Griswold**

While NATO and the Pentagon continue to wage war on the government of Libya in the name of protecting civilians and promoting democracy, elsewhere throughout North Africa and the Middle East the entrenched ruling classes that have long served these imperialists are continuing to attack protesters with impunity in the name of order and stability.

The bloodiest repression is taking place in **Yemen**, a country of close to 24 million people that borders Saudi Arabia and Oman. For three months massive protests in many parts of Yemen have demanded the ouster of the military-head-turned-president, Ali Abdullah Saleh. Saleh has ruled for 31 years, most of that time over North Yemen, before the north and south unified in 1990.

Saleh's response to the protests has been bloody repression. In Sana'a, the capital, tens of thousands of protesters have been occupying the central square, now called the Square of Change, despite attacks from troops and out-of-uniform goons.

According to the Yemen Post, a total of 3 million women and men gathered in 16 provinces on Friday, April 15, demanding an end to the Saleh regime. The largest gatherings — more than 800,000

each — were reportedly in the cities of Sana'a and Taiz.

At the same time, Saleh rallied his supporters at a different square in the capital. Saleh has strengthened his repressive state by aligning himself with Washington's "war on terror," especially after a U.S. Navy ship, the Cole, was bombed in a Yemeni port in 2000. Saleh's alliance with Washington and his support for the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have made him increasingly unpopular.

Evidently trying to curry favor with the Islamic population, he told the pro-government rally that it was immoral and against Islamic law for women and men to be "mixing" in the mass protests against him. Saleh's speech was a huge miscalculation.

On Saturday, April 16, "Millions of Yemeni women and men took to the streets of the capital Sana'a and other cities to condemn the speech of President Saleh to his supporters on Friday, in which he harmed the honor of the Yemeni women," wrote the Yemen Post.

The women chanted, "Shame on you, Saleh, we are here revolutionists" and "We are clean and our gatherings with our brothers, men and boys are just to oust you."

A British reporter observed, "Yemen is in some ways as deeply conservative as its neighbor Saudi Arabia in its attitude to

women, with the full face veil being normal wear. However, there is a tradition of women's education, while women are also allowed to vote and drive, unlike in Saudi Arabia. Women students and academics have taken a leading role in protests." (The Telegraph, April 18)

The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, a Marxist regime that held power in the south from 1967 until the downfall of the Soviet Union, at which time it agreed to merge with the north, had made great strides in women's rights and in education for the masses.

On Sunday after the very large protests, troops opened fire on a march in Sana'a, wounding at least 15 people. (New York Times, April 17) Even before this latest clash, at least 116 people had reportedly been killed by government forces since January. (Al Jazeera, April 17)

In the kingdom of **Bahrain**, repression against the people's movement has intensified since the intervention of more than 1,000 troops from Saudi Arabia, invited in by King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to keep power. After firing on crowds of protesters, killing and wounding many, the troops are now destroying mosques of the Shi'a majority in what is seen as an attempt to divide the movement along sectarian lines.

"The harshness of the government re-

pression is provoking allegations of hypocrisy against Washington, London and Paris," writes Patrick Cockburn from Cairo. "Their mild response to human rights abuses and the Saudi Arabian armed intervention in Bahrain is in stark contrast to their vocal concern for civilians in Libya." (The Independent, April 18)

In **Egypt**, where the military remains in power after promising elections, prosecutors announced that three former top government figures have been charged with corruption: Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif, Minister of Finance Youssef Boutros Ghali and Minister of the Interior Habib Al Adly.

Former President Hosni Mubarak, who was toppled after weeks of massive demonstrations in Tahrir Square, is ensconced in a military hospital because he allegedly suffered a heart attack during interrogation. His hated intelligence czar, Omar Suleiman, who briefly succeeded Mubarak as vice president and then became head of the new Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, has quietly dropped out of the spotlight.

The universal popular demands for prosecution of Mubarak and his cohorts for brutal crimes against the people have yet to be realized. And the state of emergency he used to justify his harsh measures remains in force. The struggle continues. □

Burkina Faso protests hit Western-backed regime

French imperialism does 'regime change' in Ivory Coast

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

On April 18, reports of student unrest in the central city of Koudougou, Burkina Faso, told of youth burning down the headquarters of President Blaise Compaore's ruling party and the prime minister's house. This is the latest in a series of mass protests, which have struck this West African state for more than two months.

The very recent rebellions by students and youth in Koudougou come amid an armed forces' mutiny in several regions of the country, which began on April 14 in the capital city of Ouagadougou. There, soldiers from two barracks moved into the streets, breaking into local businesses and stealing cars. Some merchants then torched government buildings.

Within days, the unrest had spread to the north and east of the country. On April 17, groups of soldiers at a military garrison in Po fired their weapons into the air and took control of key locations within the city.

Presidential guards and other soldiers had complained that they had not been paid their housing allowances. Reportedly, after payments were made, they agreed to return to their barracks in the capital.

Demonstrations in the former French colony began in February, at the time when rebellions and strikes had reached a critical stage in several other African states, including Tunisia and Egypt.

These protests were prompted by the death of Justin Zongo, who died in police custody in Koudougou on Feb. 20. Although Zongo purportedly died from meningitis, his family, friends and many youth alleged that police had brutalized him. Students and youth took to the streets in the aftermath of Zongo's death. Six people died during demonstrations in Koudougou.

Protests then quickly spread all over the country and continued into March, when President Compaore closed the universities and schools to try to stop them. However, he met with student leaders on April 4, in an effort to address their grievances.

Legal workers had also gone on strike for three weeks to demand better employment conditions and security after the courthouses were attacked by disgruntled soldiers.

On April 8, tens of thousands of trade unionists and members of mass organizations held large anti-government demonstrations in Ouagadougou and other cities.



French imperialism tries to deepen its control of former colonies in Africa.

The National Syndicate of African Teachers of Burkina Faso, one of the organizations that sponsored those demonstrations and others a week later, indicated that the rising price of food and the overall cost of living were the determining factors that drove people into the streets.

Cema Blegne, who works for NSAT, said, "We have translated the anger and feeling of frustration that these students and their teachers feel each time there is corruption. We have blasted impunity and bluntly told our truths." (Associated Press, April 18)

Although President Compaore tried to stem the anger and unrest by replacing many government officials, including the prime minister, there is still widespread discontent throughout the country.

Origins of the unrest in economic crisis

Most observers agree that the current demonstrations and mutinies within the military are based in the economic crisis facing many African states. As producers and exporters of mineral resources and commodities that are utilized by Western capitalist countries, the African states are subjected to the prices and terms of trade dictated by the transnational corporations, which are detrimental to the people.

Burkina Faso is ranked 161 out of 169 countries on the U.N. Human Development Index, which measures the national income and living standards for people in a given country. This West African nation, which has a population of more than 15 million people, has very high rates of unemployment and illiteracy.

The country maintains strong relations with France and the United States. The U.S. has trained Burkina Faso soldiers, and the two states have cooperated in the

Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance Program.

President Compaore, who was re-elected in November, came to power in 1987 in a coup, which overthrew and assassinated Capt. Thomas Sankara. Sankara had led a revolutionary movement within the armed forces that took power in August 1983. During the 1983-1987 period that Sankara led Burkina Faso, the country became a center of revolutionary activity in West Africa.

The economy of Burkina Faso is based on cotton and gold exports. Gold is now its leading export earner, replacing cotton as the main cash crop.

Despite the protests, Reuters reports: "The Canadian gold miner Semafo, Inc. said the recent unrest in Burkina Faso in West Africa has not disrupted operations at its flagship gold mine, the Mana mine, in the area." The news service also reports that another Canadian mining firm, Iamgold, says that operations at its Essakane mine have not been affected by these demonstrations and rebellions. "The Essakane mine produces 315,000 ounces of gold per year. Iamgold also mines in Canada, South America and in other African states." (April 18)

The unrest in Burkina Faso illustrates that the most oppressed countries continue to be profoundly impacted by the

world economic crisis. Despite the growth in exploration and mining in Africa, the overall standard of living among the people cannot be qualitatively improved until the capitalist ownership of natural resources is taken over by the people for their own benefit.

Recent developments in Ivory Coast

In Ivory Coast, another former French colony, Alassane Ouattara's military forces had stated that they could not take control of that country's security without the assistance of France and the United Nations. Incumbent President Laurent Gbagbo was overthrown in a military assault, which was led by French and U.N. troops on March 11.

Gbagbo had refused to step aside after the U.N. and Western countries insisted that he lost the run-off presidential elections held in November — despite a clear lack of evidence that this was the case. An ensuing struggle resulted in the overthrow of Gbagbo's government by France and the U.N., which placed Ouattara as the head of state. In this way the former colonial power re-inserted itself directly through "regime change" in the country.

France's actions in Ivory Coast and Libya point to a more aggressive military posture on the part of Paris on the African continent. □

U.S. deportations to Haiti must be stopped

By G. Dunkel

Seven-hundred thousand Haitians are still living in come-by-chance camps, under tents or tarps, because their homes were destroyed in an earthquake 15 months ago. Conditions in these camps are so terrible — no security, no electricity, poor water, minimal sanitation — that at least 200,000 people have moved back to their old communities to houses teetering on the edge of collapse. (International Organization for Migration report, March 16)

While the cholera epidemic has subsided a bit, the coming rainy season is likely to produce an upsurge in cases and deaths from the infection, given the dearth of sanitation in Haiti.

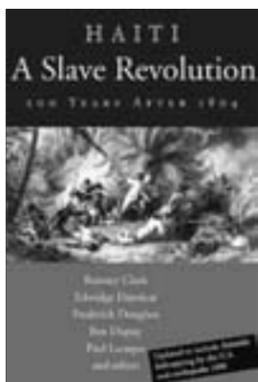
Most Haitians survive on less than \$2 a day; less than one-third have a formal job. Still, the prices for food and water in Haitian cities are comparable to prices in the rest of the world.

This is the environment into which Immigration and Customs Enforcement

began deporting Haitian U.S. residents convicted of a crime or deemed a "national security threat" on Jan. 29. Twenty-six Haitians were sent back to Haiti then, and another 19 were sent on April 15. (Associated Press, April 15)

Frequently, authorities in Haiti hold deportees with criminal records in jail. Wildrick Guerrier, who was convicted in Florida of fighting with a cop and firearm possession, spent eight days in jail after he was sent back in the first batch of deportees. He was released to family members after he developed cholera symptoms. Claudine Magloire, his fiancée, talked to him a few hours before he died in a bathroom: "He said, 'I don't have the vomiting and the diarrhea, but I still feel pain under my chest.'" (Miami Herald, Feb. 3)

Marleine Bastien, executive director of Haitian Women of Miami, deplored Guerrier's death. "We believe that any deportation now can result not only in the death of the deportee, but can contribute to the instability that reigns in Haiti." (Miami Herald, Feb. 3) □

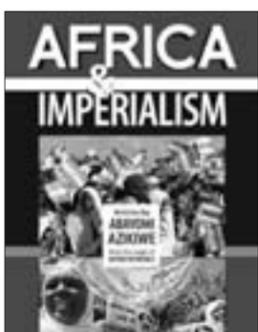


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WORKERS WORLD editorial

May Day & unity

Workers World Party applauds recent developments that heighten unity of the working class in the struggle for immigrant and worker rights.

May Day originates in the U.S. It came out of the struggle of immigrants and other workers who fought and died in 1886 for the eight-hour workday. For 125 years, workers around the world have honored International Workers' Day on May 1 each year by marching to demand their rights. However, U.S. business and government forces colluded to eclipse this day of international workers' solidarity by creating a Labor Day holiday in September.

May Day, the workers' holiday created by workers, was revived in the U.S. in 2005 with a march in New York City organized by the Million Worker March Movement. Just one year later — as repression of immigrants reached a fever pitch — millions poured into the streets throughout the U.S. on May 1 to demand legalization and rights for all workers.

This year, increased attacks on both immigrant and non-immigrant workers show the need for the most united, militant action possible on May Day in the U.S. Attempts to copycat union-busting legislation in Wisconsin and anti-immigrant legislation in Arizona are already taking place in cities and states across the country. (See this week's article on Georgia's copycat legislation,

which even outdoes Arizona's SB 1070 in racist profiling and repression.) As jobs dry up and austerity budgets are passed that slash social services — during an economic "recovery" for the bosses — the only choice workers have is to fight. And to be successful, they must be united in their struggles.

A momentous step in the right direction is the decision to hold a united May Day rally in New York City. Last year two rallies were held — a large, multinational rally at Union Square, organized by the May 1 Coalition for Worker and Immigrant Rights, that includes immigrants, trade unionists, youth and students, community members and more; and a separate, trade-union-focused rally in a separate location. Facing the urgency and necessity for unity, this year the trade union forces have agreed to hold a joint closing rally on May 1.

The unity being forged in New York will help remind all workers that, as the old labor slogan goes, "An injury to one is an injury to all." Attacks on immigrants (like attacks on women, African Americans, lesbian, gay, bi and trans people, and disabled people) are attacks on the working class as a whole. Attacks on unions are attacks on immigrants. Wars abroad heighten the war against workers at home, and vice versa. Solidarity is the key to fighting the bosses and to victory.

Long live International Workers' Day! □

U.S., Britain, France: Hands off Libya!

U.S., British and French imperialism have escalated their military intervention in Libya. And it is just beginning.

The one dominant imperialist power and the two former colonial rulers of the world first stated their intentions in a joint open letter published on April 15 in the Washington Post and other media. U.S. President Barack Obama, British Prime Minister David Cameron and French President Nicolas Sarkozy wrote that their goal was to remove Moammar Gadhafi, the leader of Libya. For good. That's what they call "regime change."

The rest of their letter is a pack of lies trying to hide imperialism's intentions and material interests in Libya and the rest of Africa behind a veil of phony humanitarian concerns. The only important point of the letter is that they wrote it. And they signed it jointly.

These three individuals have the formal leadership of the most destructive military machines on earth. Despite their internecine rivalries for plunder, despite the rejection of their plans by most African countries, despite the misgivings of their key NATO ally, Germany, they are going to war. In arrogant defiance of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, who met recently and condemned the intervention, they have decided to move forward with the conquest of Libya.

Obama's participation in the letter is a sign that whatever reluctance U.S. imperialism may have had about the Libyan adventure, it is now on board with its junior partners in conquest. The first step, announced on April 19, is that Britain and France will be sending military officers into the Libyan city of Misrata to "advise" the collection of armed people that the corporate media calls "rebels."

If the three imperialist powers have taken the first step toward the occupation of an African country, if Washington is ready to send "boots on the ground" for a third occupation, it is because they know that the so-called rebels are completely incapable of holding together — let alone winning a battle and forming a govern-

ment — without step-by-step support from the imperialists. This means that however this "rebel" grouping may or may not have begun, it has lost any resemblance to a real national liberation movement or even a movement for bourgeois democracy — it is now a complete tool of the imperialists.

Worse, the leadership of this grouping has asked for the U.S. to use its AC-130 and A-10 Warthog planes to give close ground cover to its troops. These are planes only the Pentagon can provide. They fire a withering blast of thousands of shells a minute and have often employed depleted-uranium-reinforced shells, with long-term damaging effects on civilians. (See article by Abayomi Azikiwe on Libya, WW, April 28)

As if the use of Warthogs and DU weren't enough to refute the "humanitarian" pretext given for this imperialist intervention, Sarkozy made it clear in another way when he stopped a train carrying refugees from Tunisia at the Italian-French border and sent the suffering people back. This is the Sarkozy the world knows, without his "humanitarian" mask. He advocated using steam water cannons on residents of North African heritage living in the French working-class suburbs in 2005.

These countries, through NATO, carried out the re-Balkanization of Yugoslavia. The U.S. is occupying Afghanistan. The U.S. and Britain have brought the Iraqi nation to ruin and sorrow. Now these three powers, through NATO, are attempting to reconquer Libya. It is beyond time to cut through the lies told in Washington, London, Paris and all the imperialist capitals and expose the role of these 19th-century colonial rulers grasping for a comeback.

These wars and occupations have nothing to do with alleged misdeeds of the national leaders, be they Saddam Hussein, Slobodan Milosevic, the Taliban or Gadhafi. They are nothing but the imperialists' attempt to reconquer and recolonize these countries. They are doing it with the resources stolen from workers and poor at home. It's time we put a stop to them.

U.S., Britain, France — out of Africa! □

Stop the attack on Bay Area port workers!



May Day 2008: ILWU Local 10 leads West Coast anti-warport shutdown march.

- Pacific Maritime Association, Drop all charges!
- Defend ILWU Local 10!

Your Solidarity Is Needed! An Injury to One Is An Injury to All!

The Bay Area's International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 is under attack by the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA), after the rank-and-file dockworkers' voluntary action on April 4, in solidarity with the national "We are One" action, for the Wisconsin public workers.

The PMA is suing the ILWU Local 10 because of the union members' shutdown of the ports in Oakland and San Francisco. This is a serious attack on the right of workers to withhold their labor to support other workers. Local 10 members understand that what is taking place in Wisconsin and Ohio — the state governments' attack on collective bargaining rights — could affect workers across the United States.

The San Francisco Labor Council, representing 87,000 union members, is in full support of Local 10. A resolution was passed unanimously at the SF Labor Council.

Monday, April 25, 11:00 a.m.
555 Market St., San Francisco

Committee to Defend ILWU Local 10



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50 years after Bay of Pigs

U.S. continues failed attempts against Cuban revolution

By Teresa Gutierrez

Fifty years ago, on April 16, 1961, Cuban Commander in Chief Fidel Castro declared the socialist nature of the Cuban Revolution.

Beloved around the world to this day, Fidel stated in 1961: “This is what they cannot forgive us ... that we have made a Socialist Revolution right under the nose of the United States. ... Comrades, workers and farmers, this is the Socialist and democratic Revolution of the people, by the people and for the people. And for this Revolution ... we are willing to give our lives.”

It was a momentous development that shook the world. Revolutionaries everywhere triumphed in the victory, and all those in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America who lived wretchedly under the yoke of imperialism felt tremendous possibilities for their own liberation struggles.

It was a historic step forward for workers and oppressed worldwide — one that resonates today.

Fidel’s proclamation was made as Cubans paid their respects to those who had been killed the day before during the U.S. bombing of a Cuban airbase, an attack that was a prelude to the Playa Girón (Bay of Pigs) incident.

The Bay of Pigs was a military attempt by the U.S. government to destroy the Cuban Revolution so that imperialism could restore its domination over Cuba. The military attack failed and was a major defeat for imperialism.

Counterrevolutionary efforts continue

U.S. imperialism has not and will never reconcile itself to the building of socialism at its doorstep. Since the triumph of the Cuban Revolution, the U.S. has never stopped its attempts to sabotage and undermine the Revolution. Overtly and covertly, it has carried out countless acts of aggression — including the longest economic and political blockade in U.S. history as well as numerous assassination attempts against Fidel — all aimed at destabilizing and over-



Youth celebrate 50th anniversary of Bay of Pigs victory.

WW PHOTO: GRANMA

turning the Revolution.

On March 22 the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations issued a damning press release, announcing that a series of testimonial documentaries recently shown in Cuba revealed current “direct connections of counterrevolutionary individuals in the Island with the U.S.”

The four documentaries — “The Empire’s Pawns,” “Trues and Principles,” “Cyberwar” and “Well Paid Lies” — are a study in counterrevolutionary subterfuge.

The documentaries revealed U.S. plans to introduce illegal communication and spying systems on the island and how the U.S. Agency for International Development serves as a cover for anti-Cuba CIA activities.

USAID, the documentary demonstrated, sets out to “fabricate social leaders ... who try to influence youth and academics.”

The press release states that “in ‘The Empire’s Pawns,’ Moises Rodríguez and Carlos Serpa, who for a long time lived side by side with factions that operate on the Island under direct orders of terrorists who live in the U.S., revealed evidence of how the so-called dissidents or alleged advocates of the human rights in Cuba received money directly from the U.S.”

The U.S. Interests Section in Havana, which is equivalent to an embassy, was exposed once again as playing a role of sabotage, similar to its role in other countries the U.S. wants to undermine.

For example, Rodríguez explained receiving instructions from U.S. diplomats to plot against the Cuban government. He was also sent to Miami, where he held meetings with infamous terrorists, among them Luis Posada Carriles.

Iceland’s banks: Too big to save

By G. Dunkel

Iceland’s voters on April 9 rejected a demand by the British and Dutch governments that Iceland taxpayers pay what their citizens lost in the collapse of Icesave, a private Icelandic bank.

This was the third time an agreement was rejected by one side or the other. The British and Dutch governments first rejected an agreement with Iceland’s government after Althing, the Icelandic parliament, had amended it. The second agreement was overwhelmingly defeated by 93 percent of Icelandic voters in the Icesave referendum of March 2010. (www.advice.is)

The amount in question is 10 times Iceland’s annual gross domestic product.

Iceland is a small country abutting the Arctic Circle in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, deforested and wracked by volcanoes and earthquakes. While it is a well-developed country that manages to feed itself, Iceland is small — around 320,000 people spread over nearly 40,000 square miles. Its economy is fragile, not particularly rich in natural resources beyond

geothermal and hydro power and offshore cod fisheries. It relies heavily on tourism.

Britain has used its terrorism laws to seize Icelandic property to compensate for its Icesave losses; the Netherlands is suing in international courts. The Icelandic government has promised to use what it seized from Icesave after it collapsed to repay Britain and the Netherlands, which are holding out for complete repayment.

“There is no legal basis for the claim against the Icelandic taxpayer,” says lawyer Sigridur Andersen of No-Campaign.

The website asserts that the success of the No-Campaign rested on Icelandic voters accepting the following proposition: “No, illegitimate claims should not be accepted. No, losses due to the failure of banks in the private sector should not be borne by the taxpayer. No, an agreement imposing all costs and risks on one party is unacceptable.”

Faced with demands from two major imperialist countries that would have impoverished its people for decades, demands backed up by economic sanctions, Iceland’s people rejected them. □

Serpa was instructed by anti-Cuba elements to spread false information about Cuba through Radio Martí and other U.S. media.

In “Trues and Principles,” Dalexis Gonzalez Madruga, a graduate student in telecommunication engineering at the Jose Antonio Echeverria University, showed how he was contacted by U.S. agents to “illegally introduce sophisticated equipment and install a network feasible to transmit directly to the U.S. Interests Section in Havana.”

The documentary showed how equipment was hidden in surfing equipment and how major communication advances are used by the U.S., not to help economic and social development, but for destabilizing Cuba.

Portuguese workers under attack from Euro banks, IMF

By John Catalinotto

The Portuguese government has accepted orders from the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund to impose austerity on that country’s workers. Some Portuguese leftists have said this would turn the country into a semi-colony of the big European powers, especially France and Germany.

In response to this frontal attack on Portuguese sovereignty and especially on its working class, the Portuguese Communist Party and other left forces have begun to mobilize resistance. The first measures of the extent of the resistance will be seen in two upcoming mass demonstrations — one on April 25 to celebrate the 1974 revolution that overthrew the fascist regime and one on May Day to celebrate the working-class holiday.

Given the assault on the workers, these traditional mobilizations of the working class may go beyond the routine and serve as a springboard for further mobilization and struggle. The unions have organized several general strikes in the past few years as living conditions deteriorated, with constant 10 percent unemployment and cutbacks to education, health care and pensions. The last general strike in November of 3 million workers was the most successful workers’ action since the period following the 1974 revolution.

There are also national elections scheduled for June 5. In them, the three major pro-capitalist parties — the rightist Conservatives and Social Democrats and the “Socialist” Party that led the last government — all bear responsibility for accepting the demands of the European Union

In “Cyberwar” the creation of cyber-dissidents or cyber-mercenaries, in an attempt to subvert order and create confusion among the Cuban population, was revealed. A website called “Cyber Dissidents on the Web” was created to organize a media campaign to defame Cuba by distorting Cuban reality, attacking socialism and slandering Cuban leaders. Bloggers at the website have all been linked to the U.S. Interests Section in Havana.

Despite an intense, well-orchestrated, constant, unremitting campaign to undermine the Cuban Revolution, U.S. imperialism has failed. It failed in 1961 and it is failing in 2011. The Cuban Revolution stands firm and steadfast not only because of its dedicated and knowing masses and its solid revolutionary leadership, but because of the overwhelming support the Cuban Revolution has earned worldwide.

The masses of the world who face untold misery and hardship cheer the Cuban Revolution, knowing that Cuba is not perfect, but its free education and health care are leaps and bounds ahead of the starvation and death the majority of the oppressed face. “Long live the Cuban Revolution” was the cry in 1961 heard around the world — and it remains today. □



PHOTO: PCP

Emergency street meeting in Lisbon, April 9, confronts IMF and EU challenge.

and the IMF. The three have their differences, but German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble pushed them to unite behind an austerity package or lose the possibility of an EU-backed loan. (Bloomberg, April 9)

The PCP, which has a strong base in the working class, opposed the capitulation in Parliament. So did the Left Bloc, a relatively new party that has vacillated between opposing the Socialist Party’s positions and joining them. While the electoral arena isn’t the most favorable for the working class, it provided an opportunity to raise alternatives to the pro-bank, pro-IMF program.

In a speech before an emergency meeting of activists on April 9 in Lisbon, PCP General Secretary Jerónimo de Sousa said that “there are alternatives,” including “immediate renegotiation of public debt regarding time limits, interest rates or even amounts.” When there is a large debt, “the debtor has a problem but so do the creditors.” De Sousa pointed out that the examples of Greece and Ireland show that the IMF’s solution only worsens economic and social problems without solving financial problems or ending speculation. (Avante, PCP weekly newspaper, April 14) □

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Patronos apuntan hacia el Local 10 del sindicato de estibadores ILWU

Trabajadores de base apoyan la lucha en Wisconsin

Por Cheryl LaBash

El 10 de abril Clarence Thomas, miembro del Local 10 del Sindicato de Estibadores (International Longshore and Warehouse Union), dirigiéndose a la multitud desde el podio durante la marcha contra la guerra en San Francisco dijo, “Todos los que me escuchen aquí deben entender esto. El Local 10 del ILWU necesita su apoyo. No podemos ser intimidados ni silenciados”.

Thomas pedía a todos los presentes que defendieran su sindicato frente a un vicioso ataque por la Asociación Marítima del Pacífico después de una acción laboral por los trabajadores portuarios el 4 de abril.

Ese día, los movimientos sindicales y por los derechos civiles coordinaron acciones a nivel nacional para defender la negociación colectiva y los derechos de los/as trabajadores/as. Los eventos rendían honor al reverendo Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., quien fuera asesinado en esa fecha hace 43 años mientras apoyaba los derechos de negociación de los trabajadores de saneamiento en Memphis, estado de Tennessee.

En respuesta al llamado de la AFL-CIO para un “día sin el trabajo habitual” los miembros de la Local 10 del ILWU participaron en la resistencia a la ofensiva contra los/as trabajadores/as representada en los acontecimientos de Wisconsin. No fueron a trabajar el 4 de abril. Durante 24 horas, ninguna carga se movió en los puertos de San Francisco y Oakland, en California.

La AMP respondió con una orden de arbitraje de cese y desista, y ahora está demandando al sindicato en una corte federal. Según Thomas, la AMP ha profanado la memoria del Dr. King y ahora está tratando de contener el derecho más básico y la autoexpresión que puede tener cualquier trabajador/a en una economía capitalista — el derecho a retener su fuerza de trabajo.

Sin embargo, el Consejo Laboral de San Francisco rápidamente llamó a “una movilización masiva de todos los Consejos Laborales del Área de la Bahía y de la AFL-CIO de California para que se manifestaran frente a la sede de la AMP en San Francisco el lunes 25 de abril para exigir que la demanda judicial sea suspendida y que los procedimientos vengativos contra el sindicato en el arbitraje se detengan inmediatamente”.

El 4 de abril esta escritora entrevistó a Thomas, un ex secretario-tesorero de la Local 10 del ILWU y actual miembro de



FOTO: DELORES THOMAS

su junta directiva, sobre la histórica y especial relación de su local con el Dr. King.

Entrevista con Clarence Thomas

MO: ¿Qué motivó a los miembros de base de la Local 10 a llevar a cabo esta resistencia?

CT: Lo que una gran cantidad de jóvenes sindicalistas no saben es que el Dr. King estaba en Memphis para apoyar a los trabajadores de saneamiento; el 90 por ciento era afroamericano. No tenían un

sindicato, ninguna manera eficaz para atender las quejas. Ellos estaban ganando salarios bajísimos y los trabajadores eran mandados arbitrariamente a su casa, perdiendo así su salario. Su equipo estaba anticuado y mal mantenido. En 1968 dos trabajadores de saneamiento murieron atrapados por los envasadores. No había ninguna compensación para trabajadores. Cada familia recibió un mes de sueldo y \$500 para gastos de entierro.

Es irónico que actualmente como trabajadores del sector público y del sector privado nos enfrentemos a las mismas condiciones.

El 21 de septiembre de 1967, el Dr. King fue nombrado miembro honorario de la Local 10 del ILWU en San Francisco. Él estaba en el área de la Bahía para poner en marcha una gira de siete conciertos encabezada por Harry Belafonte y Joan Baez para recaudar fondos para la Junta de Liderazgo Cristiano del Sur. El Dr. King habló en nuestra reunión sindical, y esa conexión con el Dr. King es muy importante para nuestra local.

La Local 10 del ILWU ha respondido a los ataques contra el derecho a la negociación colectiva y contra los/as trabajadores/as públicos/as en el estado de Wisconsin optando por no presentarse a trabajar hoy. Nuestra Local es el sindicato más militante del país, liderado de abajo hacia arriba. El Local 10 es la conciencia social del ILWU.

Tenemos la responsabilidad de ir hacia delante y tomar acción para tener un sindicato fuerte y continuar la tradición

de Harry Bridges y otros fundadores del ILWU que entendían que el sindicato tiene un compromiso con la lucha por la justicia social y la supervivencia de la clase obrera. O debería decir, la emancipación de la clase obrera.



Entrevista con Trent Willis

Esta escritora también entrevistó a Trent Willis, miembro y ex presidente de la Local 10 del ILWU, quien explicó la acción del 4 de abril por los miembros de su local.

TW: Entendemos el ataque [contra la Local

10] y lo grave que es. Nos enfrentamos a una arremetida total contra los sindicatos en este país. La membresía de los sindicatos es de un 10 por ciento o menos de los/as trabajadores/as organizados/as. Los efectos se empiezan a notar.

El Dr. Martin Luther King es un héroe. Mostró la conexión entre el movimiento sindical y el movimiento social. Cuando los hermanos y hermanas comiencen a unir esos movimientos, seremos más fuertes. Los/as que tienen trabajo y los/as desempleados/as, todos/as son trabajadores/as. Tenemos que hacer que no estén desempleados/as, sino que tengan trabajos.

Estoy orgulloso de apoyar y honrar a los/as trabajadores/as de Wisconsin. Me alegro que mis hermanos y hermanas estuviesen a mi lado. La lucha no ha terminado. Esto es, o un nuevo comienzo o el fin del movimiento obrero tal como lo conocemos. □

La Junta Sindical de San Francisco dice:

Defendamos la acción solidaria de la Local 10 del ILWU

La siguiente resolución de la Junta Sindical de San Francisco fue adoptada unánimemente el 11 de abril.

Dado que la reunión de delegados de la Junta votó unánimemente el 14 de marzo que “en el caso de que una afiliada de la Junta vote por participar en una acción industrial el 4 de abril, la Junta Sindical de San Francisco llamará a todas sus afiliadas... a apoyar tal acción...” y

Dado que la Local 10 del Sindicato Internacional de Estibadores y Trabajadores de Almacenes [ILWU por sus siglas en inglés] y su presidente, Richard Mead, están siendo demandados en corte por empleadores marítimos de la Asociación Marítima del Pacífico, AMP, por el cierre por 24 horas del Puerto de Oakland el 4 de abril como respuesta al llamado de la AFL-CIO a un Día Nacional de Acción y de acuerdo con el llamado del 8 de marzo del Presidente Internacional del ILWU [Robert] McEllrath para movilizar en solidaridad con los/as trabajadores/as de Wisconsin; y

Dado que cada miembro de la Local



FOTO: DELORES THOMAS

10 desinteresadamente escogió ponerse al lado de los/as trabajadores/as públicos/as en Wisconsin y por todos/as los/as trabajadores/as en la mejor tradición del sindicato de estibadores, como lo han hecho desde la Gran Huelga del 1934 y la histórica Huelga General de San Francisco que construyó la fundación del movimiento sindical en esta ciudad y en la Costa de Oeste; y

Dado que estos mismos empleadores marítimos no tuvieron éxito en su es-

fuerzo por utilizar la Ley esclavista Taft-Hartley para impedir que el ILWU llevara a cabo un paro de todos los puertos en la Costa del Oeste, iniciado por la Local 10 el Primero de Mayo de 2008 para demandar un alto a las guerras en Afganistán e Irak, primera vez en la historia del sindicalismo estadounidense; y

Dado que la Local 10, corazón y alma del movimiento obrero en San Francisco, está ahora bajo ataque por implementar la justa consigna sindical “Un ataque con-

tra uno/a es un ataque contra todos/as”.

Por lo tanto, sea resuelto que la Junta Sindical de San Francisco, conforme a su resolución del 14 de marzo, inicie una defensa de la Local 10 del ILWU constituyendo un comité amplio de defensa en colaboración con la Local 10, y que movilice las juntas sindicales y sindicatos de la AFL-CIO en el área de la Bahía y en California, y

Sea también resuelto que el primer paso en esta campaña será convocar una movilización de todas las juntas sindicales de la AFL-CIO en el área de la Bahía y en California para manifestarse frente a las oficinas administrativas de la AMP en San Francisco el lunes, 25 de abril, para demandar que se suspenda la demanda y que los procedimientos vengativos y de carácter de linchamiento contra el sindicato en el arbitraje sean detenidos inmediatamente; y

Sea resuelto finalmente, que la Local 10 del ILWU sea elogiada por su acción de solidaridad y pedimos que la AFL-CIO a nivel nacional y estatal hagan lo mismo. □