

# WORKERS WORLD

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!

Aug. 20, 2009 Vol. 51, No. 33 50¢

# UE workers arrested defending their jobs

## Wells Fargo gets billions in bailout but refuses loan to save plant

By Dante Strobino

On July 9 workers and many community supporters staged a militant street rally in Rock Island, Ill., in front of a Wells Fargo bank to protest the closing of the Quad City Die Casting plant in Moline, Ill.

Putting their bodies on the line to challenge the bank's business as usual, the rally moved into the street to blockade traffic. Nearly a dozen QCDC workers and other workers refused to leave and were arrested in defiance. When asked by local FOX 18 News why she took such bold action and got arrested, QCDC worker Deb Johann stated, "Because I wanna save my job!" (July 9)

QCDC workers are represented by Electrical Workers Local 1174 and have been actively fighting this closing for almost two months since the company warned them it was closing its doors. A hundred workers are at risk of losing their jobs if Wells Fargo doesn't extend a loan to keep their plant operating. After receiving \$25 billion in bailout funds, the bank is acting as a "road block to recovery," says UE.

The QCDC bosses informed workers that Wells Fargo would not approve payments for vacation pay that was owed to them. Two years ago, UE Local 1174 workers fought long and hard when they went on strike, endured a lockout during contract negotiations and finally secured a decent contract. Now the bosses want to throw out their legally binding collective bargaining agreement and are refusing to pay the 2 percent wage increase and a floating holiday and have eliminated health insurance. UE estimates this could have an economic impact on the Quad Cities of \$6.1 million annually in lost wages and tax revenue.

Coming off the heels of a national day of action against Wells Fargo on June 23 where UE members and community supporters in some 20 cities from Boston to Los Angeles held rallies at branches of banking giant Wells Fargo—and in some cases its subsidiary Wachovia—workers around the country are paying close attention to the heroic actions of QCDC workers.

When asked about this bold protest,

Ricky Maclin, vice president of UE Local 1110, one of the leaders of the Republic Windows & Doors plant occupation in Chicago last winter, told Workers World, "This type of action is very necessary. This is the moment when we must stand up for ourselves."

Bold actions by workers, including risking arrests and occupying factories, is becoming increasingly popular around the world as the global capitalist economic crisis deepens for the workers and mass unemployment grows worse.

QCDC workers have received lots of support and inspiration from union brothers and sisters at UE Local 1110, who ultimately forced Bank of America to extend loans to keep the factory open, now under new owners.

Workers at Hartmarx occupied their factory near Chicago and in early July forced Wells Fargo to negotiate. But the plant was closed suddenly Aug. 7 when the bankrupt company was sold to new

owners. The Aug. 11 Chicago Sun-Times reported the workers were not paid federally mandated severance.

Workers in South Korea at Ssangyong Motor plant carried out a heroic plant occupation, which was attacked by the police on Aug. 4. (See article on page 5.)

Workers at a Visteon auto parts plant followed other Irish workers at Waterford Crystal who occupied their factory earlier this year.

In Windsor, Canada, members of Canadian Auto Workers Local 195 occupied their factory for a day in March. General strikes in France, Guadeloupe and Martinique, among other countries, have also fought against job loss, mass poverty and general deterioration of living conditions for the workers and oppressed.

Only with the energy and leadership of rank-and-file workers will a mass movement be built to secure jobs or a guaranteed income and finally meet the needs of the multinational working class. □

### IMMIGRANT RIGHTS NOW

Detention center closing a victory 3



MUMIA ABU-JAMAL ON: Professor Gates' arrest 2

### UNEMPLOYMENT Fight for jobs

EDITORIAL 6



WW PHOTO: MIKE EILENFELDT

### STOP POLICE TERROR

An Aug. 10 press conference, rally and march to the 43rd police precinct was held in Bronx, N.Y. to show solidarity with Black activist Juanita Young and her family. On Aug. 8, the New York police physically assaulted and arrested members of Young's family during a cookout. Young, pictured far left carrying a banner, has been outspoken against police brutality following the 2000 shooting death of her son, Malcolm Ferguson, by a plainclothes detective. The Aug. 10 protest was organized by the Oct. 22 Coalition and the Justice Committee. Read the page 6 editorial on Young.

### Subscribe to Workers World

Eight weeks trial: \$4 One year: \$25 www.workers.org

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Workers World 55 W. 17th St., 5th Fl., NY, NY 10011 workers.org 212-627-2994

**From Mumia Abu-Jamal on death row**

# Beyond a beer with the boys

Taken from a July 30 audio column heard on [www.prisonradio.org](http://www.prisonradio.org). Go to [www.millions-4mumia.org](http://www.millions-4mumia.org) to read updates on Mumia's case.

If the arrest, humiliation and resultant brouhaha over the case of Harvard scholar Dr. Henry Louis Gates has taught us anything, it is that we still dwell in separate worlds; ones which rarely meet.

And while some wags have rushed to tell us that the case shows us the continuous clash of class, I beg to differ.

If anything, it shows us just the opposite. When it comes to Black people—of whatever wealth, status, class or prominence—the normal rules don't apply.

Indeed, Blacks are the ever-present exceptions to the rules.

Consider this: Americans have said and believed for the better part of a century that saying: "A man's home is his castle." Not Black men. How else could "Skip" Gates get busted on his doorstep—for disturbing a non-existing peace?

In law, a homeowner's property rights don't end at his front door. They extend to the street, at the curbside. This is an apurtenance.

Imagine if a person slips and falls on the sidewalk in front of a home. That person has a claim on the homeowner, not the city.

"Skip" Gates was busted not because he violated the law, but because he violated the emotions of the cop who entered his home. He angered him when he initially refused to exit his house and he angered him further when Professor Gates demanded the cop's ID.

President Barack Obama was right when he called the bust "stupid," but, as usual, politics prevailed when American rednecks responded with howls of protest. One need look no further than the email sent by a Boston cop in response to the Gates case, where the distinguished educator was described as a "jungle monkey"; no, a "banana-eating jungle monkey." Furthermore, imagine what it takes, not just to write this, but to write this to a reporter.

They took it personally—just as the cop in Gates' home took it personally.

Will a beer with the boys put this fire out?

I doubt it, for it ignores what happens everyday, in dozens of states, to countless men and women who don't have Harvard Ph.D.s, or have friends in the White House.

The sad truth is, being Black in America is akin to being born low-caste in India, where separate-and-unequal rules remain, despite promises in the Constitution.

Obama's election hasn't changed that reality, but may mask it, by providing cover for the ugly things that Blacks endure in a nation where the elites claim a false "post-racialism."

A few brewskis ain't gonna change that either.

Order Mumia's new book, "Jailhouse Lawyers" from [www.leftbooks.com](http://www.leftbooks.com).

# Solidarity with NYC Professor Gates

"Professor Henry Gates is right; racial profiling and police brutality are wrong" was the topic of a Workers World Party forum in New York City on Aug. 8. The featured speakers were WWP leaders Phebe Eckfeldt from Boston along with Larry Hales and Monica Moorehead from New York. International Action Center volunteer Dolores Cox chaired the forum. Visit [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org) to hear a podcast of the presentations. □

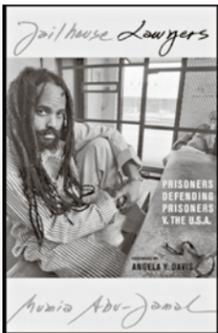


Dolores Cox, Larry Hales, Phebe Eckfeldt, Monica Moorehead. Clockwise from upper left.

## A must-see Black Panther art, prisoners' exhibit

Manhattan's New Museum has received recognition in the New York Times and Mother Jones magazine for its current exhibits of "Emory Douglas: Black Panther!" and "The Deeper They Bury Me, The Louder My Voice Becomes." The political history and power of these unique shows by artists Emory Douglas and Rigo 23 will be on view through Oct. 11.

The work by Douglas, the former Minister of Culture for the Black Panther Party, includes 165 posters, newspapers and prints dating from 1967 to 1976. Many of his illustrations appeared in the BPP newspaper. Curated by Los Angeles artist Sam Durant, Douglas' work has also been shown in Los Angeles.



Rigo 23, who is Portuguese, has dedicated his art to his many years in support of U.S. prisoners.

The New Museum is located at 235 Bowery. For more information call 212-219-2222.

—Anne Pruden

This week ...



★ In the U.S.

- UE workers arrested defending their jobs . . . . . 1
- Mumia Abu-Jamal on Professor Gates . . . . . 2
- Solidarity with Professor Gates in NYC . . . . . 2
- Black Panther art, prisoners' exhibit . . . . . 2
- Closing of detention center is a victory . . . . . 3
- Protest against FBI entrapment of Muslims . . . . . 3
- Support rally for SF8 defendant . . . . . 3
- The Mellon family, part 2 . . . . . 4
- Banks are strangling California . . . . . 4
- Impact of changes in capitalist cycle . . . . . 5
- Help to publish 'High Tech, Low Pay' . . . . . 5

★ Around the world

- Sit-down strikers evicted . . . . . 5
- U.S. policy threatens Latin America . . . . . 6
- Nigeria's economic crisis . . . . . 7

★ Editorials

- No racial profiling of Juanita Young! . . . . . 6
- Fight for jobs . . . . . 6

★ Noticias En Español

- Voces contra el golpe en Honduras . . . . . 8
- Haitianos mueren ahogados . . . . . 8

Workers World  
55 West 17 Street  
New York, N.Y. 10011  
Phone: (212) 627-2994  
Fax: (212) 675-7869  
E-mail: [ww@workers.org](mailto:ww@workers.org)  
Web: [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org)  
Vol. 51, No. 33 • Aug. 20, 2009  
Closing date: Aug. 11, 2009

Editor: Deirdre Griswold  
Technical Editor: Lal Roohk  
Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell, Leslie Feinberg, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson  
West Coast Editor: John Parker

Contributing Editors: Abayomi Azikiwe, Greg Butterfield, Jaimeson Champion, G. Dunkel, Fred Goldstein, Teresa Gutierrez, Larry Hales, Kris Hamel, David Hoskins, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Cheryl LaBash, Milt Neidenberg, Bryan G. Pfeifer, Betsey Piette, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Gloria Rubac  
Technical Staff: Sue Davis, Shelley Ettinger, Bob McCubbin, Maggie Vascassenno

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

Supporter Program: Sue Davis, coordinator  
Copyright © 2009 Workers World. Verbatim copying and distribution of articles is permitted in any medium without royalty provided this notice is preserved.

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

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Subscription information is at [www.workers.org/email.php](http://www.workers.org/email.php).

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

**JOIN US.**

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

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

**National Office**  
55 W. 17 St.,  
New York, NY 10011  
212-627-2994;  
Fax (212) 675-7869  
[wwp@workers.org](mailto:wwp@workers.org)  
**Atlanta**  
P.O. Box 424,  
Atlanta, GA 30301  
404-627-0185  
[atlanta@workers.org](mailto:atlanta@workers.org)  
**Baltimore**  
c/o Solidarity Center  
2011 N. Charles St., Bsm.  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
443-909-8964  
[baltimore@workers.org](mailto:baltimore@workers.org)  
**Boston**  
284 Amory St.,  
Boston, MA 02130  
617-983-3835  
Fax (617) 983-3836  
[boston@workers.org](mailto:boston@workers.org)

**Buffalo, N.Y.**  
367 Delaware Ave.,  
Buffalo, NY 14202  
716-883-2534  
[buffalo@workers.org](mailto:buffalo@workers.org)  
**Chicago**  
27 N. Wacker Dr. #138  
Chicago, IL 60606  
773-381-5839  
[chicago@workers.org](mailto:chicago@workers.org)  
**Cleveland**  
P.O. Box 5963,  
Cleveland, OH 44101  
216-531-4004  
[cleveland@workers.org](mailto:cleveland@workers.org)  
**Denver**  
[denver@workers.org](mailto:denver@workers.org)  
**Detroit**  
5920 Second Ave.,  
Detroit, MI 48202  
313-831-0750  
[detroit@workers.org](mailto:detroit@workers.org)

**Durham, N.C.**  
[durham@workers.org](mailto:durham@workers.org)  
**Houston**  
P.O. Box 595  
Houston,  
TX 77001-0595  
713-503-2633  
[houston@workers.org](mailto:houston@workers.org)  
**Los Angeles**  
5274 W. Pico Blvd.  
Suite # 207  
Los Angeles, CA 90019  
[la@workers.org](mailto:la@workers.org)  
323-306-6240  
**Milwaukee**  
[milwaukee@workers.org](mailto:milwaukee@workers.org)  
**Philadelphia**  
P.O. Box 23843,  
Philadelphia,  
PA 19143  
610-931-2615  
[phila@workers.org](mailto:phila@workers.org)

**Rochester, N.Y.**  
585-436-6458  
[rochester@workers.org](mailto:rochester@workers.org)  
**San Diego, Calif.**  
P.O. Box 33447  
San Diego,  
CA 92163  
619-692-0355  
**San Francisco**  
2940 16th St., #207  
San Francisco,  
CA 94103  
415-738-4739  
[sf@workers.org](mailto:sf@workers.org)  
**Tucson, Ariz.**  
[tucson@workers.org](mailto:tucson@workers.org)  
**Washington, D.C.**  
P.O. Box 57300,  
Washington,  
DC 20037  
[dc@workers.org](mailto:dc@workers.org)

## Struggle 'far from over'

# Closing of detention center is a victory

By Gloria Rubac

A victory in the fight to end immigrant family detention was won when the Obama administration announced on Aug. 6 that the T. Don Hutto immigrant detention center, located 35 miles north of Austin, Texas, would stop incarcerating families.

After the election of President Barack Obama, plans were made to organize 100 events to end family detention during the first 100 days of Obama's presidency. Over 100 actions did in fact take place, and over 60,000 people signed a petition demanding an end to locking up families awaiting immigration hearings.

"Today's announcement is not just a victory for our Campaign to End Immigrant Family Detention, but for an entire movement for justice that has come together to close Hutto and to end immigrant family detention," said Bob Libal and Luissana Santibañez, Grassroots Leadership activists in Austin. ([www.grassrootsleadership.org](http://www.grassrootsleadership.org)) "While our work to end immigrant detention altogether is certainly far from over, please join us in celebrating this incredible moment."

The Hutto facility opened in 2006. The past three years have seen thousands of people participate in dozens of Hutto vigils; the release of two popular documentary films on family detention; major media scrutiny; a landmark lawsuit settlement; and the organizing of students, immigrant rights advocates, and progressive working people around the country to fight for an end to family detention.

Hutto was originally a medium security prison when Corrections Corporation of America contracted to house immigrants there. Families are kept in cells with bunk beds and a toilet just like regular prisoners. In fact, the families there are awaiting hearings for asylum.

Early in 2007, the American Civil Liberties Union filed suit against Department of Homeland Security and Immigration and Customs Enforcement on behalf of 10 immigrant children confined at TDH. In the course of the lawsuit, the ACLU documented several cases. A film just released on the ACLU Web site shows a woman stating that confinement at Hutto was a "psychological trauma" from which she and her daughter will never recover.

CCA does a booming business—with a net income of over \$67 million during the first six months of 2009—imprisoning immigrant families, including children. ([www.correctionscorp.com](http://www.correctionscorp.com))

After ICE's announcement that the families at Hutto would be immediately transferred to a facility in Pennsylvania, CCA spoke with its investors to assure them the company still expects plenty of business from the federal government. "In some respects there may not have been much of a change," said CCA President and Chief Operating Officer Damon Hininger during an Aug. 6 conference call with investors. ([www.businessofdetention.com](http://www.businessofdetention.com), Aug. 7)

Hininger said CCA had "just learned yesterday that ICE wants us to renegotiate" the Hutto contract and that a timetable for the negotiations had not been set for transitioning Hutto to hold female immigrants. But he pointed to the Obama administration's expansion of the Bush administration's Secure Communities program as proof that demand for immigrant detention beds would continue.

Ironically, the facility in Pennsylvania is full; its administrators were not informed that families from TDH would be transferred there.

Business of Detention states: "The nation's largest private prison company has partnered with the federal government to detain close to 1 million undocumented



WWW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

Hundreds attend June 20 statewide demonstration at Hutto detention center, Taylor, Texas.

people in the past five years until they are deported. In the process, Corrections Corporation of America has made record profits. Critics suggest the CCA cuts corners on its detention contracts in order to increase its revenue at expense of humane conditions. Thanks to political connections and lobby spending, it dominates the industry of immigrant detention. CCA now has close to 10,000 new beds under development in anticipation of continued demand." ([www.businessofdetention.com](http://www.businessofdetention.com), June 2)

Longtime Houston immigrant rights activist Maria Jimenez remarked in an email sent to the In Defense of Our Community listserv on the announcement to move families out of TDH: "I agree it is a victory and congratulations are in order. But we cannot forget that the government is

simply looking at the redistribution of the detained to other facilities. In that sense, their announcement is a smokescreen.

"We have to remember that children are still being detained, especially if they are unaccompanied minors. There are at least four facilities here in Houston. These facilities may be more like group homes rather than traditional prisons, but, as Los Tigres del Norte sing, 'The cage may be made of gold, but it is still a prison.'

"Ultimately, our struggle is to defend the human right of mobility for anyone who chooses to exercise it. No one should be detained for asserting their right to a dignified life."

More information can be found at [www.businessofdetention.com](http://www.businessofdetention.com) and [tdonhutto.blogspot.com](http://tdonhutto.blogspot.com). □

## Support rally for SF8 defendant



SF8 supporters, Aug. 10.

WWW PHOTO: JUDY GREENSPAN

More than 75 supporters of the San Francisco 8 rallied Aug. 10 in San Francisco to demand that all charges be dropped against the last remaining defendant in this case, Francisco Torres.

Following the protest, the large crowd packed Judge Philip Moscone's courtroom to learn that the case has been postponed until Oct. 9. On July 6, all charges were dropped against four members of the SF8: Ray Boudreaux, Richard Brown, Hank Jones and Harold Taylor.

Herman Bell and Jalil Muntaqim pled guilty to lesser charges and were sentenced to time served and probation. Both are currently fighting for parole in New York state. Francisco Torres is the only defendant left, and supporters hope

that his charges will be dropped before the Oct. 9 hearing.

The SF8 case stems from a four-decade-old shooting of a San Francisco policeman. All defendants were well-known members of the Black Panther Party and community activists.

The SF8 issued the following statement on Aug. 6: "We and our support committee are claiming victory in this latest battle. As we go forward and prepare for the next one we ask that you lend your strength, your ideas and your spirit to win the dismissal of the charges against Francisco Torres. We also ask that you give your full support to the effort to gain release on parole by Jalil and Herman."

—Report and photo by Judy Greenspan

## Protest against FBI entrapment of Muslims

By Joseph Piette  
Albany, N.Y.

Over 150 protesters marched and chanted alongside Albany, N.Y., rush-hour traffic on Aug. 4, waving signs and banners against the FBI campaign of entrapping innocent Muslims.

"Who did the crime? The FBI!"; "Keep justice alive, Free the Fort Dix 5"; "Free Aref and Hossain NOW" and other chants never wavered during the eight-block-long march from the Washington Avenue Armory to the Masjid As-Salam Mosque.

Representatives from the Fort Dix 5 Support Committee, Dr. Rafil Dhafir, Project SALAM, the Newburgh 4, Muslim Solidarity Committee, Peace and Justice Foundation, the International Action Center and other groups participated.

Hundreds of "preemptive prosecutions" against Muslims, mostly immigrants, have been carried out by the FBI since 9/11. Each case involves government surveillance, agent provocateurs and sensationalist headlines. Arrests are made before any crimes take place and trials run in ways that guarantee successful prosecutions and extreme penalties.

The FBI admits sending undercover agents into mosques and community cen-

ters all over the country. Critics charge that the agents themselves instigate and originate the supposed crimes—nothing less than entrapment. The trials not only destroy innocent individuals and families, but also terrorize Muslim communities.

The upstate New York demonstration, a month after a similar rally for justice on July 3 in Washington, D.C., which drew 100 participants, is evidence that the movement against these miscarriages of justice is growing.

The latest FBI sting arrests took place July 27 in North Carolina against eight Muslim men, charging them with plotting to carry out terrorist attacks overseas. Most of the press treated this case—as they have others—as an individual situation, with no connection to the hundreds of cases involving over 500 Muslim brothers and sisters since Sept. 11, 2001.

Reflecting increased community support for wrongly convicted victims of government entrapment, many Albany TV stations, newspapers and radio stations reported on the demonstration. (Go to <http://tiny.cc/AhoGE> and <http://tiny.cc/JYvAY>.)

The Albany protest stands as a clear example of how to fight back against the government frame-ups of Muslims. □

# The Mellon family war against workers

## Coal mines and machine guns

By Stephen Millies

“You could not run a coal company without machine guns,” sums up the Mellon style of labor relations.

Richard Mellon broke the United Mine Workers union at the family’s Pittsburgh Coal Company in 1925. Three years later the U.S. Senate’s Interstate Commerce Committee traveled to Pittsburgh to question this strike-breaking brother of Treasury Secretary Andrew Mellon.

They asked Richard Mellon about the machine guns of Pennsylvania’s Coal and Iron Police, a notorious private strike-breaking outfit that functioned like Blackwater (now named XE) mercenaries do. Mellon answered, “It is necessary. You could not run without them.”

While Mellon was testifying, his coal bosses had been told to “keep our police in the background.” Eleven months later on Feb. 9, 1929, they beat union miner John Barkoski to death. Union supporter John Philipovich was shot to death on the porch of his store.

Much bloodier were the East St. Louis, Ill., race riots in 1917. Two thousand workers had gone on strike there at the Mellon-controlled Aluminum Ore Company plant. Unionists were conducting organizing drives at other local plants.

Mellon and other employers recruited thousands of African Americans from the South with false promises of employment.

Whites were told that Black workers were going to take their jobs. The strike at Mellon’s plant was broken.

Unlike future Communist leader William Z. Foster, who was then organizing African-American and white meatpacking workers in Chicago’s stockyards, the white AFL union leaders in East St. Louis catered to racism.

### PART 2

These mislead-ers demanded Black workers be driven out of the city while local newspapers printed lurid, lying stories of a Black “crime wave.”

This deliberate instigation of racism led to a mob of thousands of armed whites hunting Black people on the streets on July 2, 1917. W.E.B. Du Bois estimated in his autobiography that 125 African Americans were murdered then.

Years before railroad tycoon Jay Gould bragged he could “hire half of the working class to shoot the other half.” Big capitalists became experts at pitting one group of workers against another.

The anger of white and U.S.-born workers against their bosses would often be diverted into hatred for African Americans, Latinas/os and immigrants.

Mellons are again today involved in attacking the working class and oppressed—this time in the debate on health care. Right-wing groups are conducting a vicious fight against any reforms of a rotten system where nearly 50 million

people are uninsured. One of the biggest backers of the tax-free foundations leading this smear campaign is Richard Mellon Scaife, whose fortune is an estimated \$1.2 billion.

### Bayoneting workers

Family patriarch Thomas A. Mellon hated unions. He called union leaders “labor parasites” who were “promoters of socialism and anarchy.”

In 1880 Thomas Mellon busted a strike at the Waverly Coal Coke Company, which he partially owned. Mellon even had union leader David Jones prosecuted on “criminal conspiracy” charges for seeking to fix the price of labor!

Andrew Mellon’s friend and financial partner Henry Clay Frick broke the Homestead steel strike in 1892. Workers at Andrew Carnegie’s steel plant outside Pittsburgh had driven out Pinkerton private police thugs.

The 1892 presidential campaign receded into the background as the whole country focused on the long strike. Frick was so hated that anarchist Alexander Berkman tried to kill him. Berkman spent 14 years in prison for his deed.

It took the whole summer and 8,000 Pennsylvania National Guard troops to finally break the strike. Not until 45 years later in 1937 did the workers at Homestead win a union.

Alcoa workers spent decades winning a union. The Industrial Workers of the World led a 1913 strike at the company’s New Kensington plant, 18 miles northeast of Pittsburgh. Women armed themselves with blacksnake whips and lashed

strikebreakers.

After six weeks of state troopers attacking picket lines, the workers had to settle for promises of arbitration.

Two years later in 1915 workers revolted at the Mellon’s Massena, N.Y., aluminum mill. Anticipating the sit-down strikes of the 1930s, they captured every section of the big plant while management fled.

St. Lawrence County Sheriff Thaddeus Day deputized a gang of businessmen to break the strike. New York state Gov. Whitman sent in two companies of the National Guard who bayoneted workers. They killed strike leader Joseph Solunski, who died in an Ogdensburg hospital on Aug. 2, 1915.

Aluminum Workers Local 19256 finally compelled the company to sign a contract in 1941.

In 1919 William Z. Foster led a national steel strike against the 12-hour day that was drowned in police violence. Members of Troop D of the Pennsylvania State Constabulary assaulted workers at Mellon’s Standard Steel Company plant outside Butler, Pa.

As terrible as the conditions in these U.S. plants were, workers were treated even worse in Mellon’s aluminum trust mines in Guyana, Surinam, Jamaica and Guinea.

Sources: “Mellon’s Millions” by Harvey O’Connor; “Mellon” by David Canadine; Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, also known as the “Kerner Commission.”

Next week: Deindustrializing Pittsburgh

### Letter to the editor

## Banks are strangling California

John Parker in his “Tax the corporations” article (Aug. 13) is right to demand that the rich pay for the California budget shortfall. They have sucked the financial, human and environmental resources of California for centuries without paying anything back.

About 50 years ago a new scheme was launched in the U.S. to ensure that bankers and mega-investors had an annual, tax-exempt, legal way to get taxpayer money transferred to them—debt service. Fifty years ago California paid most bills out of general revenue cash. Then they started selling bonds to investment banks and stock brokerages. Each year interest was due on these tax-exempt bonds. And every year new bonds were sold and the interest due (debt service) grew and grew.

The banks got worried as the percentage of the state budget due for debt service kept growing. So they had their friends in the California state legislature amend the state constitution to require it to pay debt service before paying for anything else.

What a great windfall for the banks. They soon came up with additional ways to steal. The state set up “authorities” of all kinds—out of the control of the public, which also sold bonds—with the California budget being responsible for the debt service. It’s almost a state secret to find the exact amount of the debt and debt service paid annually. But here are some examples:

In the current budget debt service direct payment is about \$7 billion. If you add in the Department of Water Resources (\$1.3 billion), the California university systems (total unknown, estimated at \$2.7 billion), and an agency that sells bonds just to cover the shortfall in the budget (\$1.4 billion), that comes to \$12.4 billion without all the other authorities included. The banks buy California bonds with federal taxpayer money Troubled Asset Relief Program, and then we have to pay them again with interest, and they pay no taxes on the profit.

The state could declare an emergency and defer or default on the debt service and stop borrowing. All the bourgeois economists (who work for the rich) will cry, “What a horror! California’s credit rating will be in the toilet.” Well, it already is, forcing the state to pay higher interest rates. Tax the rich, the corporations, agribusiness and especially the banks and increase benefits to the workers who produced all that wealth in the first place.

—Gavrielle Gemma  
Jersey City, N.J.

**BEFORE THE G-20 SUMMIT**  
**A CALL TO JOIN A NATIONAL**

*The Unemployed, the Homeless, the Hungry & the Poor must no longer be INVISIBLE & SILENT*



**MARCH FOR JOBS**

**IN PITTSBURGH**  
**SUNDAY, SEPT. 20**

**Revive Dr. King’s dream of a movement for a right to a job.**

**TENT CITY ON THE HILL**  
**Sept. 20-25**

**Volunteers & funds needed**

**CONTACT: BAIL OUT THE PEOPLE MOVEMENT**  
**BailOutPeople.org March4Jobs@gmail.com**  
**NYC: 212-633-6646 PITTSBURGH: 412-780-3813**

*Join the “Jobs or Income Now” caravans (cars, vans, buses) from across the country.*

Do not post on public or private property.

## From new intro to 'High Tech, Low Pay'

# How changes in capitalist cycle have impacted workers

Following is the second part of an excerpt from the introduction by Fred Goldstein to an upcoming reprint of the ground-breaking work "High Tech, Low Pay" written by Sam Marcy in 1986 during the early stages of capitalist restructuring. Goldstein is the author of "Low-Wage Capitalism: Colossus With Feet of Clay." Read part one in the Aug. 13 WW issue.

Even before the 1990s the capitalist business cycle, described a century earlier by Engels, had changed in favor of capital. Marcy, in Chapter 3, focuses on the fact that capitalist recession lengthened in the post-World War II period and that "this is very important in relation to strike strategy, which had a lot to do with the duration of the capitalist economic crisis." It raises the question of what workers can do if a recession turns out to be protracted and the bosses can hold out for a long time.

### Workers, 'boom-and-bust' and low-wage capitalism

The new era of low-wage capitalism, worldwide wage competition and slowing capitalist economic growth has put workers under pressure even during times of capitalist upturn. The booms have weakened, benefiting only the bosses, with not even relative gain for the workers.

The era of rapid accumulation, that is, rapid and tempestuous growth of capital investment, has been undercut by the growing productivity of labor and the speed with which markets become saturated. The relative labor shortage during the upturn is a thing of the past. Instead, there are jobless recoveries and the consequent eradication of the opportunity for the workers to make up lost wages by forcing increases on the bosses.

The "golden chains" Marx referred to are not so golden anymore. Marx spoke

of workers getting higher wages during a boom while the capitalist got even higher profits. This meant that workers' real wages went up, although their wages declined relative to the larger profit gains of the bosses. In the present era, these conditions no longer obtain.

For the last several decades, with a slight exception in the mid 1990s, workers' real wages have gone down or stagnated even during the periods of expanded capitalist accumulation—during upturns. Because of off-shoring, outsourcing and wage competition with workers in low-wage areas, workers in the United States went into massive personal debt and worked extra jobs; whole families worked just to compensate for the wage decline. Not only did the relative wages of the workers decline, but their **absolute** standard of living plummeted—and this was **before the crisis**.

This makes Marcy's work, his admonitions to the labor movement to develop new strategies to deal with protracted crisis, to engage in class-wide struggle, to break out of the traditional capital-labor relationship, more pressing than ever before.

Engels spoke of the continuous cycle of boom and bust. Certainly the cycle continues, but under conditions of structural changes to capitalism. Booms have become weaker and weaker over time. The classic booms that reemploy most of the workers laid off during the bust are a thing of the past. That is the meaning of the increasingly protracted jobless recoveries.

### Solving a crisis by creating a bigger one

In fact, the immediate roots of the latest global capitalist crisis, which began in December 2007, can be traced back to the attempt by the financial authorities to overcome the jobless recovery of 2001-2004 and the weakness of the capitalist upturn.

The Federal Reserve System pumped hundreds of billions of dollars into the economy by lowering interest rates from

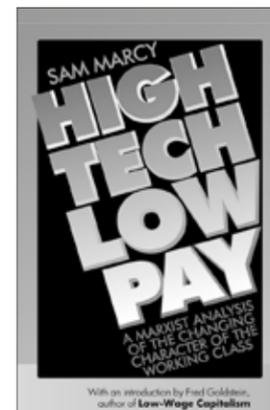
5.5 percent to 1 percent. Alan Greenspan directed much of this credit toward creating an artificial housing boom. He publicly urged home buyers to take out adjustable-rate mortgages. The housing market regulators gave a pass to the most egregious, often racist, subprime mortgage-lending practices. The Securities and Exchange Commission synchronized its efforts with the Fed by deliberately closing its eyes to the burgeoning market in mortgage-backed securities, derivatives and other shady practices. The rating agencies Moody's and Standard & Poor's played their part by giving potentially toxic assets triple-A ratings.

Much of the credit made available went straight to stock market speculation and banking operations. Huge sums of fictitious capital, paper wealth with no underlying value, found their way through an unregulated conduit known as the shadow banking system—hedge funds, private equity funds and insurance companies—backed by the big Wall Street banks. This shadow system was used to evade even the minimal constraints on finance capital.

In the end, a crisis emerged in the overproduction of housing. The bubble burst, housing prices plummeted and masses of people lost their homes. Throughout the economy, production had outstripped consumption. Auto sales and construction collapsed. Record credit-card debt could not bridge the gap. Debts based on housing sales, credit cards, student loans and auto loans became bad debts. Banks were insolvent.

As Engels had predicted, hard cash disappeared, credit vanished, goods piled up, means of production were destroyed. And in the end the attempt to stem the original crisis by artificially creating a housing boom led to an even greater crisis that enveloped the globe at the speed of light.

To be continued.



## Sit-down strikers evicted, struggles continue

By Martha Grevatt

Since last December when the sit-down at Republic Windows and Doors in Chicago drew international attention, workers around the world have been employing that same militant tactic. In early August, police forcibly ended job occupations in three different countries.

On Aug. 4, brutal police-state tactics were utilized to break up the 77-day occupation of Ssangyong Motors in Pyongtaek, South Korea. Several previous assaults failed to get autoworkers to leave the complex. Each time workers retreated to the paint shop, where highly flammable chemicals could explode if an attack were launched.

The strike began May 22 when 1,700 workers, who had just learned of company plans to permanently lay them off, took over several areas of the Ssangyong works. Ssangyong, which filed for bankruptcy three months earlier, announced a restructuring plan that would shed 2,646 jobs—36 percent of the workforce.

By mid-July around 1,600 workers accepted "early retirement" offers of five months' severance pay, but 1,000 workers remained inside the plant. Despite shortages of food and water—police began blocking deliveries July 20—600 were still inside and on the roof when the police attacked Aug. 4.

As police forced their way past an encampment of supporters, workers resisted with pipes, crowbars, slingshots and Molotov cocktails. Workers fought back as a cargo container full of cops, who were firing water cannons, was lowered onto the roof by helicopter.

Two workers were seriously hurt after falling off the four-story roof while fighting. Altogether at least 100 workers were injured; even many who did not resist the eviction were beaten.

The Korean Metal Workers Union ended the strike, claiming partial victory. Ssangyong management agreed to call back 48 percent of the laid-off workers who declined severance pay after a one-year furlough.

The state is preparing harsh repression against strike leaders and workers who

physically defended the plant. Ninety-six union leaders are currently detained, and some could face charges as serious as attempted murder.

Blaming the unions for property damage and injuries during police attacks on "violent" rallies, the Gyeonggi Provincial Police Agency filed a lawsuit equivalent to about \$400,000 against Ssangyong union leaders and officials of the KMWU and the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions. The Agency plans to file a second lawsuit over losses sustained in the final assault. (Korea Times, Aug. 9)

Four workers and a union leader's spouse died during the struggle, two by suicide. As of this writing, about 30 autoworkers are still refusing to leave the paint shop.

### More sit-downs in July

After learning that the Danish firm Vestas was closing shop and eliminating 625 jobs, about 30 workers occupied a plant in Newport on the Isle of Wight in the United Kingdom on July 20. Before taking action, they consulted with Irish and British autoworkers who occupied plants own by Visteon, the former parts division of Ford, earlier this year.

Vestas, a producer of wind turbines, will leave a total of 1,900 workers jobless when it shuts down European operations to focus on business opportunities in North America, South America and Asia. The justification for the Newport closure is that the plant does not make blades for British turbines, yet Vestas declined a grant of \$9.88 million and offers of government help for retooling.

Solidarity actions with the Vestas workers took place in many British cities. In London supporters picketed a speech by Department of Energy and Climate Change Minister Joan Ruddock, demanding the plant be nationalized under workers' control. Vestas and Ssangyong workers exchanged messages of solidarity.

However, support from the so-called union "Solidarity," with ties to the fascist British National Party, was turned down. As one sit-downer explained, "They go

Continued on page 7

## Help to publish 'High Tech, Low Pay'

World View Forum is reissuing this classic work by Sam Marcy, Workers World Party founder, on the party's 50th anniversary.

The book rings as true today as when it was first published in 1986. Marcy explained how the high-tech revolution was destroying high-paying jobs while changing the social composition of the working class, bringing more of the oppressed into workplaces, raising the potential for more solidarity and struggle.

Marcy's analysis, strategies and tactics are still on-target. A new introduction by Fred Goldstein, author of

Everyone who donates \$25 or more will receive a copy of "High Tech, Low Pay."

**Yes!** I want to help with publishing and promotional costs.

Here is my donation of  \$500  \$250  \$100  \$50  \$35  \$25 \$\_\_\_\_\_ Other

(Write checks to World View Forum.)

Or donate \$\_\_\_\_\_ by  Visa or  MCD.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

NO. \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Return to World View Forum, 55 West 17th Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10011



## No racial profiling of Juanita Young!

The July 16 arrest of Harvard Professor Henry Louis Gates Jr. for “disorderly conduct” in his own home in Cambridge, Mass., exposed once again the fact that racism is alive and well in the U.S. The ongoing struggle of Juanita Young shows the state’s ruthlessness against those who fight back.

For the simple, justifiable act of speaking out against being racially profiled, Gates was arrested. For her continued activism against police brutality—after the 2000 killing of her son by a plainclothes cop—Young and her entire family have been arrested multiple times, continually harassed and brutalized by the New York Police Department.

A press release from the Juanita Young Support Committee quotes an eyewitness to the latest attack on Aug. 8, which occurred as Young was having a cookout with her family, friends and neighbors: “Over a dozen cops seemed to appear out of nowhere, broke the front door down, slammed JJ [Jason James, Juanita’s oldest son] up behind the door, and beat him on the head while cuffing him. This was all happening with kids and babies around (photos posted at [nyc.indymedia.org](http://nyc.indymedia.org)). ... The cops went upstairs into Juanita’s apartment, made everyone get down on the floor, and also arrested her daughters Saran and Naya, Saran’s baby’s father Tyrell, their cousin Jason, and family friends Jonathan and Mike. ... After many phone calls to the precinct from all over the country, JJ was eventually taken to a hospital.”

Other than Jason James, everyone else was released with a summons for disorderly

conduct—the same charges Gates faced. JJ, who faced the most brutality by the cops, has been charged with assaulting a police officer, resisting arrest and possession.

Young’s son Malcolm Ferguson was killed in 2000, just five days after he attended protests against the police killing of Amadou Diallo. Police officer Louis Rivera shot the unarmed Ferguson point-blank in the head. Young was awarded \$10.5 million in 2007 by a Bronx, N.Y., civil court in her trial against New York City and the NYPD. Since Ferguson’s death, Young has been a tireless and courageous fighter against all repression.

True to form, the police have responded viciously, taking any opportunity they can to attack Young and her family. In 2003 she was arrested for trespassing in her own home as part of an illegal eviction. She was arrested again in 2005 at an anti-war demonstration, and was denied medical attention when she suffered an asthma attack in police custody. In 2006 police arrested her again, while they were responding to a call for an ambulance at Young’s home for one of her daughters.

If you are a person of color in the U.S., all of your rights are questionable and subject to the will of the state. Yet speaking up and fighting back in the face of state repression is considered a high crime, subject to long imprisonment—like Mumia Abu-Jamal—or continued harassment—such as what the Young family faces on a regular basis. What Juanita Young and other courageous survivors of police brutality know is that we must fight back. □

## Fight for jobs

What do the July unemployment statistics mean for the working class? Most bourgeois economists expressed undue optimism. They’re optimistic mostly because the rising stock market and jump in banking profits has brought optimism back to the capitalists, who pay the economists’ salaries.

For workers, things have only gotten worse since December 2007, plummeting since last fall. So it would be best not to get too excited over the rosy spin to the news that “only” 247,000 jobs were lost in July instead of the 350,000 expected and that the official unemployment rate dropped from 9.5 to 9.4 percent.

Is this spin supposed to fool workers into thinking that if they don’t have a job, it’s their own fault? It shouldn’t. It’s not the workers’ fault. A well-functioning economic system would provide jobs for everyone. Only that would have to be a socialist system, not a capitalist system that provides periodic unemployment and crisis.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics calculates the official unemployment rate, the one we always see, known as U-3, by a flawed method. It makes no adjustments for part-time work or job furloughs and only counts as unemployed those who are actively seeking work. It excludes “discouraged” workers.

That’s why the July rate dipped. Some 422,000 workers—counted as unemployed in June—gave up looking for work in July, according to the BLS. These

workers—just as jobless in July as they were in June—are no longer counted as unemployed seeking work. Instead of rising to 9.7 percent, the rate fell to 9.4 percent. The number of unemployed dropped to 14.5 million.

One-third of these 14.5 million unemployed have been jobless 27 weeks or more, the highest recorded in the 61 years of BLS reporting. (New York Times, Aug. 8) These long-term unemployed might soon become discouraged workers. That means the U-3 rate could decline even as the number of jobs sinks.

More somber reports might focus on the decline in the total workforce, the losses of jobs in almost all private areas of the economy, the disproportionate number of African Americans without jobs, the continuing monumental unemployment among youth in general and calamitous unemployment for youth of color.

Or they might highlight the BLS’s more useful U-6 rate, still above 16 percent, which includes discouraged workers and adjusts for part-time work. That means there are more than 25 million unemployed, discouraged or underemployed workers in a workforce of more than 155 million.

Nothing to cheer about. More like something to fight about. On Sept. 20-26 at the G-20 meeting in Pittsburgh, a fight-back will take place with a national march for jobs and income, organized by the Bail Out the People Movement. Be there! □

## From Honduras to Colombia U.S. policy threatens Latin America

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

The old adage, “Actions speak louder than words,” underlines a dangerous reality regarding any alleged change in U.S. relations with Latin America, and especially regarding Honduras and Colombia.

At last April’s Summit of the Americas in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, President Barack Obama broke with former President George W. Bush’s harsh rhetoric. He spoke in a slightly more conciliatory tone toward Latin America, and even on Cuba, saying, “We are not dug in into policies that were formulated before I was born.” This apparently new attitude from the North brought some hope that the long imperialist intervention in the region would recede.

But events in Honduras and Colombia show that Simon Bolivar’s famous statement—“The United States seems destined by providence to plague the world of misery in the name of freedom”—still holds true.

### Honduras, a crucial crossroads

Hardly two months after the summit, a coup d’état reminiscent of the nightmarish U.S.-backed military dictatorships in Latin America of the 1970s was carried out in Honduras, with help from Washington. Initial words from both Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton seemed to side with Honduras’ people. Though they spoke much after many Latin American and world leaders condemned the coup, Obama and Clinton also condemned the criminal coup and said Washington recognized the legitimate Honduran President Manuel Zelaya Rosales.

Since then, the Obama administration has only helped the coup leaders with maneuvers and has softened its opposition to the coup regime. Clinton has even publicly opposed Zelaya’s attempt to return to Honduras, at one point calling Zelaya “reckless” for trying to cross the border before reaching an agreement.

Despite help from U.S. imperialism that includes a monumental media campaign on behalf of the criminal coup, the coup regime has big problems. A powerful resistance has arisen uniting all sectors opposing the coup, who have put any political differences aside and worked incessantly and cooperatively with only one main objective: to defeat the coup d’état.

Faced with repression, assassinations, mass detentions, torture, constant curfews, etc., this movement, organized under the Popular Front of Resistance against the coup d’état, has, contrary to U.S. expectations, grown and strengthened.

Juan Barahona of the Honduran Unitary Federation of Workers (FUTH) and a leader of the Popular Front illustrated the resistance’s strength in an Aug. 8 interview. Workers World’s first call found Barahona in the middle of an assembly, itself reflecting the ongoing consultative character of the movement, which care-

fully assesses every event and development in order to plan adequate actions.

Barahona thanked WW and the International Action Center for their support and solidarity: “For us, that solidarity and support that the peoples of the world have given us is what keeps our morale high, with the firmness and the conviction that we will defeat the golpistas [coup plotters].”

The resistance leader continued: “Here we are fighting strongly, resisting, organizing massive mobilizations against the coup. This coming Tuesday and Wednesday [Aug. 12], thousands of Hondurans will arrive in San Pedro Sula and Tegucigalpa from all over the country to strengthen the resistance. This week an OAS [Organization of American States] commission headed by Insulza accompanied by five exterior ministers will arrive here. We are hoping that the time for the golpistas to abandon office is near and [that they] will hand power to the legitimate president.

“We are demanding that Obama increase pressure against the golpistas, since up to now we feel that the U.S. government has not done enough to pressure the golpistas to surrender. The most important demand is to suspend all financial and military support for Honduras. That is why they do not surrender, because it is like the oxygen that keeps them alive.”

Later, WW learned that Roberto Micheletti’s coup regime had prevented the OAS delegation from reaching Honduras, stating that Secretary General José Miguel Insulza was unwelcome because he was not neutral.

More than 40 days of constant actions on the streets have illustrated Barahona’s claim that the resistance movement is growing wider and new sectors are joining. The country is virtually paralyzed. Hospitals and schools have closed. The workers of the National Company of Electric Energy have joined the strike. The National Association of Meteorologists of Honduras has declared an indefinite strike affecting air transit in all the airports, which have been closed. Taxi drivers have also joined the strike.

### Colombia—U.S. hope to destabilize region

While Washington hesitates to condemn the Honduras coup, it massively militarizes Colombia, which many call the “Israel of Latin America” because of its flagrant role as a U.S. military proxy. The Pentagon plans to increase its presence in Colombia far beyond replacing the Manta base in Ecuador after President Rafael Correa refused to renew Manta’s 10-year contract.

The Pentagon will now have open access to seven additional military bases in Colombia—three army, two air force, and two naval bases, one of them on the Pacific and the other on the Caribbean, very

*Continued on page 7*

## 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.

A timely new book by Fred Goldstein describes in sweeping detail the drastic effect on the working class of new technology and the restructuring of global capitalism in the post-Soviet era. It uses Karl Marx’s law of wages and other findings to show that these developments are not only continuing to drive down wages but are creating the material basis for future social upheaval, the end of working-class compromise and retreat and must end up in a profound revival of the struggle against capital.

Order online from [Leftbooks.com](http://Leftbooks.com)

# Nigeria's economic crisis behind unrest in the north

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

Over 700 people have been reportedly killed and hundreds arrested in a police and military crackdown on the Boko Haram religious group based in several Northern states in the West African nation of Nigeria. Western and domestic media reports have characterized the crackdown as an "anti-terrorism" effort on the U.S. model. Yet Nigeria's underlying crisis is tied to the world capitalist collapse and its impact on those countries dependent on exports to North America, Western Europe and Japan.

For five days beginning July 26 in states of Borno, Bauchi, Kano and Yobe, Nigerian police and military forces held gun battles with members and supporters of Boko Haram. The worst fighting occurred in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno, where Boko Haram leader Mohammed Yusuf, 39, had his headquarters. Yusuf was taken into custody by the military and executed by the police on July 30.

Hundreds of bodies were placed in a mass grave. Other residents of homes occupied by the group, including children, were taken into detention. Mohammed Yusuf's execution has drawn concern and condemnation inside of Nigeria and abroad.

Government officials claimed Yusuf was killed trying to escape from custody. Others have demanded an independent inquiry into Yusuf's death. They note that no charges had been brought against him in a public trial.

"Lagos-based independent television channels late Sunday, August 3, showed footage of Yusuf surrounded by soldiers when they arrested him, and later handed him over to the police. He was pictured standing naked to the waist." (South Africa's Mail & Guardian, Aug. 3) Networks later showed his bullet-riddled corpse.

Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and other local human rights organizations not only questioned the circumstances surrounding his death but also called for an investigation into the arbitrary killings of others during the five-day siege.

One of the leading opposition parties in Nigeria, the Action Congress, said in the same Mail & Guardian article that the death of the Boko Haram leader in custody was a "blow to Nigeria's image as a country seeking to return to the path of the rule of law, after eight years of sheer

lawlessness" under the previous military regime of Sani Abacha during the 1990s.

## What is Boko Haram?

While most reports dismiss Boko Haram as a "Taliban-style" sect of "terrorists" or "fanatics," the organization had been growing in influence over the last several years and had recruited some key Northern Nigerian figures.

Founded in 1995 in response to the political turmoil then in Nigeria, the organization decried increasing "Westernization" in Nigeria and placed special emphasis on what it described as the corrupting influence of the education system in this region of Africa, which was largely inherited from the British colonialists who ruled the country for seven decades.

The majority of the population in Northern Nigeria are Muslims, and have been so for centuries prior to the advent of slavery and colonialism in West Africa. With the rise of British imperialism in this region after 1851, the policies of "divide and conquer" and indirect rule prevailed. Nigeria, which has the largest population of any state on the continent, was divided into regions, which made it necessary to create a federal political system at the time of national independence in 1960.

Although the Muslim community dominates demographically in the Northern region, there is a substantial Christian population. A leading organization within that community is the Christian Association of Nigeria, which issued a statement claiming that 20 churches were bombed and 14 pastors died in the aftermath of the siege against Boko Haram.

Elder Samuel Salifu, the National Secretary of CAN, stated in a press conference that Yusuf was killed in police custody to prevent a trial that could have exposed the supporters of Boko Haram within the state and national government in Nigeria. (Nigeria's Daily Sun, Aug. 4)

Other groups have also raised questions about Yusuf's sudden execution. The Conference of Nigeria Political Parties, a coalition of opposition parties to the government of President Umaru Yar'Adua, also condemned the extrajudicial killings of members of Boko Haram.

A report published on Aug. 7 in Nigeria's ThisDay newspaper claims that "Fleeing members of Boko Haram yesterday challenged some top aides of state Governor Ali Sheriff, to swear publicly that they have no link with them. The fundamentalists also said they are ready to

come out with the true picture of everything, insisting that the movement is still very much around and that the deaths of some of their leaders and members cannot stop them." (Nigerian Vanguard, Aug. 4)

## The legacy of colonialism and regional conflict

Nigerian politics have been shaped by the history of British colonialism, which took root in the mid- to late-19th century. By 1914 the British designated Nigeria a single colonial unit, but this was in name only.

The late South African journalist Ruth First in her 1970 classic book, "The Barrel of a Gun," pointed out that in early colonial Nigeria "the only bond of political unity was the person of Lugard, the governor-general. ... For all the formal act of unification, Nigeria was still run as two colonies."

First also examines the economy in northern Nigeria and how it differed from that in other regions. She writes, "In the development of a cash economy and the production of crops for export, the North limped far behind the rest of the country. Social change and Western education came last and least to the North."

In the South of Nigeria, the colonial system created greater demands for local commerce, artisans and a small group of Western-educated professionals.

After Nigeria's 1960 independence, the regional divide imposed by British colonialism further intensified. The unrest within the military in 1966 led to two coups and the outbreak in 1967 of the so-called Biafra War that lasted until 1970. Oil had been discovered in the South during the 1950s and consequently this export earned 90 percent of Nigeria's foreign exchange. Although the wealth-producing areas of the South constitute the economic powerhouse of the country, officers from the North dominate the military.

Since 1956 Western-based, multinational firms have dominated the oil industry, ostensibly in partnership with the government through the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation. Nigeria is a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, but the overwhelming majority of the people have not significantly benefited from oil-exploration and extraction revenue.

Some major firms involved in the Nigerian oil industry are Royal Dutch Shell, ExxonMobil, Texaco, Chevron, Elf and Agip. The various rebel groups, many of whom are associated with the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, have targeted these firms.

Over the years there has been increas-

ing discontent and unrest in the Niger Delta due to the failure of the people in this region to benefit from the billions in oil revenue that are generated annually. Sabotage has hampered oil extraction and brought about a significant decline in barrels-per-day production.

## Economic crisis breeds political instability

Since May there has been a drastic decline in the viability of Nigeria's oil industry, due to both the unrest in the Niger Delta and in the Northern states as well as the overall global capitalist economic crisis. As a result, it was recently announced that Nigeria is no longer first but second to Angola among Africa's oil producers.

ThisDay reports, "With Nigeria losing an average of \$1 billion in oil revenue every month as a result of production shut-ins rather than a fall in crude oil prices, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) may no longer be able to defend the current value of the naira [national currency], it has emerged." (Aug. 4)

These developments in Nigeria illustrate clearly that the legacy of colonialism and the dependence upon the United States and European oil industries cannot help to maintain any semblance of stability within the country. The question of national unity must be viewed within the context of present class and regional disparities that the British colonial system imposed and which its political and economic reliance on U.S. imperialism reinforced.

The vast oil reserves and the wealth produced in the Niger Delta must be equitably distributed among all people throughout the region and the country as a whole. Unity based upon the common interests of the working people and farmers throughout the country is a prerequisite to the genuine national development of the postcolonial state.

Consequently, the unrest in the North must be viewed as resulting from the failure of successive governments to formally break with the political and economic system that still relies on the West for its main economic lifeline. Although the disturbances in the North seem to be related to differences over degrees of religious fervor, the source of these problems cannot be viewed outside the class and sectional divisions that grew out of the character of Nigeria's integration into the world economic system.

Despite the amount of natural resources that exist in developing countries, the majority of the working people and farmers will not benefit as long as the ownership and relations of production are dominated by world capitalism.

For full article, see [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org).



## U.S. policy from Honduras to Colombia

Continued from page 6

close to the Guajira region on Venezuela's border.

Washington and its puppet paramilitary Colombian President Alvaro Uribe claim the bases are necessary to fight drug trafficking and "terrorism" and simply extend Plan Colombia. They do not even call them U.S. military bases.

During a recent meeting with Spanish-language reporters, Obama said: "There have been those in the region who have been trying to play this up as part of a traditional anti-Yankee rhetoric. This is not accurate. We have had a security agreement with Colombia for many years now. We have updated that agreement. We have no intent in establishing a U.S. military base in Colombia.

"This is continuation," Obama said, "of assistance that we had been providing them. We have no intention of sending large numbers of additional troops into Colombia, and we have every interest in seeing Colombia and its neighbors operate peacefully." (Reuters.com, Aug. 7)

But Latin American leaders see it differently. They have spoken out against the establishment of such bases as a dangerous development that can lead to war in the region and act against its neighboring countries, Ecuador and Venezuela, whose presidents have already denounced the installation of new U.S. military bases in Colombia.

Next: *Uribe's whirlwind tour to seven Latin American countries, the growing war threat against Ecuador and Venezuela, the UNASUR meeting.*

## Sit-down strikers, struggles continue

Continued from page 5

against a lot of the things people believe in here. We have Polish workers with us. They're our friends." (Wikinews, Aug. 2)

On Aug. 7, after Vestas secured a court eviction order, the last six sit-downers came out. While the 18-day occupation has ended, the struggle to stop these cuts in "green jobs" has not. Hundreds are maintaining a solidarity camp outside the plant. A rooftop occupation of another Vestas plant in nearby Cowes, begun Aug. 3, continues.

The sit-downs in Korea and the Isle of Wight were followed by a five-day sit-

down at the Thomas Cook travel agency in Dublin. The world-famous agency announced plans to close all its offices in Ireland, ending 77 jobs, even though its profits in 2008 rose by 50 percent. The sit-down strike ended only after 28 workers, most of them women and two of them pregnant, were arrested.

On Aug. 7, the British Broadcasting Corporation voiced the fears of world capitalism: "It is hardly surprising that a growing number of workers see sit-ins as the most direct and effective way of registering their protests. It is likely we should expect more." □

## Reportan al movimiento en Estados Unidos

# Voces de resistencia contra el golpe en Honduras

Por **Betsey Piette**  
Filadelfia

Los obreros/as y campesinos/as hondureños han protestado todos los días desde que el 28 de junio un golpe militar derrocara al presidente democráticamente electo Manuel Zelaya. Voces de resistencia de ese movimiento hablaron en Filadelfia el 31 de julio enfatizando la urgencia de que Zelaya sea reinstalado a su puesto y el golpe de estado sea derrocado.

Varios oradores expresaron su esperanza de derrocar el golpe, diciendo que a pesar de los gases lacrimógenos y los asesinatos, esta es la primera vez que han visto un nivel tan alto de unidad y determinación a resistir del pueblo hondureño.

Organizado por la Alianza Nacional de Comunidades de América Latina y el Caribe, (NALACC por sus siglas en inglés), la delegación de activistas por los derechos humanos primero visitó Washington, D. C., para presionar a representantes del gobierno de Estados Unidos a que suspendan inmediatamente toda ayuda financiera y militar al gobierno ilegal dirigido por Roberto Micheletti.

Oscar Chacón, Director Ejecutivo del NALACC enfatizó que la crisis hondureña es la prioridad para el movimiento de solidaridad, afirmando el peligro que este golpe representa, como una señal para acciones militares en otros países si no se le pone un alto pronto.

Berta Joubert-Ceci, quien ha escrito extensamente en WW/MO sobre la situ-

ación en Honduras, moderó la reunión, la cual fue copatrocinada por el Centro de Acción Internacional de Filadelfia, Prometheus Radio Project y Anarchist/Autonomous People of Color Philly.

Internacionalmente conocido, el médico hondureño y activista por los derechos humanos Dr. Juan Almendares culpó a las fuerzas militares entrenadas por la Escuela de las Américas estadounidense por el golpe, el cual está apoyado por el continuo rechazo del gobierno de Estados Unidos a suspender toda su ayuda.

Almendares hizo notar que el ex embajador estadounidense a Honduras, John Negroponte visitó Honduras a comienzos de junio y sostuvo conversaciones con las fuerzas envueltas en el golpe militar, incluyendo a líderes empresariales, jerarquía eclesiástica y el ejército.

Almendares criticó a la prensa estadounidense por promover el apoyo al golpe de estado al no reportar que amplios sectores de la población hondureña han apoyado el llamado de Zelaya para los cambios en la constitución, la cual históricamente ha discriminado contra las mujeres, indígenas y afrohondureños/as.

En el año 2001 Almendares recibió el Premio Barbara Chester por sus esfuerzos pioneros con prisioneros, víctimas de tortura, los/as pobres y la población indígena. Almendares, que es un sobreviviente de torturas, ha sido amenazado por los escuadrones de la muerte.

El Dr. Luther Castillo, nombrado el Doctor del Año por el capítulo en Tegucigalpa del club Rotary International, de-

scribió el impacto negativo del golpe de estado sobre los pueblos indígenas y la población Afrohondureña Garífuna en la costa Atlántica de donde él proviene.

Formado en la Escuela Latinoamericana de Medicina en Cuba, Castillo inició la construcción en Honduras del primer hospital rural garífuna que ha servido a más de 20.000 personas. Habló de la resistencia a los intentos de parte de los golpistas por cerrar el hospital y sobre un ataque contra los manifestantes que resultó en el asesinato de un joven maestro que recibió un disparo en la cabeza por los militares.

Los garífunas, que representan el 15 por ciento de la población de Honduras, son descendientes de africanos/as traídos a la zona en buques de esclavos hace 212 años. Sus antepasados nunca fueron esclavizados porque mataron a los amos esclavistas. Este espíritu de resistencia continúa hoy con la lucha de los garífunas contra la asimilación y ahora contra el golpe de estado.

El joven activista, periodista independiente y miembro de la organización de base hondureña Los Necios Gerardo Torres, describió cómo la gente pobre y trabajadora en Honduras se ha beneficiado de los cambios realizados por Zelaya, quien aumentó el salario mínimo y detuvo la privatización del agua y la electricidad.

“Las mismas personas que acusaron a Zelaya de tratar de mantenerse en el poder eran miembros de la Corte Suprema de Justicia que han estado en el poder por

29 años,” dijo Torres. “El golpe de estado en Honduras es un ejemplo para otros países y es clave para los intereses de los EEUU. Si EEUU quitara el apoyo a [los líderes] el golpe de estado, no durarían una semana”.

Abencio Fernández Pineda, coordinador de la ong Centro para la Investigación y Defensa de los Derechos Humanos en Honduras, describió el creciente problema de las amenazas de muerte contra las personas que se oponen a Micheletti. “Hay gente siendo asesinada, entre ellas un periodista asesinado debido a sus reportajes, y hay cinco casos de personas que están desaparecidas”, señaló Pineda.

Pineda también explicó que el toque de queda impuesto por la junta militar está siendo utilizado como una excusa para detener a las personas que se oponen al golpe de estado. “Todo se hace en el nombre de la ‘seguridad’. Cincuenta y cuatro personas fueron detenidas en las protestas de hoy, entre ellas mujeres y niños”.

María Luisa Jiménez, una ex oficial de policía que ha denunciado la corrupción, habló de su experiencia personal sobre lo que el ejército es capaz de hacer contra las personas que se oponen al golpe de estado. Describió los retenes de la policía y el ejército que han sido colocados en todo el país. “Hay escuadrones de la muerte paramilitares matando a la gente y las mujeres son detenidas y violadas”, dijo Jiménez. Empresas privadas de seguridad y fuerzas mercenarias, con la participación de más de 60.000 hombres armados, también operan en el país. □

## Haitianos/as ahogados/as al huir del régimen instalado por los Estados Unidos

Por **Caleb T. Maupin**

El 26 de julio doscientos haitianos/as viajaron abarrotados en un pequeño barco según los informes noticieros. Estaban tratando de escapar de un país que continúa ocupado por tropas extranjeras y cuyo pueblo sufre de una enorme pobreza y hambruna.

Un sobreviviente, Alces Julien, dijo que el barco había chocado contra un arrecife después de ver un barco de la policía cerca de las Islas Turcos y Caicos, y trataron de esconderse. (AP, 28 de julio) El barco se partió y cayeron al agua. Aunque más de 100 personas fueron rescatadas eventualmente, por lo menos 85 se ahogaron.

Innumerables haitianos/as se han ahogado al tratar de escapar de los resultados de la intervención estadounidense en su país y la imposición de su sistema “libre” de capitalismo desregulado.

El Haití de donde las 200 personas trataron de escapar es un país donde tropas de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas (ONU) patrullan las calles para mantener en el poder a un gobierno instalado por Estados Unidos. El presidente elegido, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, fue removido de su puesto por Estados Unidos

en febrero del 2004 en lo que los/as haitianos/as llaman un “golpe-secuestro”. Más tarde ese mismo año, una investigación hecha por la Facultad de Leyes de la Universidad de Miami encontró que las “ejecuciones sumarias”, en las cuales haitianos/as eran matados/as sin mediar un proceso legal, eran una “táctica policiaca” común. (“Haiti Human Rights Investigation”—11 a 21 de noviembre, 2004).

Aristide se había negado a vender industrias que eran propiedad del estado y demandó reparaciones al gobierno francés por sus crímenes contra el pueblo haitiano. Él fue secuestrado con la asistencia de la CIA y trasladado a África.

Cerca del 80 por ciento de los/as haitianos/as hoy en día vive debajo del nivel de pobreza según incluso el “Libro de hechos mundiales” [World Factbook], publicado por la CIA. Haití tiene la tasa de mortalidad infantil más alta en Latinoamérica y también el índice de longevidad más bajo. Sólo 52,9 por ciento de la población ha tenido suficiente educación para ser considerada alfabetizada.

Mientras la economía mundial continúa en crisis, el gobierno de Haití, respaldado por Estados Unidos, continúa privatizando las empresas estatales, forzando a que suba astronómicamente el desempleo porque los/as que trabajaban

en esas empresas han sido despedidos/as. La Confederación de Trabajadores Haitianos continúa sufriendo supresión por parte del gobierno por tratar de organizar a los/as trabajadores/as para que tengan una vida mejor, lo cual es supuestamente legal bajo la ley haitiana.

El 26 de julio—el mismo día en que el desafortunado barco salió de Haití—Cuba, otro país caribeño, estaba celebrando el aniversario de la rebelión de Moncada. Allí, fuerzas revolucionarias eventualmente destruyeron y derrocaron el capitalismo en Cuba y su programa resultó en empleo pleno, alfabetismo, y cuidado de salud, educación, y vivienda gratis para todos/as. □

## LIBERTAD PARA LOS CINCO CUBANOS



Gerardo Hernández Nordelo, Ramón Labañino Salazar, Rene González Schwerert, Antonio Guerrero Rodríguez y Fernando González Llort.

**Libertad para los cinco compatriotas cubanos que defendieron a su país del terrorismo y que ahora están presos en EE.UU. por evitar muertes en la isla.**