



As danger to Iran grows Anti-war groups to hit the streets

By John Catalinotto

The following are three important anti-imperialist events scheduled for the coming months. Workers World Party is supporting and participating in each of them.

FEB. 4: Emergency protest in 48 cities to stop war on Iran

U.S.-based anti-imperialist and anti-war organizations have called for protest demonstrations to stop U.S. aggression aimed at Iran on Feb. 4, calling it a "global day of action." As of Jan. 29, the movement had grown to include protests in 48 U.S. cities, plus cities in five other countries.

The demonstrators demand, in a leaflet posted on a few of the endorsing organizations' websites: "No war, no sanctions, no intervention, no assassinations against Iran."

While the organizations involved have varied assessments of the Iranian government, they all see that any intervention by U.S. imperialism in the oil-rich Asian country not only threatens the Iranian people, but could also be a stepping stone to a much wider war in Asia.

Activists in Iran are also concerned about these dangers. The Iranian organization called The House of Latin America has been contacting its friends in the Western Hemisphere to work toward actions on Feb. 4.

Workers World spoke on Jan. 28 with Sara Flounders, co-director of the International Action Center, one of the original organizations to call for the Feb. 4 action.

"The quick response to the emergency action shows deep apprehension about the threat of war," said Flounders. "Different combinations of the endorsing groups have already called for actions in 48 cities around the United States. Each of these groups has its own political program and analysis of the world situation, but they have agreed to give priority to fighting against this new and possibly devastating war that threatens humanity.

"Sometimes people in the U.S. fail to see that sanctions are in themselves an act of war. Those the U.S. and the United Nations carried out against Iraq from 1990 to 2003 cost the lives of more than 1 million Iraqis, including at least half a million children. The Iran sanction measures also impose sanctions on any country that doesn't go along with the U.S. blockade. This drives up oil prices and threatens to unhinge the economies of the poorest countries.

"International support, considering the short time span, has been good," continued the IAC leader. "Demonstrations are planned in Ireland, Norway,

Continued on page 4

MESSAGE FROM WORKERS WORLD PARTY

WHAT WILL STOP IMPERIALISM

Jan. 31 — These are dangerous times. The political and diplomatic maneuvering that precedes military action is growing, with the U.S. government in the forefront of trying to round up support for new imperialist interventions.

We in the United States have a special obligation to stay the hands of the war hawks, because the Pentagon, in our name and sucking up our money, is the most aggressive and destructive force in the world today.

That's why Workers World Party is in complete solidarity with all the anti-war actions that are demanding: No war on Iran! No intervention in Syria! U.S.-NATO out of Libya! End the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq now! Bring U.S. troops and special ops home from Korea, Guantanamo, Pakistan, Somalia and everywhere else!

But taking action to oppose imperialist wars and occupations is not an issue for the anti-war movement alone. Everyone in the United States who is suffering from

or just worrying about the deep economic problems affecting the millions here needs to understand that the war threats are intimately connected with imperialist plunder abroad and capitalist exploitation at home.

Moreover, it is only when the war-makers in Washington fear a massive response to their lethal decisions that we can hope to pull them back from the brink.

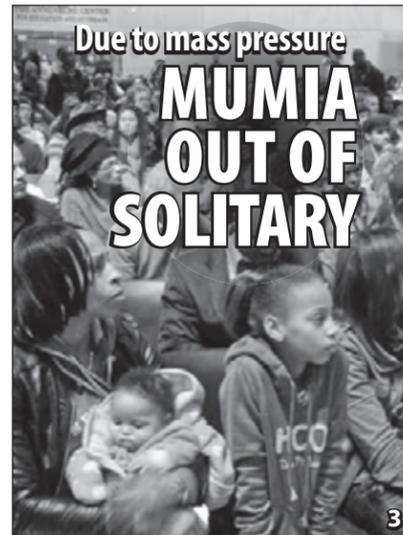
It is clear from the many anti-war and anti-imperialist demands of those attracted to the Occupy movement that such a consciousness is growing in this country.

So we are in a race for time. Which will come first — another war or the explosive growth of anti-war sentiment among the people, especially the working class and oppressed?

Capitalist economic crisis fuels war drive

The deepening capitalist economic crisis is fueling an increase

Continued on page 10



Free Mumia rally, Dec. 9, Philadelphia. WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE



BLACK HISTORY MONTH
IDA B. WELLS
freedom fighter

ONE, TWO, MANY OCCUPIES 6-7

► Mass arrests in Oakland, Calif. ► Philadelphia solidarity with Egypt ► Wisconsin & MLK Day ► Retiree encampment in W.Va.



WW PHOTO: TERRI KAY

Subscribe to Workers World

- 4 weeks trial \$4
- 1 year subscription \$30
- Sign me up for the WWP Supporter Program.

For more information: workers.org/supporters/
212.627.2994 www.workers.org

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

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

REMEMBERING IDA B. WELLS

A fighter for African Americans, women

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

On July 16, 1862, Ida B. Wells-Barnett was born into the antebellum slave system in Holly Springs, Miss. Wells-Barnett, who died on March 25, 1931, during the Great Depression, is still recognized as one of the early pioneers in the struggle against lynching and for the rights of African Americans, women and the working poor.

During late 2011, an effort was undertaken by her great-granddaughter, Michelle Duster, to have a sculpture placed in the location where a housing project named after the anti-lynching activist once stood on Chicago's South Side. The Ida B. Wells Homes opened in 1941. It was one of the New Deal-era Public Works Administration construction projects.

The Wells Homes suffered the same fate as other U.S. public housing projects. In the decades after World War II, when larger numbers of African Americans migrated from the southern states to the northern industrial regions, racist employment and residential practices led to the systematic segregation of urban areas.

Both de jure and de facto segregation stemmed from the conscious policies of the U.S. ruling class to divide the working class in order to continue the superexploitation of the African-American population. Housing projects, although considered progressive for providing low-income residences when they were first built during the mid-20th century, later became the dumping grounds for African Americans.

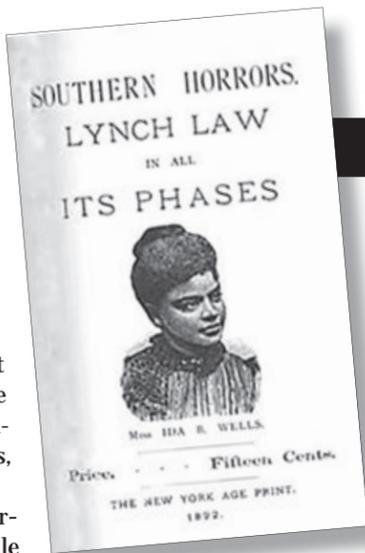
The Wells Homes, which consisted of 1,662 units with more than 860 apartments and nearly 800 row houses, deteriorated over the decades. By the 1990s, the area had become a center for drug activity, gang-related crime and violence rooted in poverty.

The Associated Press noted in an article: "In an infamous 1994 case, two boys, ages 10 and 11, dropped a 5-year-old boy to his death from a vacant 14th floor apartment. The boys were convicted on juvenile murder charges." (Associated Press, Dec. 30)

This case gained nationwide attention and illustrated the conditions under which millions of African Americans lived in urban areas. The same article stated, "The same year two neighborhood teenagers produced an award-winning radio documentary, 'Ghetto-Life 101,' which aired on National Public Radio."

Eventually by 2002, the final buildings at the Wells Homes were torn down. Other housing projects in Chicago such as the Robert Taylor Homes and Cabrini Green would also be razed in a federal and local government program purportedly aimed at eliminating blight and encouraging more humane living conditions for low-income city dwellers.

Nonetheless, the government policies of eliminating public housing and refusing to invest adequate sums of public money into building low- and moderate-income housing contributed significantly to the burgeoning problem of homelessness as well as foreclosures and evictions. Today, the lack of quality, affordable housing



BLACK HISTORY 2012

is one of the most serious problems facing working and oppressed people under capitalism.

A living legacy

It was not until the emergence of the campaign launched by Wells during the early 1890s that there was widespread attention given to the genocidal wave of terror inflicted on African Americans centered

in the U.S. South, but not necessarily limited to this region. Wells, whose parents had been enslaved, studied at Shaw University and eventually became a primary school teacher in Mississippi as well as in Shelby County, Tenn.

Her parents died in the yellow fever epidemic of the late 1870s, which struck Mississippi and southwest Tennessee. Soon, Wells went to Memphis to live with the widow of her uncle, who had also perished during the yellow fever epidemic.

During her tenure as a school teacher in Woodstock, Tenn., in 1884, she became embroiled in a racial segregation lawsuit after the young educator was forcibly removed from a ladies' coach reserved for whites-only on the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad. After filing suit in the Circuit Court and winning a favorable judgment against the railroad company, the firm appealed to the State Supreme Court of Tennessee, having the lower court's decision overturned against Wells.

As a teacher in Memphis, Wells participated in the social life of the African-American community during this period. She joined a lyceum where she read poetry, essays and engaged in debates on the issues of the times. After making an impression on her colleagues at the lyceum, she was asked to take over the editorship of their literary journal, the Evening Star.

Later, she would take partial control of the Free Speech and Headlight newspaper in Memphis. This was a period of flowering for numerous African-American newspapers which covered issues the white-dominated corporate publications would never address.

Eventually, she would take full control of the newspaper then called the Free Speech. It was during the course of building her reputation as a newspaper publisher and editor that a murderous act of mob violence in Memphis would change the course of the life of Ida B. Wells. While away from Memphis on newspaper business in Natchez, Miss., word came to Wells of the lynching of Thomas Moss, Calvin McDowell and Henry Stewart, all of whom were friends of the Free Speech editor.

According to published newspaper reports of the period, the three African-American men had wounded three whites who had unlawfully entered a store Wells' friends owned in order to carry out a robbery. The three Black men were arrested and placed in the Shelby County jail, where some days later a select group of whites were admitted by the authorities inside the lock-up in order to

Continued on page 3

WORKERS WORLD this week...

★ In the U.S.

- Anti-war groups to hit the streets 1
- Remembering Ida B. Wells 2
- Mumia transferred to general population 3
- Military court frees last Marine in Haditha massacre 4
- Student loans approach \$1 trillion 5
- On the picket line 5
- Occupy Oakland tries to open vacant building 6
- Struggle continues at Longview 6
- Retirees camp outside aluminum plant 6
- Wisconsin Occupy movement spreads 7
- Ojibwe reject mine land grab 7
- Philly marks Egypt uprising 7

★ Around the world

- European strikes against austerity 8
- Attacks rise against imperialist-backed regime 9
- Hondurans organize amid growing repression 9
- Kim Jong Il's contributions to People's Korea 11

★ Editorials

- What will stop imperialism 1

★ Noticias En Español

- Panama: Huelga histórica 12

Workers World

55 West 17 Street
New York, N.Y. 10011
Phone: 212.627.2994
E-mail: ww@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org
Vol. 54, No. 5 • Feb. 9, 2012
Closing date: Jan. 31, 2012
Editor: Deirdre Griswold
Technical Editor: Lal Roohk
Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell, Leslie Feinberg, Kris Hamel, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson
West Coast Editor: John Parker
Contributing Editors: Abayomi Azikiwe, Greg Butterfield, Jaimeson Champion, G. Dunkel, Fred Goldstein, Teresa Gutierrez, Larry Hales, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Cheryl LaBash, Milt Neidenberg, Bryan G. Pfeifer, Betsey Piette, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Gloria Rubac
Technical Staff: Sue Davis, Shelley Ettinger, Bob McCubbin, Maggie Vascassenno
Mundo Obrero: Carl Glenn, Teresa Gutierrez, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Donna Lazarus, Michael Martínez, Carlos Vargas
Supporter Program: Sue Davis, coordinator

Copyright © 2011 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: \$30; institutions: \$35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from University Microfilms International, 300 Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

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

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to

Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., 5th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10011.

JOIN US

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

National Office
55 W. 17 St.
New York, NY 10011
212.627.2994
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta
P.O. Box 5565
Atlanta, GA 30307
404.627.0185
atlanta@workers.org

Baltimore
c/o Solidarity Center
2011 N. Charles St.
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
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
919.322.9970
durham@workers.org

Houston
P.O. Box 3454
Houston, TX 77253-3454
713.503.2633
houston@workers.org

Los Angeles
1905 Rodeo Rd.
Los Angeles, CA 90018
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
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

Due to mass pressure

Mumia transferred to general population

By Berta Joubert-Ceci
Philadelphia

After more than 30 years in the chambers of death, political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal has been released into the general prison population. Finally, as of Jan. 27, he is now able to embrace his loved ones and shake the hands of all those who have supported him in the struggle for freedom.

In a short message sent to his spouse, Wadiya Jamal, Mumia said: "My dear friends, brothers and sisters — I want to thank you for your real hard work and support. I am no longer on death row, no longer in the hole, I'm in population. This is only part one and I thank you all for the work you've done. But the struggle is for freedom!"

On Dec. 7, Philadelphia District Attorney Seth Williams announced that he had abandoned pursuing the death sentence for Mumia after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against the DA's appeal to reinstate Mumia's death sentence. On Dec. 9, a standing-room-only event at the Philadelphia Convention Center drew an unprecedented number of people, young and old, especially from the city, to demand his freedom.

Days later, Abu-Jamal was transferred from the infamous SCI Greene to the supposedly less restrictive prison, SCI Mahanoy, just 100 miles from his hometown of Philadelphia. But what should have been an automatic transfer into general population turned into a yet more restrictive and cruel environment.

For seven long weeks, Mumia was held in solitary confinement or "the hole," with no access to news, bright lights on all the time, wrists and ankles shackled when he was out of his cell and many more conditions far more severe than the ones on death row. What was called "Administrative Custody" in the "Restrictive Housing Unit" was indeed a form of torture that elicited a major national and international response.

As soon as Mumia supporters found out about the cruel conditions, a campaign

started to get him into general population.

An online petition campaign was initiated, which rapidly drew 5,000 signatures demanding not only the release of Mumia from solitary confinement, but the closing of all restrictive housing units around the U.S. On Jan. 26, before delivering these signatures and letters from legal organizations and Mumia supporters to Secretary John Wetzel at the Department of Corrections headquarters in Camp Hill, Pa., dozens of Mumia supporters held a press conference in Philadelphia.

Exposing horror of U.S. prisons

The press conference was a vivid example of the significance of the struggle to free Mumia. The various speakers represented prisoners and their families, community activists, lawyers, educators and Mumia advocates, showing the broad spectrum of the struggle against the prison-industrial complex and the cruelty of the system. Each speaker added a piece to the quilt that is U.S. imprisonment.

Pam Africa, well-known spokeswoman of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, opened the conference by introducing the chair, King Downing, of the American Friends Service Committee.

Several political prisoners spoke through a moving video describing the horrible conditions that they are subjected to as punishment for their activism. The video stated that on any given day as many as 200,000 people endure solitary confinement in U.S. prisons; that up to 80 percent are people of color and 60 percent have mental illness. It was reported and repeated several times that, according

to the U.N. Human Rights Committee, prolonged solitary confinement is torture.

Ramona Africa, Minister of Communications of the MOVE organization, said that the reason Mumia was in the "hole" was due to the fury that the state has "because they could not legally kill him."

Setting the tone for the media event, she reminded the audience that it is the people who have the real power, but it must be used to continue the fight. She concluded her remarks calling for the freedom of all political prisoners.

Prisoners' relatives spoke like Theresa Shoatz, daughter of Russell Maroon Shoats, a former Black Panther Party and Black Liberation Army member who has been incarcerated in Pennsylvania prisons for almost 40 years — 30 of them in solitary. She spoke not only about the ordeal her father and the whole family have gone through, but how more than 15 young men in their 20s hung themselves in one year alone, because they were in 23-hour lockdown in SCI Greene. Also speaking was Karen Ali, an activist and spouse of prisoner Omar Askia Ali, who has been incarcerated for over 40 years.

Johanna Fernandez, "Justice on Trial" filmmaker and professor, described vividly her conversations with Maroon Shoats, who likened Mumia to Frederick Douglass and himself to Nat Turner. Shoats told her that the prison authorities, in the current climate of struggle brought about by the Occupy movement, would never allow Mumia and him together in SCI Greene general population. Indeed, six days later, Mumia was transferred.

Attorney Rachel Wolkenstein spoke on Mumia's fight to get into general population, a move that was delayed with bogus excuses by the prison like demanding that his dreadlocks be cut and that he give a blood sample and also that they were waiting for the papers about resentencing. Finally, these excuses were all dropped.



FREE MUMIA

Lawyer Michael Coard stated, "We don't go to court to get justice; we go to court to expose the injustice." He delineated the three approaches of legal action on behalf of Mumia: "At the international level, based on the human rights violation law that states that 'solitary confinement' is torture, and torture is a violation of human rights; at the federal level, based on the Eighth Amendment that prohibits cruel and unusual punishment, which his continued, ongoing incarceration constitutes; and at the state level, based on Article 1, section 13, which says the same and even more than the Eighth Amendment." Coard concluded that the ultimate remedy is to remove Mumia from prison.

Other speakers were Suzanne Ross of the Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Coalition (NYC) and Heidi Boghosian, director of the National Lawyers Guild. They spoke on the fightback and the campaigns to free Mumia. Sandra Jones, of the Delaware Campaign to End the Death Penalty, and Darryl Jordan, from AFSC, also spoke on their organizations' work.

Although the fight continues until Mumia is free, this has been a victory thanks to the relentless fight of the ICFMAJ and the supporters at the international and national level. The increase of support in Philadelphia, demonstrated by the significant turnout at the Dec. 9 event, has been a major factor in the turning point of the struggle. The next big action will be on April 24, Mumia's birthday. That day will be Occupy the Justice Department in Washington, D.C. Free Mumia and ALL political prisoners! □

Ida B. Wells: A fighter for African Americans, women

Continued from page 2

remove Moss, McDowell and Stewart.

The men were forced onto a switch engine rail car which ran in back of the county jail. The three were taken one mile north of Memphis city limits and shot to death by the white mob.

Wells was outraged by the killings and wrote fiery editorials denouncing the authorities in Memphis for allowing such actions to take place without any attempts to prosecute the perpetrators. While she was away on a speaking tour, the offices

of the Free Speech were ransacked and destroyed.

Wells wrote in her autobiography: "I had bought a pistol the first thing after Tom Moss was lynched, because I expected some cowardly retaliation from the lynchers. I felt that one had better die fighting against injustice than to die like a dog or a rat in a trap." (Wells-Barnett, Crusade for Justice, p. 62)

Wells never returned to Memphis to live after the destruction of her offices. She would travel throughout England,

Scotland and Wales in 1893-94, speaking on the atrocities being committed against African Americans in the U.S. She would continue as a newspaper writer and public lecturer for the remaining years of her life.

In 1895, she would publish the first serious study on the problem of racially-motivated mob violence. This book was entitled "A Red Record: Tabulated Statistics and Alleged Causes of Lynchings in the United States, 1892-1893-1894."

In 1895, Wells married attorney Ferdinand Lee Barnett, the founder of the Conservator, the first African-American newspaper in Chicago. She was an early proponent of women's suffrage. In Chicago, where she re-located to live the remainder of her life, she worked as a leader in the African-American women's club movement, the Equal Rights League and the Negro Fellowship League.

The Ida B. Wells Commemorative Committee is attempting to raise \$300,000 in donations to complete the project honoring her. Chicago artist Richard Hunt has been commissioned to create the sculpture, which will combine an image of Wells along with her writings.

Michelle Duster said of the project: "I

want people to remember Ida B. Wells the woman, not Ida B. Wells the housing community. Something should be done to remember who she was." (AP, Dec. 30)

Duster went on to comment: "I think who she was as a woman got lost when it was attached to the housing projects. Her name and what she did can't be lost with the housing project." □



JAILHOUSE LAWYERS Prisoners defending prisoners v. the U.S.A.

by Mumia Abu-Jamal

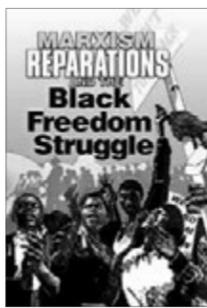
Available at: freemumia.com/?page_id=60 and bookstores around the country

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 & Poverty in the Delta** Larry Hales **Haiti Needs Reparations, Not Sanctions** Pat Chin Available at Amazon.com and bookstores around the country www.workers.org/reparations/



COVER GRAPHIC: SAHU BARRON

Anti-war actions, meetings set for early 2012

Continued from page 1

India, Bangladesh and Canada.”

People can follow developments on the Facebook link: No War On Iran: National Day of Action Feb 4, tinyurl.com/883f7jg. There will also be updates, giving times and places of demonstrations, at the International Action Center website: iacenter.org.

MARCH 23-25: UNAC national antiwar conference

Hundreds of anti-war activists are expected to attend the United National Antiwar Coalition's National Conference in Stamford, Conn., March 23-25.

UNAC established itself as a major anti-war coalition in the summer of 2010 when 800 people gathered for a conference in Albany, N.Y. At that meeting, a large majority voted to support UNAC's anti-imperialist positions opposing U.S. intervention against Iran and condemning U.S. support for the Israeli settler-state.

The group held major anti-war demonstrations, a march of 10,000 people from Union Square to downtown Manhattan on April 9 and a march of 3,000 people in San Francisco on April 10. Demonstrations were also held on the 10th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan.

UNAC says this will be “a conference to challenge the wars of the 1% against the 99% abroad and at home” and to “say NO! to the NATO/G8 wars and poverty

agenda.” (unacpeace.org) One of the main tasks of the conference will be to plan protest activities in Chicago when both NATO and the G8 are holding summits May 15-22.

A series of workshops and plenaries at the March 23-25 conference will take up questions including the Occupy Wall Street movement, the global economic crisis, anti-Islam bigotry, the movements that sprang up in Tunisia and Egypt and spread throughout the Middle East, and U.S. intervention in many parts of the world, including Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as Latin America and Africa.

UNAC says its conference will highlight “the relationship between the wars abroad and the racist war at home on the Black Community” and “the way in which mobilizing around these issues is central to effective movement building.”

May 19: Protest the G8 and NATO in Chicago

Whoever plans summits for the imperialist gangsters dominating and plundering the world decided that it was a good idea, after the October 2010 NATO summit, to hold summits for both the G8 economic centers (the old G7 plus Russia) and the NATO military powers in Chicago on May 15-22.

The summits were planned before the so-called debt crisis and austerity measures opened a new recession in Europe



— and provoked a fightback from European workers along with the rise of the “Indignant People's movement.” It was also long before the Occupy movement began to change the political discourse in the United States and put youth on the streets — with banners and political discussion — in more than 100 cities.

By last summer anti-war forces in the U.S., many of them in UNAC, began to organize protests for that week in May. They submitted requests for permits to the Chicago police. They organized a struggle around the right to demonstrate, appealing under the name of the Coalition

Against the NATO and G8 War & Poverty Agenda (CANG8).

On Jan. 12, the City of Chicago granted the permit for suitable marches and rallies. Organizers took note, however, of a clause that allows the City to rescind the permit should there be a demand from Homeland Security to do so. CANG8 and all supporters of the right to protest say they will remain mobilized to fight for that right.

Meanwhile, the imperialists scaled down their summits so that the G8 will meet May 19-20 and NATO May 20-21. CANG8 will hold a “People's Alternate Summit” on May 12-13 and a mass rally and march on May 19. The entire week will be filled with meetings and protests.

On Jan. 25, Adbusters, the Canada-based network associated with the Occupy movement, issued Tactical Briefing #25, urging massive support for the May actions.

Besides a growing movement within the U.S. that supports the protests in Chicago, the joint meeting of NATO and G8 has aroused international indignation. Already the organizers of the Chicago actions have opened discussions with anti-war forces in other countries to arrange solidarity actions — either to participate in Chicago or to hold mass actions in their home countries.

For more information, visit unacpeace.org, cang8.wordpress.com or iacenter.org.

Compounding the crime

Military court frees last Marine in Haditha massacre

By G. Dunkel

In November 2005, a squad of U.S. Marines made a night raid on homes in Haditha, Iraq. They shot and killed at close range 24 unarmed civilians — children, women and even a man in a wheelchair, most in their night clothes. The Marine Corps claimed the civilians had been killed in a gun battle between the troops and “insurgents.” It wasn't until the next year, after Time magazine uncovered the story, that the Marine Corps started a criminal investigation.

The Associated Press on Aug. 2, 2006, reported that an unnamed Pentagon official said the investigation had uncovered evidence that “supports accusations that U.S. Marines deliberately shot civilians, including unarmed men, women and children.” Eight Marines were charged with crimes.

But as the cases wore on, the charges were dropped against six of them, including a lieutenant colonel. In June 2008, a Marine intelligence officer was tried by a seven-member jury of officers and acquitted of covering up the killings by destroying evidence.

This year, the last Marine still charged in the case, which became known as the



To see more graphic photos from the investigation of this crime, where unarmed men, women and children were killed while in their beds, go to tinyurl.com/6wktotx

Haditha Massacre, was allowed to plead guilty to “dereliction of duty,” although he had originally been charged with murder. Squad leader, Staff Sgt. Frank Wuterich, who had told his men to “shoot first and ask questions later,” was sentenced to a loss of rank — with no jail time.

This verdict set off a wave of revulsion and anger throughout Iraq. One Iraqi told CNN: “This soldier should be executed. The verdict is unfair and unjust for the innocent people who were killed in this incident.” Another commented: “They were just civilian people who did not raise weapons against the occupiers and they

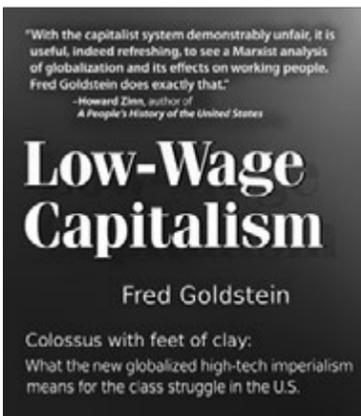
were killed this way. This is a heinous crime and the soldiers should get the most severe punishment.”

Ali Latif, a commentator on the British Iraqi Forum, said: “Even by Iraq's post-war bloody standards, the Haditha massacre shocked a nation and the world. The cold-blooded killing of 24 civilians by a U.S. army unit epitomized the callous disregard for life that many Iraqis experienced during the years of occupation. This has obviously not registered with ... the U.S. justice system.”

Most of the media coverage of this massacre has focused on the rank-and-file

Marines and left out the responsibility of those in command, who were tasked with crushing any Iraqi resistance to the U.S. occupation of the country. For the first two years of the occupation, Haditha was a center of resistance. Massacres like Haditha were a deliberate tool the occupiers used to establish control in Iraq.

The fact that the decisions in these cases of mass murder were made by U.S. military courts rather than Iraqi courts is just another proof that the imperialists permit Iraq no sovereignty, even when the “government” there was set up by the U.S. occupation. □



LOW-WAGE CAPITALISM

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

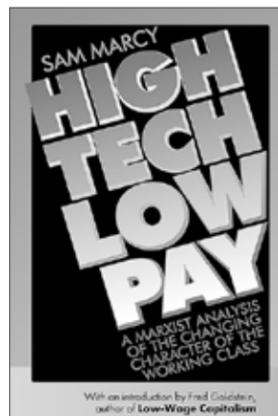
An easy-to-read analysis of the roots of the current global economic crisis, its implications for workers and oppressed peoples, and the strategy needed for future struggle.

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

The author is available for lectures & interviews.

www.LowWageCapitalism.com

Available at Amazon & bookstores around the country



HIGH TECH, LOW PAY

A Marxist analysis of the changing character of the working class

More than 20 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. Using Marxism as a living tool he analyzes the trends and offers strategies for labor including the occupation of plants.

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.

Available at Amazon & bookstores around the country.

www.workers.org/marcy/hightech/

Student loans approach \$1 trillion

By G. Dunkel

As the total student debt in the United States exceeds a trillion dollars, more than the total credit card debt, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York (USA Today, Oct. 25), some financial analysts are pointing out that another bubble has been created — for borrowers.

Students are graduating with more than \$25,000 in debt on average, according to the latest figures from 2008. Since these figures are old, only being collected every four years, all the other available data — tuition increases, a decline in family income, lower wages — point to an even higher figure for indebtedness.

More than two-thirds of all students — in public as well as private institutions — need loans to pay for their costs. It is the most prevalent way of paying for higher education.

A big reason for youth taking on all this college debt is to transport themselves across the sea of a college education to the other shore where their credentials will enable them to get a “middle-class” job. While the unemployment rate for people with a college degree, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, is 4.1 percent, the rate for recent college graduates is 9.1 percent. (projectonstudentdebt.org)

What these figures mean is that about 10 percent of recent college grads can't find a job, any job, much less one that uses, or requires, their expensively acquired skills.

The debt that is incurred by graduate or professional school students is often substantially higher. According to statistics from the Department of Education, debts over \$150,000 are not unheard of.

The solution a lot of politicians promote for getting out of poverty and finding a “good” job is education. But it doesn't seem to be working.

Rather than employers bearing the cost and risks, such as training workers in a technology that can quickly become obsolete, they have managed to shove those costs and risks off on the individual student looking to become a skilled worker.

The federal government guarantees a lot of student loans, mainly through Sally Mae, a government sponsored corporation that started as a nonprofit but became a very profitable private enterprise in 2004. The banks that handle student loan processing find it very profitable, because these loans can't be discharged by bankruptcy, only by death.

With refinancing and paying off the interest that accumulates — raising the total cost of the loan — many students don't finish paying for their education until they reach their forties. If they started



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

Students across country are resisting cuts. Here, New York City.

their higher education late, some even have to put off their retirement.

Student loans are not guaranteed by a house or a car, like the other common situations that lead people to take on debt; they are based on what a person can earn, and pressure is put on individuals to do nothing that hinders their earning enough to pay off their loans, such as joining the struggle to organize a union.

Because access to higher education and the jobs that it promises are based on an individual's ability to pay for it, persons coming from communities of color or working-class backgrounds have to take on higher debt. Because of racism they have more trouble finding a “good” job when they graduate.

The last 30 years have seen an explosion in student debt and a corresponding erosion of public financing of higher education in the U.S. Public universities are expected to finance themselves from tuition and other student fees and by using more part-time, contingent teachers and staff, who are paid far less than regular faculty and receive fewer, if any, benefits.

Politicians and appointed, high-paid managers of higher education have proposed all manner of tweaks for dealing with the rising costs of a college education.

Students in the Occupy Wall Street movement have proposed a simpler solution — cancel all student debt and make public higher education free.

See “Academic Freedom and Indentured Students” by Jeffrey J. Williams in *Academe Online January-February 2012*. (aaup.org)



INVEST IN WORKERS WORLD NEWSPAPER

- If you know from reading WW that capitalism is at a dead end.
- If you're sick and tired of the bankers and bosses making the workers pay for the economic crisis they didn't create.
- If you want to fight for a better way of life based on economic planning and equitable distribution of wealth.
- If you're lucky enough to still have a job.

Then invest your hard-earned dollars in Workers World and help us put out one of the only remaining left weeklies in the U.S. that's still printed as well as on the Web. We're determined to keep issuing a printed edition to hand out to people looking for answers at Occupy sites, demonstrations and street corners.

For the past 35 years WW subscribers have helped maintain the paper by joining the WW Supporter Program. We invite you to sign up today!

Choose a Supporter Program option:

- \$75 to become a WW Supporter.
- \$100 Enclosed to become a WW Sponsor.
- \$300 Enclosed to become a WW Sustainer.
- One time donation of \$ _____.
- Please send information about the Supporter Program.

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Clip & return to **Workers World Newspaper**
55 W. 17th St., 5th Fl., NY, NY 10011

On The Picket Line

By Sue Davis

A first for Cablevision workers: union representation

In a first for Cablevision, its installation workers in Brooklyn, N.Y., voted 180 to 86 on Jan. 27 to join Communication Workers Local 1109. But first they had to buck strong company opposition, which included an internal website called “Why Union Free?” and the requirement that workers attend anti-union meetings. The workers in the mostly nonunionized industry joined CWA because their wages are more than 30 percent lower than those of Verizon workers, whom CWA represents; they have been subject to arbitrary discipline and the company has refused to meet with them to hear their grievances; and they want better health and retirement benefits. The union campaign got outside help when supporters like the Rev. Al Sharpton and New York City public advocate, Bill de Blasio, signed a letter in mid-January telling the company to “respect Cablevision workers' right to organize free from harassment and intimidation.” (New York Times, Jan. 27)

Nat'l protest of Cooper Tire lockout

Jan. 14 was a National Day of Action at more than 125 tire stores around the country. This was called to show solidarity with 1,051 members of Steelworkers Local 2071 who were locked out at Cooper Tire's Findlay, Ohio, plant on Nov. 18. When the company was floundering in 2008, USW members agreed to sacrifice \$31.2 million in concessions in their three-year contract. Since 2009, the state of Ohio granted \$2.5 million in subsidies to shore up the company. That allowed Cooper to recover, with \$448 million in operating profits and \$360 million in before-tax income. To reward themselves, the top five executives split \$9.5 million — the CEO gave himself a 211 percent raise — and awarded management with two salary hikes and double bonuses. What did they offer the workers? More concessions. No wonder the workers voted down the contract. That's when corporate greed went into high gear, and Cooper locked out its highly skilled workforce and hired out-of-state scabs. The USW has taken its case to the National Labor Relations Board, charging Cooper with unfair labor practices in bargaining and imposing the lockout. But the workers and their supporters aren't waiting for the NLRB. They're taking this blatant example of corporate greed directly to the 99%. Boycott Cooper Tires! (thestand.org, Jan. 17)

Students fight sweatshop conditions in Cambodia

When members of the Ohio State University chapter of United Students Against Sweatshops found out that the university was negotiating to sign a 10-year deal with Silver Star Merchandising — the Dallas Cowboys' merchandising unit — they immediately investigated how the apparel was made. They discovered that Cambodian workers are forced to work 10-hour days, six days a week, for a pittance — just 29 cents per hour. Ironically, their monthly take-home pay amounts to \$100 — the cost of one Dallas Cowboys jacket! ESPN aired a story in early January about the hostile work environment, where supervisors yell at and insult the mostly female workforce for talking to co-workers or taking too long in the bathroom. USAS has started a campaign to expose these sweatshop conditions and stop other universities from considering deals with Silver Star. (usas.org, Jan. 8) If you want to be truly inspired by USAS, which is celebrating its 15th anniversary in February, read about the 11 campaigns, detailed on its website, where the students helped workers win their rights in 2011.

Picket Trader Joe's to support tomato workers

The Community/Farmworker Alliance NYC — one of many groups working around the country to support the Coalition of Immokalee Workers — has called a protest at New York's Union Square store on Feb. 12 to demand the national supermarket chain sign an agreement with CIW to pay at least one penny more per pound for tomatoes that the mostly immigrant workers pick. The CIW national campaign to end sweatshop conditions in Florida's tomato fields has successfully convinced corporate giants like McDonald's and Whole Foods to join the CIW cause. But TJ's has resisted CIW for nearly two years. What takes the cake now is that TJ's is opening its first Florida store on Immokalee Road, only 35 miles from CIW headquarters! The coalition plans to protest there Feb. 10-12, and as of Jan. 30, protests are planned in 33 cities. To sign a petition demanding that TJ's CEO, Dan Bane, support the campaign, visit sumofus.org. To find out more about CIW and locate a protest near you, visit ciw-online.org. □

Occupy Oakland tries to open vacant building, hundreds arrested

By Terri Kay
Oakland, Calif.

Some 2,000-plus Occupy Oakland participants were met with heavy police violence and hundreds of arrests on Jan. 28 as they marched on the long-vacant Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center. The group had been planning the building occupation for several months.

Dubbed "Move-In Day," the intention was to turn the building into a "social center, convergence center, headquarters, free kitchen and place of housing for Occupy Oakland." Organizers had described their plan in an open letter to Oakland's mayor, Jean Quan; the Oakland Police Department; and the Oakland City Council.

Occupy Oakland has maintained a strong presence at Oscar Grant Plaza, even though the city busted up its encampment there. It has held general assemblies, fed the homeless and hosted multiple other meetings and activities. People there have been constantly harassed and picked up by police for minor "offenses" such as holding an umbrella — considered a form of tent or structure — or feeding the homeless without a license. This plus the inclement winter weather motivated the planned move-in event.

Protesters marched peacefully through



WW PHOTO: TERRI KAY

Occupiers wanted to turn vacant building into a community center. Picture shows crowd before police attack.

the streets of Oakland, their sound truck blasting celebratory music, towards the building. After one route was blocked by police, the marchers filed around the back way, through Laney College, without incident.

When we arrived at the building, we were met by police in riot gear protecting the abandoned building from the likes

of Occupy. As the crowd tried to find a way to enter, tearing down some sections of chain-link fencing, the cops started launching smoke bombs and tear gas.

City management was determined to keep the Occupy movement from having a home or center of operations. Never mind that the building had been abandoned by the city, and Occupy was ready to fix it up and use it to serve the community.

A group of parents with their children had pulled back to protect themselves from police violence. Out of nowhere some riot cops appeared and started pushing at them, one swinging his club. The group included young children and a woman with a baby.

The crowd was forced to move on to Plan B, another identified abandoned building. Again, riot cops blocked the streets, throwing flash-bang grenades and firing rubber bullets, bean bags and tear gas at the protesters.

The people marched back to Oscar Grant Plaza to regroup. After resting and eating, they had a short meeting and decided to make one more attempt to occupy another building. The cops surrounded and tried to "kettle" them. ("Kettle" is a word that originated in Britain and is now used here to describe police trapping demonstrators in a small area.) They broke free by tearing down a fence.

Blocks later, the cops successfully kettled a group of 300 to 400. Many tried

to run into the still-open YMCA but were met by more cops at the back door as they tried to exit. The cops arrested this entire crowd of up to 400, with many reporting injuries from police batons.

Occupy Oakland's Move-In Committee said in a statement: "Occupy Oakland's building occupation, an act of civil disobedience, was disrupted by a brutal police response yesterday. Protesters were met with baton strikes, shot with rubber bullets and exposed to tear gas along the route. Police immediately issued denials that tear gas was used; however, as many victims can attest, it was used freely and without regard to safety of the diverse crowd, which included families and children. ... These actions from the OPD come at a time when the city of Oakland is laying off hundreds of workers, and following millions of wasted dollars in similar brutal police actions."

Solidarity demonstrations took place the next day by more than 21 Occupies all over the U.S. and Canada. In Iowa, more than 100 members of Occupy Des Moines set up an encampment at People's Park at the Iowa State Capitol in solidarity with Occupy Oakland. Occupy Oakland planned to continue its teach-ins and meetings despite the arrests and repression. They have asked for donations to bail out the hundreds arrested. For information, Google "Occupy Oakland Bail Fund." □

Struggle continues at Longview

As of Jan. 30, negotiations are still in process between the International Longshore and Warehouse Union and the union-busting grain and food cartel, EGT. Rank-and-file workers from various ILWU locals on the West Coast, including Local 10 in the Bay Area, plus Occupy organizations, remain mobilized to defend the longshore workers in Longview, Wash. EGT had tried to break a coastwide agreement with the ILWU, originally won after years of militant struggle.

ILWU Local 21 in Longview is under gag orders from the International not to talk about the pending agreement. Supporters remain on alert to mobilize quickly, should the negotiations go sour. For now, EGT's plan to load a ship using scab labor is on hold. It was the strength and militancy of Local 21, and the company's fear of an impending mobilization of



WW PHOTO: BILL BOWERS

thousands in the small town of Longview, that forced EGT to the table. The Occupy movements in Oakland, Calif.; Portland, Ore.; Seattle, Tacoma, Bellingham, and Olympia, Wash.; and many others, plus ILWU Local 10 and rank and file from many other ILWU locals, stand ready to give support if needed.

— Terri Kay

After bosses axe health plan

Retirees camp outside aluminum plant

Since Dec. 19, members of United Steelworkers Local 5668 and retirees of Century Aluminum have been holding an encampment outside the plant here in Ravenswood, W.Va., calling it "Occupy Century Aluminum."

The company shut down in 2009 and sent out "health care termination" letters to the retirees. "The company basically told people they were going to steal every last thing they worked for," stated Karen Gorrell, a spokesperson for Occupy Century Aluminum. "The notifications put so much stress on all of us, and as a result we lost a couple of our co-workers. So we decided to finally take action."

The encampment has received a lot of support. Activists from various Occupy locations in the region have visited and made donations. Other labor unions

have also expressed solidarity. On Jan. 25, United Steelworkers President Leo Gerard made an appearance and gave a speech where he called the Century Aluminum bosses "a bunch of rotten bastards for trying to take away people's health care."

Class struggle is nothing new for the members and retirees of USW Local 5668. This same local faced a historic two-year lockout by the then Ravenswood Aluminum Corp. in the early 1990s.

Gorrell added, "If we don't fight back, the corporate bosses will literally try to work us to death. We the retirees will fight until we are in our graves, because we have nothing to lose and a lot to gain." For more information, visit centuryaluminumretirees.com.

— Report and photo by Jeremy B.



In response to state of emergency

Wisconsin Occupy movement spreads

By Bryan G. Pfeifer
Milwaukee

Those participating in the Occupy Wall Street movement in Wisconsin are continuing to fight the 1% statewide in a creative series of protests, forums and foreclosure defenses, and by building a statewide and regional network in solidarity with numerous progressive struggles. OWS here is bolstered by the people's uprising that started with the State Capitol occupation in February 2011.

Critical features of Occupy in Wisconsin include youth and students taking leadership roles, learning organizing skills and working with elder activists of all nationalities, who are also learning from youth and students. Other critical building blocks are white participants in the Occupy Coalition in Milwaukee and in other cities who are open to respecting the leadership roles of people of color and their initiatives, organized by Occupy the Hood and Decolonize the Hood.

To build events, members of all the groups work together on many tasks, including distributing leaflets throughout the city and on city buses. The Occupy Coalition in Milwaukee began the year by joining together in neighborhood activities in the African-American community and celebrating Dr. King Day.

The Occupy Coalition in Milwaukee, which includes Decolonize the Hood, Occupy Milwaukee, Occupy Riverwest and Occupy the Hood, formally joined the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. rally and march in Milwaukee on Jan. 16. Each group had representatives speaking and participating as a united delegation in the march to the King memorial statue.

"When any members of a community are oppressed, we all are oppressed. ... War has been declared on working and poor folks in this state and across the country. When we invoke the legacies of Father Groppi [Milwaukee-based civil rights activist who died in 1985] and Dr. King, we fight back. When we build alliances at the grassroots level, like the Occupy Coalition I'm a proud part of, we fight back. When labor and community forces join together to agitate and work for infrastructure funding that will really create jobs, we fight back," said Angela Walker, legislative director of the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 998 and a leader of the Occupy Coalition, at the main rally at St. Francis of Assisi church.

Continued Walker: "When we march on Madison [the state capital] and Wash-

ington to demand an end to unjust wars and corporate giveaways that have broken this economy, we fight back. When we demand accountability and not lip service from our elected officials and let them know we're not going for pacification tactics anymore, we fight back. In our push for safe and affordable housing, access to health and food and an end to foreclosures and evictions in our neighborhoods, we are fighting back. And when we remind those in positions of power that transit is a necessity and that it needs to be fully funded, expanded and respected, we fight back ... in the spirit of Sankofa we reach back and carry the battle forward."

Crisis, fightback deepen

The Occupy Coalition in Milwaukee is now mobilizing for a "Take Back City Hall" Feb. 6 rally at Chase Bank on Water Street and Wisconsin Avenue, with a march to Milwaukee's City Hall to follow. The coalition will be demanding that Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett and Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker declare a state of emergency based on the economic crisis that exists in Milwaukee and statewide. Of particular concern are the foreclosure epidemic and jobs crisis, especially as these relate to the Black and Latino/a communities.

Milwaukee has one of the highest unemployment rates in the U.S. for African Americans. The infant mortality rate for Black infants is approximately 19 per 1,000 live births. There have been more than 20,000 foreclosures since 2007 in Milwaukee, mostly in neighborhoods where Black union workers and their families had jobs at nearby manufacturing plants that have been moved out or shut down by the 1%. Other demands include that funds allocated for community development block grants be disbursed correctly in the neighborhoods where they are needed most, as well as a moratorium on foreclosures and evictions.

Across the state, Occupy groups are forming and developing. The Occupy WI website lists more than 20 cities in Wisconsin that have Occupy groups, along with their Facebook and web sites. New websites such as Occupy Riverwest are growing and activists are learning many new skills.

Occupy Green Bay hosted its first-ever people's forum on Jan. 28 and other activists came from throughout the region to attend. Occupy Appleton is engaging in community foreclosure defense actions. And various Occupies are joining in the Feb. 4 "No War on Iran" protests in Green Bay and Milwaukee. All the Oc-



Members of Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement.

WW PHOTO: BRYAN G. PFEIFER

cupies in Wisconsin are standing in solidarity with Native nations to oppose an iron ore mine in the northern region of the state near Lake Superior — the largest fresh water body in the world — that would destroy the environment.

Many progressive organizations are

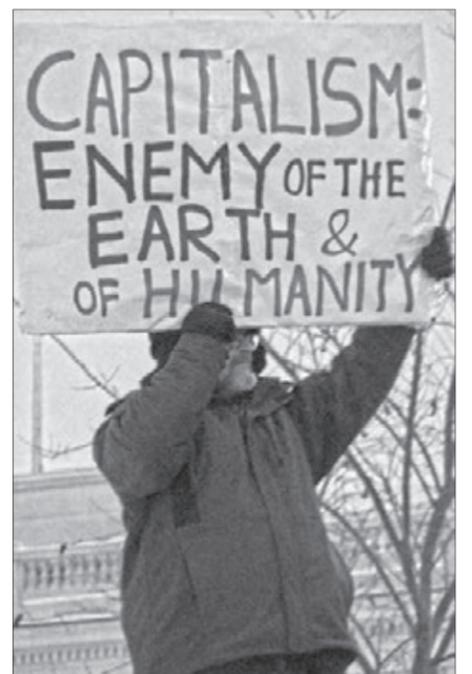
working with the Occupy movement in the state, including the Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement, which is also sponsoring a Feb. 25 organizing meeting in Milwaukee to fight foreclosures and evictions. Go to wibailoutpeople.org for more information. □

Protesters converge on Wisconsin Capitol

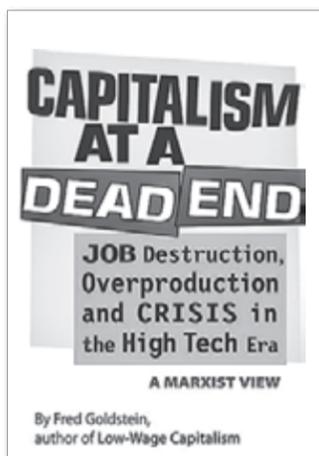
Ojibwe reject mine land grab

Thousands of poor and working people converged on the Wisconsin State Capitol in Madison for a week beginning Jan. 22. They raised two issues: opposition to Gov. Scott Walker's activities on behalf of Wall Street, and solidarity with Native nations against a proposed mine on their land. The Carlyle Group iron ore mine, intended for the Penokee Hills in the northernmost part of Wisconsin, would destroy sacred Native land, including rice crops.

All week, people's hearings took place along with protests, speak-outs, cultural events and more. On Jan. 25, members of the Ojibwe Nation sponsored a protest on the steps of the Capitol to oppose the iron ore mine. This protest, the largest of the week, merged with a major one inside the Capitol, where protesters drowned out Walker's State of the State speech, calling it a speech for the bankers and bosses. For more information on how to help stop the mine, see savethewatersedge.com and indiancountrytv.com.



— Report and photo by Bryan G. Pfeifer



Pamphlet is available at www.LowWageCapitalism.org and www.workers.org/books. Order pamphlet from Workers World 55 W. 17 St., 5C, NY, NY 10011\$2 (plus \$1 shipping)



Philly marks Egypt uprising

On Jan. 25, the first anniversary of the beginning of the Egyptian uprising, Occupy Philly activists rallied at Love Park. They marched to the site of an Egyptian banner on Philadelphia's historic flag-draped Ben Franklin Parkway. After four volunteers read the names of the first 1,000 men, women and children killed by Mubarak's forces, several speakers gave solidarity statements with their brothers and sisters still struggling for liberty in Cairo's Tahrir Square.

— Report and photo by Joe Piette

Austerity breeds worker resistance throughout Europe

By John Catalinotto

As January ended, so did several meetings where representatives of the global 1% gather to decide the fate of hundreds of millions — the 99%.

The first one was the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, where 2,500 billionaires, bankers and politicians met to decide how to best expand their domination of the globe.

This year they were preoccupied with the problems caused by the ongoing and intractable capitalist economic crisis.

A Jan. 29 Associated Press report of the meeting described it this way: "The five-day gathering of business and political leaders ends without the enthusiasm of past World Economic Forums. ... Europe's crippling debt crisis dominated the world's foremost gathering of business and political leaders, but for the first time the growing inequality between the planet's haves and have-nots became an issue, thanks largely to the Arab Spring uprisings, the Occupy movement and other protests around the globe."

Europe's bankers and government leaders held a separate continentwide meeting in Brussels and another, more specific one, in Athens. In both they were trying their best to dump the costs of the crisis on the backs of the European working class.

The European Union has dispensed with even sham democracy in Italy and Greece. They have forced the appointment of banker-

technocrats to key government posts to replace politicians who had lost the ability or the will to impose the austerity programs the bankers think can resolve the crisis in favor of big capital. Their aim was to make the workers pay the lion's share of the costs of the crisis.

The International Monetary Fund had just reduced its forecast for worldwide growth of the economy from its earlier September prediction. Now it expects a recession in Europe — meaning the economy will shrink rather than grow.

Across the continent, the working people who must sell their labor in order to live were rising up. The Occupy movement set up igloos in Davos, workers struck in Brussels, and unionists demonstrated in Athens. But that wasn't all.

Belgium

First general strike since 1993

Belgium is a small, industrialized, heavily unionized country in northern Europe. Its economy is in relatively good shape compared to those in Greece and Italy. The government nevertheless recently announced plans to cut social spending and raise taxes.

European leaders had scheduled a one-day meeting on Jan. 30 in Brussels, which is the "capital" of the E.U. This was bad timing, especially since the agenda for their meeting was at its heart how to squeeze more out of the European workers.

So Belgium's workers greeted Europe's leaders with their first general strike since 1993. Despite a vicious anti-union campaign in the corporate media, joined by all the traditional capitalist political parties, there was high participation in the walkout.

The strike stopped production in both the Flemish- and French-speaking regions of the country. Trains and trams closed down. In the ports of Antwerp and Zeebrugge, despite government threats to use force against the unions, ship traffic was halted. Workers blocked the industrial areas of Liege and Charleroi in Wallonia starting at 4 a.m.

There was no way Europe's political leaders could miss the strength of the action. Instead of their flights landing at the international airport just outside Brussels, they were rerouted to the Beauvechain Air Base 25 miles southeast of the city center.

The capitalist politicians are caught between two menaces to their rule: their capitalist system that has reached a dead end, on one side; and a working class that is beginning to wake up and fight, on the other.

According to a report in the Jan. 31 issue of the German progressive daily *Junge Welt*, the campaign against the strike by the Belgian government and the pro-capitalist media and political parties failed. More than that, it served to provoke the workers' anger and mobilize them for the strike.



PHOTO: KKE

Greece

Unions protest 'Troika' meeting

The popular name for the three hated partners — the International Monetary Fund, the European Central Bank and the European Union bureaucracy — is the "Troika." The 99% may hate the 1% in their own country, since each European country has its own capitalist ruling class that exploits the rest of the population. But the Troika introduce the element of foreign economic rule.

These days, even where local rulers might concede to massive worker resistance, the Troika intervene to tighten the austerity belt even further. No cuts, no loans, say the Troika.

That's what the Troika's representatives were telling the Greek government in January. Prime Minister Papademos himself is a banker-technocrat recently installed by the Troika to replace the veteran social-democratic politician George Papandreou, a third-generation Greek political leader.

On Jan. 25, "at the crack of the dawn the All Workers' Militant Front (PAME) carried out a dynamic protest in Athens outside the hotel where the delegation of the Troika is staying and called on the working people to rise up against the government, the plutocracy and their allies. The protesters of PAME blocked the central entrance of the hotel and shouted slogans from the loudspeakers expressing the opposition of the workers and the people to the policy that leads them to bankruptcy and impoverishment." (inter.kke.gr)

Later, the demonstrators took down and burned the flag of the E.U. that had

been hanging on the hotel.

PAME is a militant union confederation that is close to the Communist Party of Greece (KKE). PAME sometimes acts at the same time as other union confederations, at other times on its own. It has called dozens of general strikes, national and regional, in the past two years.

The latest was on Jan. 17, when the three labor centers held a major strike throughout the wider Athens region. That strike's aim was to respond to the government's anti-worker measures, which include cutting salaries by \$200 to \$275 a month, abolishing seasonal bonuses, while introducing privatizations, flexible (for the bosses) working hours, increasing anti-popular taxes, etc.

The KKE considers the economic crisis unsolvable through capitalist measures.

Italy

Rebellion in Sicily spreads

Like Greece, Italy now has a prime minister appointed by and beholden to the banks — Mario Monti, an economist and former member of the European Commission. Because Monti replaced the reactionary billionaire misanthrope Silvio Berlusconi, there was little popular resistance to this abuse of what remained of Italy's capitalist-dominated democracy.

Appointed as 2011 ended, Monti's task was to impose severe austerity on the workers, while forcing the bosses to pay some of the taxes they consistently avoid, and to do this without arousing mass rebellion.

In mid-January, however, demonstrations and strikes began in Sicily, an island south of the Italian peninsula that historically is less industrialized than Italy's north, though now 42 percent of fuel in Italy is refined there. Much of the population is conscious of its regional identity.

The participants were not just the workforce in traditional unions, but included truckers, fishers, farmers and shepherds, who were also protesting the sharp increase in gas prices — 40 percent over the previous year — reminiscent of the recent struggles in Nigeria.

Besides withholding labor, the demonstrators set up roadblocks that brought the economy on the island to a halt during the five-day action.

Later in the week, students joined the protests in Palermo in solidarity and burned a tricolor flag, saying it was a symbol of the Italian state, whose financial maneuvers were driving the people to poverty while enriching the usual suspects.

On Jan. 23, the truckers' actions spread to continental Italy, blocking main traffic

arteries in an action that lasted until Jan. 27. Automobile manufacturer Fiat was forced to shut down a half dozen factories starting Jan. 24 due to a shortage of components.

According to the transport union leading the protest, the strike was at the national level and was related to the high cost of fuel, insurance and road tolls.

Romania

Widespread if undefined resistance

The end of Romania's post-World War II participation in the socialist bloc came in 1989, when a military coup's firing squad executed President Nicolae Ceausescu and his partner, Elena Ceausescu. This brutal killing was celebrated in the capitalist West.

At that time, Romania's population was 23 million. It had no foreign debt, which the regime had paid off in full despite the unpopularity of the measures taken to accomplish this.

Currently, after 20-plus years of integration into the capitalist world, Romania's population has dropped to 21 million, half of its 8 million jobs have been lost, and 3 million Romanians have emigrated. The foreign debt is now about \$150 billion.

In other words, Romania, along with the rest of Eastern Europe, has for the last two decades become a semi-colony ruled and plundered by Western European imperialist banks, much as Central America is plundered by U.S. imperialist banks. This fate is undoubtedly the nightmare of those in the peripheral West European countries — Ireland, Portugal, Greece — who can imagine their country swallowed whole by the European Central Bank if there is no resistance.

In May 2009, under a plan agreed to with the IMF and World Bank, Romania got a \$17 billion loan on the condition of reducing already low government worker salaries by 25 percent and pensions by 15 percent. Last December, even before getting more IMF demands, the Romanian president announced a virtual privatization of all public hospitals.

Many campaigns erupted to this plan on Facebook, Twitter and in the media, and the president withdrew his proposal. But it was too late. The accumulated indignities finally unleashed an avalanche of public protest that began Jan. 13, with public demonstrations in Bucharest, the capital, and in Cluj, Sibiu, Targu Mures and other cities.

In Bucharest there was street fighting with the police. By the evening of Jan. 14, three demonstrators had been injured and 29 arrested. The political leadership of the movement in Romania may be unclear, but it is clear that there is lots of unhappiness with the new capitalist system. □



Joyce Chediak

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 Amazon and bookstores around the country <http://gazaresistancebook.com/>

LIBYA

Attacks rise against imperialist-backed regime

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

A series of attacks have been launched against the U.S.- and NATO-installed National Transitional Council in Libya. The most significant events occurred on Jan. 23 when local forces still loyal to the former government of slain leader Col. Moammar Gadhafi retook the city of Bani Walid, located 120 miles southeast of Tripoli.

During the battles to reclaim the city, four people were reportedly killed and 20 others injured. Reports indicate that heavy weaponry was used by several hundred Libyan loyalists, including 106 mm anti-tank launchers.

The liberation of Bani Walid took place after a gun battle with the NTC rebels that lasted only a few hours. Immediately, green flags were hoisted. These flags are a symbol of the Jamahiriya government that was driven from power by a seven-month bombing campaign carried out by the U.S.-NATO forces.

NTC soldiers patrolling Bani Walid had

recently arrested supporters of the former government, prompting outrage among the population. The city had been one of the last to fall during the war against Libya, which lasted for eight months and resulted in the wholesale destruction of the country's infrastructure and the theft of its national wealth.

After holding out for many months against the U.S.-NATO forces and the NTC rebels, the local loyalist forces agreed to allow the Western-backed gunmen to enter the city. However, tensions have remained extremely high.

Just last November, gun fights erupted when NTC rebels entered the city in an attempt to arrest pro-Gadhafi supporters. On Jan. 23, loyalist forces attacked an NTC militia garrison, killing several guards before moving to occupy the center of the city.

Reports say it may be very difficult for the NTC to exercise authority over Bani Walid. Sentiments against the Western-backed "rebels" have not subsided.

Journalist Taha Zargoun wrote: "Taking back control of the town will be chal-

lenging because it has natural defenses. Anyone approaching from the north has to descend into a deep valley and then climb up the other side, giving defenders an advantage." (Reuters, Jan. 23)

Bani Walid liberation part of broader unrest

In various regions of Libya the NTC has been rapidly losing any semblance of control. Other attacks by loyalist forces have taken place in the eastern city of Benghazi, the base of the counterrevolution, and in Tripoli, the capital.

In Benghazi, pro-Gadhafi fighters mounted offensives against NTC rebels, killing at least three. In the capital of Tripoli, guerrilla units loyal to the former government launched attacks against NTC personnel in several neighborhoods across the city.

Overall dissatisfaction with the imperialist-backed regime is increasing daily. Even elements that supported the counterrevolution have rapidly grown disillusioned with the NTC regime, which has failed to rein in the militia groups that

roam areas of the capital and other cities, committing atrocities against the people.

The Associated Press wrote on Jan. 23: "The bold attacks are the latest breakdown in security, three months after Gadhafi's capture and killing. Protests have surged in recent weeks, with people demanding that the interim leaders deliver on promises of transparency and compensation for those injured in the civil war."

There have also been reports of attacks launched by loyalist forces in the western Nafusa mountains. This has prompted the NTC rebel regime to heighten security in Misrata, setting up checkpoints in order to secure entrance into the city.

After the fall of Tripoli in August, many loyalist units took refuge in Bani Walid and other areas in the west of the country. Reports of clashes have been consistent from the area.

Imperialist media ignored human rights violations

Since the beginning of the rebellion against the Gadhafi government last

Continued on page 10

Hondurans organize amid growing repression

By Heather Cottin

When the New York Times publishes an op-ed piece stating that Honduras is "descending deeper into a human rights and security abyss" and adds that this is "in good part the State Department's making," something is changing. (Jan. 26)

Since the U.S. government-sponsored military coup on June 28, 2009, the State Department has spread a smokescreen to justify the kidnapping of legally elected President Manuel Zelaya Rosales and the brutal military takeover of this country of more than 8 million people.

Conditions in Honduras, the second-poorest Central American nation, have only deteriorated since the coup. Sixty-seven percent of the population — more than 5.5 million people — live below the poverty level. The unemployment rate is almost 30 percent. (hondurasnews.com, Jan. 3) The oligarchs and transnational corporations have taken total control, exploiting the people and resources, even privatizing the country's rivers.

Since the coup, Honduras has become

the center of U.S. military operations in Central America. The Soto Cano Air Base (Palmerola), to which Zelaya was flown during his kidnapping, has received an infusion of up to \$45 million in construction funds since 2009. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)

Violence and drug trafficking in the country also spiraled upward during the same period. As a result of killings carried out by the military and military-trained police forces, Honduras has among the highest murder rates in the world. (southcom.mil) According to a report of the Organization of American States' Inter-American Commission for Human Rights, there is "generalized impunity for human rights violations" and the return of death squads. (October 2010)

Lucy Pagoada, a representative of Honduras Resistencia USA, told Workers World: "The leader of the coup, Roberto Micheletti, and Miguel Facussé, the country's richest oligarch and uncle of Honduras' U.N. Ambassador Mary Flores Facussé, are the leading drug lords of Honduras."

Facussé is alleged to have stolen vast

tracts of land from the Indigenas and Garifuna (Afro-Honduran) people, and his death squads have killed, kidnapped and tortured dozens of peasants in the Aguan Valley. Facussé brought

in the Honduran Army's U.S.-trained 15th Infantry Battalion and private security guards to attack the Aguan peasants. A 17-year-old boy and five security guards were killed in 2010. (Honduras Solidarity Network, Aug. 19, 2010)

The New York Times piece said that the U.S.-backed coup and Washington's support for the sham election of Porfirio Lobo Sosa in November 2009 placed a regime in power that was quickly recognized by the Obama administration. The Lobo government "threw open the doors to a huge increase in drug trafficking and violence, and it unleashed a continuing wave of state-sponsored repression. ... The judicial system hardly functions. Impunity reigns. At least 34 members of the opposition have disappeared or been killed, and more than 300 people have been killed by state repression."

According to Human Rights Watch, 18 journalists have been killed since the coup.

Repression breeds resistance

But the Honduran Resistance Movement has been in the streets, facing down the police and army in the cities and countryside. In February 2011, they held a large representative assembly and then went back to their communities to organize to take power.

For the national election set for November 2013, "Peasants, students, Indigenous peoples, teachers and workers have organized a party in direct defiance of the two traditional parties of Honduras, the National Party and the Liberal Party," said Pagoada. "We call it 'LibRe' — for Liberty and Reformation. We have



decided to take a political direction. Xiomara Castro Del Zelaya, the wife of Manuel Zelaya, will be our candidate, and a poll taken on Jan. 28 showed that she is the leading candidate."

Fearing this overwhelming groundswell of resistance, the U.S. government appointed Lisa Kubiske ambassador to Honduras. On Jan. 26, Kubiske whisked President Lobo off to Miami for 10 hours of high-level talks. That resulted in his decision to support unprecedented legislation that would enable the U.S. to extradite suspected Honduran drug traffickers, specifically Miguel Facussé and Roberto Micheletti, to the United States. Lobo also ordered the arrest of police officers believed responsible for the murder of the son of a leading academic. The police then miraculously escaped from prison, Pagoada noted.

On the same day, Honduran lawmakers proposed a bill that would establish an independent monitoring body tasked with reforming the country's notoriously corrupt police force. (insightcrime.org, Jan. 27)

"Few articles admit that all the poverty, murder, drug trafficking and corruption are the direct results of the U.S.-sponsored coup," Pagoada told Workers World. "What is clear is that the coup has failed."

Pagoada informed WW that "Xiomara Castro Del Zelaya is coming to the United States to speak in New York and Washington. She will also address the United National Antiwar Coalition convention in Stamford, Conn., in March [23-25]. We will hear a powerful message of resistance, democracy and peace from the Honduran people." □



MESSAGE FROM WORKERS WORLD PARTY

WHAT WILL STOP IMPERIALISM

Continued from page 1

ingly belligerent foreign policy by all the imperialist powers. The “scramble for Africa” that happened toward the end of the 19th century, when the European capitalists raced each other to grab the most territory on that great continent, is being repeated today — but now it is a struggle to recolonize countries in Asia and Africa that had, by the 1960s, won some measure of independence, aided by the existence of a bloc of socialist countries.

In today’s scramble, the U.S. has blasted its way into Iraq and Afghanistan, with the British ruling class tagging along for their cut of the pie. The European imperialists and the U.S. collaborated on hammering down the Gadhafi government in Libya — like Iraq, a country that had used its oil revenues to greatly raise the standard of living of most of the people.

Now the U.S., Britain and France are hauling out their big guns — literally and figuratively — to try and get United Nations cover for an attack on Syria. As we write, the foreign ministers of all three imperialist countries are in New York putting pressure on Russia and China, which have veto power in the U.N. Security Council. These two only abstained on the Libya vote early last year. The imperialists used the resolution allowing a “no-fly zone” over Libya as cover for an intensive bombing campaign that lasted more than six months and finally brought down the government of that North African country. Obviously, to them no-fly doesn’t apply to their bomb-laden planes and drones.

China and Russia have said they don’t want to make that mistake again. It takes an outright veto to block a resolution supported by the other three permanent members of the Security Council — the U.S., Britain and France. We hope that this time these two countries will do just that and emphatically vote no.

The irony is that the imperialists, the U.S. first and foremost, are pushing military solutions because they, in fact, are growing weaker economically. The capitalist system that has fattened off super-exploitation of the developing world is now choking on the highly efficient, high-tech global economy it has created.

This crisis brings to the fore a fundamental contradiction of capitalism that Karl Marx unraveled when it was still in its early stages. Capitalist competition drives forward technological innovation, which at first makes more profits for the owners because they can shed labor. But eventually the process overwhelms the markets for their products — workers have no money to buy the greater and greater quantities of goods produced! — and a crisis occurs. The privately owned profit system is at war with the socialized

character of the productive process.

Today’s crisis is worldwide and reflects the global character of the capitalist economy and the labor market. It will not yield to politicians’ promises or some tinkering with credit or taxes or currencies.

The impasse the system is in can intensify all of capitalism’s ugliest features: xenophobia, as seen in the vicious crusade against immigrants; racism, which deepens the immense suffering of the oppressed communities even if a few individuals are allowed to advance; jingoism and “America first” bombast against other countries, most notably China at this time, concealing who the real enemies of the working class are.

It is U.S. corporations, and the banks behind them, that decide to move their operations to low-wage countries in search of even greater profits, even though they already possess the greatest riches in human history. Unfortunately, some union leaders are misdirecting the anger of their members against China at this time. That only feeds into the divide-and-conquer strategy of the boss class, which has an international outlook. It is time for U.S. labor leaders to also think globally and strengthen solidarity with workers around the world.

Solidarity and unity needed to fight the capitalist system

But political reaction can also arouse the instincts of solidarity and unity of all the workers and oppressed — instincts they need to fight the system. It is beginning to happen. Black, white, Latino/a, Asian, Native and Arab together are helping each other resist evictions, walk the picket lines and occupy public spaces in protest over poverty and injustice.

People here celebrated the struggles of the Egyptians in Tahrir Square. The Egyptians in turn cheered on the Wisconsin sit-in at the Capitol building and sent pizzas, via cell phone, to Occupy Wall Street.

Class struggles are growing in Europe as workers there fight back against the austerity measures imposed by banks and bureaucrats.

Decades ago, Longshore union workers in the U.S. refused to load apartheid South African ships and cargo destined for U.S.-supported dictatorships in Central America.

This kind of solidarity is a direct challenge to the empire builders who would rip up our pensions, our jobs, our health care and other social services in their mad profit-driven attempts to control the world.

We must work to ensure that the anti-war movement deepens its roots among the people, especially the most oppressed, and becomes one with the class struggle against capitalism and imperialism. □

Left Forum set for NYC, March 16-18

Thousands of people are expected to attend the Left Forum on the weekend of March 16-18 at Pace University near City Hall in New York City. The forum’s agenda includes opening and closing plenary sessions along with hundreds of panels on global issues, from the global economic crisis to the Occupy movement.

The LF is probably the largest annual gathering in the United States where people can hear Marxist scholars, most from universities and colleges, but also from left political organizations. Given the impetus to progressive thought and activity by the Occupy movement, there may well be an influx of young activists at this year’s forum, fresh from the streets and squares.

Reflecting the expectation that this movement will take part, more than half the panels have the word “occupy” in their titles.

LIBYA

Attacks rise against imperialist-backed regime

Continued from page 9

February, there have been gross human rights violations against people in Libya. Foreign nationals, Black Libyans and loyalist forces were subjected to harassment, beatings, illegal imprisonment, torture and deaths at the hands of the NTC rebels and their imperialist backers.

During the course of last year’s bombing campaign, 26,000 sorties and 10,000 air strikes were carried out between March 19 and Oct. 20. Estimates of deaths during this period range from 50,000 to 100,000.

At least 7,000 people remain imprisoned inside the country, including the son and heir-apparent to Gadhafi, Seif al-Islam. He was captured by the NTC in the south of the country late last year and has been held incommunicado since then.

Seif al-Islam reportedly had a hand severed and is not allowed to seek legal counsel. The International Criminal Court, which had indicted Gadhafi and Seif al-Islam for alleged war crimes during the bombing of the country, has now said that the son can be tried on Libyan soil under the purported laws of the NTC rebels.

A January report released by several human rights organizations says there are still widespread abuses, unjustified imprisonment and torture being conducted by the NTC rebel regime. The document, entitled “Report of the Independent Civil Society Fact-finding Mission to Libya,” reveals that there are victims of NATO and NTC war crimes in numerous areas throughout the country, including Tripoli, Sibrata, Khoms, Zilten, Misrata, Tawergha and Sirte.

The authors of the report include the

The LF’s Marxism has a distinctly social-democratic bias. The LF’s main single force is the Democratic Socialists of America, which is usually allied with the left wing of the Democratic Party. This political tendency is most prominent in the plenary sessions.

Nevertheless, nearly every left tendency is invited to the LF and does participate, which means that revolutionary communists, anti-imperialists and a broad range of other activist speakers have an opportunity to raise their voices, especially in some of the panels, and to sell and distribute their books and literature at the book fair.

Workers World Party members and allies plan to participate in at least four panels during the forum. Workers World newspaper will organize a table at the Book Fair for its own and allied literature.

— John Catalinotto

Arab Organization for Human Rights, the Palestinian Center for Human Rights and the International Legal Assistance Consortium. The document further confirms the deliberate targeting of civilians during the bombing campaign between March and October 2011.

Farirai Chubvu wrote of the findings: “The report exposes the human rights and democratic pretenses employed by the U.S., France, Britain and their NATO accomplices to carry out a colonial-style war of conquest. It makes clear that U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973, imposing a ‘no-fly zone’ and arms embargo on Libya supposedly to protect civilians from repressive actions by Moammar Gadhafi, was in fact used to carry out a ruthless air war waged in coordination with ‘rebel’ forces on the ground.” (The Herald Online, Jan. 27)

Imperialist states cannot be relied upon to protect the basic human rights of peoples within countries where they are carrying out wars. When President Barack Obama boasted during his State of the Union address recently that the government of Gadhafi had been overthrown, no mention was ever made of the horrendous crimes committed by the U.S. and NATO against the people of Libya.

Anti-war, peace and social justice organizations in the U.S. and other Western countries must continue to speak out and organize against imperialist wars being waged against oppressed peoples. Despite their false claims of concern for human rights and civil rights, it is the Western states that are the main purveyors of violations of fundamental rights throughout the world. □



The Lavender and Red series of articles by Leslie Feinberg, author of *Stone Butch Blues*, is available online. The series includes:

Rainbow Solidarity In Defense of CUBA

This groundbreaking book documents revolutionary Cuba’s inspiring trajectory of progress towards liberation of sexualities, genders and sexes.

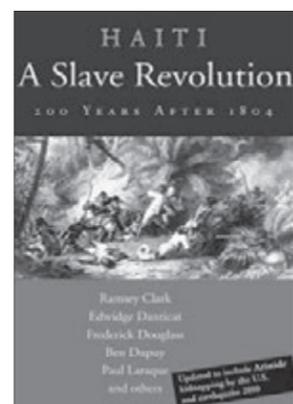


Book available at Amazon.com

HAITI: A Slave Revolution

200 Years after 1804 UPDATED 2010: Includes the coup against President Aristide and the January 2010 earthquake. Authors include: Mumia Abu-Jamal, Ramsey Clark, Pat Chin, Edwidge Danticat, Frederick Douglass, Greg Dunkel, Ben Dupuy, Sara Flounders, Stan Goff, Kim Ives, Fleurimond Kerns, Paul Laraque, Maud LeBlanc, Sam Marcy, Franz Mendes & Steve Gillis, Felix Morrisseau-Leroy, Johnnie Stevens, Abayomi Azikiwe, Larry Hales, Monica Moorehead, Saeed Shabazz.

Available at Amazon and bookstores around the country www.iacenter.org/haiti



Kim Jong Il's contributions to People's Korea

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has been mourning the untimely death of its leader, Kim Jong Il. The following press release from the DPRK's U.N. Mission relates some of Kim's biography and his contributions to securing the country from imperialist attack while adhering to socialist development. The term Songun refers to Kim's policy of giving the greatest priority to the military and the defense of the DPRK. This policy was intensified after U.S. President George W. Bush threatened Korea with war by adding it to his "Axis of Evil" list. Vinalon is an ingenious silken fabric that is mass produced in the DPRK from anthracite and limestone, which are abundant there.

Kim Jong Il, Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army, was endowed with unexcelled military stratagem and unparalleled courage.

Born in Mt. Paektu, the base of the armed struggle of the Korean people to liberate the country from the Japanese military occupation (1905-1945), he spent his childhood amid the roar of gunfire of the sacred anti-Japanese war. In the days of the Fatherland Liberation War of the Korean people against the aggression of the United States (1950-1953, the Korean war) when he was around 10 years old he learned the military beside the table for mapping out plans of operation at the Headquarters. These circumstances enabled him to acquire the viewpoint of giving importance to military affairs and deep knowledge of it from his early days.

He made public many works while studying at Kim Il Sung University (1960-1964) and not a few of them are related to the military affairs.

On Aug. 25, 1960, he inspected the Seoul Ryu Kyong Su 105 Guards Tank Division of the Korean People's Army, which signifies the start of his Songun-based leadership, and has pursued Songun politics since the end of the 1960s. Already in those years he demonstrated his wisdom and stratagem, and courage and pluck befitting a brilliant commander. When the touch-and-go situations were created on the Korean peninsula owing to the Pueblo (a U.S. armed spy ship) Incident in January 1968, the EC-121 (a U.S. spy aircraft) Incident in April 1969 and the Panmunjom Incident in August 1976, the United States could not escape ignominious defeats. All these were thanks to his unexcelled military stratagem and unparalleled courage.

The world public realized more keenly his matchless courage as the brilliant commander, when the United States forced upon Korea a "special inspection" clamoring about its "nuclear issue" while resuming the Team Spirit joint military exercise, a nuclear test war the largest of its kind unprecedented in history, in March 1993. At that time he issued the order of the Supreme Commander declaring the state of semi-war to the whole coun-



Left, Kim Jong Il meets with Korean Air Force pilots.

CREDIT: KCNA

Below, the USS Pueblo was a ship captured off north Korea in 1968. The captain and crew made a public confession that they were spying for the U.S. and were eventually released. Here, WW Editor Deirdre Griswold (right) and Henri Nereaux, a former vice-president of the Masters, Mates and Pilots union in the U.S., stand with a Korean soldier alongside the Pueblo in 2002. The ship became a floating museum in the Daedong River, testament to the DPRK's determination to defend its sovereignty.

try, which was followed by the statement of the DPRK government on its withdrawal from the NPT.

Stunned by the successive thunderbolt-like declarations the United States could not but resign itself to the negotiations with Korea and sign the DPRK-USA Joint Statement (June 1993) and DPRK-USA Agreed Framework (October 1994) aimed at peacefully settling the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula.

When Korea announced to the world that it would launch its second artificial earth satellite Kwangmyongsong No. 2 in April 2009 the United States, Japan, south Korea and other enemy forces made much fuss about it. The Japanese government even adopted the "interception of the satellite" as its national policy and by all means tried to prevent Korea from launching its satellite by deploying warships. At this critical time Korea declared that Japan's "interception of the satellite" would mean a war, stressing that if Japan would make attempts to intercept its satellite, it would shower a fire of revenge not only on interception means already deployed but also on main targets in Japan. Those who fussed about the "interception" shut their mouths and Korea launched the satellite as scheduled.

Kim Jong Il led the socialist cause of Korea and the cause of global independence against imperialism to victory with Songun politics as a basic political mode of socialism.

In the closing years of the 20th century socialism collapsed one after another in several countries, and the U.S.-led imperialist allied forces, raving about the "end of socialism," directed the spearhead of attack toward Korea who unflinchingly held fast to the banner of socialism. To cope with it, Kim Jong Il held higher the banner of Songun to defend the destiny of the country and people and socialism, and to secure the peace and security of the



Korean peninsula and the world.

He ensured that the political and ideological, military and technological strength of the army was intensified in every possible way by giving ceaseless inspections at the units of the People's Army. He also put forward the line of economic construction on giving priority to the defense industry.

As a result, the atmosphere of giving importance to military affairs has been created throughout society and the work of arming all the people and fortifying the whole country impregnably realized at a higher level. It has also possessed reliable nuclear deterrent in order to cope with the U.S.'s tenacious nuclear threat and blackmail.

Korea has remarkably strengthened the national power as a whole on the basis of its powerful military capacity. It holds supremacy of CNC technology, the cutting-edge technology in the machine-building industry, and has established the system of producing iron, fertilizer and vinalon relying on its domestic resources. The appearance of land has been changed beyond recognition through the large-scale land realignment and tideland reclamation.

Korea, already occupying the position of a political and military power, is now striving to become an economic giant.

The reality of Korea which registers one victory after another by upholding the banner of Songun greatly encourages the countries and people of the world which aspire after independence and oppose imperialism and gives strong impetus to the implementation of the cause of making the world independent. With Songun Korea's world profile increasing remarkably, West European and many other countries that had long shunned themselves from it or disregarded it, established diplomatic relations with it. Many political figures, including former U.S. presidents, paid visits to Korea.

Wakabayashi Hiroshi, a social figure of Japan, has once commented that nobody could deny the fact that there was only one country among many, large and small on the planet, which won victory politically, diplomatically and militarily in open showdown with the United States and which made the latter yield to and visit it, and that was Korea led by Kim Jong Il.

Kim Jong Il was a peerless commander in the Songun era. □

Most **WORKERS WORLD** pamphlets available at www.workers.org/books Order from Workers World 55 W. 17 St., 5C, NY, NY 10011 Enclose \$2 (plus \$1 shipping) for each pamphlet

U.S. hands off Libya!

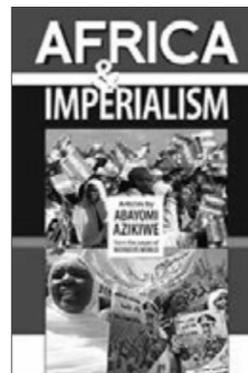
Articles from Workers World in March 2011 include:

- Libya and imperialism • No U.S. attack on Libya!
- Libya repels attack as U.S. seeks 'regime change'
- Libyan military routs Western-backed rebels • Why imperialists hate Libya, love Bahrain • Worldwide protests demand: Stop U.S. bombing of Libya! • Libya & the era of imperialist reconquest • Imperialists escalate bombing operations over Libya • War in Libya: it's about oil



WISCONSIN: Lighting the Fires of Class Struggle

Read articles beginning in February 2011 when the Egypt uprising came to Wisconsin and the unions took to the streets.



AFRICA & IMPERIALISM

Articles by Abayomi Azikiwe from the pages of Workers World

- Africa struggles against imperialism
- WikiLeaks on U.S. role in Africa
- Tunisian masses rebel
- South African workers strike
- Famine in the Sahel
- Women at forefront of liberation struggles
- Africa increases trade with China

Una huelga trascendencia histórica en el Canal

Por Olmedo Beluche

Olmedo Beluche es sociólogo, profesor de la Universidad de Panamá, y activista político de la ULIP, Unidad de Lucha Integral del Pueblo.

El lunes 16 de enero de 2012, se declararon en huelga alrededor de 5,000 trabajadores que laboran en la ampliación del Canal de Panamá, que construyen dos nuevas esclusas para barcos postpanamax. La paralización ha sido total, tanto en el sector del Pacífico como en el Atlántico, y sumó a todas las categorías, desde ayudantes hasta capataces. El pliego de peticiones que motiva la huelga se sustenta en una serie de abusos cometidos por el consorcio "Grupo Unidos por el Canal", encabezado por la transnacional española Sacyr y la principal constructora panameña, del Grupo CUSA, propiedad de la familia del actual administrador del Canal de Panamá, Alemán Zubieta. La huelga, que se ha prolongado por una semana, es tan fuerte y golpea un sector clave de la economía que el Ministerio de Trabajo, tan propatrontal y antiobrero en otros conflictos, ha sido cauteloso en sus declaraciones y ha evitado reprimir a los trabajadores.

Los huelguistas han denunciado todo tipo de atropellos, desde despidos injustificados hasta salarios discriminatorios para los panameños en beneficio de empleados extranjeros (españoles e italianos), lo que recuerda la doble escala salarial basada en el origen étnico ("gold roll" y "silver roll") impuesta por el imperialismo norteamericano en la Zona del Canal, verdadero apartheid racista que existió durante la presencia colonialista norteamericana hasta 1977.

El problema central de las demandas obreras se concentra en una escala salarial decretada por el gobierno panameño para los trabajadores del canal a todas luces obsoleta (Decreto No. 3 del 4 de marzo de 1980), y que se ha quedado rezagada ante la galopante inflación de los últimos años, y los ajustes salariales logrados en los decretos de salario mínimo de 2009 y 2011, y la convención colectiva del Sindicato Único de la Construcción (SUNTRACS) con la patronal (CAPAC).

El Decreto 3 fija en un monto máximo de 2.90 dólares la hora de trabajo para la categoría inferior, mientras los trabajadores huelguistas y la dirigencia del SUNTRACS exigen un piso mínimo de 6.00 dólares la hora, y la ministra de trabajo ha propuesto un aumento que no exceda el 5% de la base salarial del referido decreto.

El problema se ha vuelto complejo de resolver porque no sólo es obsoleto el Decreto 3, sino que ese decreto expresa el criterio segregacionista con que la burguesía y los gobiernos panameños han querido manejar lo concerniente al Canal de Panamá desde que revirtió a la soberanía nacional en el año 2000. Desde la década del 90, poco después de la invasión norteamericana de 1989, el imperialismo yanqui le exigió a la bur-



Los trabajadores huelguistas del Sindicato Único de la Construcción en lucha.

guesía panameña que, para transferir el canal como establecían los Tratados de 1977, debía establecerse un estatus jurídico especial, segregado de la jurisdicción del resto de la república. Como han denunciado muchos, es como si siguiera existiendo la Zona del Canal, sólo que administrada por "panameños" (la Junta Directiva de la Autoridad del Canal de Panamá - ACP, está compuesta por altos empresarios del sector bancario y de la construcción que cuentan con el aval norteamericano).

Es en estas circunstancias que, en 1994, el conjunto de la burguesía panameña y sus partidos políticos, con el aval del gobierno de Estados Unidos, imponen el Título XIV de la Constitución Política, que da al Canal de Panamá no un régimen de autonomía, sino de verdadera segregación respecto del resto de la nación. Entre otras cosas, el artículo 320 de la Constitución panameña estableció que el presupuesto de la ACP "No formará parte del Presupuesto General de Estado", que solamente será controlado a posteriori por la Contraloría y que no podrá ser modificado por la Asamblea Nacional. Es como si se hubiera creado otro Estado dentro del Estado panameño, lo mismo que la anterior Zonal del Canal, con la única diferencia es de que ahora los administran "panameños".

Siguiendo esa lógica segregacionista, el artículo 322 de la Constitución Política estableció un régimen laboral "especial"

para los trabajadores del Canal de Panamá, es decir, un régimen al margen de las leyes nacionales y del Código de Trabajo. Entre otras cosas que incluye ese artículo, está la prohibición de huelgas en el canal, lo cual constituye una violación de la propia Constitución, del derecho internacional y de los principios de la Organización Internacional del Trabajo. En base a ese artículo se han desarrollado toda una reglamentación interna de la ACP que choca con otros criterios jurídicos del país, entre ellos el Decreto de marras que motiva la huelga a que hacemos referencia.

Decimos que esta huelga tiene una trascendencia histórica porque le ha dado en la torre al esquema segregacionista que la burguesía panameña y el imperialismo yanqui han querido establecer para el Canal panameño y ha puesto al descubierto toda la mar de contradicciones legales y constitucionales que se cobijan bajo el esquema de la ACP.

Las contradicciones expresadas en el Decreto 3, son todavía más absurdas y ridículas ya que, si bien pudiera decirse que el Título Constitucional al que hemos hecho referencia, y las leyes y reglamentos que de él se han derivado, son aplicables a los trabajadores del Canal de Panamá, el hecho es que los trabajadores de la ampliación que laboran para el "Grupo Unidos por el Canal", no son empleados de la ACP, sino de un consorcio privado que debiera estar regido por el Código de

Trabajo y las leyes laborales panameñas, como la de salario mínimo.

Por ello constituyó un doble abuso desde el principio pretender que estos trabajadores estuvieran regidos por el Decreto 3 del 4 de marzo de 1980. Por ello han hecho bien estos obreros en declararse en huelga y exigir su ajuste salarial, tanto con la Convención Colectiva SUNTRACS-CAPAC, como con la ley que regula el salario mínimo en Panamá.

La "tapa del coco" de todos los abusos y canonjías, y que ha trabado las negociaciones para poner fin a la huelga, es que hoy se ha sabido (La Prensa, 21/1/12) de la existencia de una cláusula secreta entre el Grupo Unidos por el Canal y la ACP (cláusula 3.7 del contrato) que obliga al estado panameño a pagar el 100% de cualquier ajuste salarial de los trabajadores que vaya más allá del Decreto 3 de 1980. Esto es el colmo, el Estado panameño, sea por la vía del presupuesto general o de la ACP, tiene que cubrir de sus fondos el aumento salarial para garantizar los beneficios de los empresarios extranjeros y nacionales beneficiados con el negociado de la ampliación del Canal.

Cuando en 2006 empezó el debate sobre la ampliación del Canal de Panamá mediante un nuevo juego de esclusas para barcos postpanamax, quienes nos opusimos argumentamos dos cosas, que ahora se muestran certeras: primero, la obra no es urgente para el comercio mundial ya que el Canal está lejos de su máxima capacidad, por ello implica endeudar al país para beneficio de las navieras internacionales; dos, gastar al menos, 5,200 millones en esa obra es transferir a beneficio de bancos y constructoras unos ingresos del Canal que debían servir para resolver los problemas sociales acumulados por el pueblo panameño.

La lucha generacional por la soberanía era para que el pueblo panameño viva mejor, no una pequeña élite empresarial nacional y extranjera. Eso es lo que está pasando, los potentados del Grupo Unidos por el Canal se llevan para sí y para el extranjero las ganancias de la ampliación, mientras quieren pagarle migajas al trabajador panameño. Por eso también ha sido legítima e histórica esta huelga, que cuenta con el respaldo de todas las organizaciones populares y sindicales de Panamá.

Panamá, 21 de enero de 2012

FREE THE CUBAN 5 unjustly held in U.S. prisons for more than 13 years



Gerardo Hernández Nordelo, Ramón Labañino Salazar, Antonio Guerrero Rodríguez and Fernando González Llort. René González Schwerert, while recently released, is still being forced to remain in the U.S. against his will.